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Family Geographies and Gender Cultures

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In this paper we describe regional differences in partnering and parenting within Britain, using indices of the 'Motherhood Employment Effect' to indicate different geographical levels of adherence to the 'traditional' male breadwinner/female homemaker family, and of 'Family Conventionality' to indicate geographical differences in 'good-enough parenting'. The geography of family formations thus described does not follow the better known 'north–south' or 'urban–rural' geographies of economic performance and prosperity, and we speculate as to how this relatively unfamiliar family geography may be related to the existence of regional gender cultures.

Introduction: families, diversity and space

In the debate over the 'decline of the family' it is now established that the 'traditional' male breadwinner/female homemaker family model was itself created historically – it emerged as an ideal in Europe over a relatively short historical period, and always many families found it impossible to live up to it (see Lewis 1989, 1992; Pfau-Effinger, 1998). What is often overlooked in this debate is that families have not simply changed over time, they also vary over space at any one time. The 'traditional family' itself emerged in particular parts of Britain and the Netherlands in the seventeenth century, and subsequently developed in other countries and regions, although even in western Europe some areas and social groups long remained relatively untouched (Todd, 1985; Pfau-Effinger, 1998; Fraser, 1999). In short, family forms have a geography, as well as a history.

These geographies of family forms have important implications for social behaviour and social policy. For example, research has established that understandings of what constitutes 'good mothering' varies significantly between different social groups in different geographical areas and that these understandings are, in part, maintained and reproduced through local social networks where deviant behaviour is unsupported and conforming behaviour is rewarded (Duncan and Edwards, 1999; Holloway, 1999). In turn, the economic and income effects of training and educational policies will partly depend upon whether mothers are expected – and expect – to be basically carers at home (perhaps with some part-time work organised around this prime responsibility) or full-time workers using childcare services.

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This 'geography of family forms' has been addressed at the national level, particularly for western Europe, in the context of the debate over women's position in different welfare state regimes (for example Sainsbury, 1994, 1996; O'Connor, Orloff and Shaver, 1999). This debate has been limited, however, in focussing on women's paid work and welfare rights, rather than on their position in families. This body of work can also be criticised for overly focussing on the national level, and neglecting important regional and local dimensions to gender inequalities and family behaviour (see Duncan, 1995, 2000). Partly this results from the 'national state fetishism' of social policy as a discipline where much of this debate has taken place, probably reflecting both its particular Fabian inheritance as well as the common tendency in a generally space unaware social science to simply equate spatial differences with different 'societies', in turn crudely identified as nation states ('German society', etc.). This tendency is no doubt underlain by the fact that modern social and political discourse is heavily infused by national assumptions (Williams, 1995). The result, however, is that the national state is enthroned as dominant social actor as well as the only spatial container, and the rich vein of geographical research on regional and local gender differences, from Doreen Massey's Spatial Divisions of Labour (1984) onwards, has been almost completely neglected in this debate.

The work of Pfau-Effinger (1998, 2000) is a partial exception in developing a theory of 'gender cultures' – social understandings about what men and women are, do and expect, and how families vary as one part of this. In some countries (type case Finland) mothers are culturally defined, in families as well as institutionally, as full-time workers while in others (type case former West Germany), mothers are culturally defined as homemakers and carers. This gender culture includes how childhood and parenting is conceptualised, and how it is practised, although most comparative social policy discussion of differential gender roles ignore this arguably crucial part of women's lives (cf. Pringle, 1998). Pfau-Effinger sees such gender cultures, rather than differences in national social policy such as childcare provision, as primarily explaining national variations in rates of women's paid work. Of course, social policies affecting the relative ease with which women can take on paid work (conceptualised by Pfau-Effinger as the 'gender order' of institutions and structures) can be important to their actions in taking on or avoiding long-time paid work but, if anything, they too result from gender culture expectations about women's and men's roles. This position is supported by historical evidence which normally shows that women, including mothers, enter the long hours labour force in large numbers before the development of state support, not afterwards. (The current situation in Britain, where New Labour's National Childcare Strategy is more a response than a breakthrough, seems a case in point.) This argument turns the normal social policy argument on its head, which assumes that it is variations in national welfare and tax/benefit policies which determine national differences in women's behaviour in combining paid work and motherhood. Any local differences then become, by implication, trivial and almost random variations around this national standard.

