Using time use data to measure and value unpaid caregiving work

By

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**'Using Time Use Data to Measure and
Value Unpaid Caregiving Work'**

submitted by Nancy Zukewich, Hon. B.A.

**in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts**

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Abstract

This thesis uses feminist theories of work to examine the utilization of time use data to measure and value unpaid informal caregiving work. It demonstrates that what counts as caregiving and how it is counted reflect the economic assumptions underlying data collection and analysis. Feminist theory acknowledges that unpaid work is both similar to and fundamentally different from paid work. In particular, informal caregiving is subject to relations that are personal in nature – it is about labour and love. This analysis illustrates the limitations of the current approach, suggests ways to improve data collection and proposes a revised framework for analysis. It finds that informal caregiving accounts for 18% of unpaid work, women do the majority of it and most of it is done for relatives. Using the most conservative valuation method, unpaid informal caregiving work is equivalent to the GDP of the health care and social assistance sector.

For Gedo and Baba in Lenswood and in memory of Baba in Flin Flon

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Much of women's work, both paid and unpaid, is characterized by the provision of help and care, reflecting persistent sex/gender divisions of labour in Canada. Despite the influx of women into the labour market in the past three decades, official statistics confirm that unpaid work in the domestic sphere is still largely women's work while women's work in the labour market resembles their unpaid work in the domestic sphere (Statistics Canada 2000; Armstrong and Armstrong 1994; Status of Women 1995a). Furthermore, "[i]n both areas, women tend to do much of the caring and supportive work" (Armstrong and Armstrong 1994, 66). These gendered divisions of labour and the relationship between paid and unpaid labour have long been at the heart of feminist theoretical approaches to understanding gender inequality (Luxton 1980; Fox 1980). Since much of women's work involves care and support, caregiving plays a central role in a sex/gender-conscious method of examining unpaid work.

This thesis argues that the current statistical framework for estimating the volume and value of unpaid work does not lend itself to a nuanced and gendered analysis of caregiving. An examination of the current statistical framework reveals its economic theoretical underpinnings, which largely ignore sex and gender. Thus, the current framework is not explicitly designed to acknowledge the distinct nature of unpaid labour generally and caregiving in particular. According to the main insight of the domestic labour debate, paid and unpaid work are fundamentally different because they involve different relationships and are subject to different conditions. Unpaid work in the

domestic sphere is about both labour and love (Luxton 1980; Baines et al. 1991) and as Armstrong and Armstrong (1994) observe, the relationships governing the performance of unpaid work are “more arbitrary [than paid work] and more subject to personal bargaining” (76) and the “criteria applied to it are based on personal responses and needs rather than universal standards” (202).

This thesis will demonstrate that the economic basis of the current framework limits its usefulness for measuring and valuing unpaid caregiving in at least two ways. First, the framework mainly measures those aspects of caregiving that have current market equivalents. This means that the many of the affective and relational aspects of caregiving are undercounted and undervalued. Secondly, while the existing framework identifies some indicators of help and care, these categories are organized in a way that still reflect principles of economic utility theory that try to distinguish activities that yield mainly direct returns from those that yield mainly indirect returns. This is analogous to separating the labour from the love in a labour of love. As rational economic actors, it is theorized that households would not delegate an activity to the market unless they would derive exactly the same utility from the market good (Hawrylyshyn 1978). This ignores the fact that direct benefits can be derived from all forms of work, paid or unpaid. One result is that unpaid caregiving is counted and valued differently depending on for whom the work is done. While unpaid work and paid work are similar in many ways, and these similarities form the basis for the current measurement and valuation methods, these two illustrations of difference underscore the complexity inherent in superimposing ways of understanding paid work on to unpaid work.

This thesis seeks to highlight the importance of unpaid informal caregiving work, defined as help and care provided by individuals to individuals outside the context of a civic or voluntary organization. This permits an analysis of the least visible forms of help and care. Care provided by volunteers has greater visibility by the very fact that an organization delivers the services. The current interest in caregiving, the centrality of help and care to women's work and the lack of a coherent, comprehensive set of caregiving indicators all underscore the need to gender unpaid work statistics. The main objective of this thesis is to use feminist theories of work to modify the existing statistical framework such that the caregiving components of unpaid work are brought into focus. The main contribution to the literature is threefold. First it provides a feminist critique of existing evidence on caregiving derived from time use surveys, demonstrating how assumptions about paid work lead to limitations in measures of unpaid informal caregiving work. Secondly, it suggests ways to improve the measurement of caregiving in time use surveys and reorganizes the current statistical framework for measuring and valuing unpaid work in a way that is sensitive to the distinct nature of unpaid labour. Finally, it provides an analysis of unpaid informal caregiving work that compares the current and revised frameworks.

Chapter 2 proceeds with a review of the literature pertaining to the measurement and valuation of unpaid care work, followed by a description of the objectives and method. It focuses on the way that unpaid work and care work are gendered and invisible in the traditional economic context, reveals the economic underpinnings of the current measurement and valuation methods and provides a feminist critique of this theoretical approach. Chapter 3 addresses the question, "What counts as unpaid caregiving and how

is it counted and valued?” This chapter illustrates the ways in which the distinct nature and conditions of unpaid work, measured from an economic perspective, lead to limitations in the resulting statistical indicators, with respect to both the way the data is collected and the way the data is organized and valued. It then outlines a new framework that makes informal care central to the analysis including a valuation structure that assigns that values care in similar ways regardless of for whom it is done. This new framework and valuation scheme form the basis of the statistical analysis in Chapter 4, which addresses the question, “How much time is devoted to unpaid informal caregiving work, who does it, for whom and what is its value?” The chapter draws some insights about informal caregiving from the existing data, despite its limitations. This chapter presents estimates of the total volume and value of unpaid caregiving work, comparing the existing and the new measurement framework and valuation schemes. It also examines the gendered and relational aspects of unpaid care work by analyzing who does it and for whom. The central findings and their implications for future research are discussed in the conclusion, Chapter 5. The findings underscore the need for measures of unpaid informal caregiving that are more sensitive to the relational aspect inherent in this “labour of love”. The current framework, with its utilitarian economic roots, still mainly focuses on production for surplus and ignores the broader issue of social reproduction and its relationship to market production.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

The most fundamental characteristic of unpaid work, and particularly informal caregiving, is its invisibility in the conventional framework of economic production. While feminism rejects the idea of separate private and public spheres, arguing that “the personal is political” (Adamson et al. 1988), a distinct private/public split still characterizes the definition of production in economic theory. Traditional economic theory views economic production as activity that produces a good or service for monetary exchange in the market (Statistics Canada 1994b). The same activity producing a good or service that is not exchanged for money in the market is not measured and counted in the official economic measurement system,¹ the United Nations System of National Accounts (UNSNA). This narrow view of production effectively renders much of the work performed by the world’s women economically and politically invisible (Waring 1998, 1996; Williams 1994; Bakker 1998; Cohen 1987). In other words, that which isn’t counted doesn’t count; it is neither theorized nor analyzed (Armstrong and Armstrong 1990; Harvey and MacDonald 1976). Invisibility in the national accounting framework effectively means that unpaid work is not assigned a monetary value. “Although no one would argue that money is the sole measuring rod of value, some would argue that what is not counted as economic production often ends up being invisible, unimportant and deemed of little or no value” (Statistics Canada 1995, 4).

¹ Some unmeasured values that do not give rise to monetary exchange, such as the rental value of owner-occupied housing, are regularly imputed and included in the economic accounting system. By the same token, work done in the underground economy is considered to be market activity because it generates

Unpaid work has what Marx calls use value, but no exchange value, precisely because it is not exchanged for pay. “Because this work is outside the money economy in a society that determines value on the basis of money, it is valueless from the standpoint of those who own and of many others as well” (Armstrong and Armstrong 1994, 173).

Soupourmas and Ironmonger (2002) argue that “[t]he failure of statistical organizations to provide official estimates of the household economy [Gross Household Product] means that almost half of the total valuable economic activities undertaken by Australians are ignored by economists and policy makers” (1). Although Statistics Canada produces estimates of the volume and value of unpaid household work, it does not produce a full satellite account of unpaid work. A full satellite account entails the creation of input-output tables. On the input side of the equation, this would include estimating the value of capital and labour to household production. On the output side of the equation, the value of goods and services produced by households would have to be established, and household production would have to be added as a new industrial category. The estimate of the value of unpaid household work currently produced by Statistics Canada includes only the value of labour inputs as estimated from the time use diary data.² The most recent national time use survey data have been available since 1999, but three years later, Statistics Canada has yet to publish updated estimates of the volume and value of unpaid household work. It is only when analysis brings the regular and the satellite accounts together that the full picture of costs and benefits of economically productive activity emerges. In her study, Unpaid Work and Macroeconomics: New Discussions, New Tools

monetary income, in practice, it is rarely measured because of its clandestine nature (Statistics Canada, 1994b).

² Personal communication with Catherine Bertrand, Income and Expenditure Accounts Division, Statistics Canada, May 7, 2002.

for Action, Bakker (1998) concludes that feminist scholars must make clear the costs of not including unpaid work in macro-economic policies and make explicit the linkages between macro-economics, unpaid work and gender inequality.

It has long been recognized that the system of national accounts does not measure the full range of economic activity. Feminists and economists have sought to expand economic framework to encompass unpaid production based on the similarities between paid and unpaid work, but for different reasons. Economists called for an expansion of the conventional narrow view of economic production, justifying estimations of the dollar value of domestic labour by “demonstrating their impact upon the issue of economic growth and welfare” (Adler and Hawrylyshyn 1978, 333). For example, the accounting system is not designed to measure productive activity that moves from one sphere to the other, as in the classic example of a man contributing to a decrease in Gross Domestic Product when he marries his housekeeper, a fact that violates basic accounting principles (Harvey and MacDonald 1976). Nor were the national accounts designed to measure well being (Statistics Canada 1995). Ignoring unpaid work in the calculation of economic activity, though “inappropriate and misleading” was considered “a practical necessity” by economists and statisticians due to the difficulty inherent in producing estimates (Hershlag 1960 cited in Statistics Canada 1995). Feminists pointed to the need to underscore the links between the public and private spheres (production and social reproduction) in order to understand gender inequality. In an attempt to address the problem of economist error in excluding unpaid labour (Vosko 1997) feminist scholars adapted Marxist materialist theories of market production to domestic production. They argued that unpaid work is related to market production via the process of social

reproduction, that is, unpaid household work physically reproduces the next generation of the labour force and sustains and regenerates the labour that is sold each day in the market (Morton 1972; Armstrong and Armstrong 1994; Luxton 1980; Fox and Luxton 1993). Feminist scholars contend that domestic labour is, and always has been, essential to the functioning of society and the economy. In the pre-capitalist, pre-industrial period, “[t]he common economic unit of production was the family, to which all members, except the youngest of children, contributed,” (Phillips and Phillips 1983, 10). As waged labour became more common, a “decisive break between the public sphere (the factory) and the private sphere (the home) was established” (Latin American and Canadian Women’s Collective 1980, 50). A unified system approach to the analysis of gendered divisions of labour serves to re-establish the link between work carried out in the public/market and private/domestic spheres via an expanded definition of production (Vosko 1997).

For feminists, theories of work must consider all the labour involved in acquiring what is deemed necessary for survival by different social classes in different racial and cultural groups and in different historical periods. This means including unpaid work done for family firms or farms and the volunteer work performed for all manner of organizations and individuals. It means including all the unpaid domestic work – the management of the household and its finances, the bearing and raising of children, the personal services provided for the elderly and for husbands and children of all ages. It also means including the work done for pay in the underground economy – the selling of sex and of typing, cleaning, babysitting, laundry, and sewing services. (Armstrong and Armstrong 1990, 13).

In the context of a broader socio-economic framework, unpaid work is valuable in some way to both households and the economy since it fulfils a need for emotional relationships and consumes market goods and services (Benston 1972). Feminist theory therefore sees social reproduction and market production as inextricably linked,

and relates the subordination of women to the fact that unpaid labour is assigned to them as a group (Benston 1972; Eichler 1985b). From this perspective, “[t]he undercounting and undervaluation of women’s work is fundamental to the economic subordination of women” (Williams 1994, 72).

