

Transnational Families

LORETTA BALDASSAR, MAJELLA KILKEY, LAURA MERLA
AND RAELENE WILDING

Transnational Families: Introduction and the *Mobility Turn*

The original *Companion to the Sociology of Families*, published a decade ago, did not contain a chapter on transnational families – evidence of the dramatic expansion of this family type. And yet, it would be fairly safe to presume that nearly every reader of this 2014 edition has some direct experience with this kind of family form. Such has been the pace of social change, linked to the intensification of globalization processes that has profoundly influenced family life.

Whether pushed or pulled out of homelands in search of safe asylum, better economic futures, or improved lifestyles and whether chosen or enforced by restrictive migration laws, increasing numbers of people are separated from their families by distance and national borders. Even those family members who *stay behind* become part of social relationships stretched across time and place, though they might never actually move at all. In addition to migrant families, a growing number of other *types* of families are being defined by their experiences of mobility, including commuter, fly-in-fly-out, frequent flyer, expatriate, and even the multilocal families created after divorce and separation.

It must be noted that transnational families are not new. Throughout history, there have been many and varied forms resulting from all types of mobility including emigration and immigration (e.g., of wet nurses and artisans), colonial expansion and exploration, and the separation of family members through entry into religious orders, the custom of apprenticeship, and even the use of boarding schools (Yeates, 2009). Rather, it is the scale of mobility that has been radically transformed as well as the revolution in travel and communication technologies. Whereas in the past transnational family members would stay in touch only by long-awaited letters that traveled by sea, today, people can be *virtually* constantly present in each other's lives.

The Wiley Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Families, First Edition.
Edited by Judith Treas, Jacqueline Scott, and Martin Richards.
© 2014 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. Published 2014 by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Mobility has become such a feature of contemporary life that it has been touted as a new paradigm for the social sciences (Urry, 2000). Traditionally the domain of scholars working on migration and demography, the study of transnational mobility is now increasingly relevant to other areas of study, including family studies. The notion of *transnational families* has been developed as a way of conceptualizing how families are affected by mobility (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002; Baldassar, Baldock, and Wilding, 2007). This chapter provides an overview of current thinking, incorporating new research results and emerging debates, in this burgeoning field of transnational family research.

We begin with three evocative case studies, from our own research, that capture something of the diversity of experiences of transnational families as well as their interconnections across the globe.

Case studies: Transnational Families and the Global Circulation of Care

Every day during his lunch break at around 1pm, Alberto, who lives in Perth, Australia, phones his 85-year-old father, Angelo, who lives in Rome, Italy. Angelo, who is not in the best of health, is usually sitting at the kitchen table having his morning coffee and bread roll. "It'll only be 6am in Italy, but Dad will always be waiting for my call," Alberto explains. Since Alberto's mother's sudden and unexpected death a year ago, Alberto, an only child, has tried to manage his father's increasing care needs from a distance. He took 6 weeks unpaid leave from work to travel to Italy to arrange the funeral for his mother and put in place care supports for his father. Both Alberto and Angelo see aged care facilities as a last resort option; they are expensive and have a social stigma that reflects badly on families. Angelo wishes to remain living in his own home for as long as he can. Moving to Australia is not an option because of Angelo's failing health; furthermore, aged migration to Australia is costly with prohibitive requirements. Given the aged care regimes in both countries, father and son adopted the commonest solution and hired a domestic worker, Maria, to work from 9 to 5 each day, preparing lunch and dinner, doing the cleaning and shopping and taking Alberto to his medical visits. Maria has agreed to move into the spare room as a live-in carer if Angelo's health deteriorates. A long-time family friend, Nadia, the daughter of Angelo's old friend and neighbor, Nello, sets up a Skype every Sunday when she visits her father (who lives next door). Alberto feels this is the best way to "get a thorough update." Nello has a live-in carer, Stella, who is also on hand at nights if an emergency arises. Alberto plans to spend all his recreation leave in Italy, putting some financial strain on his family in Perth, but fortunately his wife is supportive. Alberto's daughter, Alana, is planning to visit her grandfather while on an exchange student trip to Europe later in the year.