Feminist geographers have developed Pfau-Effinger's work in describing regional gender cultures in the case of Sweden (Forsberg, 1998) and Switzerland (Bühler, 1998). In Sweden, some regions possess 'traditional', gender 'contracts',[1] despite an overall national equality gender contract, while other areas show different 'modernised' and 'non-traditional' gender contracts. In Switzerland, 'traditional' and 'modern' gender

cultures mapped on to linguistic divisions between German and French speaking areas. Analogously, different social and ethnic groups of lone mothers in Britain showed different 'gendered moral rationalities' towards combining paid work and motherhood, despite living within the same policy regime (Duncan and Edwards, 1999). This differentiation within national social policy regimes supports Pfau-Effinger's argument that both variations in women's uptake of paid work, and the different availability of welfare services associated with these (public childcare, etc.), result from differences in deep-seated and long-lasting gender cultures about the position of women in families, and how they should combine caring and economic work.

In this paper we address the issue of local variations in family forms within one country, using Britain as an example. We concentrate on partnering and parenting as constituting the 'core' of families, although of course there are many other social relationships carried out within families.[2] Firstly, in section 2, we briefly discuss how we measure spatial differences in partnering and parenting. In section 3 we go on to show how there is no standard British family in any geographical sense. Rather, different sets of regions and localities hold their own statistical norms for family life. This leads to the question of origins – where do these different spatial norms come from, and how are they reproduced? We discuss this issue in section 4 where, in the absence of definitive British research, we speculate as to how this family geography may be related to the existence of regional gender cultures.

Measuring variations in partnering and parenting in Britain

We constructed an index of differences in partnering – the 'Motherhood Employment Effect' (MEE) – and another index of differences in parenting practices – the 'Family Conventionality' (FC) index. We mapped these indices on the District Council (DC) scale, the smallest standard local government level in Britain at the time of the 1991 census, which is our chief source of data.[3] This is for two reasons. Firstly, we can build up from this scale to discover any sub-regional groupings and, secondly, DCs can also be taken to approximate Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) which spatially link commuting to job opportunities – especially for women and the lower skilled.[4]

The Motherhood Employment Effect (MEE)

The MEE is a standardised measure of the difference between the full-time employment rate of partnered mothers (i.e. with dependent children) and the full-time employment rate of partnered non-mothers (i.e. without dependent children) in the prime 'motherhood' age range of 20–45 years. It is constructed from the individual 2 per cent Sample of Anonymised Records (SARs, where some smaller DCs are spatially aggregated) derived from the 1991 British census and is inspired by Sackmann's (1998, 2000) 'motherhood effect' index for EU countries.

The MEE represents the withdrawal of mothers from full-time paid work into either what the GB Census labels 'economic inactivity' – in fact usually full-time, but unpaid, caring and domestic work – or into part-time employment combined with such unpaid work. In a social and cultural sense, most part-time paid work by partnered mothers in Britain – as in most of the EU – can be taken as an index of withdrawal from a paid-worker role in that it is usually seen (by both partners) as supplementary to a caring role.

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It becomes organised around the priority of unpaid caring and domestic work, both in terms of taking up employment and hours worked. Partly for this reason, mothers' part-time employment is often short-time and low paid, although it can be important to household income. Certainly it is with fathers and mothers of dependent children that gendered divisions in employment, and disparities in earned income, are strongest in Britain (Dex, 1999; Breugel, 2000). Partnered mothers who work full-time also usually carry out much more unpaid caring and domestic household work than male partners (Sullivan, 2000), but in this case much caring work has also to be carried out by someone else apart from the mother, while unpaid work schedules must be organised around paid work times, rather than vice-versa. Full-time work also offers substantially increased income. In this way the 'traditional' male breadwinner/female homemaker duality is severely qualified when a female partner works longer hours. Using the difference between mothers and non-mothers further controls for the effects of local economies. Lone mothers are excluded because of their particular position in terms of childcare and income needs, and where their frequency also varies dramatically between areas.