Statistics Canada began efforts to estimate the volume and value of unpaid household work in the mid-1970s, mainly driven by economic rationales for recognizing non-market production, that is, more accurate measures of economic activity and well-being. Economists sought to better measure economic activity and well being by extending theories of paid to work to unpaid work. Employing time use data to estimate the volume and value of labour inputs to non-market production emerged from theoretical developments related to the economic theory of utility maximization (Hawrylyshyn 1978). “Traditional economic theory has conceived of the household or family unit (a basic micro-unit of decision-making in economic theory) as a maximizer of utility, which is said to be a function of the quantities of goods and services purchased on the market and consumed at home” (Hawrylyshyn 1978, 80). Becker (1965) and Lancaster (1966) criticized this basic theory of utility for its oversimplification of the relationship between goods and utility. They suggested that utility is derived from the basic commodities or “Z-goods”, produced when households use time to further transform or to consume market goods. This notion altered the understanding of the relationship between goods and utility, opening the door to the recognition that households produce basic commodities that yield utility and that non-market time plays a role in the creation of these commodities. The addition of time into the equation provided a common currency for linking the market/public and household/private spheres. The currency of time gives

everyone the same 24-hour budget constraint and this time can either be devoted to activities by the household or offered for sale on the market (Hawrylyshyn 1978). It also provided an economic argument for valuing non-market time, suggesting that households will allocate their time to non-market activities as long as the output or marginal product of these activities is worth more than what their time could command in the market. Thus, the value of basic commodities produced by the household can be estimated based on the value of the time inputs used to transform the market good. This led to the widespread use of time use surveys to measure the value of unpaid work.

However, basic commodities are often jointly produced, that is, time can be used to generate many commodities at once. “The jointness in the time input used to produce commodities...[is] reflected in the ubiquitous plaint of mothers who can’t but must do ten things at one time” (Hawrylyshyn 1978, 84). Hawrylyshyn (1978) sees this joint production issue as related to “the notion that an hour of time in such household activities often produces both direct and indirect utility” (84). Direct utility consists of the benefits directly obtained from doing an activity (e.g. pride, enjoyment, satisfaction, etc.). For example, the personal enjoyment of baking a loaf of bread cannot be exchanged on the market. In contrast, activity outputs that can be exchanged have indirect utility; for example, you can sell the loaf of bread that you enjoyed baking. The possibility that non-market production could yield direct as well as indirect utility makes it difficult to assign a “minimum production time” to these activities, as more time may be devoted to more enjoyable activities. Hawrylyshyn’s (1978) analysis of joint production also neglects the possibility that an hour of time can produce more than one commodity, each with an indirect utility component, such as washing the dishes while minding the child.

According to Hawrylyshyn (1978), only the portion of non-market activities that creates a commodity with indirect value, that is an output that can be exchanged on the market, should be assigned a dollar value, while “direct utility components are not and should not be subject to dollar valuation” (86). The separation of direct from indirect utility thus forms the economic theoretical basis for valuing non-market time. Since in practice it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate the direct and indirect utility components of activities, and since all activities, including market activities, can potentially yield direct utility, the challenge rests in determining which household activities produce indirect utility and which activities produce solely direct utility.

Although there is no internationally sanctioned definition of unpaid work, Statistics Canada’s estimates include unpaid activities that have a potential exchange value, that is, they yield an output with indirect utility and therefore could be the subject of exchange, regardless of the current availability of a market substitute (Statistics Canada 1995). The most recent estimates of the volume and value of unpaid work from 1992 time use data confirm that in Canada, as in other parts of the world, unpaid work is women’s work. (Statistics Canada 1995, 2000; Waring 1997; Soupourmas and Ironmonger 2002).

Despite the increase in female labour force participation, Canadian women have consistently carried out about two-thirds of all hours of unpaid work since 1960’s, work that was equal to between 32% and 54% of Gross Domestic Product at market prices in 1992, depending on the valuation method (Statistics Canada 2000). Help and care, defined as a range of activities done for members of the household (See Appendix A), accounted for 11% of time spent on unpaid work in 1992, down from an estimated 16% in 1961. Women undertook the lion’s share of time devoted to help and care, at 72% of

the total in 1992 (Statistics Canada 1995). These trends are consistent with other research using a variety of data sources that finds that women: devote more time than men to child care; are more likely to work part-time due to child care responsibilities; account for nearly all parents who do not work for pay; and provide the bulk of informal care (Statistics Canada 2000; Marshall 1998; Zukewich 2002; Jenson and Jacobzone 2000). Women also make up the six out of every ten people providing informal unpaid care and assistance to seniors with long-term health problems and provide more weekly hours of care than men (Keating et al. 1999). Women are also slightly more likely than men to offer their time either via an organization or on an informal basis directly to individuals (Hall et al. 2001).

While similarities between paid and unpaid work as labour inputs to production form the basis for using time use surveys to estimate the volume and value of unpaid work, feminist theory acknowledges not only the sameness but also the difference between labour in the two spheres. The theory that paid and unpaid work are fundamentally different emerged as feminists adapted Marxists theories of work to domestic labour. A key insight of the “domestic labour debate” was that “[d]omestic and wage are different kinds of labour, involving different kinds of relationships” (Armstrong and Armstrong 1994,176). Unpaid work activities may produce goods and services similar to those available on the market, but they are not subject to market forces in the same way. For instance, the absence of an employment contract for unpaid work means there are no predetermined hours and since everybody does it and it requires no formal training, it is not socially constructed as skilled work (Armstrong and Armstrong 1994; Luxton 1980; Felt et al. 1995). There is a distinctly personal nature to unpaid work. As Armstrong and

Armstrong (1994) observe, the relationships governing the performance of unpaid work are “more arbitrary [than paid work] and more subject to personal bargaining” (76) and the “criteria applied to it are based on personal responses and needs rather than universal standards” (202). Even the enjoyment associated with unpaid work can affect how much time is devoted to it (Statistics Canada 1995; Hawlyryshyn 1978). But the flexibility described above also makes unpaid work inflexible. The anonymous quote “A man may work from sun to sun, but woman’s work is never done” reflects the simultaneously flexible and inflexible nature of domestic labour. Although some unpaid labour is discretionary, other tasks, like feeding children, are not. The fact that there is no pre-determined time to start or stop doing unpaid work means that it is always time to do it; there is no retirement from unpaid work. By its very nature, unpaid work is not exchanged for pay and it is not subject to the same conditions and benefits as paid work. Consequently, is not highly valued, even when it is done in the market (Armstrong and Armstrong 1994).

The different relationships involved in unpaid work are particularly evident with respect to caregiving. In contrast to the market, a place of rational thought and the pursuit of self-interest, the home is a place of altruism, of love and of care (Badgett and Folbre 2000). Baines, Neysmith and Evans (1991) define care as “the mental, emotional and physical effort involved in looking after, responding to, and supporting others” (11). Embedded in this broad definition are the two distinct but intertwined dimensions of labour and love, often referred to as “caring for” versus “caring about” (Beaujot 2000; Baines et al. 1991). The former includes both personal, physical care (e.g. bathing, feeding, dressing, etc.) and other instrumental care (e.g. assisting with housework,

shopping, transportation, etc.). The latter encompasses a range of activities related to the provision of emotional support and necessarily involves an emotional or psychological connection between the caregiver and the care receiver. It is possible to care for someone without caring about them, just as it is possible to care about someone without being the person who cares for them. The different relationships inherent in paid and unpaid work are at the root of the dual systems approach to understanding labour. “Deriving some utility from caregiving work violates the parameters of the utility function. Neoclassical theorists have traditionally avoided this by drawing a strict boundary between the world of altruism (family) and a world of self-interest (the market) (Badgett and Folbre 2000, 331).

The definition of unpaid care is also highly dependent on contextual relationships, which are often shaped by gender. Context determines under which conditions specific unpaid activities become care. For example, the activity of washing and dressing, which people usually do for themselves, is not generally conceived of as unpaid work, but when this activity is done for children or a person who cannot do it for themselves, it becomes caregiving (Fast and Keating 2000). Coleman (1998b) groups care to adult household members together with household work tasks, only identifying child care as a distinct caregiving activity. Unpaid domestic tasks like cooking and housekeeping when done by and for members of the household are not generally considered to constitute caregiving, although they certainly fall within the Baines et al. (1991) definition of care and are mostly done by women. The same activities performed for an elderly neighbour, though, may be defined as care because it is not customary for neighbours to do these tasks for each other. Fast and Bittman (2001) found that people were less likely to report an

activity as caregiving when the care recipient lived with the caregiver, such as the example of wives looking after husbands. This also illustrates the way gendered contexts influence the conceptualization of care. Some activities are not perceived as care because of the sex/gender division of labour in households. Keating et al. (1999) found that assistance provided to married senior men with health problems was more likely to be reported as “the way things are done” in their household, while unmarried men who had to arrange for various home care services reported the same activities as care.

Context also extends to the nature of interpersonal relationships. Family members have traditionally been the main source of unpaid care and support and most caregiving is still done for relatives through informal care and unpaid work (Côté et al. 1998; Fast and Keating 2000; Jenson and Jacobzone 2000). For instance, unpaid child care is largely done for one’s own children, but people also volunteer their babysitting services to others. As the population becomes increasingly urban and mobile, people requiring care may find themselves at a distance from family and relying more heavily on networks based on friendship ties (Baines et al. 1991; Cranswick 1999). Some people even move in order to maintain a care relationship. In most of these instances, the care recipient and provider were relatives, but nearly one in five care relationships involving a move related to care provided by friends (Cranswick 1999). Keating et al. (1999) also found that one in five providers of informal elder care were not relatives. And among the 80% of people providing eldercare who were family members, only 15% lived with the care recipient. This highlights the importance of unpaid help and care provided both by non-relatives and by family members living in different households.

The importance of context means that much of the literature examines forms of care defined by the characteristics of the recipient and the relationship between care provider and care receiver, such as care of one's own children, of elders or of the ill or disabled (Ferguson 1991; Armstrong and Armstrong 1994; Côté et al. 1998; Doherty et al. 1998; Zuzanek 2001; Cranswick 1997; Keating et al. 1999). Such categories are useful “because each requires somewhat different skills, imposes different restrictions, and changes at a different pace” and the way this work gets done can differ by age, class, race, marital status and geography (Armstrong and Armstrong 1994, 81). However, it is also useful to conceive of unpaid care and support at a higher level of abstraction, and examine its relationship to total unpaid work. Vincent and Woolley (2000) and Eichler (1985b) argue that caregiving, as a form of unpaid work, is fundamentally different from other domestic labour because it has a value to society above and beyond its private value to households. This social value derives from the fact that it constitutes an aspect of work “that would be taken over by society if a family failed to perform [sic], for whatever reasons” (Eichler 1985b, 72). However, most studies focus on recipient-specific examples of caregiving, such as child care or care for the disabled, stopping short of a broad conceptualization of the caregiving component of total unpaid work.

Feminist scholarship recognizes that data are subjective rather than objective facts, influenced by the theory that motivates their collection (Armstrong and Armstrong 1990). Statistics Canada's data collection initiatives related to the valuation of unpaid work are justified in terms of better measurement of economic activity and well being (Adler and Hawrylyshyn 1978; Statistics Canada 1996). However, this approach tends to superimpose assumptions about the nature and conditions of paid work on to unpaid

work. Waring (1988) argues that in order to measure unpaid work, “time budget data is required, whatever the method [of valuation of household work] is used. There is no conceptual or measurement problem; it is just that such data is not considered necessary for calculating the GNP” (229). Others disagree. Cohen (1987) argues that assumptions matter. “The theoretical approaches that focus on market activity have created methodological tools based on this type of activity; there has been a tendency not to develop adequate ways of looking at non-market activity, except as an adjunct to market activity” (5). Concerns have also been expressed about using language and methods that apply to paid work to measure and value unpaid work. Participants at a workshop organized by a non-governmental organization “expressed concern that measurement could not reflect the varying nature of unpaid work, and that some work, often that which is emotionally the most draining, may be especially difficult to measure,” and also noted “the possible negative effects of continuing to view unpaid work through the lens of paid work – could a system designed to measure paid work accurately reflect the value of unpaid work?” (Mothers Are Women 1998, 25). Participants in an international workshop sponsored by Statistics Canada “felt it was inadequate and inappropriate to use market/labour language for concepts in this sphere, and that this tendency is driving research efforts in the wrong way” (Statistics Canada 1994a, 13). Despite ongoing debate about the usefulness of valuing unpaid work and the validity of current valuation methods (Beneria 2000; Statistics Canada 1994a), this thesis begins with the assumption that “it is better to be approximately right, making some sort of estimate of the value of household production, than to be precisely wrong, placing a value of zero on household work” (Vincent and Woolley 2000, 35). Measuring and assigning a value to unpaid work

becomes a tool to “permit investigations of the relative social costs of different divisions of social reproduction between individuals, family households, communities, the market and governments” (Cheal et al. 1998, 66).