* * * * *

Every Saturday and Sunday, at around 6am, Maria phones her 10-year-old son, Diego, in the Dominican Republic. She arrived in Rome a year ago on a tourist visa to visit her 18-year-old daughter who had traveled to Italy a year earlier. Maria planned to find work as a domestic and help support her daughter to continue studying and also raise enough money to bring Diego to Italy. In the meantime,

Diego lives with his grandmother Lucia, Maria's mother. Twelve people currently live in Lucia's crowded house, including her frail partner Arturo, two of Maria's brothers, their partners and children, and Maria's sister Anna's three children. Anna is a domestic employee in the United States. Maria and Anna call Lucia a few times a week to talk and discuss with their children, exchange support with their mother, and talk to other family members present at the time of their call. The two sisters are also in regular contact with their oldest sister, Teresa, who lives in Belgium with her Spanish husband and their three children, and the three women send monthly remittances to their mother. In spite of the distance, Teresa plays a central role in her extended family and is considered by all as the head of the household that is stretched across thousands of kilometers and several countries. Teresa checks with her brothers and sisters-in-law that Arturo, who suffers from diabetes and has lost his sight, takes his medicines and eats properly, and sends emergency remittances when a specific need arises. She visits her family every year, and during these visits she works with her brothers on the renovation of the family house.

* * * * *

Every day after work, Stella calls her 40-year-old daughter and two small grandchildren in Poland. Stella left Poland for Rome in 1999 as an undocumented migrant, before Poland joined the EU (2004). Her move was prompted by the loss of her nursing job in Poland. She had separated from her husband some years earlier. He had been working intermittently in Germany, and they had grown apart during his absences. Stella often reflects on how hard it was to stay in touch back then, even though the distance was not so great. Her two children were grown when she left and really did not need her to be there for them. The money she could send back to them was more useful. Stella quickly found work as a live-in carer for Nello, whose only child Nadia lives in Florence, a 2h train ride away. Stella is missing seeing her grandchildren grow up and sometimes asks Nadia to help try to Skype with her daughter, but because of the short notice, sometimes, she does not find them at home. It should be easier to visit since her status became regular when Italy lifted its restrictions on Poles' access to the labor market in 2006, but it is difficult to get leave from the job, and she has only been able to go back once or twice a year for only a week at a time. Her daughter wants Stella to return to care for the grandchildren once they start school so that she can return to work. Stella will probably do this – her financial situation has deteriorated during the Eurocrisis – Nello's pension has been cut and the family has reduced Stella's pay. She feels she ought to help her daughter out, and looking after the children part-time will be much less tiring than caring for Nello.

Transnational families: Definitions and key research issues

Members of transnational families maintain a sense of *familyhood* (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002), in that they continue to feel they *belong* to a family even though they may not see each other or be physically copresent very often or for extended periods of time. As Baldassar, Baldock, and Wilding (2007, p. 13) write, “the resulting idea of the ‘transnational family’ is intended to capture the growing awareness that members of families retain their sense of collectivity and kinship in spite of

being spread across multiple nations.” Angelo, Maria, and Stella have all migrated away from their close family members but sustain their sense of family *belonging* over time through their active involvement in the lives of their parents, children, and grandchildren. As their case studies show, sustaining transnational family life is complex and often difficult, and, as in the case of Stella and her husband, does not always work out. This is because it is influenced by many factors in both the sending and receiving societies, the life stages and characteristics of the family members, as well as by the processes and the timing of the migration and mobility that created it in the first place.

In order to provide a comprehensive overview of the complexities of transnational family life, we have structured this chapter around four central challenges to the analysis and understanding of transnational families:

