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The Gender Poverty Gap: What Can We Learn From Other Countries?

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Luxembourg Income Study Working Paper Series

Working Paper No. 112

**The Gender Poverty Gap:
What Can We Learn From Other Countries?**

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(scanned copy)



THE GENDER-POVERTY GAP:
WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

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**THE GENDER-POVERTY GAP:
WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM OTHER COUNTRIES**

ABSTRACT

We examine gender differences in the relative poverty of men and women in eight industrialized countries. The analyses are based on data from the Luxembourg Income Study that includes data from the United States, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden, Italy, and the Netherlands. We examine the importance of the gender-specific demographic compositions of marriage, parenthood, and employment in accounting for differences in men's and women's poverty rates, both within and across countries. The cross-national comparisons suggest that the relative importance of demographic characteristics differs by country and that factors such as religion, culture, and government policies also help determine the gap between women's and men's poverty rates.

**THE GENDER-POVERTY GAP:
WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM OTHER COUNTRIES**

American women are much more likely to be poor than American men. In 1991, 16.0 percent of women in the United States lived below the poverty line compared to only 12.3 percent of men (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1992). The ratio of women's to men's poverty rates -- the gender-poverty ratio -- was 1.30 in 1991, which means that women were 30 percent more likely to be poor than men. Although African-Americans have much higher poverty rates than whites (35.5 percent for women and 28.5 percent for men), their gender-poverty ratio is quite similar to whites -- 1.28 as compared with 1.30 (McLanahan, Sorensen, and Watson 1989).

We use data from the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) to compare the poverty rates of women with those of men in eight Western industrialized countries and to determine whether gender differences in demographic composition can account for within-country and cross-national differences in gender-poverty ratios. Because our data are cross-sectional we cannot say whether demographic composition is a cause or consequence of differences in men's and women's poverty rates. Nonetheless, we believe that the descriptive information we provide is of interest, and we hope that it will inform theories of gender inequality and welfare state policy.

BACKGROUND

Poverty is a family characteristic rather than an individual characteristic. That is, people are defined as poor or nonpoor depending on the economic status of the family with which they live. Two factors are particularly important in determining a family's economic status: (1) the total income of the family and (2) the ratio of dependents to earners (dependency ratio) in the family (Sorensen and McLanahan 1990). Regardless of where one draws the poverty line, people who live in families with high incomes and low dependency ratios are much less likely to be poor than people who live in families with low incomes and high dependency ratios.

We focus on six demographic characteristics that are related to a person's family income and dependency obligations: age, education, employment status, marital status, parental status, and single parenthood (the interaction of marital status and parental status). The first three characteristics -- age, education, and employment status -- tell us something about a person's earnings capacity (experience and skills) and employment effort. Higher earnings capacity and active employment increase total family income, all else being equal. For a recent discussion of gender differences in earnings see Bianchi (forthcoming). Marital status tells us something about a person's family income as well as their dependency ratio. Marriage can increase income by increasing the number of potential earners in a family. Note that because poverty is a family characteristic rather than an individual characteristic, men and women who live in the same family have, by definition, identical poverty rates. Thus, if all men and women were married, there would

be no gender difference in poverty. Parenthood and single parenthood, on the other hand, increase poverty by increasing the dependency ratio.

While each of these six characteristics is related to poverty status, we do not expect all of them to account for gender *differences* in poverty. For example, men and women in the United States do not differ very much in age, education, and marital status (at least not within the age range we focus on here), and therefore these attributes cannot account for gender differences in poverty ratios. In contrast, men and women differ substantially in employment status and parental status. Men are more likely than women to be employed, and women are more likely than men to live in a family with children (and especially to be single parents) (McLanahan and Casper forthcoming). Because employment increases family income, whereas children in the household increase dependency obligations, we expect gender differences in employment and parental status to account for a good deal of the gender-poverty ratio in the United States and to account for gender differences in poverty rates in other countries as well. In countries where there are large gender differences in demographic composition, we would expect to find relatively high gender-poverty ratios; in countries where men and women are similar in terms of these characteristics, we would expect to find low gender-poverty ratios. Because political and religious *differences* exist among the countries we study, the relative importance of these demographic characteristics in accounting for gender differences in poverty rates may be different than in the United States. We return to this point later.