The limitations of the current approach to measuring and valuing unpaid work are clearly illustrated with respect to informal caregiving. Much of women’s paid and unpaid work consists of providing help, care and support. Armstrong and Armstrong (1994) describe unpaid work as “a service job, that consists of service to others” (202). Women make up the majority of providers of unpaid care (Baines et al. 1991) as “it is still primarily women who limit their paid work in order to care for dependants or other family members (Status of Women 1997, 22). Although caregiving is a central component of unpaid work and women’s work in general, Statistics Canada’s current approach to measuring and valuing unpaid work provides limited indicators of help and care and does not provide an adequate framework for a nuanced analysis of caregiving. While the existing statistical classification of unpaid work for valuation purposes does include a broad “help and care” category, it is composed of solely of activities carried out for household members (Statistics Canada 1995, 35) (See Appendix A). This is related to the economic theory underpinning the measurement and valuation methods. The main axis of differentiation of unpaid work in the current framework is the distinction between “household work” - work done by and for household members - and “other unpaid work” – work done for other individuals or organizations. This distinction is based on the economic notion of utility. The “household work” / “other unpaid work” distinction affects the kinds of activities that are counted as unpaid work and how they are valued. Nor does the classification

provide an overall measure of the help and care component of unpaid work. The optimal approach would be to transform the way unpaid work data are collected and organized to reflect gendered divisions of labour. However, the usefulness of existing data can be improved by reorganizing them so that the caring elements are brought into focus.

The current statistical framework for measuring and valuing unpaid work is rooted in economic theory that largely ignores sex and gender, and therefore is not explicitly designed to acknowledge the gendered divisions of labour and their relationship to gender inequality. This limits the usefulness of the data for feminist research in at least two ways, both of which are related to the main insight of the domestic labour debate, that is, paid and unpaid work are fundamentally different because they involve relationships and are subject to different conditions.

First, the framework mainly measures those aspects of social reproduction that have current market equivalents. Due to the fundamental differences in the nature of paid and unpaid work, the parts of social reproduction that are the most difficult to measure are not included in the time use survey activity classification structure. Hawrylyshyn (1978) says this direct/indirect utility distinction simply takes traditional criteria for market inclusion to its logical conclusion – all activities that could be replaced by market activities should be included. In general, an estimate of the value of non-market production is included when the “income in kind has a close monetary equivalent in the market economy” (Statistics Canada 1994b, 2). While some types of unpaid labour, like child care and cooking, have close market substitutes, others, like bearing children, managing the household and its finances and providing emotional support, do not. Therefore, the full

range of activities comprising social reproduction is not measured in the current framework. This is especially true of caregiving, especially with respect to affective care, or “caring about”.

Secondly, while the existing framework distinguishes between different types of unpaid work, including some differentiated measures of help and care, these distinctions reflect the principles of economic utility theory. For example, the current unpaid work classification groups non-market productive activities into two broad categories: household work and other unpaid work (Statistics Canada 1995) (See Figure 2.1). The main axis of differentiation is determined by who benefits from the work; “household work” includes unpaid labour done for household members while “other unpaid work” includes labour done for other individuals or organizations. Early definitions of unpaid work explicitly excluded activities done for non-household members or organizations because work that was not part of the maintenance of one’s own household was considered to yield mostly direct or intangible returns derived from being charitable. That is, if people delegated this work, they would not derive the direct benefits of helping others. Thus, in addition to the third person criterion, delegating an activity should not change the utility to the household members (Statistics Canada 1995). In other words, it was theorized that as rational economic actors, households would not delegate an activity to the market unless they would derive exactly the same utility from the consumption of the market output as they by consuming the same commodity produced by the household. Current Canadian definitions of unpaid work no longer impose the condition of utility equivalence and include both volunteer work done for organizations and help and care provided on an informal basis by individuals to individuals. However, the statistical

classification for the measurement and valuation of unpaid work still reflects this distinction. This conceptualization of help and care is too narrow to provide an adequate basis for analyzing the gendered nature of unpaid work. As a result, much of the literature tends to use the concept of unpaid work as an undifferentiated activity or conflates unpaid work and caregiving, since much of unpaid work consists of caring, supporting and serving others (Beaujot 2000; Bakker 1998; Waring 1988). Furthermore, unpaid work done for non-household members is often lumped under the general rubric of voluntary and civic activity (Coleman 1998b; Hall et al. 2001). Voluntary and civic activity is further divided into formal and informal voluntary activity, the former including unpaid work done for non-profit organizations and the latter including unpaid work performed by individuals for members of other households (Coleman 1998b; Hall et al. 2001). This formal/informal distinction is also used in the conceptual framework for the new “Voluntary Sector Satellite Account”. This accounting framework currently in development at Statistics Canada explicitly excludes informal unpaid work provided to members of other households, and focuses on formal volunteer work for organizations, unpaid work that is most like market work.³

Caregiving in various forms has emerged as the main focus of public interest with respect to the issue of unpaid work. The unpaid work policy objectives of Status of Women Canada advocate the provision of some form of economic and social recognition for unpaid caregiving that contributes to the well being of society (Status of Women 1995). Indeed, current Canadian policies recognizing unpaid work largely centre on the care of children or dependants with disabilities, for example: maternity, parental and

³ The voluntary sector is defined as “non-profit organizations dependent on volunteers (at least for their governance) and on financial support from individuals, businesses or governments to deliver goods and

adoption leave entitlements; the child-rearing drop-out provision of the Canada Pension Plan; and child care and caregiving provisions in the income tax system (Government of Canada 1999). The ageing of the population has also led to an emerging policy interest in the issue of eldercare (Keating et al. 1999), at a time when the responsibility for caregiving is increasingly being shifted from the state to individuals in the context of privatization (Cossman and Fudge 2002; Bakker 1998). Yet, unpaid work and caregiving remain topics of contention. In their analysis of lobbying efforts to measure unpaid work on the Census of the Population, Luxton and Vosko (1998) observe that

[t]he issue of how to provide for those who need care (children, the ill, the disabled or the elderly) is highly controversial both within society and amongst feminists themselves. The shape of the 1996 Census campaign, particularly the politically diverse set of groups involved and the absence of a vigorous debate within the larger feminist movement in Canada over unpaid work, confirms this claim (66).

Recent debate regarding the tax treatment of families with children is another example of the tensions surrounding unpaid caregiving (Vincent and Woolley 2000; Kesselman 2000; Boessenkool and Davies 1998; Krashinsky and Cleveland 1999). Luxton and Vosko (1998) also note that although feminists largely support the measurement and valuation of unpaid work, the feminist movement in Canada has been reluctant to address the “thorny issue” of unpaid work in a proactive manner. As a result, feminists have not fully exploited official Canadian statistics on unpaid work to test and further develop theories of work. Nor have they adequately debated potential implications with a view to finding “the most appropriate way forward on the issue of measuring and valuing unpaid work” (Luxton and Vosko 1998, 72).

This thesis argues that one way forward involves using feminist theories of work to propose an alternative statistical framework for measuring and valuing unpaid work and to analyze informal unpaid caregiving work using Canadian time use data. In doing so, it considers the following research questions: What counts as caregiving work and how is it counted and valued?; How much time is spent on unpaid caregiving, by who and for whom?; and What is its market value?

Data and Methods

The study is based on Statistics Canada's 1998 General Social Survey (GSS) on time use. Although other Statistics Canada surveys collect data on unpaid work, most notably the 1996 Census of Canada, the time use survey is the only vehicle that uses the diary method, a collection technique widely considered to provide the most accurate and detailed information on daily activities (Paillé 1994). The time use survey is the source used for official estimates of the value of unpaid household work for the satellite national accounts. The General Social Survey is an ongoing annual survey program designed to monitor changes in the living conditions and well being of Canadians over time, and to fill data gaps by providing information on social policy issues of current or emerging interest. Each year, the nationally representative survey focuses on a different core topic, time use being one of five core content areas. Time use diary data was collected for the third time in 1998.⁴ In addition to a time use diary, the 1998 GSS collected information on perceptions and enjoyment of time, sports and cultural activities, demographic characteristics of respondents and information about the main activity of their spouse. The 1998 GSS is of particular interest with respect to the measurement of helping and

caregiving due to the addition of new questions about informal social support.

Respondents were also asked to indicate whether activities⁵ helped someone outside the household or helped an organization. For activities that helped a non-household person, they were asked if the recipient of this help was aged 65 or more, if the person had a long-term health or activity limitation. A question was also asked to determine the recipient's relationship to the respondent.

The target population for the 1998 GSS was people aged 15 and over residing in Canada, excluding residents of the territories and full-time residents of institutions. The sample was selected using the Elimination of Non-Working Banks technique of Random Digit Dialling.⁶ The survey was conducted using Computer Assisted Telephone interviewing from February 1998 to January 1999 and an attempt was made to obtain an interview with one randomly selected person from each household. The final response rate was 78%, yielding a total of 10,749 respondents with usable time use diary information. For each activity, respondents were asked the start and end time of the activity, where it took place, and whom they were with.⁷ Trained interviewers coded descriptions of daily activities into 177 activity codes.

This analysis focuses on the volume and value of labour inputs to unpaid work as measured by time. The volume and value of capital inputs to unpaid work are excluded because the time use survey does not provide this information. Although it is argued that measuring and valuing outputs would result in the best estimates of the exchange value of

⁴ The other surveys took place in 1986 and 1992.

⁵ Excludes activities that are personal in nature, that were described as helping household members only, that were related to paid work or education and certain leisure activities such as listening to the radio or watching television.

⁶ Statistics Canada estimates that less than 2% of the target population of households do not have a telephone. Survey estimates were adjusted to account for people without telephones.

non-market goods and services, this is not the case with respect to personal services such as help and care.

It is sometimes difficult to define the outputs resulting from unpaid work or to determine the appropriate measurement unit. This is especially the case with direct services to people. Consider activities such as caring for a sick adult or keeping watch over children at play. The output can be characterized as a flow of services yielding comfort in the first instance, and protection and safety in the other. The appropriate measurement unit is not apparent in either case. Duration measures alone, like the amount of time devoted to caring, do not reflect differences in the nature, quality or productivity of the services (Statistics Canada 1995, 21).

For the purposes of this analysis, unpaid work is defined to include those activity codes used by Statistics Canada (1995) to measure and value households' unpaid work in a national accounting framework⁸ (See Appendix A). Unpaid informal help and caregiving work includes only those activities that entail help and care provided informally to individuals by individuals. Consequently, unpaid caregiving that is provided by the formal voluntary sector (non-profit organizations) is excluded. The valuation of informal caregiving work includes estimates based on the before tax opportunity cost as well as the specialist and generalist replacement cost variants. Weighted estimates of the annual number of hours of unpaid caregiving work are produced by summing the total minutes per day across all respondents who spent time on caregiving activities, dividing this sum by 60 minutes in an hour and multiplying by 365 days in a year. The participation rate for an activity is obtained by dividing the number of people who reported the activity on the diary day divided by the total population. Differences in the mean time devoted to activities per participant reported in the analysis are significant at the 95% level unless

⁷ Respondents were not asked who they were with for sleep and most other personal activity codes (400, 450, 460 and 480).

⁸ This grouping of codes is more restrictive than the definition of unpaid work suggested in the User's Guide to the 1998 General Social Survey.

otherwise indicated. The standard errors were calculated using the boot-strap method (Rao et al. 1992) in order to account for design effects associated with the complex sampling design of the survey.

Figure 2.1: Current framework for measuring and valuing unpaid work

* Includes components that are excluded from definition of unpaid work.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-603E, No. 3, 1995, Table A3.