- The first is the theoretical question of how to conceptualize and define transnational families. Here, we need to draw on insights from both family studies and migration studies to consider their intersections. Of particular relevance to this discussion is the risk of viewing families through a Western-centric lens. For example, it is instructive to consider how in Maria’s family it is quite common and acceptable for children to be raised by someone other than their biological parents, a practice which is widespread in certain parts of the world but which is considered quite inappropriate in Western conceptions of *proper* family life.
- The second is the methodological question of how to research such families, whose members by definition are dispersed across different countries, often on separate continents. Do our traditional tools of analysis serve us well? Given the importance of new communication technologies, of particular relevance here is the question of how to adapt our traditional research techniques to study the increasingly important virtual and online dimensions of family life.
- The third is the empirical question of how families actually manage *familyhood* in transnational settings. As the case studies clearly show, access to communication technologies greatly enhances the ability (and obligation) of family members to stay in touch with each other, although access is also differentiated according to factors such as socioeconomic position, age, gender, and geography.
- The fourth is the practical question of how transnational family forms can be supported through relevant policies. Of special importance here is how the standard governing structures of states and nations can meet the needs of families that stretch across borders. Also pertinent is the issue of how migration and other policies generate transnational families in the first place.

Transnational families: Belonging and the centrality of care

There are four very broad fields of enquiry. Our research leads us to argue that a productive way these four challenges can be addressed is by focusing our analysis of transnational families through the lens of caregiving. This is a useful methodological and analytical focus for an analysis of transnational family life because the exchange of care is one of the central processes (practices and performances) that maintains and sustains family relationships.

Our definition of family includes both nuclear and extended types whose members are actively engaged in family survival and maintenance, ranging from those whose involvement is extensive and constant to those whose roles are more marginal. We recognize, too, that these roles and the extent of engagement can change over time and across the life cycle. For this reason, our definition of transnational caregiving includes a wide variety of care exchanges (Baldassar, Baldock, and Wilding, 2007). Drawing on Finch and Mason's (1993) model of family support, five dimensions of care are distinguished: financial and material (including cash remittances or goods such as food, clothing, and paying household and other bills), practical (exchanging advice and assisting with tasks), emotional and moral aimed at improving psychological well-being, personal care (like feeding and bathing), and accommodation (providing shelter and security). This multidimensional definition of care enables distinctions between caring practices that can be exchanged across borders through the use of communication technologies (typically financial and emotional), proximate caring practices that occur during visits, and proxy caring practices, involving the coordination of support provided by others (Wilding, 2006; Baldassar, 2008; Kilkey and Merla, 2013). All these types of care can be exchanged in transnational settings but to varying degrees and subject to a variety of factors, including gender, ethnic, class, and power hierarchies as well as the cultural and structural histories of welfare regimes.

Transnational caregiving, just like caregiving in all families (whether separated by migration or not), binds members together in intergenerational networks of reciprocity and obligation, love, and trust that are simultaneously fraught with tension, contest, and relations of unequal power. Baldassar and Merla (2013) point out how the exchange of care in families is inherently reciprocal and asymmetrical, governed by the *norm of generalized reciprocity* – the *expectation* that the giving of care must ultimately be reciprocated, although it may not always be realized (Finch and Mason, 1993). People give care without measuring exactly the amount they receive, but with the expectation and obligation that care will be returned to them. This said, family members often carefully monitor these exchanges, and they are governed by the multiple and constantly *negotiated family commitments*, intimate and unequal power relations that characterize family life. As this care is given and returned at different times and to varying degrees across the life course, Baldassar and Merla (2013) argue that the care could be described as *circulating* among family members over time as well as distance. This care circulation framework helps to capture all the actors involved in family life as well as the full extent of their care activity, including practical, emotional, and symbolic, that defines their membership in a family. It also helps to avoid the more narrow definition of both family and caregiving that tends to define these processes in dominant Western conceptualizations.

An analysis of transnational caregiving activity must be sensitive to the unevenness of reciprocal exchange, including the withholding and limiting of care. While the circulation of care involves reciprocal exchanges between family members, both the transnational and local care burdens fall most heavily on women, who generally receive less than they give (Ryan, 2007). In this context, care and the ability to exchange it can be considered a form of social capital (or resource) that is unevenly distributed within families subject to cultural notions of gender and other roles,

which intersect with and interrelate to the care regimes of the various nation-states and communities in which families reside. The debate in the literature about the transformative potential of migration and transnational processes to reconfigure power relations, in particular of gender, is pertinent here (cf. Mahler and Pessar, 2001). Furthermore, the increasing mobility and profound impact of new communication technologies on abilities to care across distance and manage absence in family life makes an analysis of *the portability of care* (Huang, Thang, and Toyota, 2012, p. 131) a fundamental topic of contemporary lives.