The theoretical basis for the MEE follows the concept of gender cultures as described in section 1. This claims that regional and local differences in women's employment patterns are not only influenced by geographical variations in the availability of jobs at the local labour market level (which the MEE attempts to standardise), or by the varying provision of welfare services supporting working women. According to this argument, these are secondary, exogenous influences, where instead variations in women's employment rates are crucially influenced by local social and institutional ideas about what men and women ought to do, and about their interdependencies. In some places mothers are generally seen as mothers caring for children at home, maybe with some part-time paid work when the children are at school. In other places mothers are seen as workers, where children are cared for by others in work hours. The MEE is thus designed to measure geographical differences on a male breadwinner/female homemaker normative continuum, as an index of this varying social interpretation of motherhood.

There are four indicator weaknesses with the MEE. First, partnered women sometimes carry out substantially more 'gainful 'work than officially recorded, for example in family businesses. However, this work is again usually socially and temporally placed as supplementary to the social role of homemaking and caring. Indeed it is often unpaid. Second, older 'non-mother' women will have often been mothers with dependent children in the past, and will have lost both human capital and labour market orientation. This 'inherited' motherhood effect will be on the wrong side of the equation, as it were. Third, caring for elderly or sick parents and other relatives and friends is not distinguished, and again will appear on the wrong side of the equation among non-mothers. Our formulation of the MEE will minimise these latter two problems however, as partnered women aged over 44 years without dependent children are excluded from the index and it is in this age group that the majority of 'previous' mothers and carers for the sick and elderly –especially those with heavy responsibilities – are located (ONS, 1998). These first three problems with the MEE should have a minimal effect on its efficacy in indicating relative spatial differences.

A more troublesome problem can arise if some areas have low employment rates for both partnered mothers and partnered non-mothers, where the MEE will be reduced simply because of this statistical equivalence. Similar effects have been noticed on an

international scale, where in Ireland, Greece and Japan for example, women often leave the labour market on marriage, not when they later become mothers (Sackmann, 1998). While this was common in Britain before the war, this does not seem to be the case over recent decades (Lewis, 1989, 1992). There may, however, be a limited effect of this type in Britain in local labour markets where there are few jobs available for any women, mothers or non-mothers. This would be a classic indicator problem where different processes produce the same patterns. However, an analysis of female job availability (the ratio of total female jobs to the total number of females aged 20–45 in 1991) showed that this problem was only marked in a few areas, mostly in Wales. We have distinguished these areas in mapping the MEE in section 3.

The Family Conventionality Index (FC)

The FC measures the ratio of births to married couples: births to cohabiting (non-married) couples, and was constructed from the Population and Vital Statistics (1997) which aggregates 100 per cent birth register information for local government areas.[5] Lower ratios, with more births to cohabiting couples, are taken as indicating less conventionality in parenting practices, and vice versa.

Theoretically, this index sees the social response to pregnancy, by couples, as a good marker of what is considered 'good-enough parenting'. In some areas good parenting is generally viewed to mean marriage ('conventional'), while in others cohabitation is commonly seen as good enough ('alternative'). Again, births to lone mothers are excluded where these are both strongly clustered and associated with social deprivation. The number of lone mother births can have an indirect effect on the index however, where in some areas cohabitation is seen more as an alternative to lone motherhood, while in other areas it may be more of an alternative to marriage.

The geography of partnering and parenting in Britain

The Motherhood Employment Effect

Figure 1 maps the MEE for the 278 SAR areas in Britain. An index of 100 indicates total withdrawal from full-time paid work by mothers, and 0 indicates no withdrawal. In fact the index ranged between just over 50 per cent for areas in Lancashire and inner London, where only half of mothers withdrew from the worker role (lighter shading in figure 1) to almost 90 per cent for outer suburban towns in the south-east of England, where almost all mothers withdrew from the worker role (darker shading).

Using Sackmann's pioneering work (1998, 2000) on European gender roles, Britain overall appears as one of a more 'traditional' group of countries, with a high score (–34) on Sackmann's 'motherhood effect' index (also indicating mothers' withdrawal from the labour market but constructed in a different way to the MEE and not directly comparable). Only west (old länder) Germany (–39), the Netherlands (–43), and Ireland (–51) show higher withdrawal rates. In contrast France and Belgium showed much lower rates (–17 and –16). Dramatically, Denmark gave a positive rate of +2; here motherhood stimulates women to take on more paid work. The reasons for these national variations have been discussed extensively elsewhere. Our point here is to show the importance of regional variations which disappear in using national averages (see Forsberg, Gonäs and