DATA AND MEASURES

Data

The Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) consists of surveys from 17 industrialized countries.¹ The country-specific data sets provide a wealth of information on household income from all sources as well as limited demographic information pertaining to household members. We use data collected in the mid-1980s from eight countries: Australia (1985-1986), Canada (1987), Germany (1984), Italy (1986), the Netherlands (1987), Sweden (1987), the United Kingdom (1986), and the United States (1985). These countries were selected because their surveys contained complete information on marriage, parenthood, and employment. Our study population is women and men ages 18 to 57. Because we are particularly interested in the effects of parental obligations and employment status on gender differences in poverty, we excluded adults who were beyond the child-rearing years and those who were likely to be retired.

Measuring Poverty

We focus on poverty rather than on economic status in general because we are interested in gender differences in *economic hardship* as opposed to differences in average income. We classify people as poor if they live in a household whose disposable income (after taxes and government cash transfers) is less than 50 percent of the median disposable income for all households in that country.² We adjust for differences in family size by using an equivalence scale developed for the LIS data that is comparable to the one used

to define the official poverty lines in Canada, Sweden, and the United States (Buhman, Rainwater, Schmaus, and Smeeding 1988).

By drawing the poverty line at 50 percent of the median income, we use a *relative* poverty measure rather than an *absolute* standard (such as the one used by the U.S. government). We use this relative measure because we want to examine differences in poverty between men and women in different countries relative to the common standard of living in those countries. Countries with narrow income distributions will have low poverty rates, and countries with high levels of economic inequality will have high poverty rates, regardless of the standard of living. Using the relative measure rather than the absolute measure increases the gender-poverty ratio from 1.39 to 1.41 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1986). For more information on how the different measures affect the poverty rates and relative rankings of the different countries, see Smeeding, Torrey, and Rein (1989).

Measuring Demographic Composition

Age is measured in years and is treated as a continuous variable. Although most of the countries have data on educational attainment (Sweden is the exception), the coding in some surveys, is very crude, and the measure is not comparable across countries. To address this problem we created a variable to classify individuals according to their relative educational status within their own country. People who fall in the top 30 percent of the educational distribution are classified as "highly educated"; all others are classified

as "not highly educated." In Germany and the Netherlands, because education is measured in crude categories, we could not set the cutoff point at 30 percent -- we could only identify individuals in the top 17 percent of the educational distribution. And in the Dutch data we could only identify individuals in the top 25 percent of the educational distribution. Thus, in these two countries, "highly educated" individuals represent a more select group than in the other six countries.

We use information on marital status to distinguish between individuals who are currently married and those who are currently single. Sweden is the only country that has no information on marital status. For Sweden we use "couple status" as our measure of marital status. This category includes people who are legally married and people who are cohabiting. Individuals are classified as parents if they live in a household with a minor child who is at least fourteen years younger than they are. They are classified as employed if they work in the paid labor force.³

METHODS

We specify logistic regression equations that treat poverty as a function of age, education, marital status, parenthood, single parenthood, and employment. Separate equations are estimated for women and men for each country. To obtain predicted poverty rates for women and men we use the following formula:

$$Prob(poverty) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(B_0 + B_1 X_1 + B_2 X_2 + \dots + B_p X_p)}}$$

Means and coefficients for women and men are reported in Appendices A and B.

We use a straightforward standardization technique to assess whether differences in demographic composition explain differences in the gender-poverty gap. For within-country differences, we substitute the mean values of demographic characteristics for men into the logistic regression models for women, one at a time. For example, to see what the women's poverty rate would be if women had the same marital status composition as men, we use the intercept, coefficients, and means obtained from the women's model, substitute the men's marital status mean for the women's, and calculate the predicted poverty rate for women. Likewise, to see what the women's poverty rate would be if women had the same employment status composition as men, we substitute the men's employment status mean for the women's employment status mean in the women's model and recalculate the women's predicted poverty rate holding everything else constant. (We also used men as the standard by substituting women's mean characteristics for men's characteristics. These results led to the same conclusions as those derived from using women as the standard.)