Transnational Families: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues

In Western conceptualizations of family caregiving, *the* family and the nation-state tend to be defined within an interpretive frame that presumes sedentarism and assumes physical copresence as an essential precondition of caregiving (Baldock, 2000; Leira and Saraceno, 2006). These ideas about care and proximity are inherently linked to the notion of *the* family as a private geographical domain represented by a household. The model of the family as featuring a white middle-class heterosexual couple with two children represents family members as bonded together by physical copresence and bounded by the confines of the privately owned land and house that contains them (Morgan, 2011). In these conceptualizations, the structure of the family is viewed as a microcosm and primary reproducer of the nation-state.

This approach to caregiving, families, and states mirrors the way nations and communities were, until recently, largely theorized as inherently connected to a geographical place. Migration was viewed as a process that literally and symbolically breaks away from the norm of sedentarism and therefore results in divided state loyalties, fractured families, and an inability to fulfill obligations to care. The movement out of homeland states, and in particular the resulting distance between family members, was seen to rupture and inhibit continued connections to people and place. Migration was understood as unidirectional – from sending to receiving country – as well as final, culminating in settlement. This view contributed to conceptualizations of the migrant's home and host societies as discrete, homogeneous entities with little in common and few connections between them. Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002) note how this seemingly unproblematic division of space tended to privilege the straight line theory of assimilation as the end result of migration as well as an either/or approach to home and host allegiances (Alba and Waters, 2010). In this context, it is hardly surprising that the dominant notions about households – and the families they contain – are very much conceived as rooted in static, geographical domains (Stacey, 1998; Hardill, 2004).

As our case studies show, transnational as well as local geographical mobility impacts on increasing numbers of families, both in the *global south* (in developing countries like the Dominican Republic and transitional countries like Poland) and the north (in relatively wealthy countries like Australia and in countries that have been hard hit by the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) like Italy). Transnationalism in this context is defined as “a social process in which migrants establish social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders” (Glick Schiller, Basch, and Szanton-Blanc, 1992, p. ix). What our research examples also reveal is how

interconnected these global flows of people and their labor are, both in terms of their contributions to the more *public* economic markets and *private* family domains. Notions like *transnationalism from below* (Gardner and Grillo, 2002) feature the profound impact of these global processes on private and familial lives. A useful way of capturing the extent of these changes is to consider how the processes of social reproduction, which have historically been conceptualized as contained within static and localized notions of families and households, are today more appropriately conceived as (to varying degrees) directly linked to migratory moves, which are expected to provide greater access to the material and financial resources that guarantee family well-being. So, for example, the concept of *global householding* (Douglass, 2006) has been developed to highlight the fact that households themselves become global in all the dimensions that compose them. Marriage and intimate relations, procreation and child-rearing, management of daily life, income generation, caring, and, more generally, the practices of mutual support that guarantee the social reproduction of households increasingly involve, to various degrees, strategies that go beyond local contexts and are affected by global dynamics and phenomena. Kofman (2012) advocates engaging with the concepts of social reproduction and *global householding* in order to “place care work within a wider landscape of activities and sites and to connect supposedly disparate circuits of migration, in particular labour, family, and education, which are usually analysed separately but which are in fact interconnected” (p. 144).

