S E D A P

A PROGRAM FOR RESEARCH ON

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF AN AGING POPULATION

The Social and Demographic Contours of Contemporary Grandparenthood: Mapping Patterns in Canada and the United States

Candace L. Kemp

SEDAP Research Paper No. 62

For further information about SEDAP and other papers in this series, see our web site:
http://socserv2.mcmaster.ca/sedap

Requests for further information may be addressed to:
Secretary, SEDAP Research Program
Kenneth Taylor Hall, Room 426
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
L8S 4M4
FAX: 905 521 8232
e-mail: qsep@mcmaster.ca

The Social and Demographic Contours of Contemporary Grandparenthood: Mapping Patterns in Canada and the United States

Candace L. Kemp

SEDAP Research Paper No. 62

October 2001

The Program for Research on Social and Economic Dimensions of an Aging Population (SEDAP) is an interdisciplinary research program centred at McMaster University with participants at the University of British Columbia, Queen's University, Univérsité de Montréal, and the University of Toronto. It has support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada under the Major Collaborative Research Initiatives Program, and further support from Statistics Canada, the Canadian Institute for Health Information, and participating universities. The SEDAP Research Paper series provides a vehicle for distributing the results of studies undertaken by those associated with the program. Authors take full responsibility for all expressions of opinion.

The Social and Demographic Contours of Contemporary Grandparenthood: Mapping Patterns in Canada and the United States[1]

Candace L. Kemp
McMaster University

Abstract:

Although there exists a growing body of literature dedicated to understanding the complexities of grandparenting, few researchers have documented the demographic patterns and social trends that encompass contemporary grandparenthood. Concomitantly, in instances where researchers have described such patterns, data are largely derived from studies profiling American populations. This paper, therefore, examines social trends in grandparenthood and outlines the demographic context within which Canadians participate in grandparent-grandchild relationships. Drawing on nationally representative samples and data derived from both the 1990 and 1995 General Social Surveys of Canada, this study analyzes patterns influencing grandparenthood such as grandparents' rates of survival, the prevalence of grandparenthood, multiple generation families, step-grandparenthood and the availability of grandchildren. In addition, analysis considers rates of intergenerational cohabitation and surrogate parenting as well as grandparents' participation in additional social roles.

Introduction

Research in the area of grandparenthood has been steadily growing for over two decades. Cumulatively, this work suggests that grandparenthood is a contingent and complex process which is largely shaped and mediated by influences including, but by no means exclusive to, individual, familial, socio-historical, economic and demographic factors (Szinovacz, 1998a;1998c). To date, researchers have made significant steps toward understanding grandparenthood from a micro-perspective, elucidating for example, the meaning, roles, types, styles and activities of grandparents

---

[1]A version of this paper was presented at the XVIIth World Congress of the International Association of Gerontology, Vancouver, British Columbia, July 4, 2001. The work reported in this paper was conducted as a SEDAP (Social and Economic Dimensions of an Aging Population) Graduate Research Fellow and carried out as part of the SEDAP Research Program supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada. The author gratefully acknowledges Carolyn Rosenthal for her helpful comments throughout the research process, Sharon Webb for her assistance in the early stages of data analysis and Byron Spencer for his remarks on the paper.

(e.g. Bengtson 1985; Cunningham-Burley, 1986; Johnson, 1985) and exploring dimensions of intergenerational contact, as well as factors influencing grandparent-grandchild relationships (eg. Hodgson, 1992; Hunter & Taylor, 1998; Roberto & Stroes, 1992). Although few researchers would dismiss the significant import of large-scale social and demographic patterns in explicating this intergenerational tie, parallel efforts to understand population-based trends in present-day grandparenthood have generally not been made (Aldous, 1995). Concomitantly, of the few studies that examine these patterns drawing on nationally representative samples, data are derived from American populations (see for example, Szinovacz, 1998b; Uhlenberg & Kirby, 1998). As a result, we possess surprisingly little information on the demographic contours of grandparenthood in Canada and generally lack comparative analysis with other nations.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, is essentially twofold. The first aim is to establish the demographic patterns and social trends which characterize contemporary grandparenthood in Canada using nationally representative data from the 1990 and 1995 General Social Surveys of Canada. Patterns characterizing and influencing grandparenthood such as the prevalence of grandparenthood, multiple generation families, step-grandparenthood and the availability of grandparents and grandchildren are examined. Analysis also focuses on rates of intergenerational cohabitation and surrogate parenting by grandparents, as well as the intersection of grandparenthood and other family and work-related roles. The second aim of the paper—where methodologically possible—is to provide a comparative analysis of Canadian and American trends, thereby placing findings within a North American context. Szinovacz's (1998b) recent comprehensive profile of American grandparents serves as a comparative base.[1] First, however, I situate grandparenthood within a framework of contemporary social and demographic trends, beginning with a consideration of the

family.

Contemporary Social and Demographic Trends

Grandparenthood, Family Structure, Generational Overlap and the Supply of Grandchildren

Canadian families are presently undergoing processes of transformation and redefinition, generally assuming more heterogeneity in size and structure (Rosenthal, 2000). Increasing life expectancy, decreasing fertility, changing gender roles, patterns of work and of marriage and divorce, all join to influence family structure (Beaujot, 2000; Milan, 2000) and consequently, grandparenthood. Accordingly, family structure impinges on the experience of grandparenthood defining not only if, who and when, but also under what circumstances individuals enter into grandparent-grandchild relationships.

In order to better comprehend the emerging diversity characterizing present-day families, researchers have conceptualized various multi-generational family types including: "beanpole"; "age condensed"; "age gapped"; "truncated"; and "step" or "reconstituted" families (Bengtson, Rosenthal & Burton, 1990; George & Gold, 1991). Each family type holds unique implications for grandparenthood. The "beanpole" family is characterized by "verticalization" or an increase in the number of generations and a decrease in the number of members (Bengtson, Rosenthal & Burton, 1990). This "long and lean" family contains multiple generations, but family members are few[er] in number. Meanwhile, in "truncated" families a lineage ends due to childlessness and therefore, grandchildlessness ensues. "Age condensed" and "age gapped" refer to the timing of child birth and hence, age differences between grandparents and grandchildren; the former family type occurs in instances of several adjacent generations experiencing childbearing early, the latter when childbirth

is experienced late. Finally, "step" or "reconstituted" families are formed by a remarriage involving one or more children from a previous union and potentially extend the grandparent-grandchild relationship into the 'step' realm.

In 1995, the step family represented an estimated 10 per cent of all Canadian families with children (Statistics Canada, 1996), but the actual prevalence of the "beanpole", "age condensed", "age gapped", and "truncated" multiple generational families types have not been empirically demonstrated (Uhlenberg, 1993). Despite this fact, the "beanpole" family is frequently speculated to be among the most prevalent multiple generational family type. Rossi & Rossi (1990) have countered that estimates of families with four and five generations are likely over-exaggerated.

Regardless of such debate, the increasing likelihood of "generational overlap" as a result of escalating longevity and life expectancy is widely acknowledged (Rosenthal, 2000). More individuals will live to experience grandparenthood and maintain the grandparent role for a longer time and witness their grandchildren grow into adults (Hodgson, 1992, 1998; Kennedy, 1990). Grandchildren too, will have the opportunity to know more grandparents longer. A recent estimate suggests that in North America, over 90% of ten year old children and three quarters of twenty-year-olds will have at least one living grandparent (McPherson, 1998).

Grandparents are surviving longer, but are projected to have fewer grandchildren compared to the past. Women's increased labor force participation, the availability of contraception and patterns of marital dissolution during the twentieth century have all contributed to declining birth rates in Canada (Milan, 2000) and other Western countries. Such declines have meant fewer children and consequently, fewer grandchildren for grandparents. In a recent U.S. study, Uhlenberg & Kirby (1998) observed a decrease in the supply of grandchildren over the course of the last one

hundred years. They estimated that women who reached old age in the 1990s could expect to have less than six grandchildren and predicted such a downward trend to persist into the twenty-first century until reaching an average of approximately four grandchildren.

Grandparenthood and the Restructured Life Course

Grandparenthood unfolds within boundaries set by the structure and content of the life course. The timing and sequencing of life events, not to mention the intersection of grandparenthood with family and work-related roles, combine to impact how individuals ultimately experience grandparenthood and how such experiences change over time. Interestingly, there is little empirical evidence to suggest that the timing of grandparenthood itself has changed drastically over the course of the past century (Cherlin & Furtsenberg, 1986). U.S. estimates suggest that grandparenthood typically begins in mid-life (Sprey & Matthews, 1982). Likewise, the findings of a Canadian study drawing on a sample of women born between 1905 and 1929, reported the transition to grandmotherhood as typically occurring around age fifty (Gee, 1991).

Dramatic changes to the timing and sequencing of events other than grandparenthood have altered the life course, particularly for women (Hagestad, 1988). Shifting patterns in childbearing, life expectancy and marital status as well as employment and retirement have, in a sense, restructured the life course in several ways that directly or indirectly influence grandparenthood. First, women are ending childbearing at earlier ages, thereby making active parenthood and grandparenthood more distinct and separate phases of life. Over time, as the age at which women complete their childbearing decreases, the overlap between grandparenthood and active parenting has become less likely (Uhlenberg & Kirby, 1998). In Gee's (1991) study, slightly less than half of the women reported having dependent children at the onset of grandmotherhood. This number is

expected to decrease with future cohorts.

The second implication of a restructured life course for grandparenthood is brought about by increasing life expectancy as well as changing marriage patterns. As a result of these trends, grandparenthood is more likely to precede, rather than follow, widow[er]hood in the sequencing of life events. In Gee's (1991) study, nearly three quarters of the grandmothers were married. Such a finding suggests that the transition to grandparenthood is often entered into as a couple. However, as patterns of marriage and marital dissolution[2] are not constant, this number is expected to fluctuate with cohorts over time. Ultimately, it appears that among those whose marriages do not end due to separation or divorce, the transition to grandparenthood will typically occur prior to the death of a spouse. As women live longer and marry at younger ages relative to men (Statistics Canada, 2001), however, it is likely that a greater number of grandfathers will be married compared to grandmothers.