We used the same standardization technique to examine how demographic composition differences explain cross-national differences in the gender-poverty gap. Because there is no discernable gender-poverty gap in Sweden, Italy, and the Netherlands,

we use these countries as standards to assess whether the gap between women's and men's poverty would be reduced if the countries with wider gaps were to have the same gender-specific demographic composition as the countries with no gaps. For example, to determine what the gender-poverty gap in Australia would be if Australian men and women had the same employment status as Swedish men and women, we substitute the Swedish women's employment status mean for the Australian women's employment status mean and the Swedish men's mean for the Australian men's mean and calculate the predicted poverty rates using the Australian women's and men's models.

RESULTS

Within-Country Differences

According to our estimates, the United States has by far the highest poverty rates of any of the countries we studied (Figure 1): For women the rate is 18.2 percent and for men it is 12.9 percent. Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands have the lowest poverty rates. In all other countries except Sweden, men have lower poverty rates than women.

Figure 1 about here

Figure 1 also shows that the United States has the highest gender-poverty ratio of the countries in our study. This ratio indicates that women in the United States are 41 percent more likely to live in poverty than are men. The country with the next highest

poverty ratio is Australia, followed by Germany and Canada (which are almost equal), and then Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden. In Italy and the Netherlands, the poverty rates of women and men are virtually the same. In Sweden, women's poverty rates are actually lower than men's rates. With the exception of Germany, the countries with the highest gender-poverty ratios are the countries with the highest overall poverty rates.

Table 1 about here

What if the women in each country had the same age, education, and marital status as the men in that country? Table 1 reports the percentage reduction in the gender-poverty ratio resulting from demographic standardization. Results are not reported for Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden because women in those countries have about the same poverty rates as men. According to Table 1, gender differences in the demographic compositions of age and marital status do not account for gender differences in poverty rates. Education differentials account for a small portion of the gender difference in poverty rates in the United States and Canada. Parenthood and single parenthood differentials reduce the gender-poverty ratio in all of the countries. The effects are moderate, however, with the exception of Canada. Parenthood and single parenthood differentials each reduce the gender-poverty ratio by 14 to 24 percent in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In Germany, no reduction is associated with

parenthood, although single parenthood differentials reduce the gender-poverty gap by 14 percent. In Canada, the parenthood and single parenthood differentials have substantial effects, reducing the gender-poverty ratio by 40 percent and 30 percent, respectively.

The fact that single parenthood differentials do not account for much of the poverty gap between women and men may surprise some readers, given that single parenthood is more common among women and is known to be associated with high poverty rates in the United States and elsewhere (Garfinkel and McLanahan 1986; McLanahan, Casper, and Sorensen forthcoming). Compared to other statuses single parenthood is not very common in any of the countries, however, and therefore adjusting for composition differences does not greatly affect the poverty rates of women overall.

The last row in Table 1 shows that the gender differences in employment status are the most important factors underlying gender differences in poverty rates in all the countries studied. If women had the same employment status as men, the gender-poverty ratio would be less than 1 in Australia, Canada, and Germany. In the United Kingdom and the United States, the ratio would be reduced by about 70 percent.

These results are consistent with our expectations about the effects of demographic composition differences on the poverty status of men and women. Gender differences in parenthood and single parenthood have moderate effects on the gender-poverty ratio, and gender differences in employment status have large effects on the gender-poverty ratios in all the countries.

Cross-National Differences

The next step in the analysis is to determine whether cross-national differences in the gender-poverty ratio are associated with cross-national differences in gender-specific demographic composition. We use as standards those countries with no gender-poverty gap and countries where the gender-poverty ratio is less than 1: These countries are Sweden, Italy, and the Netherlands. Keep in mind that we are concerned with *gender differences in relative poverty* rather than absolute poverty differences across countries.

Using Sweden as the standard. When we give men and women in the other five countries the mean age of the men and women in Sweden, the gender-poverty ratios change very little (Table 2). (Data are not available on educational composition for Sweden.)

Table 2 about here

Substituting the Swedish gender-specific marital composition reduces the poverty gap by about one-third in both Canada and the United States and by 14 percent in Germany. No reduction occurs in the gender-poverty ratios in other countries because their marital compositions are similar to Sweden's or they are more advantageous for women in the other countries than in Sweden.