Figure 2.2: Revised framework for measuring and valuing unpaid work

Chapter 3

What counts as unpaid informal caregiving work?

The main factor used to determine if an activity should be counted as unpaid work or a form of unpaid work such as caregiving, is the third person criterion. An activity is deemed to be economically productive⁹ if it can be delegated to another person and results in an output that could be exchanged, regardless of whether such a market substitute currently exists. An additional criterion, “normal or customary behaviour”, is often applied to unpaid delegable activities in the Canadian context.¹⁰ For example, a person could hire someone to help her/himself wash and dress, but these activities are not usually delegated unless the individual is a child or an adult who is unable to do these things for her/himself (Statistics Canada 1995). Consequently, the ability to identify delegable activities becomes a key element in the application of the third person criterion. In total 57 out of the 177 activity codes in the 1998 time use activity classification system have been identified as unpaid delegable activities and thus are included in official national accounting estimates of the volume and value of households’ unpaid work (See Appendix A).

Once an activity satisfies the third person criterion, context becomes crucial to defining an activity as caregiving. The current framework mainly differentiates unpaid work according to whether the activity benefited a household member or an individual

⁹ In the context of economic activity, a productive activity is one that yields something other than direct utility that can be exchanged (Statistics Canada 1995). “Direct utility can never be produced by a third person without affecting its value to the household members, whereas indirect utility can always be produced by a third person without affecting its value” (Hawrylyshyn 1978, 17).

¹⁰ Unpaid work estimates produced in the national accounting framework apply the criteria of “normal or customary behaviour”. However, other studies such as Stone and Chicha (1996), Status of Women Canada

outside the household. The framework then identifies activities that constitute help and care according to who received the care, that is, household children, household adults and non-household members (See Figure 2.2). While there is some similarity between the activity codes for care for the three different groups of care recipients, help and care for people in other households also encompasses domestic work tasks, such as housework and cooking, that are not counted as help and care when done for household members. Routine domestic tasks are assumed to benefit all household members and are not coded as “help and care”, even if the person usually responsible for these tasks is unable to do them and they have been delegated to another household member. However, when these same tasks are delegated to a person outside the household, they are captured as informal unpaid help and care in the time diary of the care provider. This is another manifestation of the “normal and customary behaviour” criterion, sometimes applied to delegable activities. Nonetheless, normal and customary behaviour is shaped by contextual factors, such as location and gender, and as such, affects what counts as unpaid care. Time spent on travel related to caregiving and other forms of unpaid work is conceptualized as separate from the activity that motivates it. Furthermore, limited contextual information is collected about help and care for household members, particularly for adults.¹¹ Thus, the existing framework provides little insight into the characteristics of care receivers who live in the same household as the care provider, making it difficult to study how relationships shape the provision of care. Contextual information was collected about activities that helped people living in other households. A series of supplementary

(1997) and Clark (2001) include all activities that meet the third person criterion, even if they are not normally delegated, like washing and dressing oneself.

¹¹ However, it is reasonably safe to assume that the vast majority of help and care for household children and adults is provided to a family member, since most people live with family members.

helping questions were added in 1998 to measure informal social support since the distinction between activities for household versus non-household members is not always clear. For example, activities can benefit both household and non-household members, e.g. sharing leftovers with a ill neighbour; or doing laundry for both yourself and for your child who has her/his own apartment (Statistics Canada 1999). The new questions indicate if an activity helped someone outside the respondent's household and determines if the care recipient was an organization or an individual. Activities that were personal in nature, that described helping household members only, that were related to paid work or education and certain leisure activities¹² were excluded. However, the new questions were asked of activities that explicitly describe informal help and care for a non-household member. If the activity in question indeed helped an individual not living in the household, then further questions were asked. These included ascertaining the relationship of the care recipient to the caregiver and determining if the care recipient was a senior (aged 65 and over) or a person with a long-term illness or activity limitation. Similar information could be collected about household members. For example, in the existing framework, help and care provided to children aged 15 and over living with their parents is indistinguishable from help and care provided to an elderly household member. Thus any analysis of unpaid child care time necessarily excludes time spent with older children.

In order to focus on unpaid informal help and care, the current framework could be improved by replacing the "household/non-household member" distinction with a distinction between informal unpaid work, done by individuals for individuals, and

¹² The exclusion of most leisure activities means that it is not possible to derive measures of expressive care from activities such as socializing and writing letters.

formal volunteer work, done by individuals for civic or voluntary organizations (See Figure 2.2). This acknowledges that the nature of formal volunteer work more closely resembles that of paid work, while informal unpaid work involves fundamentally different relationships and is subject to different conditions. We can then more clearly focus on the informal help and care component of informal unpaid work, develop an overall aggregate measure, and examine the gendered nature its components in a systematic fashion. The new framework expands informal help and care to include travel related to caregiving.

How is unpaid informal caregiving work counted?

Time use surveys are the main source of data for the estimation of the value of labour inputs to unpaid work activities. Statistics Canada began collecting national-level time use diary data in 1986 as part of the General Social Survey. The most recent time use survey was conducted in 1998. Using the diary approach, respondents in the sample were assigned a day of the week or “designated day”, and were asked to describe chronologically what they did on the day following the designated day.¹³ Trained interviewers then coded activities into a detailed classification system. The other commonly used methodology for collecting time use information is the direct or stylized approach, where individuals are asked how much time they spent on a particular activity over a particular reference period. The unpaid work questions on the 2001 and 2006 Canadian Census of the Population are examples of the direct approach, e.g. “Last week,

¹³ Respondents could be contacted up to two days after the designated day, but priority was given to collecting information about the day immediately following the designated day.

how many hours did you spend providing unpaid care or assistance to one or more seniors?''.

The diary approach is generally considered to provide the most accurate and least biased estimates of time use (Frederick et al. 1992; Harvey 1998; Paillé 1994), particularly for valuing the market value of the labour inputs to unpaid work. Direct approach estimates may be biased for several reasons. First, there may not be a common understanding of the activity in question, i.e. unpaid care and assistance to seniors – what activities are included as unpaid care and assistance and how is a senior defined? Secondly, the respondent must add up all the time spent on the activity over the reference period, a task that is made more difficult the longer the reference period and if the activity occurs often or if each occurrence is of short duration. Time can also be double counted, if the respondent was doing two types of unpaid work simultaneously, such as doing domestic work while minding children, leading to overestimates of the total time devoted to unpaid work activities. The direct approach is also subject to social desirability bias, that is, the tendency for respondents to overestimate time spent on activities that are seen as “positive” or highly valued by society. The diary approach is less subject to this bias, since respondents describe chronologically what they did on the previous day, and interviewers assign pre-determined codes to the descriptions, probing for clarification if necessary (Frederick et al. 1992; Harvey 1998).

One criticism of the diary approach is that it collects information only about the primary activity, defined as the activity demanding the most attention if the person was doing more than one thing at a time. This, however, is necessary for the unduplicated valuation of labour inputs to unpaid work. Some time use diary studies have collected up

to four parallel activities, such as the 1981 Canadian Pilot Time Use Study. Statistics Canada tested the collection of simultaneous activities in 1991 by asking, “Were you doing anything else at the time?” The most commonly reported activities were television viewing, listening to the radio, conversation and child care, but little other unpaid work (Frederick et al. 1992). Consequently, primary activities remain the focus of the GSS on time use,¹⁴ although it also collects a supplementary child care diary in an effort to measure the time spent on child care even if it was not the primary activity. The collection of one primary activity also forces the respondent to make a decision about how they perceive their activity, a decision that can be influenced by contextual factors such as gender or location. For example, Fast and Bittman (2001) found that people were less likely to report an activity as caregiving when the care recipient lives in the same household as the caregiver, such as the example of wives caring for elderly husbands. This may be because women consider certain kinds of caregiving as part of their usual and customary activities, while men perceive them differently since they do not usually do these activities (Keating et al. 1999).

In addition to the issue of secondary activity child care, there are other potential shortcomings of the diary approach with respect to the measurement of unpaid informal caregiving. These stem from the short reference period for the diary (one day), the fact that it does not capture activities of very short duration and that it measures labour time but not production time. Collecting information on one specific day means less chance of capturing activities that occur infrequently, such as the example of a person who takes their grandmother grocery shopping only once a week. Activities of very short duration are also undercounted. The diary approach used in the 1998 GSS recorded only activities

¹⁴ The 1998 GSS also includes direct questions similar to the Census unpaid work questions.

that lasted more than five minutes, and interviewers were instructed to discourage respondents from reporting activities that only lasted a few minutes (Statistics Canada 1999). This combined with interviewer guidelines for coding activity detail means that the data does not readily capture “multi-tasking” and the inherent fragmentation of labour time for activities with overlapping production time. “Production time measures the duration of a task from start to finish; labour time measures the specific period during which a worker is actually expending labour” (Luxton 1980, 20). For example, the production time of washing a load of clothes might be 30 minutes, counting from the time the laundry is put in the washing machine until the load is done. However, the labour time might only be five minutes – three minutes to load and start the washer and two minutes to take the clean wet laundry out at the end of the cycle. In this example, according the instructions provided to interviewers with respect to “intermingled” tasks, the GSS would only capture one activity episode for washing clothes for a total of five minutes:

If a few activities are broken up and intermingled and exact start times cannot be remembered but durations can be estimated, make only one entry for each and enter the total time for each one. For example, the respondent tells you that:

- 1) She put a load of laundry in the washer (5 minutes)
- 2) Made a cake and put it in oven (10 minutes)
- 3) Did some vacuuming (18 minutes)
- 4) Transferred the wash to the dryer (5 minutes)
- 5) Took cake out of oven (a couple of minutes)
- 6) Iced the cake (15 minutes) (Total of 55 minutes)

These activities could be recorded as follows:

- laundry	0900 to 0910	
- baking	0910 to 0937	
- indoor cleaning	0937 to 0955	(Total of 55 minutes)

(Statistics Canada 1999, H - 9).

Six separate activity episodes that clearly indicate an overlap of production time are thus reduced to three distinct labour times. Household labour in this final coding scheme appears to monochronic, hiding the fragmented labour time in the original description. Furthermore, the relationship between labour time and production time is different for different kinds of work. In the above example, estimates of labour time make it seem that doing the laundry only takes 10 minutes a day, while in reality the production time is much longer. However, for vacuuming, the production time and the labour time match more closely.

The measurement of only primary activity labour time is of particular interest with respect to caregiving. First, the production time of caregiving may be much longer than the labour time, child care being an obvious example (Armstrong and Armstrong 1994). Primary activity child care encompasses only a portion of the time parents devote to their children. In theory, child care could be expanded to encompass all time spent with children, whether caring for the child was the primary activity or not, (e.g. transportation time and time spent taking a child to the doctor) and time spent on behalf of the child, such as arranging for child care or parent-teacher meetings (Statistics Canada 1994). In theory, parents are responsible for their children 24 hours a day, seven days a week, what Luxton (1980) refers to as the “production time” of child care. Similarly some individuals who are unable to live independently because they require assistance with basic everyday tasks require around the clock care. In these instances, parents and caregivers are always “on call”, even when the care recipient is sleeping (Statistics Canada 1994, Frederick et al. 1992). Recognizing these limitations, and given that child care was a commonly reported secondary activity in survey tests, the 1998 GSS collected

a supplementary child care diary. The supplementary diary records the total time spent looking after all children under age 15 in the household on diary day, even if child care was not the respondent's primary activity. The diary covers time between when the child woke up on the designated day until they went to sleep for the night.¹⁵ These data complement the data collected on primary-activity child care to provide a more comprehensive picture of time devoted to unpaid child care. However, no such supplementary diary was collected for other instances where care is provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Studies of unpaid work and caregiving in particular should acknowledge the limitations of primary activity time estimates when labour time differs greatly from production time. The collection of simultaneous or secondary activities would also help to improve measurement of the caregiving.

It is also notable that some forms of affective care are included in the activity codes comprising care for household children, even though affective care is not as clearly delegable as instrumental care. Strictly speaking, expressive care does not meet the third person criterion because it cannot be replaced by a market equivalent - "money can't buy you love" as the saying goes. Thus, an activity like visiting someone to provide emotional support, an example of "caring about", is not be counted as unpaid work because it "generates mainly direct returns that are inextricably tied to the personal relationships between the provider and the recipient and is not readily delegated to a third party" (Statistics Canada 1995, 17). For example, visiting or phoning someone who is sick in the hospital is unquestionably an example of "caring about" someone, but this would be captured by the survey as leisure time spent socializing (codes 754 and 950).