Women's massive entry into the paid labor force has brought about a third implication for grandparenthood, particularly for grandmothers. While employment and grandparenthood have typically intersected for men, women's growing labor force participation increases the likelihood that grandmothers will also have work-related roles. This, is of course, more true for younger grandparents and for those who must work in their later years due to financial necessity. In Gee's (1991) study, slightly less than half of the women reported working at the time of becoming a grandmother. This figure is likely to rise with successive future cohorts.

However, and related to the final implication of a restructured life course, is the possibility that the overlapping of grandparent and employment-related roles will reverse as trends toward retirement and early retirement continue. The institutionalization of retirement as a distinct phase

of life impacts the intersection of work and grandparenthood, particularly for men and increasingly for women (offsetting the trend towards employment). At the beginning of the twentieth century, retirement was not institutionalized, but at its close, relatively few men and women aged 65 and over engaged in labor force participation (Uhlenberg, 1992). Ideally, the transformation of retirement into a distinct phase of life, paired with the continuous decline in the average retirement age (Guillemard & Rein, 1993; Phillipson, 1998) translates into new possibilities for grandparent-grandchild relationships.

Grandparenthood & Household Composition

Geographic proximity is routinely noted as contributing to the quality and quantity of interactions between grandparents and their grandchildren (Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1985, 1986; Gladstone, 1987; Rossi & Rossi, 1990). Not surprisingly, those grandparents and grandchildren who live further from one another are generally found to have less contact than to those who live closer (Hodgson, 1992). As geographic proximity impinges on intergenerational relationships, it follows that grandparent-grandchild coresidence, with or without the middle generation, represents the potential for developing qualitatively distinct intergenerational bonds.

Canadian rates of grandparent-grandchild cohabitation have not been widely publicized. Conversely, in the U.S. grandparent-grandchild coresidence and child rearing has garnered considerable attention sparked by the suggestion that grandparents are raising their grandchildren in unprecedented and growing numbers (eg. Chalfie, 1994; Cox, 2000; Hayslip & Goldberg-Glen, 2000). Despite alarmist demographics, Uhlenberg & Kirby (1998) have demonstrated that three generations typically do not reside in the same household. Further, it is even less likely, with the exception of Black families, that grandparents and grandchildren live together without the middle

generation. In Black families, children are more likely to live alone with a grandparent or with one parent and a grandparent compared to children in White families (Uhlenberg & Kirby, 1998). Thus, it is doubtful that grandparent-grandchild coresidence among Canadians will be a common living arrangement and it is even more improbable that a sizeable percentage of grandparents will act as surrogate parents to their grandchildren.

American Findings and Canadian Predictions

In a recent U.S. study based on data from the National Survey of Families and Households (Wave 2-conducted between 1992 and 1994), Szinovacz (1998b), sketched a demographic profile of contemporary American grandparenthood. Similar to the present paper, her analysis included: the prevalence, survival and timing of grandparenthood; grandparents' roles; divorce; and surrogate parenting among grandparents as well as household extension. Szinovacz also examined variations in grandparenthood according to gender, race (Black, Hispanic, white) and where appropriate, age. Specific details of the findings appear later in this paper, however, the study's more general conclusions can be incorporated into predictions regarding the state of grandparenthood in Canada.

Based on the American experience, it is anticipated that grandparenthood in Canada will be relatively common among older members of the population with children, particularly among those aged 65 and over. Rates of grandparent survival will be related to the age of the grandchild, as well as the gender and lineage of the grandparent. Multiple-generation families containing three generations will be relatively common. Further, it is anticipated that multi-generational cohabitation and surrogate parenting among Canadian grandparents will be very rare while a substantial minority will experience step-grandparent-grandchild relationships. It is also plausible that many Canadian

grandparents will have work and/or other family related roles including spouse, adult-child and in some instances, active parent. The extent to which this is true, however, will be linked to both the gender and age of the grandparent.

Although general similarities between the two countries are predicted, Canadian and American populations differ in important ways which may lead to differences related to grandparenthood. Given Canada's lower birth rate (in recent years), greater life expectancy and dissimilar racial composition (lower percentages of Black and Hispanic individuals) compared to the United States (CIA, 2000), national differences among grandparents are anticipated. For example, it is likely that the supply of Canadian grandchildren will be lower and the supply of Canadian grandparents (based on survival) will higher than in the United States.

Methods

Data Source(s) and Sample(s)

The data for this study were derived from Statistics Canada's 1990 and 1995 General Social Surveys of Canada (GSS)-Cycle 5, Family and Friends and Cycle 10, Family, respectively. For both cycles, the target population was comprised of all persons aged 15 and over living in a private household in one of the 10 provinces.[3] The samples were selected using random digit dialing and the surveys were administered by telephone. The GSS 1990 (n=13, 495) focused on respondents' family and friends. Certain core questions were repeated again in the 1995 survey (n=10, 749), but the latter survey focused mainly on the respondents' family, marital history, children, family origins and fertility intentions. Prior to analyzing each survey, both the 1990 and 1995 samples were weighted using the population weights provided by Statistics Canada. Thus, the sample and

subsequent findings can be considered nationally representative and generalizable to the larger Canadian population.

As previously stated, American data are drawn from Szinovacz's (1998b) research on contemporary grandparenthood. Her studied relied on responses from the U.S. National Survey of Families and Households, Wave 2, collected between 1992 and 1994 (n= 10,008). The U.S. data described in the present paper were weighted by Szinovacz and are representative of the American population (1998b:41).

Measures

Measures for this study relied on responses from both the 1990 and 1995 surveys and include: the prevalence of grandparenthood, multiple generation families and step-grandparenthood; the availability of grandparents and grandchildren; rates of intergenerational coresidence and surrogate parenting; and the intersection of grandparenthood with work and family-related roles. Wherever possible, data were drawn from the most recent survey. Data from the 1990 survey were used if it was neither possible to address the research question directly nor feasible to make inferences based on the responses of the middle generation (or it was uninformative to do so). For comparative purposes, in several instances measures were modeled after those in Szinovacz's (1998b) study.

The prevalence of grandparenthood was measured by the percentage of respondents who identified having one or more grandchildren in the 1995 survey. Such self-reports allow grandparents to define 'grandparenthood' in the sense that grandchildren could refer to any combination of biological, adopted, step or 'fictive'[4] grandchildren. Thus, the prevalence of grandparenthood was measured by the overall percentage of the population who identified

themselves as a grandparent. Likewise, the supply of grandchildren was estimated using the actual number of grandchildren as reported by respondents. In the 1995 survey, the coding for the number of grandchildren ranged from none to fifteen or more. Therefore, for those grandparents who reported having fifteen or more grandchildren (4.5%), this number potentially underestimates the actual number of grandchildren. Consequently, the mean number of grandchildren per grandparent is slightly underestimated. Both the prevalence and supply of grandchildren measures were examined according to age group and gender. In order to facilitate comparison with Szinovacz's findings, prevalence was measured among those over the age of twenty.

Following Szinovacz's study, measures for multiple generation families were constructed using respondents' reports of having at least one living parent, having one or more children and/or having at least one grandchild. Respondents who answered affirmatively to any combination totaling two of these family conditions were categorized as belonging to three generation families. In cases where the combination totaled three, respondents were classified as members of a four generation family. For comparative purposes, analysis of multiple generation families emulates Szinovacz and is based on reports of respondents 35 and over in the 1995 survey and explores gender and age differences.

In the 1990 survey, respondents were asked directly about the survival of their grandparents, specifically whether they were presently living (or not) by gender and lineage. Responses to these questions were used to evaluate the percentages of grandparents' rates of survival in adult-grandchildren's lives. Survival of respondents' maternal grandmother and grandfather, as well as their paternal grandmother and grandfather were examined separately. The survival/supply of grandparents was also measured using the total number of living grandparents and represents the sum

of surviving grandparents, ranging from no living grandparents to a maximum of four living grandparents. Percentage results measuring grandparents' rates of survival are displayed according to the adult-grandchild's age group.

Given that neither survey cycle asked grandparents to report the ages of their grandchildren or their grandchildren's dates of birth, establishing the timing of the onset of grandparenthood relied on data provided by the middle generation in the 1995 survey. All respondents with children were asked to provide the age of each child. In instances where children were deceased dates of birth and death were not recorded. Consequently deceased children were not included in the analysis. Information from each respondent was collected on the year of birth of each parent as well as, if applicable, the year of death. Working backwards from the date the survey was collected and the age of each child, it was possible to establish a year of birth for grandchildren and determine the percentage of grandparents living at the time of the births of the first and last born child (youngest at the time of the survey). If the grandparent was living at the time of the survey or, if the grandparent's year of death was after the birth of the child, the grandparent's age at the time of each child's birth was calculated. From this measure, it was possible to establish the mean age at the birth of first and latest child for the middle-generation child's mother and father for the entire cohort and by gender. The mean age of the parents at the birth of the middle-generation child represents the mean age at the onset of grandparenthood. The measure assumes that the middle generation child's first born is also the first grandchild; that is not always the case, but the measure remains the best possible estimate of timing given the limitations of the data.

Due to the manner in which the questions were posed, step-grandparenthood could not be established directly, but only inferred indirectly based on reports provided by the middle and older

generations in the 1995 survey. Responses to the question "How many step-children have you ever raised?" form the basis of estimating step-grandparenthood. Owing to the fact that step-relations can occur through the actions of various generations, the prevalence of step-grandparenthood was examined on two levels. The first step-grandparenthood measurement relied on respondents aged 35 to 55 examining step-parenthood among the entire cohort as well as those with at least one living parent at the time of the survey. If respondents reported raising at least one step-child, their parent was considered a step-grandparent. Prevalence of this form of step-grandparenthood was measured by the number of individuals age 35 to 55 with at least one living parent and who reported ever raising a step-children. Second, those respondents who self-identified as grandparents were analyzed separately to determine the prevalence of raising step-children. Assuming that children of the step-child generation would be step-grandchildren, the prevalence of step-grandparenthood was measured by the percentage of grandparents who ever raised step-children. Admittedly, there are many methodological flaws with these measurements including for example, the possibility of overlap between the sample aged 35 to 55 and the grandparent sample, the possibility that step-children do not have children and the fact that many step-parents never assume the responsibility of raising their step-children. Overall, the estimates of step-grandparenthood should be regarded as low and generating a somewhat crude, but the best approximation of the Canadian situation given the GSS data.