With the exception of Germany, substituting the parental status of Swedish men and women has no effect on the gender-poverty ratios in other countries. In Germany the gender-poverty ratio is reduced only slightly (by 14 percent). Again, this is because the gender differences in the percentages of men and women with children in their households is similar across countries. Women in all of these countries are about 5 to 6 percentage points more likely to have children in the household than men (see Appendix A).

Standardizing on the gender-specific single-parent composition in Sweden reduces the gender-poverty ratio in the United States by about 18 percent, indicating that American women are more disadvantaged than Swedish women with respect to single parenthood. Standardizing on this variable reduces the gender-poverty ratio only slightly in Canada (by 10 percent) and in the United Kingdom (by 5 percent), and has no effect on the gender-poverty ratio in other countries. Note that if we could have defined single parents in Sweden as "unmarried parents" rather than "noncohabiting parents," the proportion of Swedish single parents would nearly double, and standardizing on the Swedish composition would not reduce the gender-poverty ratio in the United States. However, we feel that it is appropriate to classify these families as married, because they contain two earners and most of the men in these households are the biological fathers of the children.

Gender differences in employment composition have the strongest effect on reducing the gender-poverty ratios. If we substitute the Swedish gender-specific

employment composition for those of the other five countries, the ratio would either be significantly reduced or totally eliminated. The ratio is reduced by about 60 percent in the United States and the United Kingdom, by 90 percent in Australia, and by more than 100 percent in Canada and Germany. This is because in Sweden the percentage of women who are employed is only 4 percent less than the percentage of men who are employed. The differential is substantially higher in other countries (see Appendix A).

Thus, when Sweden is used as the standard, the gender difference in employment status is by far the most important factor in accounting for cross-national variation in the gender-poverty ratio. That is, if women in the other countries had the same labor force participation rates as do Swedish women (relative to men), the poverty gap would be entirely eliminated or substantially reduced in other countries.

Using Italy as the standard. A much different picture emerges when we use Italy instead of Sweden as the standard for evaluating the importance of demographic compositions. In this comparison we find that characteristics such as marital status and parenthood have the greatest effect in decreasing the gender-poverty ratio.

If the other five countries in our comparison had the same gender-specific marital composition as Italy (Table 2), the poverty gap would either be substantially reduced or entirely eliminated. The reductions in the gender-poverty ratios range from a low of 29 percent in Australia, to 43 percent in the United Kingdom, 71 percent in the United States, and 80 percent in Canada. In Germany, the gender-poverty ratio would be reduced

by more than 100 percent if the gender-specific marital composition were the same as the Italian composition. Examination of the means shown in Appendix A indicates that this occurs because Italy has a very small gender gap in marriage: Most Italians between the ages of 18 and 57 are married. (Note that in other countries the poverty rates for single women are higher than the poverty rates for single men. Hence changing the gender-specific marital compositions of other countries has a relatively large effect on the gender-poverty gap.)

When we substitute the gender-specific parenthood composition in Italy for those of the five other countries, the gender-poverty ratios are reduced by 14 to 30 percent. In most of the countries the percentage of women who have children in the household is at least 5 percentage points higher than the percentage for men. In Italy the percentage is only 2 points higher for women. When examining single parenthood, we find the same results. Substituting Italian single parent means for the means in other countries reduces the gender-poverty ratio between 14 and 30 percent, because Italian women are less likely to be single mothers than are women in other countries (in absolute terms and relative to men).

Not surprisingly, standardizing on the employment compositions in Italy does not reduce the gender-poverty ratio in any of the other countries. This is because the gender difference in employment status is much greater in Italy than elsewhere. Whereas in Italy the employment status difference between men and women is close to 40 percentage points, in other countries it ranges from a low of 16 to a high of 26 percentage points.

Using the Netherlands as the standard. We have seen that employment and marriage are important factors in accounting for the low poverty ratios in Sweden and Italy, respectively. The last panel in Table 2 shows that standardizing on the compositions from the Netherlands does not substantially reduce the gender-poverty ratio in most of the other countries studied. The substitutions of the Dutch means for age, education, marital status, parental status, and employment status have only minimal effects on the reduction of the gender-poverty gap in Australia, Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The only country in which the poverty gap is substantially reduced is the United States. The gender-poverty ratio would be reduced by 18 percent if the United States had the same gender-specific marital composition as the Netherlands. If the United States had the same gender-specific parent composition and the same single-parent composition as the Netherlands, the gender-poverty gap in the United States would be reduced by 12 percent and 18 percent, respectively.