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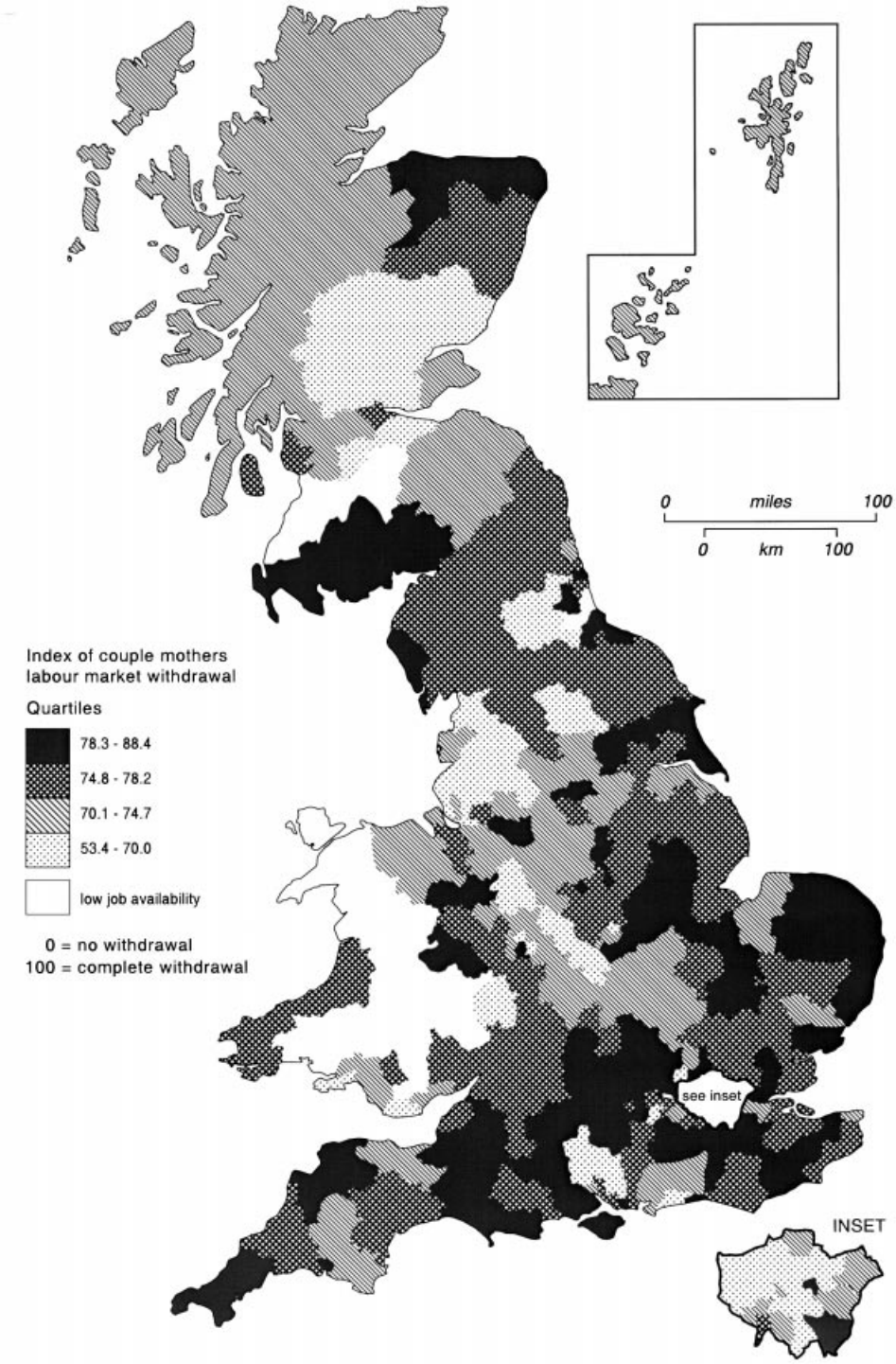

Figure 1. The motherhood employment effect, Britain 1991
Source: Individual (2%) SAR, 1991 Census.

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Perrons, 2000 for women's employment in Europe). Some areas in Britain resemble 'little Irelands' in terms of the MEE, while others are more like 'little Frances' – although there are no 'little Denmarks'.