While the GSS 1995 asked respondents if they had a grandparent living within the household, questions did not specifically address household composition. In the 1990 survey, however, respondents were asked to identify their living situation and could, among other options, identify their household as composed of three-generations or composed of grandparent(s) and grandchild(ren)

without the presence of the middle generation. In the first instance, those respondents who stated that their household type was comprised of three-generations were classified as living in a three-generation household. In the second instance, rates of surrogate parenting on the part of the grandparent were inferred based on the number of respondents reporting that their household, at the time of the survey, was composed of grandparents and grandchildren only. It should be noted that this form of co-residency does not necessarily indicate that the grandparent is acting as a surrogate parent; the measure should be regarded, however, as the best available estimate. Analysis examined the entire population, the grandparent population and younger grandparents (<65) and older grandparents (>64) separately and considered gender differences.

The GSS 1995 probed various areas of the respondents' lives including work and family. In order to establish the degree to which grandparenthood intersects with other roles, responses made by those who self-identify as a grandparent were examined. Again, for comparative purposes, measures are similar to those created by Szinovacz (1998b). For instance grandparents worked full-time if they reported working 30 hours per week or more on a regular basis. Respondents were considered married if they reported being married or living in a common-law relationship. Those grandparents with both children under 19 and children at home were considered to be active parents. Reports of having at least one living parent established the prevalence of the adult-child role. In order to assess the total number of roles beyond grandparenthood, these roles (employee, spouse, active parent, adult child) were each valued at one and summed totaling to a maximum value of four roles. Analysis examined grandparents under age 65 and those 65 and over separately and investigated variation between men and women.

Results

Prevalence of Grandparenthood, *Supply of Grandchildren and Multiple Generation Families*

As Table 1 suggests, grandparenthood is a common experience in Canada. Overall, slightly more than one quarter of community dwelling Canadians over the age of 20 have grandchildren. A higher percentage of women, 31% compared to 22% of men identify themselves as grandparents. Not surprisingly, the percentage of grandparents in the over-twenty population increases as age group increases. Early onset or "off-time" grandparenthood experienced before the age of 40 is extremely rare among the younger cohorts. Less than 1% of this age group are grandparents. In contrast, a sizeable majority of those age 65 and over have grandchildren. In every age group, there are significant gender differences as more women than men experience grandparenthood, reflecting the fact that women marry at a younger age than men and also live longer.

In narrowing the analysis to examine rates of grandparenthood among respondents over twenty years of age with birth, adopted and/or step children (and therefore, a greater potential for grandparenthood), the prevalence of grandparenthood increases. The gender and age patterns observed in the larger population persist within this smaller population. Overall, between one-third and two-fifths of respondents twenty-one and over with children are grandparents. Being a grandparent between the ages of 21 and 39 is again extremely rare, experienced by less than 1% of this group. In fact, grandparenthood does not becomes common until reaching the age group of 55 to 64, where the majority of men and women are grandparents. Also noteworthy, for those parents aged 65 and over, grandparenthood is almost universal, particularly among women. In this age category, 86% of men and 94% of women are grandparents.

— Table 1 approximately here —

The bottom panel of Table 1 shows that Canadian grandparents have approximately 5 grandchildren, on average. As expected, the number of grandchildren is directly and positively correlated to the age group of the grandparent. And, with the exception of the youngest age group, women have a higher number of grandchildren compared to men. Overall, the mean number of grandchildren per grandfather is slightly lower (4.58) than per grandmother (5.18).

Table 2 displays the prevalence of multiple generation families. Over three quarters of people aged thirty-five and over belong to three generation families; approximately one-tenth are members of four generation families. Slightly lower percentages of individuals aged 45 to 54 (72.4%) and higher percentages of those aged 65 and over (80.9%) belong to three generation families. Roughly 20% of those aged 45 to 64 and less than 5% in the 35 to 44 and 65 and over age groups are members of a four generation families. Overall, higher percentages of women than men aged 35 and over are three and four generation family members. This pattern is evident across each age group.

— Table 2 approximately here—

Adult Grandchildren and Their Grandparents

Table 3 presents the supply of living grandparents among Canadians. Among the entire 1990 sample, roughly 30% of the population aged 15 and over had one or more grandparent living at the time of the survey. Not surprisingly, there exists a significant and positive correlation between age group and the number of living grandparents. While the majority of grandchildren have experienced the loss of a least one grandparent by age 15, those between the ages of 15 and 17 are

three times more likely to have all four grandparents living than to have none living at all. An overwhelming majority of grandchildren aged 15 to 19 have at least one living grandparent. The results support the high prevalence of adult-grandchildren: close to 70% of Canadians in their twenties and one-third of those in their thirties have at least one living grandparent. Very few Canadian aged 40 and over have living grandparents, but among those who do, it is most likely a maternal grandmother.

Survival clearly favors grandmothers and the maternal lineage: the highest percentages are maternal grandmothers followed by paternal grandmothers, maternal grandfathers and paternal grandfathers. The same pattern holds for the various age groups of grandchildren. Since given that life expectancy is increasing, rates of grandparent survival are likely to rise over time (unless the age at the transition to parenthood increases to such an extent, countering this projected trend).

— Table 3 approximately here—

The Onset of Grandparenthood

As expected, most Canadians survive to experience grandparenthood (see Table 4). Over 93% of middle generation Canadians had their mothers' living and 85% had their fathers' living at the time of the birth of the first child. The majority of grandparents were also living at the time that middle generations' youngest children (at the time of the survey) were born. Given that mothers tend to be younger than fathers, greater percentages of women have living parents at the time their eldest and youngest children are born. Once again, survival not only favors women, but also maternal lineages.

— Table 4 approximately here—

As Table 5 illustrates, among those grandparents who were living at the time of the birth of

their first grandchild, the transition to grandparenthood in Canada is typically experienced in mid-to-late fifties. Based on responses from the middle-generation, their parents' mean age at the onset of grandmotherhood is 53.6 years and grandfatherhood is 56.6. Likely reflecting the women's tendency to marry older men, women's parents are generally younger and experience the onset of grandparenthood earlier relative to men's parents.

— Table 5 approximately here—

Step-Parenthood and Step-Grandparenthood

Assuming that the population aged 35 to 55 would be more apt to have married, had children, experienced marital dissolution and remarriage than other cohorts, initial analysis focused solely on this group. Table 6 indicates that less than 5% of individuals in this group have ever raised a step-children. Among those with one or more parents living, just over 6% have raised a step-child thereby rendering their parents step-grandparents. Compared to women, two times as many men aged 35 to 55 with a living parent have ever raised a step-child.

It is, of course, possible for step-parents to become step-grandparents through the family formations of their step-children. Accordingly, analysis also considered step-parenthood among self-defined grandparents. Among grandparents, approximately 6% have ever raised a step-child and roughly 7% of grandparents with at least one living parent have ever raised a step-child. These figures suggest the potential for step-grandparents-grandchild relationships, but given that many step-parents do not raise their step-children these approximations are not wholly accurate. Again, men have more step-relations compared to women; this finding is a reflection of the fact that greater percentages of men remarry than women.

It is important to note, however, that there are likely grandparents in the 35 to 55 age group

and as such, the groups are not mutually exclusive. Results should be interpreted as such. It does appear that while step-grandparent-grandchild relations are not the norm, when percentages are translated into actual members of the population, a sizable number of individuals and families experience this 'step-relation'.

— Table 6 approximately here —

Household Composition

As shown in Table 7, grandparent-grandchild co-residence is not a typical experience for Canadians. Three generation households are fairly uncommon. Only 2.5 % of all Canadians aged 15 and over and 3% of all Canadian grandparents reside in a three-generation household. Meanwhile, grandparent-grandchild households with the middle generation absent are even more rare. Less than half a percent of the entire population and fewer than 1% of all grandparents experience this living arrangement. Therefore, it appears that surrogate parenting among grandparents is uncommon. Variations according to age and gender indicate that greater percentages of older grandparents relative to younger grandparents and women, relative to men, experience grandparent-grandchild co-residence, either with or without the middle generation in the household.

— Table 7 approximately here—

Intersection of Grandparenthood with other Roles

Results appearing in Table 8 indicate that grandparenthood intersects with other family and work-related roles and further, that there are variations according to gender and age group. Among all grandparents, slightly less than one-third reported being employed in a full-time capacity. Roughly three-quarters were married or living in a common-law relationship. Approximately 5% of Canadian grandparents have children under the age of 19 living in the household full-time.

Slightly more than one-quarter of this group have one or both parents living at the time of the survey. Not surprisingly, fewer grandmothers are employed full-time, married or in a common-law union and have dependent children under 19 and children living in the household full-time when compared to grandfathers. Although, slightly higher percentages of women have at least one parent living, this gender difference was not statistically significant. None of the work and family-related roles intersect with grandparenthood for 29.2% of Canadian grandmothers and 7.9% of Canadian grandfathers.

— Table 8 approximately here—

When analysis was narrowed to compare grandparents aged 64 and under and those 65 and over separately, considerable differences emerged. Among the younger group, slightly more than half are employed full-time (70% of men and 40% of women) as compared to less than 5% (of 8% of men and only 2% of women) in the older age group. The majority of younger grandparents are married, but there are large gender differences: 90% of younger grandfathers and only 75% of younger grandmothers have a spouse. Among the older group 61% are in a marital union and the gender differences are larger: approximately 84% of older grandfathers and less than 50% of older grandmothers have a spouse. While about 10% of younger grandparents have dependent children living in the household, among those 65 and over that is rare. In fact, it is virtually a non-occurrence for older grandmothers. And, while close to half of all younger Canadian grandparents have at least one parent living, this figure drops to about 5% among the older grandparent population. Again, gender differences were not found to be statistically significant. Overall, in Canada, younger grandparents have more roles than older grandparents and grandfathers have more roles than grandmothers.