¹⁵ For households with more than one child, the diary covers from the time when the first child woke up until the last the time when the last child went to sleep.

This example serves to illustrate how activities that most resemble paid work get counted as unpaid work.¹⁶ Time spent by a person who volunteers for an organization that visits people in the hospital or calls senior citizens to check up on them would be counted as unpaid volunteer work (code 660) while it is coded as socializing when it is done on an informal basis. In their study of Canadian and Australian time use data, Fast and Bittman (2001) found that social and emotional support tends to be hidden in socializing activity codes, particularly for caregivers who do not live with the care recipient. Child care is the only type of care where the survey explicitly codes activities that predominantly reflect expressive care as caregiving: helping/teaching/reprimanding, reading/talking/conversation with child; and playing with children. Including these three activities as part of caregiving to children acknowledges that the work of raising children involves more than looking after their physical needs.

[C]hildren's development emerges through social interactions which include an affective context. Reproductive work includes not only the specifics of physical caregiving (feeding, bathing, supervising, etc.), but also the investment of time and energy in interacting with children to nurture their talents, their self-esteem, and their capacity of care for others as a result of stable and secure emotional attachments (Statistics Canada 1994, 104).

Aside from the child care example, most affective activities that could in theory be considered to be forms of unpaid informal caregiving do not meet the third-person criteria and therefore are not counted in the current activity classification system.

Capturing the more subjective dimensions of time use would improve data interpretation by shedding light on the motivation and meaning of activities (Harvey 1998). This would also help to create better measures of expressive care.

¹⁶ Even women's jobs in the market "often require them to perform significant amounts of emotional work...[y]et these forms of work are typically unrecognized and uncompensated" (Forrest 1998, 210).

In a similar vein, the existing activity-code structure has difficulty measuring other less tangible dimensions of caregiving, such as the household management and tension management (Luxton 1980; UNPAC 1999). “A woman who gets up from her sleep to comfort a frightened child awakened by a nightmare will likely say that she slept through the night, denying that she spent a half an hour tension managing,” (Luxton 1980, 186). Primary activities related to household management are captured under code 118, including such descriptions as, “wrote out checks [sic] to pay bills”, “planning and co-ordinating family activities”, and “leaving kids notes on chores to do”. It is unclear however, how much household or tension management goes unreported as a secondary activity. Related to the dimension of management functions is the notion of primary responsibility for tasks, another dimension of care not measured by the 1998 time use survey. The amount of time spent on an activity does not necessarily reflect who has the responsibility of ensuring the activity is carried out. “Responsibility goes beyond the actual performance of a task to include anticipating, planning and organizing what needs to be done. It encompasses the management of time, people, and resources,” (Marshall 1993, 24). Data from the 1990 GSS on family and friends suggest that women are more likely than men to be primarily responsible for routine household chores (preparing and cleaning up meals, house cleaning and laundry); men tend to look after home maintenance and yard work (Marshall 1993). Although the 1990 GSS did not ask similar questions about child care or other types of caregiving, such questions could be added to the time use survey to gauge the management aspects of all forms of unpaid work and provide another indicator of the sharing of unpaid work between the sexes.

How is unpaid informal caregiving work valued?

The economic theory underpinning the measurement of the labour input to unpaid work also affects the way market value is assigned to these activities.

There are two main approaches to measuring unpaid work based on the time devoted to a particular activity – the opportunity cost and the replacement cost methods. The opportunity cost valuation method involves calculating the average hourly earnings of employed people and multiplying this figure by the number of hours spent on unpaid work. This method assumes that the marginal product of non-market productive time is equal to the foregone market wages. The replacement cost method estimates the hourly earnings of people employed full-time, full-year in various occupations that correspond with types of unpaid work. It is assumed that paid domestic workers could carry out unpaid household work or that this work could be contracted to businesses specializing in particular tasks, hence the generalist and specialist variants of the replacement cost method. Statistics Canada favours the generalist variant of the replacement cost method for purposes of estimating unpaid household work in the context of the national accounting system because at least for the activities defined as household work, domestic employees work in a similar setting and under similar conditions as household members.¹⁷ In order to avoid double counting of labour time inputs, valuation of unpaid work considers only primary activities as collected using the time use diary. For the purposes of valuation, the 57 unpaid work activity codes

¹⁷ Personal communication with Malika Hamdad, Income and Expenditure Accounts Division, Statistics Canada, September 9, 2002.

are grouped into 22 different activity types, to which occupations and hourly wages are assigned (See Appendix A).

All of these methods have an inherent gender bias. Because women earn less on average than men, the opportunity cost method assigns a lower monetary value to the same activity if it is done by a woman, effectively “reproducing the difference in women’s and men’s earnings in the valuation of unpaid work” (Statistics Canada 1995, 49). The generalist replacement cost method also reproduces women’s lower relative wages; this method values most forms of unpaid work at the average hourly wage of people employed as babysitters and housekeepers, low-wage occupations disproportionately held by women. In the specialist variant, the value assigned to different types of unpaid work depends to a large extent on whether the activity is matched with a male-dominated or a female-dominated occupation. For example, pet care is matched with male-dominated categories, such as biologists and agricultural workers, and commands an hourly wage of \$10.27. Physical care of children is matched with female-dominated occupations such as babysitters and early child educators, and commands an hourly wage of \$9.13, the lowest replacement cost of any unpaid work activity (See Appendix A).

The distinction between help and care provided to household versus non-household members also affects the way unpaid caregiving work is valued. In the specialist replacement cost variant, many activities are assigned a lower dollar value when done for a non-household member than for a household member. For example, the specialist variant assigns an hourly wage of \$13.74 to home repair and maintenance when

this activity is done by and for household members and a value of \$9.83 when this activity is done for non-household members. This difference is largely an artefact of the limited detail available in activity classifications for early time use surveys. The current 22-code valuation system was designed in order to compare the estimates from the two national time use studies carried out in 1992 and 1986 with the 1981 Time Use Pilot Study. Since activity coding detail differs from survey to survey, the value code system was restricted to “activities common to all three time use surveys, often those of the least detailed survey” (Statistics Canada 1995, 36). Consequently, all eight activity codes encompassing help and care to non-household members are grouped into a single valuation category and are the same value as “other household work” carried out for household members. In the generalist variant, unpaid work for household members is assigned the hourly wage of domestic workers who would typically do these tasks, resulting in lower estimates of the value of this work. For example, child care activities are valued at the cost of physical care of children, \$9.13 per hour and household work, including personal care for adults, shopping and household management is valued at the cost of other domestic work, \$9.83 per hour. The hourly wage assigned to unpaid informal help and care for non-household members does not change in the generalist variant, as it already reflects the wage for a domestic worker in the specialist variant. Furthermore, volunteer work for organizations, an unpaid work activity that closely resembles market work in its nature and conditions, is assigned a much higher value in both the specialist and generalist variants of the replacement cost method, \$13.32, than help and care carried out informally for non-household members, \$9.83. This is yet another example of the way in which the current framework values work differently

depending on for whom it is done. To eliminate these kinds of biases, all help and care activities should be valued at the same rate, regardless of whether they are done for household or non-household members, or are done on an informal basis or as a volunteer for an organization (See Appendix B).

Despite the limitations of the time use data and the current statistical framework for measuring and valuing unpaid work, three different forms of unpaid informal caregiving can be derived from the 1998 GSS. These are help and care provided to household children, help and care provided to household adults, and help and care provided to non-household members. The revised framework clearly distinguishes between informal unpaid work and organizational volunteer work in order to focus on informal caregiving and acknowledge the different relations associated with “informal” versus “formal” unpaid work. What counts as informal caregiving is also expanded to include travel time related to caregiving. Finally, the revised framework is applied to the valuation of unpaid informal caregiving for a more consistent assignment of hourly wages to similar activities, regardless of for whom they are done. The ensuing chapter analyzes the 1998 time use data with the revised framework for measuring and valuing unpaid work.

Chapter 4

How much unpaid work consists of informal caregiving?

Unpaid informal help and care accounts for a considerable share of all time devoted to unpaid work, under either the current or the revised framework. In 1998, Canadians aged 15 and over performed a total of 30,331 million hours¹⁸ of unpaid work.¹⁹ Under the current framework, unpaid informal help and care accounted for 15% of all unpaid work time – 12% was help and care provided to household members and 3% was other help and care provided to non-household members (Figure 4.1). As noted in Chapter 3, however, help and care for others includes many domestic work activities that do not count as help and care when they are done for household members. This is related to the criteria of normal and customary behaviour; since it is not customary to provide unpaid domestic help to other households, these activities are conceived of as help and care when done for others, but not when done for household members.

Under the revised framework, the main axis of differentiation of unpaid work is the notion of “informal” versus “formal” or organizational unpaid work. This distinction is based on the key insight from the domestic labour debate, that is, that unpaid work is subject to different relations and conditions than paid work. As such, the form of unpaid work that most resembles paid work in its relations and conditions, “formal” volunteer work for organizations, is separated from “informal” unpaid work done by individuals for individuals. The vast majority of hours of unpaid work, 98%, is informal in nature (Figure 4.2).

¹⁸ To obtain the annual volume of unpaid work, the sum of hours per day were multiplied by 365.

Within the category of informal unpaid work, activities that constitute help and care are distinguished from other unpaid work, such as domestic work and shopping done for household members. In addition to elevating the informal/formal distinction, another key difference between the measurement of help and care in the current and the revised frameworks is the treatment of travel time. In the current framework, travel related to help and care is not explicitly categorized as help and care, either when done for household or non-household members, while it is included as caregiving in the revised framework.²⁰ Consequently, informal caregiving work increases from 15% of unpaid work in the current framework to 18% in the revised framework. The measure of help and care to household adults is most dramatically affected by the exclusion of travel time, as travel is its single largest component under the revised framework. Travel made up 55% of household adult care (297 million hours), 12% of household child care (461 million hours) and just 4% of time devoted to help and care to people in other households (48 million hours). Overall, travel related to the provision of informal help and care accounted for 806 million hours or 15% of unpaid informal caregiving as defined in the revised framework (Table 4.1).

¹⁹ Unpaid work as defined in *Households' Unpaid Work: Measurement and Valuation*, Statistics Canada Catalogue 13-603E, no. 3, 1995.

²⁰ Travel time related to the provision of informal help and care to non-household members is included in a single activity code 691 – travel for civic and voluntary activity, categorized as “transport – other unpaid work” in the current framework. However, this activity code includes components, such as travel related to political activity, religious meetings and other social organizations, that do not meet the third person criterion and should therefore be excluded from the estimate of unpaid work (Statistics Canada 1995). Beginning in 1998, data from the supplemental helping question, “Did this activity help a person outside your household or an organization?” on the episode file of the time use survey can be used to identify which portion of time recorded in this activity code concerned help to a non-household member or to an organization. However, even for travel that helped an organization, we still cannot determine if the travel constituted to volunteer work for an organization (a form of organizational “formal unpaid work”) or participation in other civic or social organizations (not delegable activities, and therefore should not be included as unpaid work). Only about 15% of the 320 million hours recorded as travel for civic and volunteer activity in 1998 was related to informal help for a non-household member. This resulted in an

In total, eight out of ten hours of unpaid help and care were provided by and for household members, 70% consisting of care for children and 10% of care for household adults (Figure 4.3). Although just 20% of unpaid informal caregiving benefited a non-household member, this time is not negligible. Compared with hours spent on volunteer work for organizations (311 million hours), Canadians spent nearly three times as many hours in 1998 providing informal help and care to people in other households (1,095 million hours)²¹ (Figure 4.2). Perhaps because volunteer work for organizations more closely resembles paid forms of work, it draws more attention in an economic context than help and care provided to others on an informal basis. This bias is also evidenced by current efforts by Statistics Canada to create a satellite account for the not-for profit volunteer sector. While the national statistical agency does produce estimates of the volume and value of unpaid household work, it does not produce a complete satellite account for unpaid work, and although the 1998 time use data has been publicly available since November 1999, as of the summer of 2002, updated estimates of the volume and value of unpaid work from the 1998 GSS on time use had not yet been published.