As households have become *transnational* and *global*, so too have the cultural practices and social inequalities that define them. Much like local ones, global households are gendered sites of contestation, negotiation, compromise, and cooperation, articulated around statutory as well as individual differences (Douglass, 2012) and within which emotional, material, and physical support circulates. A particularly compelling example of family inequalities on a global scale is evident in the so-called global care chains (also known as transnational mothering/parenting). The migration of mothers in particular has been a central focus of the care chains literature (Hochschild, 2000; Parreñas, 2001, 2005). Through the framework of global care chains and its elaboration, the delivery of care has been identified as an important, though still relatively underexamined, type of goods and service that circulates in *global scapes* (Appadurai, 1991). This important body of research specifically focuses on the commodification and political economy of care in *south–north* female (domestic) labor flows, along a chain of women that typically includes a carer in the South looking after a child whose mother migrated to the North to look after the child of a woman who works full time. Prior to this research, the literature on care had not taken internationalization into consideration, and women from the South were largely excluded from the study of work–family balance issues (Leira and Saraceno, 2006). A comparable example is provided by the case of Maria, outlined earlier, who left her own children behind in order to care for not other people’s children but elderly parents (Alberto’s father, Angelo, in Rome). Recent developments in the care chains literature include other types of migrants (such as the highly skilled), caring relations that involve other family members such as men and fathers, as well as regional migration flows such as East to West in the case of Europe and as exemplified by Stella (see, for instance, Lutz and Palenga-Möllenberg, 2010; Sarti and Scrini, 2010; Erel, 2012; Kilkey, Perrons, and Plomien, 2013).

In general, researchers applying a care chains perspective have tended to assume that in order to care for each other effectively, family members must live in close proximity. Because it is largely based on a unidirectional conceptualization of care flows, with *care* being generally equated to *physical* care, the care chains literature tends to reduce the mother's participation in caring exchanges in the family to the sending of remittances. The conceptualization of care flows between the North and the South as unidirectional is linked to the idea that migration involves the *displacement* or *diversion* (Parreñas, 2003) of motherly love: distance makes it impossible for migrant mothers to *love* the children they left behind, and their love is diverted toward their affluent employers' children (or elderly kin). This displacement of love leads Hochschild (2005) to talk of a care drain, "as women who normally care for the young, the old and the sick in their own poor countries move to care for the young, the old, and the sick in rich countries, whether as maids and nannies or as day-care and nursing-home aides" (p. 35). But care drain may not necessarily occur in all transnational families (Sørensen and Guarnizo, 2007), in particular if we extend our understanding of care to include both *embodied* and *disembodied* or *virtual* forms of support and also if we recognize that care can be effectively delivered by extended family members and even friends (other than direct kin).

In analyzing transnational family life, we must be sensitive to the potency of assumptions about family and household that underlie and inform much of our thinking. As explained earlier, the idea that the family and household occupy one locus of residence and the importance placed on the nuclear family type as the ideal configuration for the delivery of care to family members, particularly children, is profoundly influential. Even though members of transnational families increasingly *routinely* live their lives *together across distance* and have developed practices to deal with the challenges posed by absence and separation, there is a general and robust skepticism (Zentgraf and Chinchilla, 2012) about whether transnational families can adequately care for and about each other, that is, how well they can actually *do family*, especially in those families who are separated over long periods of time. The spotlight most often falls on those cases where mothers are separated from young children. It has become clear that transnational mothering challenges a central and deeply held dominant Western notion about the bond between mother and child being biological rather than cultural (Bowlby, 1969) and the associated implications this has for mother and children to be both emotionally and physically close (Chavkin and Maher, 2010; Banfi and Boccagni, 2011; Lutz and Palenga-Möllnbeck, 2012).

The case studies at the start of this chapter provide a glimpse of how families and their members respond to and manage the considerable constraints they face in doing family transnationally. What they also emphasize and critique is the prevailing dominant Western notions about what constitutes *normal* and *healthy* family relationships. The notion of *family* "covers a multitude of senses of relatedness and connections" (Sørensen and Guarnizo, 2007, p.161), both within Western societies and across the globe. This richness is hidden from view in the dominant Western imaginary that identifies family with nuclear households bound up in notions of proximity and intimacy. As Sørensen and Guarnizo (2007) note, migration studies' tendency to identify the family with the domestic group has led researchers to assume that separation automatically leads to family disintegration, particularly when mothers leave husbands and children behind. The argument

about the relative absence of anxiety related to physical separation in the African as compared to the Western case is particularly instructive. For instance, Filho (2009) argues that because of the set of imperatives that define migration in the Cape Verdean society, families experience separation as less painful and disruptive than in the West. This is due to “the ethos that emphasizes a lack of anxiety in regard to physical separation between those who stay and those who leave, and the maintenance of a strong feeling of relatedness, acting as a bridge for the physical distance, by means of continuity of material obligations” (p. 525). Similarly, Madianou and Miller (2012) refer to “anthropological accounts of many regions, such as the Caribbean, where the nuclear co-present family has never been the norm” (p. 10). According to Segal (1996), Caribbean migration “should be understood as a form of extended kinship over space and time with frequent rather than one-time movements” (quoted by Nurse, 2004, p. 4). The migration of women from the lower classes in Caribbean societies, for example, has been described as part of a system of circulation of care that is an integral and accepted aspect of family and kinship (Fog Olwig, 2013).