Grandparenting in Canada and the United States

Having established the social and demographic snapshot of contemporary Canadian grandparenthood, I now turn to comparisons with the findings of Szinovacz's (1998b) American study[5]. Thus, what follows below is a comparative analysis of the two nations examining: the prevalence of grandparenthood and multiple generation families; the supply of grandchildren and survival of grandparents; the timing of grandparenthood and the intersection of work and family-related roles with grandparenthood; as well as rates of intergenerational cohabitation and step-grandparents. The comparisons suggests that there are similarities and differences— ranging from subtle to stark— between Canada and the United States.

The Prevalence of Grandparenthood in Canada and the United States

Although grandparenthood is common among Canadians aged 65 and over, particularly those with children, grandparenthood is more prevalent among Americans across all age groups and both gender categories. Of particular interest is the fact that higher percentages of the younger age groups are grandparents in the United States. For instance, as shown in Figure 1, roughly 3% of those aged 21 to 39 in the U.S. and 33% of those 40 to 54 report having grandchildren, compared to 0.4% and 20% in Canada. When American findings are broken down by race and gender, a greater percentage of women (than men) and of the Black population (than Hispanic or White) are grandparents at younger ages. In the United States, these populations are also more likely to experience the early (under age 40) onset of grandparenthood. With Blacks making up a substantially lower proportion of the Canadian population, it is possible that Canada's different racial composition accounts for some of the difference in the prevalence of grandparenthood, particularly in the younger age categories.

— Figure 1 approximately here—

Interestingly, roughly equal percentages of those aged 35 and over belong to three generation families, 76.7 % in Canada and 80.0% in the United States. However, four generation families are less common for Canadians 35 and over (10.5%) than Americans (16.1%), for Canadian women (12.2% versus 17.8%) and for Canadian men (9.1% versus 14.2%). These differences are likely due to the differences in the timing of grandparenthood and, in particular, the higher proportion in the United States that experience grandparenthood "off-time" through early onset.

The Supply of Grandchildren in Canada and the United States

While Canadian grandparents have, on average, approximately 5 grandchildren (see Table 1), their Americans counterparts are estimated to have an average of 5.5 grandchildren. This difference is due, in part, to the coding of the Canadian GSS data, which did not count the actual number of grandchildren beyond 15 (only 4.5% had 15 or more) However, different birth rates and immigration patterns between Canada and the United States (Statistics Canada, 2001) presumably explain the remaining difference in the supply of grandchildren. Just as in Canada, women in the United States have more grandchildren compared to men.

The Survival of Grandparents in Canada and the United States

When examined by age group, grandparents' gender and lineage, patterns of grandparent survival in Canada and the United States, are relatively similar.[6] For instance, as Figure 2 illustrates, in both countries, survival is more prevalent among grandmothers than grandfathers and favors maternal lineages over paternal lineages and over 90% of both American and Canadian grandchildren age 16 to 18 have at least one living grandparent. In the older age categories, however, national differences do emerge. Older American children have a greater number of living

grandparents than do similar Canadian children. These differences are especially evident in the 23 to 26 year age group where approximately 30% of Canadians are grandparentless compared to only slightly less than 18% of Americans. These differences are again presumably attributable to the greater percentage of American grandparents as well as differences in the mean age at the time of the transition to grandparenthood.

— Figure 2 approximately here—

The Timing of Grandparenthood in Canada and the United States

Not surprisingly, most North Americans survive to experience grandparenthood. In both countries survival to this life course transition favors women over men and the matrilineal over patrilineal lineages. Among the most striking differences between Canada and the United States, represented in Table 9, are the mean ages at the onset of grandparenthood. Canadians, regardless of gender or lineage experience grandparenthood notably later than their American counterparts. For instance, in Canada, the mean age of respondents' mothers at the time of the birth of their first child was nearly 54 years. Meanwhile, in the United States, the mean age was approximately 45 years. Similarly, the mean age for the onset of grandfatherhood among Canadian men was slightly less than 57 years compared to 54 years of age among American grandfathers. It is important to underscore the limitations of the approach with the Canadian data used in this study, since it overestimates the age at which grandparenthood occurs. It may be noted, however, that Gee's (1991) study estimated that the transition to grandmotherhood in Canada occurs at age 50; this finding also indicates that Americans do in fact experience first-time grandparenthood earlier in life.

— Table 9 approximately here—

Step-Parenthood and Step-Grandparenthood in Canada and the United States

Given the difficulty ascertaining rates of step-grandparenthood in Canada, comparison between the two North American nations is necessarily somewhat speculative. Canadians were only asked whether or not they had ever raised a step child; Americans were asked to report the number of step-children including both those they had raised and not raised. In Canada, roughly 5% of individuals with at least one living parent reported having *raised* step-children. Thus, the figure does not include those step-children who were not raised by the step-parent. In the United States, 14.5% of married persons with children under age 18 reported having step children and at least one living parent. It might be speculated that rates of step-grandparenthood are somewhat higher in the United States, but given the incompatible nature of the data, results are somewhat tentative.

Household Composition in Canada and the United States

As presented in Figure 3, evidence demonstrates that grandparent-grandchild cohabitation, with or without the middle generation, is relatively rare in North America. In both countries, more women than men reside in multi-generation households (not shown). However, a higher percentage of multi-generation households can be found in the United States than in Canada. In fact, relative to Canadians, twice as many Americans (proportionally) reside in a household with three or more generations— 5% of Americans and only 2.5% of Canadians. Importantly, however, in 1996, immigrants headed close to half of all three generation households in Canada; with higher levels of Canadian immigration expected, this type of household arrangement is anticipated to increase in prevalence (Milan, 2000).

Comparing rates of surrogate parenting is somewhat problematic. In the U.S. study, 11% of respondents with grandchildren indicated that they had assumed primary responsibility for a grandchild at some point in time. Recalling that Canadian rates of surrogate parenting were

estimates based on coresidence without the middle generation at the time of the survey, it is difficult to compare the two measures. However, since less than 1% of Canadian grandparents had primary care responsibilities for their grandchild[ren] at the time of data collection, it seems probable that lower percentages of Canadian grandparents act as surrogate parents to their grandchildren when compared to American grandparents.

— Figure 3 approximately here—

The Intersection of Work and Family-Related Roles Among Canadian and American Grandparents

As Figure 4 illustrates, Canadian and American patterns pertaining to the intersection of work and family-related roles with grandparenthood are relatively congruent. In both countries, grandmothers have fewer roles than grandfathers, lower percentages are engaged in full-time employment outside of the home, married and have dependent children in the household. Marginally higher percentages of grandmothers relative to grandfathers have at least one living parent. However, there are several distinction between the two nations. Attributable in part to the higher percentages of younger grandparents in the U.S. and the country's racial composition, a higher percentage of American grandparents are employed full-time (34.5%) compared to their Canadian counter-parts (30.2%). As less than half of grandfathers in both countries were employed full-time, grandmothers' rates of employment influenced the overall grandparent employment rates. Whereas almost 30% of American grandmothers were employed full-time, only 22% of Canadian grandmothers made the same claim. Black and Hispanic women are over-represented in the employed category and again, the racial composition of Canada may account for the divergence between the two countries with respect to the intersection of grandmotherhood and employment.

— Figure 4 approximately here—

The degree to which the spousal role intersects with grandparenthood varies by country. A slightly higher percentage of Canadian grandparents are married (72%) compared to American grandparents (67%). And, while overall rates for both men and women were higher in Canada compared to the United States, variation appears to be due to trends among Black and Hispanic populations. The overall marital rate for Canadian grandfathers (87.3%) is similar to rates among White American grandfathers (84.0). Meanwhile, 61.2% of Canadian grandmothers are married, which closely approximates the 60.1% of White American grandmothers who have spouses.

In North America, grandparenthood does not typically intersect with the role of active parent. However, greater percentages of American grandparents have children under 19 years of age living in the household compared to Canadian grandparents. Whereas approximately 12% of American grandparents are actively parenting less than 6% of Canadians assume this dual role. In both countries, compared to women, a greater proportion of men experience the overlap between grandparenthood and active parenthood. Importantly, in the United States, among the Black and Hispanic populations, the percentages who are grandparenting and actively parenting are considerably higher than the overall population. And, recalling that the average age at the onset of grandparenthood is earlier for these populations, national differences can be linked to the overall timing of grandparenthood, which, is assumed to occur notably later in Canada.

For a sizable minority in both countries, grandparenthood intersects with the role of adult-child by having grandchildren as well as at least one living parent. It appears that women experience this intersection more so than men although Canadian gender differences were not found to be statistically significant. However, greater percentages of American grandparents have at least one living parent (33.9%) compared to Canadian grandparents (27.3%). This difference, is of course,

not surprising given that four generation families are more prevalent in the United States.

Summary and Implications

The findings pertaining to the state of grandparenthood in Canada and the comparative analysis with the United States, have several important implications, particularly for research in the areas aging and the family. Findings either directly and/or indirectly address issues of family structure, generational overlap and the structure of the life course as well as grandparent lifestyles and responsibilities. The implications for each are discussed in turn below.

Due to the nature of the data, the current study could not establish the *actual* prevalence of the various multiple generational family types. The GSS 1990 and 1995 each collected information relevant to family structure from only one family member, at one point in time and in such a way that did not permit an overview of complete family networks and structures; measures of family types are not completely accurate. However, it is possible to *infer* levels of existence and prevalence of the "bean pole", "age condensed", "truncated" and "step" family structures in Canada. For instance, while the three-generation family is relatively commonplace in Canada, membership in a four-generation family is experienced by only a minority, depends largely on age group and favors cohorts aged 35 to 44 and those 65 and over. Thus, Rossi & Rossi's (1990) assertion that the high prevalence of the bean pole family is likely over-exaggerated (particularly the prevalence of families with four, even five generations) is clearly applicable in Canada. Further, extrapolating from the low percentages of grandparents in the under 40 age groups and the high percentages of individuals with children who are also grandparents in the 65 and over age groups, casual inference suggest that "age condensed" and "truncated" families likely exist, but are relatively rare in Canada. And, although

the prevalence of step-grandparenthood was difficult to document fully, findings indicate that while such a multiple generation family-type does exist in Canada and touches the lives of a substantial number of individuals, it accounts for only a low percentage of the overall population.