The most detailed information available about child care refers to the care of household children.²² Physical care is the largest component of unpaid care for household children.²³ About 45% of all primary activity child care time was spent on instrumental

increase of less than one percentage point in the share of total unpaid work accounted for by hours spent helping people in other households.

²¹ It should be noted that the estimate of hours spent on volunteer work for organizations is slightly underestimated as it is impossible to determine how many hours devoted to travel for civic and voluntary activity (code 691) were related to organized volunteer work as opposed to participation in social organizations.

²² Only one activity code encompasses all unpaid childcare provided to children living in other households, and this will be analyzed in the context of help and care provided to non-household members.

²³ It should be noted that this figure includes only time when caring for children was the respondent's main activity, and therefore underestimates total childcare time. Primary-activity child care represents about one-quarter of total childcare time (including secondary activities) as estimated from the supplementary child

care, including activities such as infant care, putting children to bed, getting them ready for school and other personal care activities such as getting the children up, feeding, bathing and dressing. Care for a household child also includes several forms of affective or expressive care, such as playing, helping, teaching, reading and talking with children. These kinds of care account for about four out of every ten hours of primary activity child care. About 27% of child care time was spent in play and other care, with most of this category accounted for by play time. Activities related to education, such as helping, teaching, reprimanding, reading and talking with children, accounted for 14% of care time, related travel made up 12%, and the remaining 2% of time was spent providing medical care (Table 4.1).

Household adults are defined as all household members aged 15 and over. As such, the category of help and care to adult household members also includes time devoted to adolescents.²⁴ This category of care consists mainly of transportation. An estimated 55% of hours were spent on travel related to helping and caring for adult household members, including waiting time related to travel. Medical care accounted for just 10% of adult care time. A considerable share of adultcare time, 35% of all hours, was accounted for by the residual category, “other help and care”, which encompasses a wide variety of routine non-medical activities that do not fall under the classification of general household work (Table 4.1). Examples of activities that make up the category, “other help and care”, range from washing disabled husband’s hair to helping husband grade his

care diary, variable C6DUR. This figure only includes those respondents who provided valid data for the child care diary variable. Estimates from the child care diary cannot be used in calculation of the total volume and value of unpaid work precisely because they include secondary activity child care time, which would result in double-counting.

²⁴An estimated 29% of people providing help and care to adults in the household had at least one child between 15 and 18 years of age living at home.

student's exam papers to talking with the educator of handicapped 17-year-old son. One major limitation of this measure of care is the lack of information about the care recipient. Although most household members are family, we cannot ascertain other characteristics of the care receiver, such as their age, sex, health and activity limitations, nor the specific relationship between caregiver and care receiver. Especially since travel is such a large component of this care category, it would be useful to determine to what extent this indicator is measuring transportation provided to adolescents who do not have a drivers licence, arguably a form of child care.

Unpaid babysitting accounted for the greatest share of time spent on informal help and care provided to non-household members. Looking after other people's children accounted for 31% of care time in this category. Time spent helping others with their transportation needs, such as driving your neighbour to the airport, accounted for 26%. Assistance with house maintenance and repair and other kinds of unpaid help not classified elsewhere made up 15% and 14% respectively, and the remaining shares of time were accounted for by housework and cooking assistance (5%), care for disabled or ill people (4%) and travel related to help and care activities, such as driving to your mother's place to help with her housework (4%) (Table 4.1). This category of informal help and care includes activities that would not be counted as help and care if done for a household member, such as housework/cooking and household maintenance chores.

Who provides unpaid informal caregiving work?

Women undertake the majority of all hours of unpaid work, both in the aggregate and for informal help and care. Women carried out 64% of all hours of informal

caregiving,²⁵ about the same as their share of total unpaid work in 1998 (Table 4.2). The unequal sharing of unpaid informal caregiving hours between the sexes is largely explained by the fact that women continue to bear a disproportionate share of responsibility for unpaid child care work. Women undertook nearly seven out of ten hours of primary activity child care,²⁶ the activity that constituted the largest single component of unpaid informal caregiving. In the aggregate, women and men more equally shared the total time devoted to help and care for household adults and for non-household members. An ensuing examination of the activities comprising each of type of informal help and care reveals the gendered nature of care activities, even for types of care that are shared more equally between the sexes in the aggregate.

Women performed the majority of hours of all types of child care activities. However, their share was considerably higher for instrumental physical care and for routine daily activities. For instance, women undertook 77% of medical care, 75% of education (helping, teaching, reprimanding, etc.) and 73% of physical and personal care (feeding, bathing, dressing, etc.). Women also carried out about two-thirds of child-related travel time. Women and men more equally shared the time devoted to play and other types of help and care²⁷ - 57% by women, 43% by men (Table 4.3).

Again, women carried out most of the hours that were devoted to personal and medical care of adults in the household, although the proportions were not as high as they were for child care. For example, women performed 65% of adult personal care and 57%

²⁵ The ensuing analysis focuses on data estimated from the main file of the time use survey. Thus, it excludes that portion of code 691 that concerns travel related to help and care for non-household members which can only be estimated using the episode file.

²⁶ As previously noted, these estimates include only times when caring for children is identified as the primary activity, and therefore underestimate total childcare time.

²⁷ In addition to play time, this category includes activities like attending parent-teacher interviews, watching child's sports practice and talking with child care workers.

of adult medical care. On the other hand, men undertook the majority (58%) of all travel time related to helping or caring for adults in the household (Table 4.4).

The division of labour between men and women for help and care provided to others mirrors the general gendered trends in unpaid labour. Women carried out 76% of all unpaid babysitting for other people's children, 63% of time spent caring for disabled or ill people, and 57% of time devoted to helping others with housework and cooking. As is the case when this work is done by and for household members, men undertook the greater share of hours spent helping others with house maintenance tasks (68%) and other unpaid help (57%). Time spent assisting others with their transportation needs was more equally shared between women and men (Table 4.5).

Both the share of the population that engages in an activity and the time that participants spend on it affect the aggregate time spent on an activity. While almost everyone does some unpaid work on a typical day, unpaid informal caregiving is much less common activity. Overall, nine out of ten people performed some form of unpaid work on a given day in 1998, but just one in three provided informal help or care (Table 4.2). Women were somewhat more likely than men to perform unpaid work and its informal caregiving component, and when they did, they spent more time per day on these activities. As such, participation rates and average daily time allocation per participant are both indicators that help to explain the unequal distribution of unpaid work hours between the sexes. For example, 34% of women did some form of informal help or caregiving on an average day, compared with 25% of men, and these female caregivers devoted 2.1 hours per day to this form of unpaid activity, while men reported a daily average of 1.8 hours. Again, these differences were largely related to the high rate

of female participation in unpaid child care relative to that of men – 24% versus 16% - and the fact that female child care providers devoted over a half an hour more per day than their male counterparts.

Women are more likely than men to participate in most child care activities. For example, women were twice as likely as men to perform physical care, education, and child-related travel. However, men and women were equally likely to engage in play and other help and child care. Women who provide care to household children also devote as much or more time to various care activities than their male counterparts. For example, women who provided physical child care on diary day did almost a half an hour more each day than men (1.4 hours versus 1.0 hours). Those women who provided medical care to their child did so for an average of 1.4 hours a day, while too few men provided medical care to produce a statistically reliable estimate. The average times spent on educational activities, child-related travel and other help and care to children were not significantly different for women and men (Table 4.3).

Very few people provide help and care to household adults or to non-household members on a typical day. The overall participation rate for care provided to adult household members was 6% for both women and men, while women were slightly more likely to provide help to non-household members – 8% versus 6% (Table 4.5). The participation rate was highest for travel related to helping and caring for adult household members (4%) and for assisting non-household members with their transportation needs (4%). On an average day, just 2% of people provided personal care and only 1% provided medical care for a household adult. The mean daily times per participant for these activities were not significantly different for women and men. However, the

average times per participant tended to be higher for men for “male-dominated” activities and vice versa for women. For example, men who helped non-household members with household maintenance spent 3.0 hours per day on these tasks compared with 2.0 hours per day for women. Men also spent slightly more time on average on “other help and care” activities. With respect to “female-dominated” activities, average times per participant were 1.6 hours for women who did housework or cooking for others, and 1.3 hours for women caring for disabled or ill people, while too few men participated in these two activities to produce statistically reliable estimates. Finally, although it is overwhelmingly women who provide unpaid babysitting for non-household members, average hours devoted to this activity per participant were not significantly different for women and men (about 3 hours per day) (Table 4.5).

The supplementary helping questions on the episode file also provide a broader measure of the percentage of people who informally supported non-household members through their unpaid work activities. In addition to activities that constitute informal unpaid help and care to non-household members in the revised framework, other unpaid work activities done for the household may indirectly benefit a non-household member, such as giving leftovers to a neighbour. Using this broader measure, approximately 13% of people helped a household member on a typical day in 1998, either by directly providing help and care, as defined above, or by doing unpaid work that benefited both the household and a non-household member. Women were slightly more likely than men to provide informal support to others using this broad measure (Table 4.8).

The burden of informal caregiving falls particularly heavily on people aged 25 to 44 and on women in particular. Women in this age group accounted for nearly 40% of

providers of informal help and care, followed by their male contemporaries who accounted for about 25% (Table 4.6). This is also the age range where the largest share of people is employed in the labour market. In fact, women aged 25 to 44 constituted the largest single share of providers of almost all types of care, including all forms of child care, personal care to household adults, as well as transportation assistance, housework and cooking and other unpaid help provided to non-household members, many of which are typically “female” forms of work. They also provided travel for household adults and household maintenance for non-household members, forms of work that tend to be done by men, in equal numbers as men aged 25 to 44 and 45 to 64. Unpaid babysitting and care for ill or disabled people in other households was mainly done by women aged 45 to 64. Even in the oldest and youngest age ranges, women are still more likely than men to provide certain female-dominated forms of unpaid informal care. More women than men aged 65 and over provided personal care to household adults and unpaid babysitting while more young women than men aged 15 to 24 participated in all forms of child care.

For whom is unpaid informal caregiving done?

Aside from knowing that the activity concerned helping or caring for a household member, the time use survey does not provide detailed information about the care recipient, although we can assume that most household members are family members. The relationship to the care provider for informal help and care to non-household members can be derived using the supplementary helping questions on the episode file of the time use survey. The data show that family members are also the beneficiaries of most help and care extended to members of other households. Overall, 60% of all time

spent helping others, informal unpaid help and care, assisted a family member living in a different household. This general tendency is true of each of the components of help and care to non-household members. Two female-dominated activities, babysitting and caring for ill or disabled people, were overwhelmingly done for family – 80% of time spent on the former activity and 73% on the latter. This reflects the personal, physical and affective nature of these forms of care. However, the difference between the share of time devoted to kin and non-kin is much less dramatic for the other activities (Table 4.7).

The relationship to the care receiver can also be derived for the broad measure of informal support that includes both informal help and care to non-household members and household unpaid work activities that also benefited an individual outside the household. As noted earlier, about 13% of people informally supported non-household members through their unpaid work activities. Using this broad measure of social support, people were somewhat more likely to help a non-family than a family member (8% versus 6%), and women were slightly more likely than men to help a family member. People who supported a non-relative were most commonly reported helping a friend (Table 4.8).

What is unpaid informal caregiving work worth on the market?

Two basic valuation methods are employed in the valuation of unpaid work: the opportunity cost method and the replacement cost method, including a generalist and a specialist variant of the latter method. Some of the limitations associated with these methods have been outlined in Chapter 3, including the tendency to assign work done for non-household members a different replacement cost value than the same work done for

a household member. The ensuing analysis applies a new replacement cost valuation scheme that assigns the same value to work activities when done for non-household members as when done for household members to the volume of informal caregiving as measured by the revised framework, and compares the results with the current valuation scheme.

Using Statistics Canada's current valuation framework, the market value of hours of unpaid informal caregiving work carried out in 1998 ranged from \$83.7 billion for the opportunity cost estimate, to \$50.9 billion for the replacement cost generalist variant. The estimate for the replacement cost specialist variant was just slightly higher than that for the generalist variant, at \$60.5 billion. Due to the undervaluation of women's unpaid work reproduced by the opportunity cost method, women accounted for 64% of the hours of unpaid informal care but just 57% of its market value.