Thus, the way transnational family members experience absence from loved ones is much more dependent on their interpretations of the quality of their relationships and on the socially constructed meanings of mobility than on the actual distance that separates them. This means that we need to revisit normative Western understandings of family, household, migration, and the conceptualization of human mobility more broadly. Transnational migration studies reveal that migratory moves are more likely to result in multiple identities and national belongings, rather than replacing an earlier identity for a new one. Further, recent research on transnational families shows that migration can result in expanded family networks of care as the use of new technologies gives rise to more frequent and complex multidirectional communication flows between members, including across the generations (Madianou and Miller, 2012).

Transnational Families: Research and Methodology across Borders

As Baldassar, Baldock, and Wilding (2007, p. 17) write,

By its nature, the subject of transnational caregiving demands innovative transnational research methodologies. The experiences and practices we describe in this book are both emotionally intimate and geographically distant, and the need to capture these two experiences simultaneously has meant transforming conventional research tools into different forms.

The reconceptualization of *migrant* families into *transnational families* seeks to take into account the contexts of both receiving and sending societies. By its very nature, research on transnational families thus requires an analysis of family members in different places, and this has been done mainly via the use of multisited qualitative methodologies (Falzon, 2009; Amelina *et al.*, 2012). Comparative cross-national studies are also emerging and require the development of analytical frameworks to *situate* transnationalism within specific institutional contexts and identify relevant parameters for international comparisons (Kilkey and Merla, 2013).

Baldassar, Baldock, and Wilding (2007) point out that multisited and comparative studies tend to take the nation-state as the central unit of analysis and *nation of birth* as a central category for selecting participants. Such uses of *nation* and *national identity* are problematic for a number of reasons. First, they tend to result in the collapsing of the important analytical distinction between the organizational features of the state, on the one hand, and the ideological processes of nation-building, on the other (Blanc, Basch, and Glick Schiller, 1995). Second, the use of national identity terms has the unfortunate and erroneous consequence of reifying perceived ethnic or cultural differences, rather than acknowledging their social construction in specific contexts (Eriksen, 1991). Third, it can result in *methodological nationalism*, the false assumption that particular cultural traits or processes are “unitary and organically related to, and fixed within, [geographic] territories” (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002, p. 305). Finally, national categories tend to homogenize and obscure the diversity of gender, class, regional, and ethnic background within populations (Dilworth-Anderson, Williams, and Gibson, 2002).

Perspectives of social life framed through a focus on social groups and processes that approach mobility as, potentially at least, a sociocultural norm lead to a methodological focus on the individual biography and life course of the people who move to consider how movement impacts on the static structures of the life world, rather than the reverse. In addition to work on transnational families, recent approaches in the sociology of the family, such as the *family practices* approach (Morgan, 2011) or the *configurational approach* (Widmer and Jallinoja, 2008), propose alternative frameworks that move beyond a focus on static, normative constructions of the nuclear family and stress the historical and spatial fluidity of kin relations. Similarly, Kofman (2012) argues for a more processual approach to better account for changes across the family life cycle as well as the full extent of caregiving practices. She adds that “To investigate the different forms, orientations, and directions of care, one would need (...) to adopt an approach that follows longitudinally and spatially the migrant so as to capture care giving and receiving” (p.153). To this end, Baldassar and Merla’s (2013) *care circulation framework* offers a way of tracing or mapping the multiple and multidirectional care exchanges that characterize transnational family relations across the life course.