There is no gender-poverty gap in the Netherlands. Yet in standardizing on Dutch compositions, the gender-poverty gaps in most of the other countries are not substantially reduced. The means in Appendix A reveal why: Dutch demographic compositions are no more advantageous for women than they are in the other countries.

CONCLUSIONS

We draw two principal conclusions. First, our results show that gender differences in demographic characteristics are important in accounting for gender differences in poverty

rates within as well as across the western industrialized countries we studied. The factors that account for the gender-poverty gap in the United States are similar to those that account for the poverty gap in most other countries. Employment and parenthood (including single parenthood) are the most important factors in all countries with large poverty gaps (Australia, the United States, Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom). Marital status, education, and age are much less important overall, partly because gender differences in these characteristics are small within countries and partly because their effects are absorbed by other variables, such as employment and parenthood. Employment, parenthood, and ^{single parenthood} ~~marital status~~, are the most important factors contributing to cross-national differences in gender-poverty ratios in countries where the gender-poverty ratio is greater than 1.00.

Second, the cross-national comparison reveals there are at least three strategies for minimizing gender differences in poverty rates. In Sweden, the key to having a low gender-poverty ratio is employment. Swedish women and men have very similar rates of labor force participation, while in other countries men's employment rates are at least 20 to 25 percentage points higher than women's rates. If men and women in the other countries had employment rates similar to those of men and women in Sweden, the gender-poverty ratios there would be eliminated or substantially reduced. Thus, Sweden shows that economic equality by gender can be achieved by equalizing employment patterns for men and women.

In Italy, marriage is the key to having a low gender-poverty ratio. Italian men and women have very high rates of marriage, which means that they pool incomes and share the financial burdens of child-rearing. If marriage were as common in other countries as it is in Italy, the gender-poverty ratios there would be reduced or eliminated. While poverty rates are relatively high in Italy, gender differences in poverty are very low. Having a high prevalence of marriage means that men and women share the same standard of living, whatever that standard is. Italy shows that gender equality in poverty rates can be achieved by increasing the prevalence of marriage. (Of course the measure of poverty used here and elsewhere assumes income is shared equally within the household. If this assumption does not hold, women may in reality be *poorer* than men, even though they have the same ^{official} ~~statistical~~ poverty rate.)

The Netherlands presents a puzzle. Substituting the Dutch demographic characteristics for those of the other countries had very little effect on their gender-poverty ratios, which suggests that the secret of success for Dutch women is neither marriage nor employment. Moreover, when we look at the marriage, employment, and parenthood compositions for the Netherlands, we find that this country fits neither the Swedish case nor the Italian case. Dutch women have much lower labor force participation rates than Dutch men, and the proportion of adults who are single is also relatively high in the Netherlands. These findings raise important questions: What is it about Italy and Sweden that makes two very different demographic factors important in

reducing the gender-poverty gap in other countries, and what is it about the Netherlands that makes neither of these factors important?

We believe the answers to these questions lie in the different cultures, religions, and government policies existent in these countries and the different pathways through which they affect gender-specific demographic compositions (Esping-Andersen 1990). In Sweden, the government promotes women's equality (with respect to labor force participation) and to a great extent has socialized the costs of raising children. Child care is heavily subsidized, and liberal parental and sick leave policies allow women to combine motherhood and employment (Kamerman and Kahn 1988). These policies underlie the unusually high employment rates for Swedish women and are a necessary part of the Swedish social strategy.

In Italy, the policies, culture, and religion defining economic support mechanisms are quite different. There, the family is the primary social unit. Families are highly respected and are encouraged to stick together; government resources are generally provided to families rather than individuals. The Catholic Church officially discourages divorce and any behavior associated with nonmarital childbearing. These formal and informal means of social control encourage marriage and mean that a higher proportion of Italian women have the financial security of marriage. Because such high proportions of women and men are married in Italy, the gender-poverty ratio close to 1.00.