The broad regional patterns in the MEE do not correspond with patterns of either economic growth and decline. Thus both Lancashire (an area of relative economic stagnation) and west London (with better job prospects for women) show low withdrawal rates, indicating low adherence to male breadwinner/female homemaker norms.[6] Similarly those areas with the highest employment growth in Britain – the outer south-east and East Anglia, and those with the highest job losses – the former coalmining and steel-making areas in South Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, both show high withdrawal rates and hence higher adherence to male breadwinner/female homemaker norms. Nor does the MEE rate correspond with urban–rural differences. Thus some large towns show high withdrawal rates (like Bristol, Hull, east London, and Sheffield) as do some of the more remote rural areas in Cornwall or Galloway in south-west Scotland. However, other large cities and rural areas alike show low MEEs.

This regional pattern is a relatively unfamiliar one, however. In popular consciousness the more familiar regional map of Britain is that of the 'north–south divide'. This simple picture is of course debatable, not least in terms of current government policy where even Tony Blair has been drawn in, to first denying and then (under pressure from northern MPs fearing cuts in state aid) accepting this dichotomy (Tran, 1999; Travers, 1999). The alternative, as originally favoured by Blair and his advisors, is to point to more precise inner-city–suburban–rural labour market differences, with 'succeeding' and 'failing' areas in both north and south. Some echoes of this can be seen in figure 1. Overall, however, neither the simple north–south dichotomy nor more detailed labour market regionalisations, which are both based upon economic indicators of growth and prosperity and on social indicators of class and well-being, show much correspondence with the geography of gendered divisions of partnering as shown in figure 1.

This regional pattern of the MEE, and its lack of overall correspondence with economic indicators, is replicated in similar work. Jarvis (1997) finds that 'traditional' households (men in full-time work, women working as full-time housewives) are most common in the high-growth areas in the south-east of England, while low-growth Lancashire, together with Greater Manchester, have the lowest proportion of traditional households and the highest rates of 'dual-earner/career' households. These regional patterns seem enduring. In Britain, the 1981 map of women's work roles was essentially the same as that for 1981 (Duncan, 1991a, Duncan and Edwards 1999). For Germany, Sackmann and Häussermann (1994) found that the relative propensity of women to take up paid work, by region, was the same in 1990 as in 1890 – despite dramatic shifts in regional economic performance in Germany over the last 100 years, not to mention other fundamental social and political changes over the century. It is the regional pattern which dominates in the geography of gender divisions of labour. In more general terms, the geography of gender is not the same as the geography of class or the geography of the space economy.

Family conventionality

Figure 2 shows the FC for the 476 DCs in Britain. The less conventional, lighter shaded, areas include some coastal and inland resort areas, some older and disadvantaged