In terms of generational overlap, it is clear that grandparents and grandchildren are woven into the fabric of Canadian families. Most older adults who have children are grandparents and most grandchildren know at least one of their grandparents. Grandparents' survival rates also attest to the high prevalence of adult-grandchildren in Canada. Thus for many Canadian grandchildren, grandparents belong to their family networks for a duration lasting from early childhood through their teenage years and on into adulthood. Presumably, such relationships grow and change as both the grandparent and grandchild age and experience life events. Importantly, U.S. researchers speculate that within the context of declining numbers of family members per generation, grandparent-grandchild relationships are likely to prove increasingly significant (Giarrusso, Silverstein, Bengtson, 1996).

Although the findings of this paper do not establish changes in the supply of children and grandchildren over time or their interactions and behaviors, the average size of Canadian families is decreasing (Milan, 2000). Thus, Giarrusso, Silverstein & Bengtson (1996:18) are likely correct in their assertion that "grandchildren may emerge as potentially more important sources of emotional meaning and practical support for grandparents than in the past". However, given that intergenerational assistance is more likely to flow from the older to the younger generation (Logan & Spitze, 1996), the reverse is perhaps more true. As Kornhaber (1985) found, many grandparents assume an important helping role within the family by providing social and emotional stability to grandchildren and other family members, particularly when family stability is threatened. For

example, research demonstrates that in instances such as divorce (Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1985; Gladstone, 1987, 1991; Johnson, 1983,1985,1998) or drug addiction (Minkler, Roe & Price, 1993) in the middle generation, grandparents often play an instrumental role. And, while the findings of this paper indicate that levels of coresidence and surrogate parenting are low among Canadian grandparents, this does not signal that other forms of intergenerational assistance and support—whether tangible or intangible—are not exchanged throughout the life course.

This paper also investigated the intersection of grandparenthood and other work and family-related roles. There are several noteworthy implications pertaining to the timing of life events and the structure of the life course. First, since most grandparents are married, especially in the younger age group, it is apparent that widow[er]hood does indeed, follow the onset of grandparenthood for most people. Second, very few grandparents have children under age 19 and children living in the household which attests to the separation of active parenthood and grandparenthood as distinct phases of life. Finally, employment is relatively common among younger grandparents and uncommon among older grandparents. Although there may be differences across cohorts, many individuals become grandparents prior to retirement. Additionally, Troll's (1985) observation that the grandparenthood intersects with 'careers' of individual development is supported by the fact that for the majority of Canadians, grandparenthood intersects with other work and family-related roles. Importantly, how and when these intersections and multiple intersections occur will ultimately influence grandparent-grandchild relationships.

Placed within the larger North American context, it is clear that overall demographic patterns and social trends in contemporary Canadian and American grandparenthood are relatively similar and reinforce early findings regarding gender and age. What is perhaps most important to note is

that while similarities emerge, there are important differences between the two countries related to the higher birth rate and higher percentages of "off-time" grandparenthood in the United States. And, while it is often scholarly practice to use Canadian and American findings interchangeably—particularly when faced with a lack of available data— this research suggests that national differences do exist and further, that figures and findings are not invariably interchangeable.

Conclusion

The overall aim of this paper was to provide a general demographic characterization of contemporary Canadian grandparenthood, ultimately comparing the situation in Canada and the United States. Results of this endeavor, however, can only be interpreted within the limits of cross-sectional data and should be regarded as a mere sketch of grandparenthood in Canada and more broadly, North America. Building on this demographic outline, future research would do well to consider how various multi-generation family structures shape family life, particularly grandparent-grandchild relationships. It is important that research begin to investigate the family as a network emphasizing the interconnectedness of individual members, not to mention the meanings and activities associated with family membership. Also of import to the study of family life is the need to explore specific configurations of intergenerational relationships (eg. step relations, age gapped and condensed relations), particularly how they are negotiated, maintained and change over time, ultimately intersecting with individual, family, socio-historical and demographic contexts. Overall, additional research—both qualitative and quantitative, as well as longitudinal and cross-sectional—is required if we are to address adequately the contingencies, complexities and dynamics that impinge on and constitute grandparenthood in Canada, the United States and elsewhere. Only by doing so,

will researchers generate a more complete and detailed picture of contemporary grandparenthood and grandparent-grandchild relationships.

Notes

1. The present paper models Szinovacz's analysis in several ways in order to facilitate a comparative analysis of Canadian and U.S. findings.

2. It is important to note that in Canada, while divorce rates increased in 1968 due to the introduction of the Divorce Act and again in 1986 as a result of amendments to the Act, divorce has been steadily decreasing since 1987 (Milan, 2000). Ultimately, rates of divorce will impact cohorts of grandparents differently as patterns change over time.

3. Residents of the Territories, Native Indian reserves and institutionalized members of the population are excluded.

4. Fictive grandchildren are those who are not related by blood and/or marriage (see Burton & Dilworth-Anderson, 1991 and Chatters, Taylor & Jayakody, 1994).

5. Unless otherwise indicated, all American data in this study are taken from Szinovacz (1998b).

6. Due to dissimilar national data collection practices, it was possible to compare only three age groups: 16 to 18; 19 to 22 and 23 to 26.

References

Aldous, J. (1995). New views of grandparents in intergenerational context. *Journal of Family Issues, 16*, 104-122.

Beaujot, R. (2000). *Earning and caring in Canadian families*. Peterborough: Broadview Press.

Bengtson, V.L. (1985). Diversity and symbolism in grandparental roles. In V.L. Bengtson & J.F. Roberston (Eds.), *Grandparenthood* (pp.11-25). Beverly Hills: Sage.

Bengtson, V.L., Rosenthal, C.J. & Burton, L. (1990). Families and aging: Diversity and heterogeneity. In R. Binstock & L. George (Eds.), *Handbook of aging and the social sciences* (3rd edition, pp.263-287). San Diego: Academic Press.

Burton, L.M. & Dilworth-Anderson, P. (1991). The intergenerational family roles of aged Black Americans. *Marriage and Family Review, 16,* 311-330.

Central Intelligence Agency (2000). *The world fact book*.

Chalfie, D. (1994). *Going it alone: A closer look at grandparents parenting grandchildren*. Washington, D.C.: AARP Women's Initiative.

Chatters, L.M. Taylor, R.J. & Jayakody, R. (1994). Fictive kinship relations in Black extended families. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 25*, 297-312.

Cherlin, A.J. & Furstenberg, F.F. (1985). Styles and strategies of grandparenting. In V.L. Bengtson & J.F. Roberston (Eds.), *Grandparenthood* (pp.97-116). Beverly Hills: Sage.

Cherlin, A.J. & Furstenberg, F.F. (1986). *The new American grandparent: A place in the family a life apart*. New York: Basic Books.

Cox, C.B. (Ed.) (2000). *To grandmother's house we go and stay*. New York: Springer.

Cunningham-Burley, S. (1986). Becoming a grandparent. *Ageing and Society, 6*, 453-470.

Gee, E.M. (1991). The transition to grandmotherhood: A quantitative study. *Canadian Journal on Aging*, *10* (3), 254-269.

George, L.K. & Gold, D.T. (1991). Life course perspectives on intergenerational and generational connections. *Marriage and Family Review*, *16*, 67-88.

Giarrusso, R., Silverstein,M. & Bengtson, V.L. (1996). Family complexity and the grandparent role. *Generations*. Spring, 17-23.

Gladstone, J.W. (1987). Factors associated with changes in visiting between grandmothers and grandchildren following an adult child's marriage breakdown. *Canadian Journal on Aging*, *6*, 117-127.

Gladstone, J.W. (1991). An analysis of changes in grandparent-grandchild visitation following an adult child's remarriage. *Canadian Journal on Aging*, 10(2), 113-126.

Guillemard, A. & Rein, M. (1993). Comparative patterns of retirement: Trends in developed societies. *Annual Review of Sociology, 19*, 469-503.

Hagestad, G.O. (1988). Demographic change and the life course: Some emerging trends in the family realm. *Family Relations, 37*, 405-410.

Hayslip, B., Jr. & Goldberg-Glen, R.S. (Eds.) (2000). *Grandparents raising grandchildren: Theoretical, empirical and clinical perspectives*. New York: Springer.

Hodgson, L.G. (1992). Adult grandchildren and their grandparents: The enduring bond. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 34*, 209-225.

Hodgson, L. G. (1998). Grandparents and older grandchildren. In M.E. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on grandparenthood* (pp.171-183). Westport: Greenwood Press.

Hunter, A.G. & Taylor, R.J. (1998). Grandparenthood in African American families. In M.E. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on grandparenthood* (pp.70-86). Westport: Greenwood Press.

Johnson, C.L (1983). A cultural analysis of the grandmother. *Research on Aging, 5* (4), 547-567.

Johnson, C.L. (1985). Grandparenting options in divorcing families: An anthropological perspective. In V.L. Bengtson & J.F. Roberston (Eds.), *Grandparenthood* (pp.81-96). Beverly Hills: Sage.

Johnson, C.L. (1998). Effects of adult children's divorce on grandparenthood. In M.E. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on Grandparenthood* (pp.184-199). Westport: Greenwood Press.

Kennedy, G.E. (1990). College students' expectations of grandparent and grandchild behaviors. *The Gerontologist, 35*, 83-98.

Kornhaber, A. (1985). Grandparenthood and the "new social contract". In V.L. Bengtson & J.F. Robertson (Eds.), *Grandparenthood* (pp. 159-171). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Logan, J. & Spitze, G. (1996). *Family ties: Enduring relations between parents and their grown children*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

McPherson, B. D. (1998). *Aging as a social Process: An introduction to individual and population aging,* 2nd edition. Toronto: Butterworths.

Milan, A. (2000). One hundred years of families. *Canadian Social Trends*, cat. 11-008-XIE.