We believe the low poverty rates and the low gender-poverty ratio in the Netherlands is largely due to the generous welfare system there, where unlike Sweden,

policies do not encourage women to enter the labor force, but instead protect unmarried women by providing a relatively high income floor beneath which no citizen is allowed to fall. Thus, poverty rates are low for Dutch women because poverty rates are low for all Dutch citizens, regardless of marital status, employment status, or parenthood status.⁴

In conclusion, there may be multiple ways to achieve gender equality in poverty rates. One strategy is to encourage women to become more economically independent by working outside the home. Another is to institute policy to encourage men and women to marry and stay married. Some would argue that the latter approach has costs for women in terms of their individual freedom and independence, but the economic consequences are fairly clear. A third strategy is to provide cash transfers to protect all citizens from poverty, regardless of whether they are married or employed. Many Americans would be concerned about this third strategy because they believe high transfers discourage employment and marriage. Indeed the Netherlands has a relatively high rate of unemployment (or nonemployment), a relatively low prevalence of marriage and a low rate of childbearing. Nevertheless, the Dutch case illustrates the power of institutional arrangements to override demographic influences, at least in the short term.

The results of this study are also useful in warning U.S. researchers against placing too much emphasis on women's earnings and occupational segregation when explaining women's lower economic status. Sweden has one of the highest rates of occupational segregation of all countries (Roos 1985), yet Swedish women are economically well off in both an absolute and a relative sense. Dutch women also have

very low poverty rates, not because they have achieved equality in the work place, but because of state welfare policies that protect all citizens. Likewise, Italian women are well off (relative to men), not because they are employed, but because they marry and stay married.

¹The LIS data have been used by a number of researchers to examine the poverty rates of different groups in various industrialized countries and to assess the effects of income transfers on poverty (Palmer, Smeeding, and Torrey 1988; Smeeding and Torrey 1988; Hauser and Fischer 1985; Wong, Garfinkel, and McLanahan 1992; McLanahan, Casper, and Sorensen forthcoming; McLanahan and Casper forthcoming). For more information on the LIS data base, see the "LIS Information Guide" (LIS-CEPS 1991).

² Disposable income does not include in-kind transfers, such as health care, housing, and child care, all of which improve economic welfare and vary considerably by country.

³ The Italian data do not distinguish between full- and part-time employees, and therefore we can not make a finer distinction than employed/not employed.

⁴ Ruggie (1984) makes a somewhat similar argument to account for gender equality in Sweden. She claims that Swedish women are well-off, not because of gender-specific wage policies, but because of wage policies designed to benefit all workers.

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Table 1. Percent Reduction in Gender-Poverty Ratios, Substituting Men's Mean Values on Variables for Women's Mean Values

Variable	Australia	Canada	Germany	United Kingdom	United States
Age	--	--	--	--	--
Low education	--	10	--	--	18
Single	--	--	--	--	--
Parent	14	40	--	14	21
Single parent	24	30	14	14	18
Employed	100	100	100	71	71

Note: A dash (--) indicates no significant reduction in the gender-poverty ratio.

Table 2. Percent Reduction in Gender-Poverty Ratios: Standardized on Sweden, Italy, and the Netherlands

Variable	Australia	Canada	Germany	United Kingdom	United States
Standardized on Swedish Composition					
Age	10	10	--	5	--
Low education	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Single	--	30	14	--	35
Parent	--	--	14	--	--
Single parent	--	10	--	5	18
Employed	90	100	100	57	59
Standardized on Italian Composition					
Age	5	20	--	5	--
Low education	--	--	--	--	--
Single	29	80	100	43	71
Parent	14	30	29	14	18
Single parent	29	30	29	14	26
Employed	--	--	--	--	--
Standardized on Dutch Composition					
Age	--	10	14	--	3
Low education	--	--	--	--	--
Single	--	--	--	--	18
Parent	10	10	14	5	12
Single parent	--	--	--	5	18
Employed	--	--	--	--	--

Note: A dash (--) indicates no significant reduction in the gender-poverty ratio. NA indicates data is not available.