When activities are assigned the same wage rate whether they are done for household or non-household members, unpaid informal caregiving work is worth slightly more in market terms. The replacement cost specialist variant increases by 1.3% to \$61.3 billion and the generalist variant increased by 1.5% to \$51.7 billion. Care for disabled or ill members of other households and household maintenance and repair assistance experienced the greatest increases in value. The value of time spent assisting others with their transportation needs increased only marginally, while the value of unpaid babysitting decreased marginally. The decrease in the value of unpaid babysitting is explained by the fact that the value of work done for household members was assigned to the same work done for non-household members. In the current framework, however, babysitting is worth more when done for non-household members (people employed in

personal service occupations earning \$9.83 per hour) than for household members (babysitters earning \$9.13 per hour).

Even using the replacement cost generalist valuation method, the method favoured by Statistics Canada for national accounting purposes and which yields the most conservative estimates, the value of unpaid informal caregiving work was roughly equivalent to the value of the Gross Domestic Product of the health care and social assistance sector in 1998. The child care component of unpaid informal caregiving work was valued at about the same level as the output of the educational services sector (excluding universities), help and care to non-household members was valued at just slightly less than crop and animal production, and help and care to household adults was equivalent to the forestry and logging industries.

Figure 4.1: Composition of unpaid work: Current framework,
Canada, 1998

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Figure 4.2: Composition of unpaid work: Revised framework for analysis of unpaid informal caregiving, Canada, 1998

* An undetermined portion is related to volunteer work for organizations and the remainder does not meet the definition of unpaid work.

Note: Sub-totals may not add up to totals due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Figure 4.3: Composition of unpaid informal caregiving work, Canada, 1998

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.1: Composition of unpaid informal help and care by type, Canada, 1998

	%
Help and care for household children	100
Physical care	45
Education	14
Medical care	2
Play and other help and care	28
Related travel	12
Help and care for household adults	100
Personal and other help and care	35
Medical care	10
Related travel	55
Help and care for non-household members	100
Housework/cooking	5
House maintenance	15
Transportation assistance	26
Care for disabled/ill	4
Unpaid babysitting	31
Other unpaid help	14
Related travel	4

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.2: Unpaid informal help and care by type and sex, Canada, 1998

	Number of hours/year (millions)	Distribution of hours by sex (%)	Participation rate (%)	Mean hours/day ¹ per participant
Total unpaid work ²				
Both sexes	30,331	100	91	3.8
Women	19,016	63	96	4.4
Men	11,315	37	86	3.0**
Informal help/care ³				
Both sexes	5,456	100	30	2.1
Women	3,494	64	34	2.3
Men	1,962	36	25	1.8**
Care for household children				
Both sexes	3,866	100	20	2.2
Women	2,631	68	24	2.4
Men	1,235	32	16	1.8**
Help/care for household adults				
Both sexes	543	100	6	1.1
Women	281	52	6	1.1
Men	262	48	6	1
Help/care for non-household members ³				
Both sexes	1,047	100	7	1.7
Women	582	56	8	1.7
Men	465	44	6	1.7

¹ Averaged over a seven - day week.² Includes all time spent on travel related to civic and voluntary activity.³ Excludes travel time related to helping non-household members.

** <0.05 compared to women.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.3: Unpaid help and care for household children by type and sex, Canada, 1998

	Number of hours/year (millions)	Distribution of hours by sex (%)	Participation rate (%)	Mean hours/day ¹ per participant
Help and care for household children				
Both sexes	3,866	100	20	2.2
Women	2,631	68	24	2.4
Men	1,235	32	16	1.8**
Physical care				
Both sexes	1,748	100	16	1.3
Women	1,276	73	21	1.4
Men	472	27	11	1.0**
Education				
Both sexes	538	100	7	0.9
Women	404	75	10	1.0
Men	134	25	4	0.8**
Medical care				
Both sexes	62	100	1	1.4
Women	48	77	1	1.4
Men	14	23	--	--
Play and other help and care				
Both sexes	1,058	100	8	1.4
Women	604	57	10	1.4
Men	453	43	7	1.4
Related travel				
Both sexes	461	100	8	0.7
Women	299	65	10	0.6
Men	162	35	5	0.7

¹ Averaged over a seven - day week.

** <0.05 compared to women.

-- Amount too small to produce a statistically reliable estimate.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.4: Unpaid help and care for household adults by type and sex, Canada, 1998

	Number of hours/year (millions)	Distribution of hours by sex (%)	Participation rate (%)	Mean hours/day ¹ per participant
Help and care for household adults	543	100	5.7	1.1
Both sexes	281	52	5.7	1.1
Women	262	48	5.8	1.0
Men				
Personal and other care	191	100	2.1	1.0
Both sexes	123	65	2.6	1.1
Women	67	35	1.7	0.9
Men				
Medical care	55	100	0.5	1.2
Both sexes	31	57	0.6	1.2
Women	23	43	0.4	1.3
Men				
Related travel	297	100	4.0	0.8
Both sexes	126	42	3.6	0.8
Women	171	58	4.4	0.9
Men				

¹ Averaged over a seven - day week. No significant differences between means for women and men.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.5: Unpaid help and care for non-household members by type and sex, Canada, 1998

	Number of hours/year (millions)	Distribution of hours by sex (%)	Participation rate (%)	Mean hours/day ¹ per participant
Help and care for non-household members ²	1,047	100	7.0	1.7
Both sexes	582	56	7.8	1.7
Women	465	44	6.2	1.7
Men				
Housework/cooking	59	100	0.3	2.0
Both sexes	34	57	0.5	1.6
Women	25	43	--	--
Men				
House maintenance	167	100	0.7	2.6
Both sexes	54	32	0.6	2.0
Women	113	68	0.9	3.0**
Men				
Transportation assistance	282	100	4.3	0.8
Both sexes	15	51	4.3	0.7
Women	139	49	4.0	0.8
Men				
Care for disabled/ill	39	100	0.4	1.5
Both sexes	24	63	0.4	1.3
Women	14	37	--	--
Men				
Unpaid babysitting	343	100	1.9	2.9
Both sexes	260	76	1.9	3.0
Women	84	24	0.7	2.7
Men				
Other unpaid help	55	100	1.5	1.3
Both sexes	31	43	1.5	1.0
Women	23	57	1.2	1.7
Men				

¹ Averaged over a seven - day week.² Excludes travel time related to helping non-household members.

** <0.05 compared to women.

-- Amount too small to produce a statistically reliable estimate.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.6: Distribution of providers of unpaid informal help and care by type of care, age and sex, Canada, 1998

	15-24		25-44		45-64		65+		15+
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	
	%								
Total informal help and care ¹	6	3	39	26	10	10	3	3	100
Help and care for household children	6	1	50	31	5	5	--	--	100
Physical care	6	--	57	30	4	3	--	--	100
Education	2	--	61	22	9	6	--	--	100
Medical care	--	--	73	--	--	--	--	--	100
Play and other help and care	7	--	48	36	2	4	--	--	100
Related travel	7	--	53	25	7	7	--	--	100
Help and care for household adults	4	4	24	19	15	20	7	8	100
Personal and other care	--	--	24	--	20	17	13	--	100
Medical care	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	100
Related travel	5	--	24	23	15	21	--	7	100
Help and care for non-household members ¹	8	7	24	15	17	15	8	6	100
Housework/cooking	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	100
House maintenance	--	--	26	24	--	25	--	--	100
Transportation assistance	8	11	25	17	14	13	6	6	100
Care for disabled/ill	--	--	--	--	39	--	--	--	100
Unpaid babysitting	--	--	13	--	38	10	16	--	100
Other unpaid help	--	--	30	14	11	22	--	--	100

¹ Excludes travel time related to helping non-household members.

-- Amount too small to produce a statistically reliable estimate.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.7: Distribution of unpaid help and care for non-household members by type and relationship to caregiver, Canada, 1998

	Family	Friends, neighbours, co-workers	Not stated	Total
	%			
Help and care for non-household members ¹	60	33	7	100
Housework/cooking	41	35	24	100
House maintenance	49	44	7	100
Transportation assistance	53	44	3	100
Care for disabled/ill	73	5	22	100
Unpaid babysitting	80	19	1	100
Other unpaid help	42	38	19	100

¹ Excludes travel time related to helping non-household members.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.8: Percentage of people doing unpaid work that also helped a non-household member, by characteristics of care recipient, Canada, 1998

	Women	Men %	Both sexes
Performed an activity that helped a non-household member	15.2	11.6	13.4
Person aged 65 and over	3.7	2.6	3.2
Person with an activity limitation	2.2	1.4	3.2
Family member	7.4	4.9	6.2
Parent	2.7	1.5	2.1
Child	1.5	1.4	1.4
Other relative	3.9	1.4	3.1
Non-family member	8.1	6.9	7.5
Friend	5.7	4.8	5.2
Neighbour	0.7	0.6	0.7
Co-worker	0.6	1.0	0.8
Other	1.6	0.8	1.2

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.9: Value of unpaid informal caregiving work, specialist variant of replacement cost valuation method, Canada, 1998

	Current valuation		Revised valuation		Difference	
	\$ (millions)		\$ (millions)		%	
Informal help and care ¹	60,531		61,383		852	1
Help and care for household children						
Physical care	15,960		15,960		0	0
Education	12,049		12,049		0	0
Medical care	1,016		1,016		0	0
Play and other help and care	9,656		9,656		0	0
Related travel	4,830		4,830		0	0
Help and care for household adults						
Personal and other care	2,706		2,706		0	0
Medical care	902		902		0	0
Related travel	3,117		3,117		0	0
Help and care for non-household members ¹						
Housework/cooking	584		584		0	0
House maintenance	1,642		2,295		653	40
Transportation assistance	2,774		2,957		183	7
Care for disabled/ill	381		636		255	67
Unpaid babysitting	3,375		3,135		-240	-7
Other unpaid help	1,540		1,540		0	0

¹ Excludes travel time related to helping non-household members.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.10: Value of unpaid informal caregiving work, generalist variant of replacement cost valuation method, Canada, 1998

	Current valuation		Revised valuation		Difference	
	\$ (millions)		\$ (millions)		\$ (millions)	
						%
Informal help and care ¹	50,930		51,726		797	2
Help and care for household children						
Physical care	15,960		15,960		0	0
Education	4,909		4,909		0	0
Medical care	565		565		0	0
Play and other help and care	9,656		9,656		0	0
Related travel	4,208		4,208		0	0
Help and care for household adults						
Personal and other care	1,873		1,873		0	0
Medical care	540		540		0	0
Related travel	2,923		2,923		0	0
Help and care for non-household members ¹						
Housework/cooking	584		584		0	0
House maintenance	1,642		2,295		653	40
Transportation assistance	2,774		2,957		183	7
Care for disabled/ill	381		581		200	53
Unpaid babysitting	3,375		3,135		-240	-7
Other unpaid help	1,540		1,540		0	0

¹ Excludes travel time related to helping non-household members.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.11: Value of unpaid informal caregiving work, opportunity cost valuation method, Canada, 1998

	Women	Men	Both sexes	Women's share \$	Women's share hours
	\$ (millions)			%	%
Informal help and care ¹	48,503	35,235	83,738	58	64
Help and care for household children					
Physical care	17,710	8,479	26,189	68	73
Education	5,606	2,402	8,008	70	75
Medical care	664	252	916	72	77
Play and other help and care	8,387	8,141	16,528	51	57
Related travel	4,155	2,901	7,057	59	65
Help and care for household adults					
Personal and other care	1,709	1,211	2,920	59	65
Medical care	437	421	858	51	57
Related travel	1,755	3,070	4,825	36	43
Help and care for non-household members ¹					
Housework/cooking	472	456	928	51	57
House maintenance	743	2,038	2,781	27	32
Transportation assistance	1,982	2,503	4,486	44	51
Care for disabled/ill	338	258	597	57	63
Unpaid babysitting	3,603	1,505	5,108	71	76
Other unpaid help	941	1,595	2,536	37	43

¹ Excludes travel time related to helping non-household members.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Table 4.12: Value of unpaid informal caregiving work and Gross Domestic Product at basic price, by industry¹, Canada, 1998

	SNA benchmark values \$ (millions)	Replacement cost generalist
Total market economy	844,981	
Finance, insurance, real estate & renting and leasing	167,344	
Manufacturing	150,259	
Health care and social assistance	53,166	
Total informal unpaid help and care²		51,726
Public administration	49,486	
Retail trade	45,665	
Wholesale trade	45,531	
Construction	44,520	
Educational services	44,227	
Universities	8,403	
Educational services (except universities)	35,825	
Help and care for household children		35,298
Transportation and warehousing	41,316	
Professional, scientific & technical services	33,544	
Information & cultural industries	29,759	
Mining & oil & gas extraction	26,790	
Utilities	26,025	
Accommodation & food services	20,798	
Other services (except public administration)	20,131	
Administrative & support, waste management & remediation services	16,918	
Crop & animal production	13,859	
Help and care for non-household members		11,092
Support activities for agriculture & forestry	1,358	
Forestry & logging	5,761	
Help and care for household adults²		5,336
Fishing, hunting & trapping	832	

¹ North American Industry Classification System and revised framework for unpaid work valuation.² Excludes travel time related to helping non-household members.