Minkler, M, Roe, K.M. & Price, M. (1993). The physical and emotional health of grandmothers raising grandchildren in the crack cocaine epidemic. *Gerontologist, 32*, 752-761.

Neugarten, B.L. & Weinstein, K.K. (1964). The changing American grandparent. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *26*, 199-204.

Phillipson, C. (1998). *Reconstructing old age*. London: Sage.

Roberto, K.A. & Stroes, J. (1992). Grandchildren and grandparents: Roles, influences, and relationships. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *34*(3), 227-239.

Rosenthal, C.J. (1987). Aging and intergenerational relations in Canada. In V.W. Marshall (Ed.), *Aging in Canada: Social perspectives*, 2nd edition (pp.311-342). Markham: Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

Rosenthal, C.J. (2000). Aging families: Have current changes and challenges been 'oversold'? In E.M. Gee & G.M. Gutman (Eds.), *The overselling of population aging: Apocalyptic demography, intergenerational challenges, and social policy* (pp.45-63). Don Mills: Oxford Press.

Rossi, A.S. & Rossi, P.H. (1990). *Of human bonding: Parent-child relations across the life course*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Silverstein, M., Giarrusso, R. & Bengtson, V.L. (1998). Intergenerational solidarity and the grandparent role. In M.E. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on grandparenthood* (pp.144-158). Westport: Greenwood Press.

Sprey, J. & Matthews, S.H. (1982). Contemporary grandparenthood: A systematic transition. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *464*, 91-103.

Statistics Canada (1990). Family and friends. *General Social Survey of Canada*, cycle 5.

Statistics Canada (1995). Family. *General Social Survey of Canada*, cycle 11.

Statistics Canada (1996). Canadian families: diversity and change. *http://www.statcan.ca* ;select "What's New".

Statistics Canada (2001). *Canada at a glance, second edition*. Catalogue no. 12-581-XPE.

Szinovacz, M.E. (1998a). Grandparent research: Past, present, and future. In M.E. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on grandparenthood* (pp.1-20). Westport: Greenwood Press.

Szinovacz, M.E. (1998b). Grandparents today: A demographic profile. *The Gerontologist*, 38 (1), 37-52.

Szinovacz, M.E. (1998c). Research on grandparenting: Needed refinements in concepts, theories, and methods. In M.E. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on grandparenthood* (pp.257-288). Westport: Greenwood Press.

Troll, L.E. (1985). The contingencies of grandparenthood. In V.L. Bengtson & J.F. Roberston (Eds.), *Grandparenthood* (pp.135-150).Beverly Hills: Sage.

Uhlenberg, P. (1992). Population aging and social policy. *Annual Review of Sociology, 18*, 449-474.

Uhlenberg, P. (1993). Demographic change and kin relationships in later life. *Annual Review of Gerontology and Geriatrics, 13*, 219-238.

Uhlenberg, P. & Kirby, J.B. (1998). Grandparenthood over time: Historical and demographic trends. In M.E. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on Grandparenthood* (pp.23-39). Westport: Greenwood Press.

Figure 1. Prevalence of Grandparenthood Among Respondents 20+ (%) by Age

Sources: Canadian: General Social Survey, 1995; American: Szinovacz, 1998b

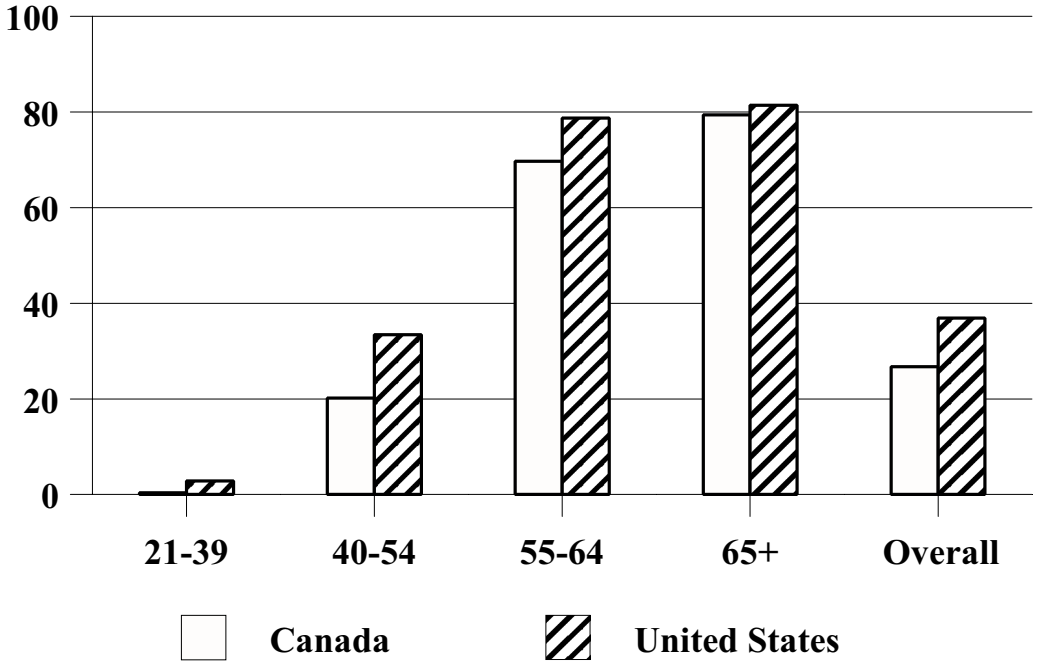

Figure 2. Grandchildren With At Least One Living Grandparent by Ages (%)

Sources: Canadian: General Social Survey, 1990; American: Szinovacz, 1998b

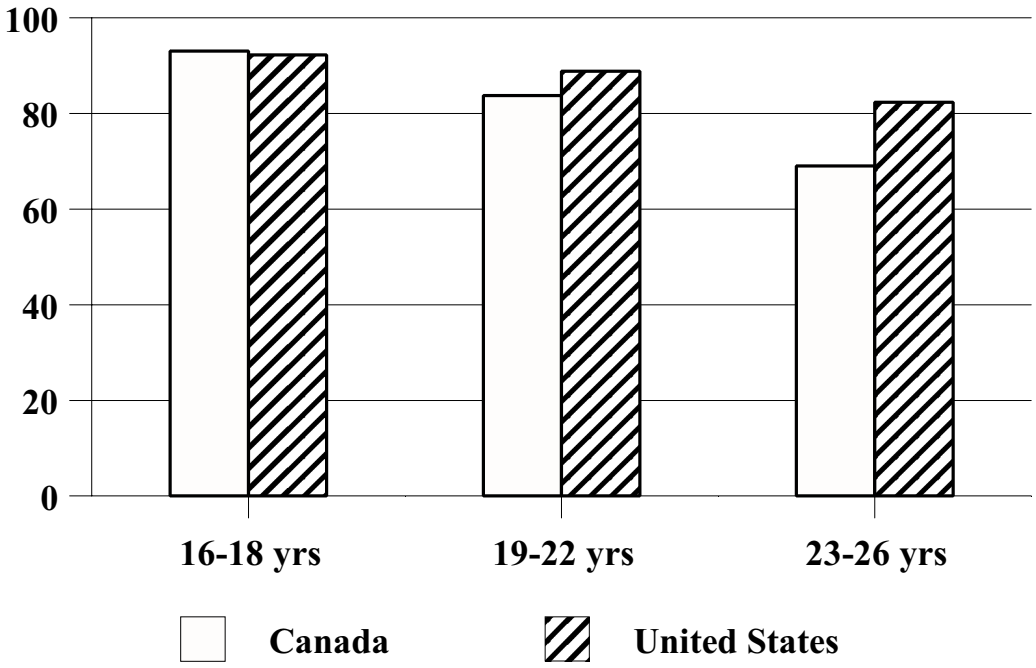

Figure 3. Household Composition (% of Grandparent Population)

Sources: Canadian: General Social Survey, 1990; American: Szinovacz, 1998b

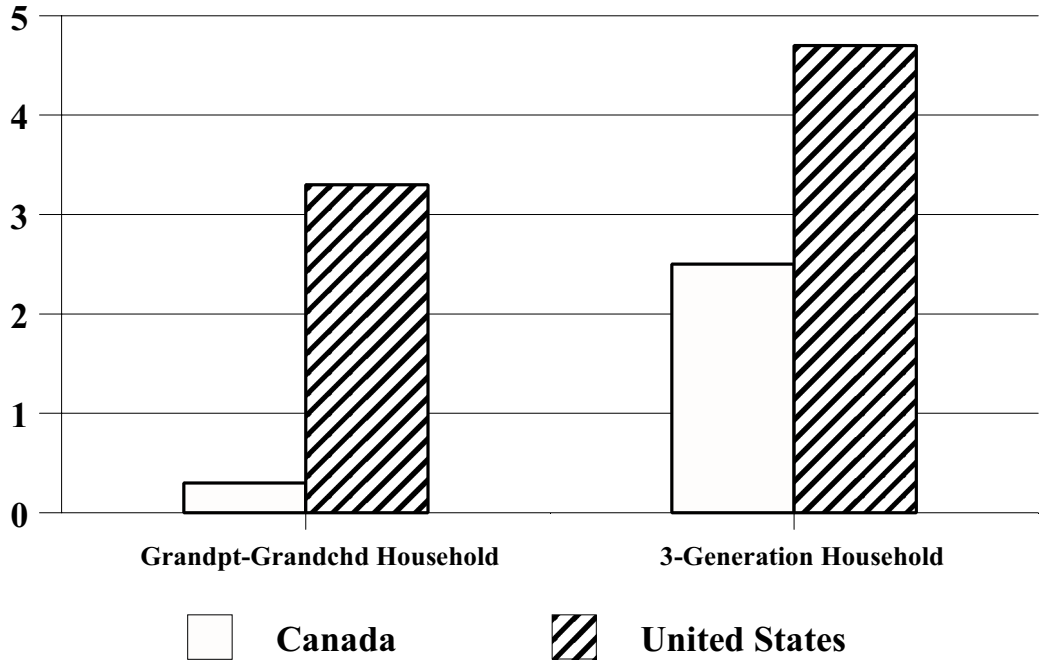

Figure 4. Grandparents' Work & Family-Related Roles (%)