Appendix A. Weighted Means Used to Predict Poverty Rates of Women and Men: Selected Industrialized Countries in the 1980s

Variable	Australia (1985-86)	Canada (1987)	Germany (1984)	Italy (1986)	Nether- lands (1987)	Sweden (1987)	United Kingdom (1986)	United States (1985)
WOMEN								
Age	36.1	35.1	37.0	36.9	35.4	36.8	36.0	35.1
Low education	.679	.704	.828	.711	.749	NA	.702	.681
Single	.310	.360	.335	.109	.373	.338	.294	.418
Parent	.504	.468	.424	.480	.491	.466	.529	.508
Single parent	.063	.075	.041	.024	.067	.072	.088	.141
Employed	.590	.671	.564	.397	.442	.868	.660	.638
MEN								
Age	36.2	34.9	37.0	36.6	35.7	36.7	35.9	35.1
Low education	.773	.694	.756	.469	.677	NA	.716	.630
Single	.374	.395	.399	.091	.404	.411	.317	.424
Parent	.439	.411	.382	.458	.446	.385	.465	.435
Single parent	.019	.024	.020	.008	.027	.013	.020	.054
Employed	.856	.833	.819	.775	.808	.913	.923	.816

Note: NA indicates data not available.

Appendix B. Logistic Regression Coefficients Used to Predict Poverty Rates of Women and Men: Selected Industrialized Countries in the 1980s

Variable	Australia (1985-86)	Canada (1987)	Germany (1984)	Italy (1986)	Nether- lands (1987)	Sweden (1987)	United Kingdom (1986)	United States (1985)
WOMEN								
Intercept	-2.340 (.287)	-2.114 (.204)	-2.786 (.184)	-1.787 (.095)	-3.762 (.504)	.560 (.440)	-1.909 (.275)	-2.421 (.064)
Age	-.006 (.005)	-.007 (.004)	-.006 (.003)	-.009 (.002)	.004 (.009)	-.061 (.009)	-.018 (.005)	-.009 (.001)
Low education	.558 (.124)	.406 (.092)	.123 (.090)	.053 (.056)	.307 (.224)	NA	.424 (.126)	.911 (.028)
Single	.796 (.184)	1.216 (.129)	1.609 (.123)	.991 (.088)	.715 (.319)	1.699 (.295)	-.001 (.205)	1.291 (.043)
Parent	.585 (.160)	.647 (.121)	.195 (.119)	.499 (.055)	.476 (.286)	-.146 (.331)	.611 (.149)	.826 (.040)
Single parent	1.364 (.236)	.512 (.168)	.855 (.169)	.098 (.160)	.098 (.413)	-1.117 (.513)	.456 (.248)	.562 (.051)
Employed	-1.139 (.108)	-1.460 (.075)	-1.629 (.078)	-1.618 (.069)	-.581 (.193)	-2.292 (.195)	-.779 (.107)	-1.259 (.022)
MEN								
Intercept	-1.874 (.348)	-1.992 (.225)	-2.094 (.210)	-2.495 (.091)	-3.789 (.594)	.383 (.451)	-1.719 (.388)	-1.100 (.076)
Age	.003 (.006)	.002 (.004)	-.003 (.004)	-.001 (.003)	.004 (.010)	-.048 (.009)	-.021 (.007)	-.016 (.001)
Low education	.336 (.151)	.204 (.091)	.277 (.090)	1.039 (.057)	.784 (.239)	NA	.406 (.146)	1.104 (.031)
Single	.364 (.199)	.714 (.138)	.461 (.136)	.914 (.088)	.455 (.365)	1.374 (.315)	-.634 (.231)	.579 (.049)
Parent	.989 (.174)	.939 (.128)	.598 (.125)	1.120 (.069)	.800 (.318)	.279 (.355)	.783 (.161)	1.064 (.045)
Single parent	-.378 (.376)	-.513 (.248)	-1.171 (.313)	-.999 (.250)	.139 (.523)	-.935 (.919)	.409 (.426)	-.159 (.063)
Employed	-1.789 (.121)	-1.521 (.085)	-2.099 (.084)	-1.243 (.067)	-.910 (.211)	-2.382 (.189)	-.768 (.199)	-1.262 (.027)

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.
NA indicates data not available.