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM II, Table 379-0023 and General Social Survey, 1998

Chapter 5

Summary

This thesis has used feminist theories of work to examine the utilization of time use data to measure and value unpaid informal caregiving work. Time use diary data provide the basis for statistics on the volume and value of unpaid work in the context of the national economic accounting framework.

The literature review in Chapter 2 showed how the definition and measurement of unpaid caregiving reflect a particular understanding of work. This understanding is influenced by the economic theory that focuses on the similarities between paid and unpaid work, that is, they both use time to produce a good or service that can be exchanged for pay. However, feminist theory deepens our understanding of unpaid work by acknowledging that unpaid work is both similar to and fundamentally different from paid work. Unpaid informal caregiving work is subject to relations and conditions that are personal and affective in nature – it is about labour and love.

Chapter 3 outlined some of the specific limitations inherent in the current approach to measuring and valuing unpaid caregiving work using time use data, suggested ways to improve data collection and proposed a revised framework for analysis that elevates the importance of care work. The current statistical framework is limited in its ability to measure unpaid caregiving in at least two ways. First, it tends to measure those forms of unpaid care that most resemble paid work and ignoring to a large extent the relational and expressive aspects inherent in care, that is, “caring about”. Secondly, unpaid help and care are measured and valued differently depending on for whom it is

done, reflecting principles of economic utility theory. These differences illustrate the complexity inherent in superimposing ways of understanding paid work on to unpaid work.

An analysis of the existing time use data in Chapter 4 produced four major findings. First, unpaid informal caregiving is underestimated and undervalued using the current statistical framework for measuring and valuing unpaid work. Unpaid informal caregiving accounts for 18% of total unpaid work using the revised framework for measuring unpaid work, somewhat higher than the estimate generated by the current framework (15%) largely because travel is not presently counted as help and care. Second, the analysis of unpaid informal caregiving in the new framework confirms that, as suggested by the literature, caregiving work is gendered. Women do the majority of unpaid caregiving, are more likely than men to provide care and spend more time doing so. Furthermore, female caregivers are more likely than men to provide routine, personal types of instrumental care. Thirdly, the vast majority of time devoted to unpaid informal help and care is done for family members; 70% of informal caregiving consists of care for household children and 10% is care for household adults. However, informal help and care provided for non-household members represented a substantial share of unpaid work; nearly three times as many hours are devoted to providing informal care to people in other households than to volunteer work for organizations. Nor is care provided to non-relatives inconsequential, as about 40% of all hours devoted to helping an individual in another household benefited a friend, neighbour, co-worker or other acquaintance. Finally, informal caregiving work is worth between \$83.7 billion to \$51.7 billion on the market, depending on the valuation method used. Even using the most conservative

estimate of the value of unpaid informal caregiving work (replacement cost, generalist variant), this work is equivalent to the Gross Domestic Product of the health care and social assistance industrial sector.

Conclusion

A feminist analysis of the current framework for measuring and valuing unpaid work has demonstrated that data are subjective facts influenced by the theory that shapes their collection and analysis. Similarities between paid and unpaid work form the basis for the inclusion of unpaid work in the national accounting framework, but the relational and affective nature of unpaid informal caregiving underscores important qualitative differences between labour in the public and private spheres. Although revisions to the measurement and valuation frameworks for unpaid work bring informal caregiving into sharper focus, the time use data are still limited in their ability to measure care, particularly with respect to affective care and the relationships that characterize the provision of care to household members. Future research should investigate the nature of care relationships beyond the household member/non-household member distinction and include both family and other types of care and support networks.

Appendix A

Current framework for unpaid work classification and replacement cost valuation, specialist variant, Canada, 1998

Type of unpaid work	Time use survey activity codes	Hourly earnings ¹	Occupation ²
Domestic work			
1. Food or meal preparation	101 to 102	9.38	G41 Chefs and Cooks G51 Occupations in Food and Beverage Service; G961 Food Service Counter Attendants and Food Preparers; and G962 Kitchen and Food Service Helpers
2. Food or meal clean-up	110	8.27	G93 Cleaners; and J317 Labourers in Food, Beverage and Tobacco Processing
3. Cleaning	120, 130, 182	11.98	G98 Other Elemental Service Occupations
4. Laundry and ironing	140	9.89	H512 Tailors, Dressmakers, Furriers and Milliners
5. Clothes repair and shoe care	151 to 152	8.96	H821 Construction Trades Helpers and Labourers
6. Home repair and maintenance	161 to 164	13.74	C125 Landscape and Horticultural Technicians and Specialists; I014 Nursery and Greenhouse Operators and Managers; I015 Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Contractors and Managers; I022 Nursery and Greenhouse Workers; and I212 Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourers
7. Gardening and grounds maintenance	171, 173	11.87	C021 Biologists and Related Scientists; G923 Pet Groomers and Animal Care Workers; I012 Agricultural and Related Service Contractors and Managers; I013 Farm Supervisors and Specialized Livestock Workers; I02 Agriculture and Horticulture Workers; and I211 Harvesting Labourers
8. Pet care	172	10.27	G016 Other Service Supervisors; G811 Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations; G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants; G922 Estheticians, Electrologists and Related Occupations; G931 Light Duty Cleaners; G983 Other Elemental Service Occupations
9. Other domestic work, n.e.c.	183 to 186	9.83	

Appendix A con't				
Type of unpaid work	Time use survey activity codes	Hourly earnings ¹	Occupation ²	
Help and care				
10. Physical care – children	200, 211 to 213	9.13	G811 Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations; G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants; and G814 Babysitters, Nannies and Parents' Helpers	
11. Education – children	220, 230	22.41	E132 Elementary School and Kindergarten Teachers; and G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants	
12. Medical care – children	250	16.42	D232 Midwives and Practitioners of Natural Healing; and D233 Registered Nursing Assistants	
13. Other care - children	240, 260, 281	9.13	G811 Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations; G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants; and G814 Babysitters, Nannies and Parents' Helpers	
14. Personal care – adults	271, 282	14.20	D234 Ambulance Attendants and Other Paramedical Occupations; and D312 Nurse Aides and Orderlies	
15. Medical care - adults	272	16.42	D232 Midwives and Practitioners of Natural Healing; and D233 Registered Nursing Assistants	
Management and shopping				
16. Household management and administration	181, 331, 332, 350	19.46	A303 Other Business Services Managers; A324 Managers in Social, Community and Correctional Services; and A361 Other Services Managers	
17. Shopping for goods and services	301 to 303, 310, 361, 362, 380	18.56	B315 Purchasing Agents and Officers; and G133 Retail and Wholesale Buyers	
Transportation and travel				
18. Transport – children	291	10.48	D234 Ambulance Attendants and Other Paramedical Occupations; G983 Other Elemental Service Occupations; and H713 Taxi and Limousine Drivers and Chauffeurs	
19. Transport – all other household work	190, 292, 390	10.48	D234 Ambulance Attendants and Other Paramedical Occupations; G983 Other Elemental Service Occupations; and H713 Taxi and Limousine Drivers and Chauffeurs	

Appendix A con't

Type of unpaid work	Time use survey activity codes	Hourly earnings ¹	Occupation ²
Other unpaid work			
20. Volunteer work	660	13.32	A343 Recreation and Sport Program and Service Directors; E036 Recreation and Sports Program Supervisors and Consultants; E212 Community and Social Service Workers; F154 Program Leaders and Instructors in Recreation and Sport; and G811 Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations
21. Other help and care	671 to 676, 678	9.83	G016 Other Service Supervisors; G811 Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations; G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants; G922 Estheticians, Electrologists and Related Occupations; G931 Light Duty Cleaners; G983 Other Elemental Service Occupations
22. Transport – other unpaid work	691	10.48	D234 Ambulance Attendants and Other Paramedical Occupations; G983 Other Elemental Service Occupations; and H713 Taxi and Limousine Drivers and Chauffeurs

Note: For the generalist variant, all household work (Type of unpaid work from #1 to #9 and #14 to #19) is valued at the cost of other domestic work (Type of work #9). Child care (Type of work #10 to #13 is valued at the cost of physical care of children (Type of work #10). Other unpaid work (Type of work #20 to #22) is valued at the same cost as in the specialist variant.

¹ Replacement cost specialist based on 1996 Census data adjusted for inflation and including employer contributions to the Canada Pension Plan and Employment Insurance.

² Standard Occupational Classification 1991 (Canada)

Source : Adapted from Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-603E, No. 3, 1995 and unpublished wage estimates from Income and Expenditure Accounts Division.

Appendix B

Revised framework for informal unpaid caregiving work classification and replacement cost valuation, specialist variant, Canada, 1998

Type of unpaid informal caregiving work Help and care for household children	Activity codes	Hourly earnings ¹	Occupation ²
Physical care	200, 211 to 213	9.13	G811 Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations; G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants; and G814 Babysitters, Nannies and Parents' Helpers
Education	220, 230	22.41	E132 Elementary School and Kindergarten Teachers; and G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants
Medical care	250	16.42	D232 Midwives and Practitioners of Natural Healing; and D233 Registered Nursing Assistants
Play and other help and care	240, 260, 281	9.13	G811 Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations; G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants; and G814 Babysitters, Nannies and Parents' Helpers
Related travel	291	10.48	D234 Ambulance Attendants and Other Paramedical Occupations; and D312 Nurse Aides and Orderlies
Help and care for household adults			
Personal and other help and care	271, 282	14.20	D234 Ambulance Attendants and Other Paramedical Occupations; and D312 Nurse Aides and Orderlies
Medical care	272	16.42	D232 Midwives and Practitioners of Natural Healing; and D233 Registered Nursing Assistants
Related travel	292	10.48	D234 Ambulance Attendants and Other Paramedical Occupations; G983 Other Elemental Service Occupations; and H713 Taxi and Limousine Drivers and Chauffeurs

Appendix B cont			
Type of unpaid informal caregiving work Help and care for non-household members	Activity codes	Hourly earnings ¹	Occupation ²
Housework/cooking	671	9.83	G016 Other Service Supervisors; G811 Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations; G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants; G922 Estheticians, Electrologists and Related Occupations; G931 Light Duty Cleaners; G983 Other Elemental Service Occupations
House maintenance	672	13.74	H821 Construction Trades Helpers and Labourers D234 Ambulance Attendants and Other Paramedical Occupations; G983 Other Elemental Service Occupations; and H713 Taxi and Limousine Drivers and Chauffeurs
Transportation assistance	674	10.48	D232 Midwives and Practitioners of Natural Healing; and D233 Registered Nursing Assistants
Care for disabled/ill	675	16.42	
Unpaid babysitting	673	9.13	G811 Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations; G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants; and G814 Babysitters, Nannies and Parents' Helpers
Other unpaid help	676, 678	9.83	G016 Other Service Supervisors; G811 Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations; G813 Early Childhood Educators and Assistants; G922 Estheticians, Electrologists and Related Occupations; G931 Light Duty Cleaners; G983 Other Elemental Service Occupations

¹ Replacement cost specialist based on 1996 Census data adjusted for inflation and including employer contributions to the Canada Pension Plan and Employment Insurance.

² Standard Occupational Classification 1991

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