Sources: Canadian: General Social Survey, 1995; American: Szinovacz, 1998b

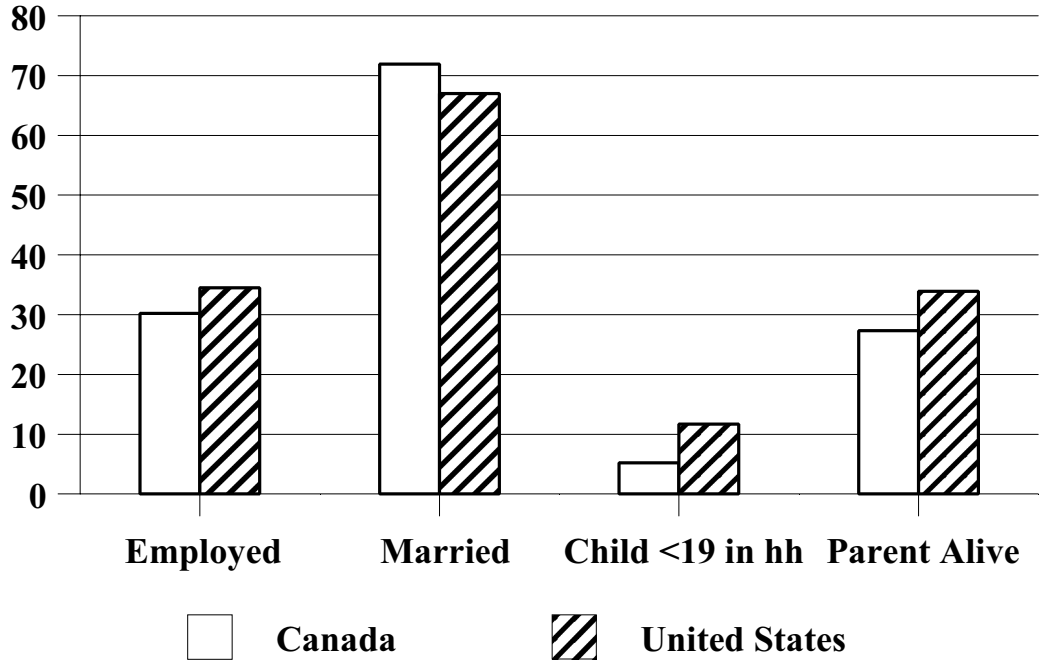

Table 1. Prevalence of Grandparenthood and Mean Number of Grandchildren

	All	Male	Female	Sig.	n
Percentage of All Respondents Who Are Grandparents					
	26.7	22.4	31.0	p<.0001	9647
Age Group of Respondents					
21 to 39	0.4	0.1	0.6	p<.0001	4227
40 to 54	20.2	15.8	24.6		2750
55 to 64	69.7	61.9	77.3		1144
65 and over	79.4	74.4	83.2		1526
Percentage of Parent Respondents Who Grandparents					
All Ages	36.3	31.8	40.2	p<.0001	7117
Age Group of Respondents					
21 to 39	0.6	0.3	0.9	p<.0001	2344
40 to 54	23.1	18.2	27.9		2406
55 to 64	77.1	68.5	85.4		1034
65 and over	90.9	86.1	94.4		1333
Mean Number of Grandchildren					
All Grandparents	4.93	4.58	5.18	p<.0001	7117
Age Group					
21 to 39	1.24	1.38	1.19	p<.0001	2344
40 to 54	2.52	2.28	2.68		2406
55 to 64	4.67	4.32	4.94		1034
65 and over	6.26	5.82	6.56		1333

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1995

Table 2. Percentage of Respondents Age 35 and Over in Multiple Generation Families

	All	Male	Female	Sig.	n
Percentage of Respondents Age 35 and Over Who are Members of Three Generation Families					
	76.7	73.5	79.6	p<.0001	6458
Age Group of Respondent					
35 to 44	76.7	75.2	78.2	p<.0001	2186
45 to 54	72.4	69.5	75.3		1651
55 to 64	77.2	73.3	81.9		1116
65 and over	80.9	76.7	84.0		1505
Percentage of Respondents Age 35 and Over Who are Members of Four Generation Families					
	10.5	9.1	12.2	p<.0001	6314
Age Group of Respondent					
35 to 44	3.4	1.6	5.1	p<.0001	2177
45 to 54	17.6	15.4	19.7		1623
55 to 64	22.7	19.9	25.4		1073
65 and over	4.4	3.4	5.3		1444

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1995

Table 3. Supply of Living Grandparents

Percentage of Living Grandparents by Age of Grandchild and Gender & Lineage of Grandparent

	Maternal Grandmother Alive	Maternal Grandfather Alive	Paternal Grandmother Alive	Paternal Grandfather Alive	Sig.	n
All Ages						
	21.9	10.9	16.9	7.9	<.0001	13 495
Age Groups						
15 to 17	73.4	51.9	61.6	39.8	<.0001	697
18 to 19	69.2	47.2	61.9	31.6	<.0001	518
20 to 29	48.2	22.9	37.7	17.5	<.0001	2860
30 to 39	20.1	6.3	13.3	3.9	<.0001	2949
40 to 49	4.4	0.9	2.6	0.4	<.0001	2278
50+	0.2	--	--	--	<.0001	4193

Percentage of Grandchildren with Living Grandparents by Age Group of Grandchild and Number of Grandparent

	0	1	2	3	4	Sig.
All Ages						
	68.9	14.6	9.1	4.9	2.5	<.0001
Age Groups						
15 to 17	6.3	22.1	28.9	23.7	19.0	<.0001
18 to 19	7.6	22.5	34.6	23.3	12.0	<.0001
20 to 29	32.1	30.4	21.2	11.6	4.6	<.0001
30 to 39	67.8	22.9	7.5	1.2	0.4	<.0001
40 to 49	92.7	6.6	0.6	—	0.1	<.0001
50+	99.7	0.3	—	—	—	<.0001

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey of Canada 1990

Table 4. Percentages of Grandparents Alive Presently and at Birth of Grandchildren

	All	Male	Female	Sig.	n
Respondent's Mother Alive at					
Birth of First Child	93.2	91.9	94.3	<.0001	6828
Birth of Latest Child	89.1	88.0	90.1	<.01	6830
Present (Time of Survey)	58.6	58.6	58.6	>.05	7043
Respondent's Father Alive at					
Birth of First Child	85.3	82.7	87.6	<.0001	6778
Birth of Latest Child	78.1	75.4	80.5	<.0001	6778
Present (Time of Survey)	43.9	44.0	43.7	>.05	7041

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey (1995)

Table 5. Grandparenthood Timing*: Middle-Generation Child Respondents' Reports (Mean Ages)

	All	Male	Female	Sig.	n
Respondent's Mother's Age at					
Birth of First Child	53.6 *s.d. 8.59*	54.9 *s.d. 8.39*	52.5 *s.d. 8.60*	<.0001	5751
Birth of Latest Child	58.0 *s.d 8.73*	59.2 *s.d. 8.52*	57.1 *s.d. 8.78*	<.0001	5556
Respondent's Father's Age at					
Birth of First Child	56.6 *s.d. 8.73*	57.9 *s.d. 8.63*	55.6 *s.d. 8.69*	<.0001	5101
Birth of Latest Child	60.7 *s.d. 8.73*	61.6 *s.d. 8.60*	60.0 *s.d. 8.77*	<.0001	4686

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey (1995)

*Analysis only draws on [grandparents] parents who were living at the time of the birth and only children who were living at the time of the survey

Table 6. Step-Families

Percentage of Respondents Who Raised One or More Step-Children	All	Male	Female	Sig.	n=
Respondents Aged 35 to 55	4.6	6.0	3.2	<.0001	10736
Respondents Aged 35 to 55 with 1 or both living parent(s)	4.8	5.8	3.3	<.0001	7391
Respondents who are Grandparents	6.3	8.8	4.6	<.0001	2580
Respondents who are Grandparents with 1 or both living parent(s)	6.8	11.2	3.9	<.001	517

Source: Statistics Canada, 1995

Table 7. Percentages of Grandparent-Grandchild Co-residence

	All	Male	Female	Sig.	n
Percentage of All Respondents					
Grandparent/grandchild household	0.3	0.2	0.4	<.0001	13 495
Three generation household	2.5	2.1	2.9		
Percentage of All Grandparents					
Grandparent/grandchild household	0.6	0.5	0.7	<.0001	3099
Three generation household	3.0	1.5	4.1		
Percentage of Grandparents ≤64					
Grandparent/grandchild household	0.5	0.4	0.6	<.0001	1708
Three generation household	2.7	1.0	3.9		
Percentage of Grandparents ≥65					
Grandparent/grandchild household	0.8	0.7	0.9	p<.0001	1391
Three generation household	3.5	2.1	4.4		

Statistics Canada, General Social Survey 1990

Table 8. Grandparents' Multiple Roles

	All	Males	Females	Sig.	n
Roles Among All Grandparents					
Working full-time	30.2	41.6	22.2	<.0001	2439
Married/Common-law	71.9	87.2	61.2	<.0001	2580
Children in hhd & <19	5.2	7.1	3.9	<.0001	2580
At least 1 parent alive	27.3	26.5	27.9	>.05	2442
*Total Number of Roles					
0	20.4	7.9	29.2	<.0001	
1	42.2	47.0	38.9		
2	22.7	24.2	21.6		
3	12.2	16.9	8.8		
4	2.5	4.0	1.5		2317
Roles Among Grandparents ≤64					
Working Full-time	52.9	70.1	40.3	<.0001	1297
Married/Common-law	81.1	90.3	74.7	<.0001	1367
Children in house & >19	9.5	12.5	7.4	<.01	1368
At least 1 parent alive	46.6	45.9	47.0	>.05	1293
Total Number of Roles					
0	6.4	2.3	9.2	<.0001	
1	30.0	23.2	35.0		
2	36.3	35.7	36.8		
3	22.6	31.4	16.2		
4	4.7	7.4	2.8		1228
Roles Among Grandparents ≥65					
Working full-time	4.5	7.8	2.2	<.0001	1142
Married/Common-law	61.4	83.8	46.3	<.0001	1211
Children in house & <19	0.3	0.8	0.0	<.05	1212
At least 1 parent alive	5.6	4.5	6.3	>.05	1149
Total Number of Roles					
0	36.4	14.4	51.6	<.0001	
1	56.1	74.5	43.3		
2	4.7	11.0	4.7		
3	0.3	0.0	0.5		1086

General Social Survey of Canada, 1995

* Total number of roles = marital status + work status + children in house hold and children under 19 + parent living

Table 9. Grandparenthood Timing (Mean Ages) in Canada and the United States*
Based on Reports from Middle Generation Respondents with Children

Measure (in years)	*Canada*			*United States*		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
Mother's Age:						
Birth First Child	53.6	54.9	52.5	45.2	46.8	44.0
Birth Latest Child	58.0	59.2	57.1	51.9	53.3	50.8
Father's Age:						
Birth of First Child	56.6	57.9	55.6	48.1	49.6	47.0
Birth of Latest Child	60.7	61.6	60.0	54.4	55.5	53.4

Sources: Canadian: General Social Survey, 1995; American: Szinovacz, 1998.