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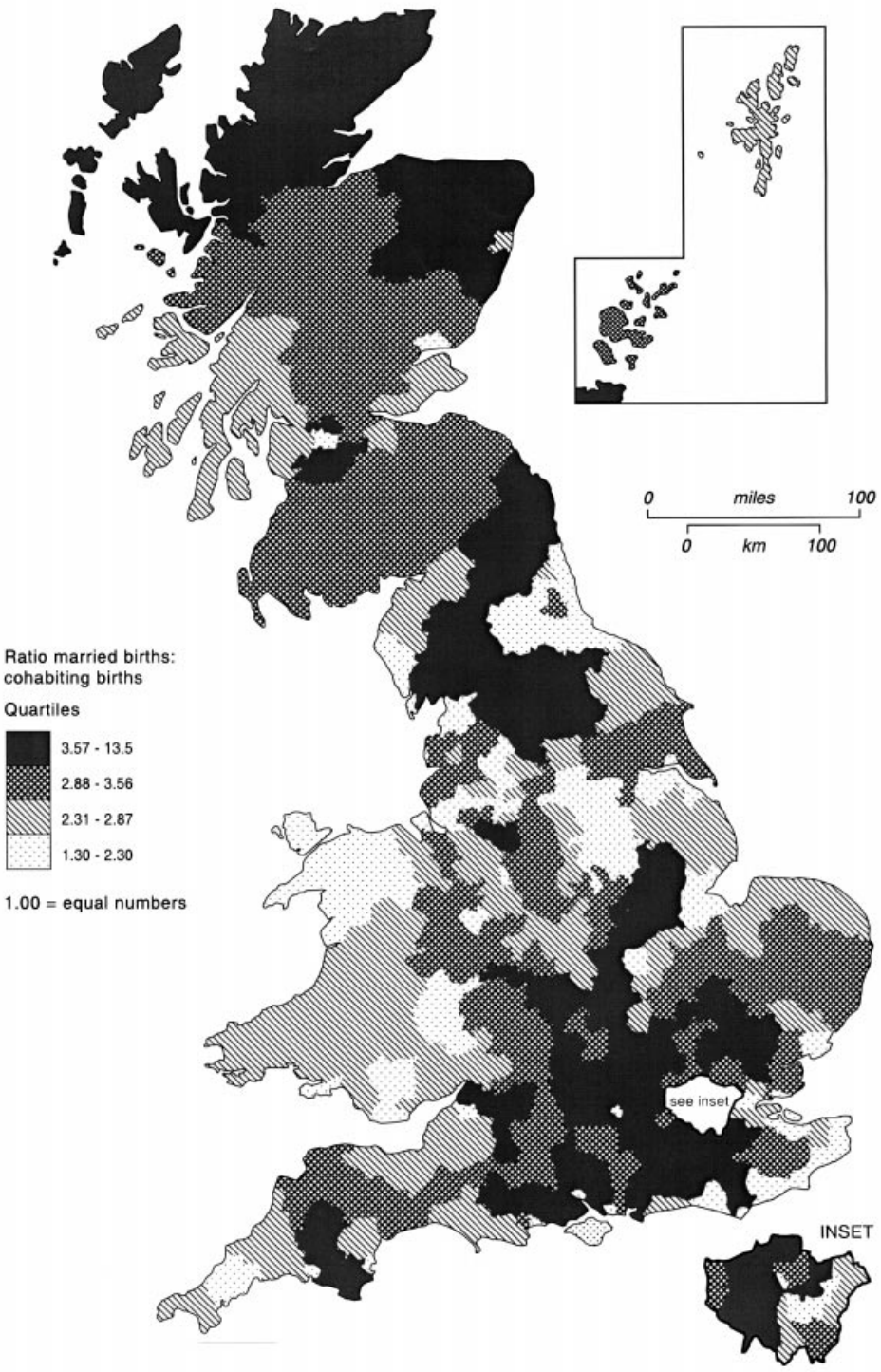

Figure 2. Family conventionality: Britain 1997
Source: Key population and vital statistics, 1997.

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industrial areas like South Yorkshire and the north-east, and relatively disadvantaged cities like Hull as well as some higher status smaller towns like Lancaster. The darker shaded areas show great swathes of 'conventionality' in the more prosperous south-east, including most of London, East Anglia, and much of small town northern England and Scotland. Some suburban DCs, and those with a large proportion of Muslim residents (for whom cohabitation is extremely rare) also show high conventionality.[7] In the Western Isles, strongly influenced by extreme Prestbyterianism, the FC reached a remarkable 13.5.

Again, it is useful to place these results in an EU context, this time drawing on Duncan's (1996) work on the 'political family'. Here four groups of countries were distinguished, using rates of births outside marriage and divorce. First was a 'traditional' group of Mediterranean countries and Ireland where children were born within marriage and divorce rates were low. In a second 'modernised traditional' central European group, including West Germany, children were born within marriage, but divorce rates were relatively high. Third was a 'restructured' or 'alternative' group, of Scandinavian countries and former East Germany, where divorce was high and where around half of children were born outside marriage. Finally, there was a group of 'restructuring' countries, including Britain and France, which were moving towards the third group. However, as with the MEE, if we look at local and regional patterns within Britain we can readily distinguish 'little Swedens', 'little Germanys', and 'little Greeces'.

Family conventionality does not completely replicate the MEE, however. Some low MEE areas are dominated by married couple births. For example, mothers in west inner London – a high status and economically buoyant area – may usually have full-time jobs, but they tend to stay within marriage as far as having children is concerned. Conversely, some areas of higher MEE show low family conventionality; these are often areas which attract people living 'alternative' family lives outside the traditional married heterosexual family, such as Brighton and some university towns, as well as areas known for escape from the 'rat race' of modern metropolitan life like west Cornwall and parts of Wales. These might be called areas of family unconventionality by choice, where people actively choosing alternative lifestyles congregate (see Phillips, 1993; Smith, 2001). Some old coalmining and industrial areas previously dominated by male manual work also show high MEEs with low family conventionality. These also appear to be areas with strong adherence to the traditional breadwinner family, but may in contrast be areas of family unconventionality through lack of choice. Severe economic and social dislocation since the 1980s has underpinned family breakdown, as many potential partners simply have few assets to bring to a partnership (cf. Smart and Stevens, 2000). Cohabitation then expresses lack of choice rather than a positive choice for an alternative to marriage. The ex-coal and steel areas of South Yorkshire and Sheffield seem prime examples, devastated by the economic restructuring and cuts of the Thatcher era, and now achieving 'objective 1' status in the EU for disadvantaged regions with incomes far below the EU average (see Turner, 2000). Finally, some large cities like Manchester and Glasgow appear to combine elements of both metropolitan 'alternative by choice' and disadvantaged 'alternative by lack of choice'.