Mapping this caregiving activity requires an examination of the lives of family members in (and between) the various places they reside and so requires a multisited methodology (Marcus, 1995; Ortner, 1997; Hage, 2005), as well as posing the challenge of researching social and family life within the virtual world of new technologies (Miller and Slater, 2000). Here, the importance of relations to the material world, of both technologies and *nonhuman actors*, is brought to the forefront. Gille (2012) refers to this as *methodological materialism*, that is, the need to connect *the social with the material*. These factors account for and shape the asymmetries and inequalities, both within and between transnational families, in the capacity to circulate care. As Merla (2012, p. 2) argues, “access to, and use of, these capabilities is strongly influenced by both home- and host-country formal institutional and informal policies” and is shaped by gender, class, and ethnic hierarchies. These policy implications are also taken up in the following text.

Transnational Families: *Doing* Family across Time and Distance

Thus far, we have identified some of the challenges of conceptualizing and researching transnational families. In this section, we turn instead to a discussion of the practices and processes of transnational family caregiving in order to provide a sense of how people actually manage to do this. While the transnational family was not necessarily *produced* out of new communication technologies, it has certainly been transformed by the significant advances in information and communication technologies in recent decades. Numerous scholars have documented the ways in which technologies such as the mobile phone and the Internet and new capacities such as video streaming, social media, and instant financial transfers have transformed the experience of migration and of transnational families. Indeed, given the profound impact new technologies are having on every aspect of social life, we might label this *the virtual age*. In what follows, we briefly describe some of these insights by focusing on a few key studies of specific cases of transnational families. By doing so, we seek to avoid the trap that we identified earlier of assuming that all transnational family forms and practices are the same. Rather, what we aim to highlight is that the existing models and expectations of family of those who migrate intersect with the available technologies and mobilities, in order to create new family practices and expectations that transcend both the destinations and the points of departure. In each of the following examples, what counts as care and what counts as acceptable family formations and practices are socially and culturally specific and negotiated within particular political and economic circumstances.

Baldassar, Baldock, and Wilding (2007) clearly demonstrate that migration does not prevent the exchange of support within families. Indeed, as is evident in the case studies that open this chapter, both aging parents and their adult children are often engaged in intense and complex exchanges of care and support. Emotional support is the most commonly mentioned, perhaps because it is able to be provided through regular letters, telephone calls, and Internet-based communications. But even accommodation support and personal support, generally understood to rely upon physical copresence, are featured in people's experiences. It is important to acknowledge that a family member who delegates caregiving to a third person or institution does not automatically step out of circuits of care but may still be *caring about* (Fisher and Tronto, 1990) the person in need of support, stay informed of the level and quality of care provided, and be ready to *step in* when needed.

Baldassar, Baldock, and Wilding's (2007) research demonstrated that there are cultural specificities in terms of which forms of support are considered more desirable or obligatory, including gendered definitions of familial roles and expectations. For example, Singaporean sons were generally more concerned with providing financial support, and Italian daughters, in contrast, were generally more concerned with providing personal care. This was understood by family members as a function of the cultural expectations regarding family that had been imparted to them as children and of the availability of acceptable caregiving services. Yet, these ideal models of family care were adjusted in response to the situation of living at a distance. Thus, Italian daughters would use their available resources, such as savings and holidays, to return to care for and be with their parents in Italy in order to fulfill

the role of *good daughters*. But, when not able to be present physically, this role could and would be displaced onto other siblings or, in some cases, paying for a domestic worker or care worker to take their place in the family home. They would remain closely involved by maintaining persistent contact by phone, letters, and e-mails, seeking to generate a sense of copresence that somewhat ameliorated their physical absence. In those families where daughters were absent, as in the case of Angelo's family, it was sons, like Alberto, often with the support of their wives, who performed these roles. In other cases, such as with the Dutch, regular contact by telephone, fax, or e-mail was considered sufficient to be able to fulfill the obligations and expectations of care. In the Netherlands, it was widely expected and accepted that as people aged, they would enter appropriate supportive accommodation, such that the expectations of sons and daughters remained in the domain of *keeping in touch* rather than being physically copresent. This did not mean that the Dutch perceived their relationships as less caring. Rather, they mobilized available communication technologies to sustain relationships that both aging parents and their children perceived as largely satisfactory, given the limitations of distance.