*Analysis only draws on [grandparents] parents who were living at the time of the birth and only children who were living at the time of the survey

SEDAP RESEARCH PAPERS

Number	Title	Author(s)
No. 1:	Population Aging and Its Economic Costs: A Survey of the Issues and Evidence	F.T. Denton B.G. Spencer
No. 2:	How Much Help Is Exchanged in Families? Towards an Understanding of Discrepant Research Findings	C.J. Rosenthal L.O. Stone
No. 3:	Did Tax Flattening Affect RRSP Contributions?	M.R. Veall
No. 4:	Families as Care-Providers Versus Care-Managers? Gender and Type of Care in a Sample of Employed Canadians	C.J. Rosenthal A. Martin-Matthews
No. 5:	Alternatives for Raising Living Standards	W. Scarth
No. 6:	Transitions to Retirement: Determinants of Age of Social Security Take Up	E. Tompa
No. 7:	Health and Individual and Community Characteristics: A Research Protocol	F. Béland S. Birch G. Stoddart
No. 8:	Disability Related Sources of Income and Expenses: An Examination Among the Elderly in Canada	P. Raina S. Dukeshire M. Denton L.W. Chambers A. Scanlan A. Gafni S. French A. Joshi C. Rosenthal
No. 9:	The Impact of Rising 401(k) Pension Coverage on Future Pension Income	W.E. Even D.A. Macpherson
No. 10:	Income Inequality as a Canadian Cohort Ages: An Analysis of the Later Life Course	S.G. Prus
No. 11:	Are Theories of Aging Important? Models and Explanations in Gerontology at the Turn of the Century	V.L. Bengtson C.J. Rice M.L. Johnson
No. 12:	Generational Equity and the Reformulation of Retirement	M.L. Johnson

Number	Title	Author(s)
No. 13:	Long-term Care in Turmoil	M.L. Johnson L. Cullen D. Patsios
No. 14:	The Effects of Population Ageing on the Canadian Health Care System	M.W. Rosenberg
No. 15:	Projections of the Population and Labour Force to 2046: Canada	F.T. Denton C.H. Feaver B.G. Spencer
No. 16:	Projections of the Population and Labour Force to 2046: The Provinces and Territories	F.T. Denton C.H. Feaver B.G. Spencer
No. 17:	Location of Adult Children as an Attraction for Black and White Elderly Migrants in the United States	K.-L. Liaw W.H. Frey J.-P. Lin
No. 18:	The Nature of Support from Adult *Sansei* (Third Generation) Children to Older *Nisei* (Second Generation) Parents in Japanese Canadian Families	K.M. Kobayashi
No. 19:	The Effects of Drug Subsidies on Out-of-Pocket Prescription Drug Expenditures by Seniors: Regional Evidence from Canada	T.F. Crossley P. Grootendorst S. Korkmaz M.R. Veall
No. 20:	Describing Disability among High and Low Income Status Older Adults in Canada	P. Raina M. Wong L.W. Chambers M. Denton A. Gafni
No. 21:	Parental Illness and the Labour Supply of Adult Children	P.T.Léger
No. 22:	Some Demographic Consequences of Revising the Definition of 'Old' to Reflect Future Changes in Life Table Probabilities	F.T. Denton B.G. Spencer
No. 23:	Geographic Dimensions of Aging: The Canadian Experience 1991-1996	E.G. Moore D. McGuinness M.A. Pacey M.W. Rosenberg

Number	Title	Author(s)
No. 24:	The Correlation Between Husband's and Wife's Education: Canada, 1971-1996	L. Magee J. Burbidge L. Robb
No. 25:	The Effect of Marginal Tax Rates on Taxable Income: A Panel Study of the 1988 Tax Flattening in Canada	M.-A. Sillamaa M.R. Veall
No. 26:	The Stability of Self Assessed Health Status	T.F. Crossley S. Kennedy
No. 27:	How Do Contribution Limits Affect Contributions to Tax-Preferred Savings Accounts?	K. Milligan
No. 28:	The Life Cycle Model of Consumption and Saving	M. Browning T.F. Crossley
No. 29:	Population Change and the Requirements for Physicians: The Case of Ontario	F.T. Denton A. Gafni B.G. Spencer
No. 30:	Nonparametric Identification of Latent Competing Risks and Roy Duration Models	G. Colby P. Rilstone
No. 31:	Simplified Estimation of Multivariate Duration Models with Unobserved Heterogeneity	G. Colby P. Rilstone
No. 32:	Structural Estimation of Psychiatric Hospital Stays	G. Colby P. Rilstone
No. 33:	Have 401(k)s Raised Household Saving? Evidence from the Health and Retirement Study	G.V. Engelhardt
No. 34:	Health and Residential Mobility in Later Life: A New Analytical Technique to Address an Old Problem	L.M. Hayward
No. 35:	2 ½ Proposals to Save Social Security	D. Fretz M.R. Veall
No. 36:	The Consequences of Caregiving: Does Employment Make a Difference	C.L. Kemp C.J. Rosenthal
No. 37:	Fraud in Ethnocultural Seniors' Communities	P.J.D. Donahue

Number	Title	Author(s)
No. 38:	Social-psychological and Structural Factors Influencing the Experience of Chronic Disease: A Focus on Individuals with Severe Arthritis	P.J. Ballantyne G.A. Hawker D. Radoeva
No. 39:	The Extended Self: Illness Experiences of Older Married Arthritis Sufferers	P.J. Ballantyne G.A. Hawker D. Radoeva
No. 40:	A Comparison of Alternative Methods to Model Endogeneity in Count Models. An Application to the Demand for Health Care and Health Insurance Choice	M. Schellhorn
No. 41:	Wealth Accumulation of US Households: What Do We Learn from the SIPP Data?	V. Hildebrand
No. 42:	Pension Portability and Labour Mobility in the United States. New Evidence from SIPP Data.	V. Andrietti V. Hildebrand
No. 43:	Exploring the Effects of Population Change on the Costs of Physician Services	F.T. Denton A. Gafni B.G. Spencer
No. 44:	Reflexive Planning for Later Life: A Conceptual Model and Evidence from Canada	M.A. Denton S. French A. Gafni A. Joshi C. Rosenthal S. Webb
No. 45:	Time Series Properties and Stochastic Forecasts: Some Econometrics of Mortality from the Canadian Laboratory	F.T. Denton C.H. Feaver B.G. Spencer
No. 46:	Linear Public Goods Experiments: A Meta-Analysis	J. Zelmer
No. 47:	Local Planning for an Aging Population in Ontario: Two Case Studies	L.M. Hayward
No. 48:	Management Experience and Diversity in an Ageing Organisation: A Microsimulation Analysis	T. Wannell M. Gravel
No. 49:	Resilience Indicators of Post Retirement Well-Being	E. Marziali P. Donahue

Number	Title	Author(s)
No. 50:	Continuity or Change? Older People in Three Urban Areas	J. Phillips M. Bernard C. Phillipson J. Ogg
No. 51:	Intracohort Income Status Maintenance: An Analysis of the Later Life Course	S.G. Prus
No. 52:	Tax-Preferred Savings Accounts and Marginal Tax Rates: Evidence on RRSP Participation	K. Milligan
No. 53:	Cohort Survival Analysis is Not Enough: Why Local Planners Need to Know More About the Residential Mobility of the Elderly	L.M. Hayward N.M. Lazarowich
No. 54:	Unemployment and Health: Contextual Level Influences on the Production of Health in Populations	F. Béland S. Birch G. Stoddart
No. 55:	The Timing and Duration of Women's Life Course Events: A Study of Mothers With At Least Two Children	K.M. Kobayashi A. Martin-Matthews C.J. Rosenthal S. Matthews
No. 56:	Age-Gapped and Age-Condensed Lineages: Patterns of Intergenerational Age Structure Among Canadian Families	A. Martin-Matthews K. M. Kobayashi C.L. Rosenthal S.H. Matthews
No. 57:	The Relationship between Age, Socio-Economic Status, and Health among Adult Canadians	S.G. Prus
No. 58:	Measuring Differences in the Effect of Social Resource Factors on the Health of Elderly Canadian Men and Women	S.G. Prus E. Gee
No. 59:	APOCALYPSE NO: Population Aging and the Future of Health Care Systems	R.G. Evans K.M. McGrail S.G. Morgan M.L. Barer C. Hertzman

Number	Title	Author(s)
No. 60:	The Education Premium in Canada and the United States	J.B. Burbidge L. Magee A.L. Robb
No. 61:	Student Enrolment and Faculty Recruitment in Ontario: The Double Cohort, the Baby Boom Echo, and the Aging of University Faculty	B.G. Spencer
No. 62:	The Social and Demographic Contours of Contemporary Grandparenthood: Mapping Patterns in Canada and the United States	C.L. Kemp