However, as with the MEE, these regional patterns do not simply correspond with patterns of economic growth or decline, although there are associations with regionally specific class distributions. While these patterns do not directly correspond with differences in the space economy, our discussion above points to explanations in the way different sorts of areas favour, or discourage, particular family forms – what we

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might call the 'space-family'. But what are the mechanisms that create the 'space-family'? We turn to this question in the next section.

Explaining the geography of family formations

Why does the geography of partnering and parenting not follow the better known 'north–south' and 'urban–rural' geographies of economic performance and prosperity? While more research is needed to arrive at a satisfactory answer, the existing literature does provide some leads and speculations.

A first solution has been to appeal to historical lags in the primacy of the space economy, where current gender geographies can seen as a hangover from earlier economic conditions. To use Doreen Massey's (1984, 1995) memorable and now classic title, the division of labour in capitalism is also a 'spatial division of labour'. Particular jobs, skills and occupations are differentially distributed to different local labour markets, and hence job opportunities, the development of human capital and income levels also vary on a local level. But the spatial division of labour is also highly gendered. Established patterns of gendered work then set traditions in which later gendered divisions of labour would develop. For example, in areas where women had long been exploited as a supplementary and ill-paid labour force in agriculture (as in East Anglia) women would remain in similar status jobs even when, as in this example, such areas entered a boom based on services and high-tech manufacturing. Similarly, but conversely, women's high orientation to paid work in areas of past economic growth where women were central to the labour force would be maintained even when these areas went into decline. The Lancashire textile towns in Britain are a particularly striking example, where the factory system first erupted on the world and where women and mothers have worked full-time in cotton mills from the eighteenth century (McDowell and Massey, 1984). In other areas immigration and the concentrated residence of different ethnic groups may bring different traditions about women's work to particular localities, for example, in parts of Inner London, Black mothers see full-time paid work as the proper thing to do (Duncan and Edwards, 1999). Indeed, all three of these areas can be readily distinguished in figure 1.

However, this very reasoning suggests that the 'local economic hangover' explanation is too simple, for appealing to 'tradition' emphasises how spatial divisions of labour are intimately bound up with other social and cultural changes. It was in industrial Lancashire, for example, that women in Britain first gained greater power both within households and in public life. Women in Lancashire often have greater control over male income and 'joint marriages' (that is when partners share the same social network) first became a norm in this area. Similarly, Lancashire women joined trade unions on a scale unknown elsewhere in the country and became a potent force in local politics. Local welfare services were sometimes highly developed as a result. This renegotiation of gendered power does not simply result from women taking up paid work and contributing more to the household wage. Empirical studies generally show that this has little impact in itself on the definition of gender roles within households. Rather, gender role renegotiation seems to follow cultural redefinitions. Thus within Lancashire towns it was the type of work undertaken by women compared with men, their relative wage levels and above all the dissolution of gendered relations of authority and subordination in the workplace that appear to be important in explaining the local level of women's political

influence (Mark-Lawson, Savage and Warde, 1985; Mark-Lawson, 1988). Similar processes can be discerned in other areas, for example in west inner London where more career-oriented women have gained some measure of personal, institutional and political independence (Duncan, 1991b). At the other extreme, social institutions and gender relations in family farming areas combine to minimise women's independent role. 'Farmer's wives' may be crucially important in the production economy of the farm, as well as to reproduction tasks – but socially they remain just that: farmer's wives (Whatmore, 1991). It seems that the ideology of the 'rural idyll', where the wife plays a central symbolic function at its domestic core, contributes as much to women's continuing domestic role in outer suburban commuting areas as do the long commuting times undertaken by breadwinning men (Little, 1987; Agg and Phillips, 1998).

In other words economic causality, even if historically lagged, is only one part of the story. It is not just spatial divisions of labour that define women's role, it is also people's own gendered expectations, negotiations and demands about what being a women or a man is, and what they should do in consequence, and in what ways they depend upon one another. These understandings are not only informed by current or past economic conditions in local labour markets, but also by other social relations in households, neighbourhoods and community networks. Miriam Glucksmann (2000), in her study of women workers in Lancashire, describes just such a process. This conclusion returns us to the idea of gender cultures. Employment structures, or social policy (such as public day-care provision), do not determine mothers' women's differential participation in labour markets and in caring work – although these may be important in a secondary sense. Rather, different countries and regions have established different trajectories as a consequence of the differing balance between alternative concepts of the normal and ideal family, and of what is 'the proper thing to do' as far as women and men, and in particular mothers and fathers, are concerned.

Conclusions

We began this paper by pointing out that, just as there has never been a standard family historically, nor is there a standard geographical family at any one time. The paper has demonstrated this through an examination of variations in partnering and parenting practices within Britain. Different areas show different norms in terms of their relative adherence to the 'male breadwinner' family, as revealed by the MEE (section 3.1) and in understandings of 'good-enough parenting', as indicated by the FC (section 3.2). This 'geography of family formations' does not simply correspond to the better-known regional geographies of economic and social prosperity. Rather, they seem to be associated with relatively autonomous regional gender cultures.

Within this regional scale we would also expect a more 'micro' geography of family formations by neighbourhoods, although we have not examined this micro scale here. Local housing markets sort residents by class, ethnicity and income, and informal social processes of support and allocation, or condemnation and denial – for example through moral judgement or informal childcare – are partly carried out through local social networks.

These regional and local geographies are in their turn aggregates – all sorts of partnering and parenting practices will be found in all areas. Our claim is twofold, however. Firstly, there will tend to be a numerical dominance – and an idealised

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normative dominance – of certain forms of partnering and parenting in particular areas. Secondly, these trends are important for how communities work and for how individuals and families interact with others. Idealised and practised notions of what constitutes 'good' partnering and parenting can be quite powerful, and it is difficult to buck the trend when approval, support and resources (like informal childcare) favour certain practices above others. This is indeed a powerful reason explaining why people move – they do not do so just for the economic reasons of jobs, housing and transport, but also to move to what they see as a more sympathetic area in terms of gender roles and family ideals. This will then confirm partnering and parenting differences all the more. Policies and strategies aiming to influence family life, work and employment, and the work–life balance must take into account these geographical differences in partnering and parenting. This supports arguments made on efficacy and ethical grounds for more supportive, rather than prescriptive, social policy (see Barlow, Ducan and James, 2002, for discussion).

Notes

1 The term 'gender contract' can in this context be taken as synonymous with 'gender culture' (see Duncan, 1995, for the theoretical development of these terms.

2 This paper uses only part of our research on spatial differences in partnering and parenting in Britain, with a number of additional indicators, as originally developed for the ESRC Group on 'Care, Values and the Future of the Welfare State' (Cava) (see Smith and Duncan, 2001, and the Cava website www.leeds.ac.uk/cava).

3 Since 1991 some District Councils have been promoted to 'unitary authorities' which combine the local government functions of both DCs and Counties, either singly (e.g. Bristol, Derby) or in combination (e.g. Brighton and Hove, the East Riding of Yorkshire combining Beverley, Holderness and East Yorkshire DCs). In Scotland and Wales Counties have been removed entirely.

4 In Britain TTWAs are conventionally defined by a cut-off point where 75 per cent of work trips begin and end, and are therefore often much larger than DCs. This arbitrary boundary condition conflates the TTWAs of different social groups, and is biased towards full-time employed middle-class males, masking the smaller TTWAs of women – especially mothers and carers of relatives (Flowerdew and Green, 1993).

5 Data had to be disaggregated, through averaging, for those 1997 Unitary Authorties which combined DCs.

6 For the geography of employment see Atkins *et al.*, 1996; Green and Owen, 1998; Turok and Edge, 1999.

7 See Haskey, 1996, for cohabitation rates by ethnicity. For the adherence of British Muslims to 'traditional' family values see Husain and O'Brien, 2000, Modood *et al.*, 1997.

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