In part prompted by the arguments about global care chains, a range of studies have focused on women who migrate from the Philippines for work, leaving their children in the care of kin or paid workers (e.g., Parreñas, 2001, 2005; Madianou and Miller, 2012). In these studies, the capacity to sustain family relationships through new information and communication technologies is both asserted and simultaneously identified as inadequate. Unlike relationships between aging parents and adult children, relationships between adults and their dependent children are typically perceived as suffering as a result of geographical distance. An important study by Mirca Madianou and Daniel Miller (2012) indicates that many of the distant mothers perceive their new-found capacity to communicate by mobile phone, Skype, and other forms as enabling them the potential to retain their mothering identities and roles and assert the continuation of the family. However, from the perspective of the left-behind children, these technologies are not always seen in such a positive light. Approximately half of the (now adult) children they interviewed indicated that their mothers' communications were perceived as an unwelcome intrusion. Some denied that communication constituted mothering at all, thereby contesting their mothers' roles as mothers.

The reliance on communication technologies to sustain transnational families highlights the fact that access to such technologies is differential across nations, genders, and age groups (Wilding, 2006). An important part of the dynamics of the relationships between mothers and children in Madianou and Miller's (2012) study was the fact that it was cheaper for mothers to access mobile telephones than it was for their children to do so in the Philippines. Migrants and their family members manage these inequalities in a variety of ways, some using the known expense of communication strategically to avoid contact with particular family members, with others posting sim cards or calling cards to their kin overseas in order to take advantage of cheaper rates from elsewhere. Interestingly, new technologies have tended to increase the direct role and engagement of both men and younger generations in transnational family care exchanges in part because of their general tendency to be more familiar and proficient at using them. While the *kin work* (di Leonardo, 1987) involved in keeping in touch with transnational family members

was often the preserve of women, particularly mothers and daughters, who wrote the letters and made the phone calls, it is not uncommon for fathers and sons, as well as grandchildren and cousins, to be directly involved in setting up the e-mail and Skype systems, coordinating and managing their use, and maintaining their upkeep (Baldassar, 2011).

When reflecting on their uses of diverse communication technologies, the participants in the aforementioned studies identify how different modes of communication affect their relationships in different ways. For example, the shift from exchanging letters and cassettes to sharing telephone calls has been associated as both a positive *and* a negative process (Wilding, 2006). The new technology meant that contact could be more frequent, but also meant that the special qualities of the letter, its perceived emotional intensity and insights, were lost. Rather than excitement at the blue airmail envelope, people recalled instead the sense of dread at a telephone call in the middle of the night (has someone died?) or the difficulties of coordinating telephone calls across different time zones and family routines. Nevertheless, gaining access to the *voice* of the distant family members is typically seen as positive, providing a stronger sense of copresence with those who are physically absent. The more recent emergence of e-mails and webcam technologies further transformed what was possible from a distance. In addition to being able to *see* and hear family members, it also became possible to recreate some of the sense of collectivity of family relations and gatherings. Rather than a letter or a telephone receiver being passed around from one person to the next, a family group is able to participate in an online chat or gather around the computer to see and be seen by webcam. Thus, Filipina mothers in Europe are able to help their children in the Philippines with homework, and families are able to share a meal at the same time and within view of each other, albeit not actually sharing the same food in the same room.

These new capacities to hear and be heard, see and be seen create new obligations and expectations for kin separated by distance. It also provides new opportunities for misunderstandings, as not everything can be communicated through a telephone call or webcam image. This helps to explain, for example, why some people choose to turn off their telephones rather than sustain connections. Riak Akuei (2005) describes how the image that many African refugees hold of America as a place *paved in gold* creates unforeseen burdens for those who are resettled in the *land of opportunity*. They are subject to continuing and urgent requests for financial assistance, which are typically managed on minimum wages. Those requesting assistance are unaware of the high costs of living in America and the relatively low levels of income of those from refugee backgrounds. Some of those who have been resettled resort to disconnecting their telephone as one of the few means available to stem the flow of demands. However, the presence of transnational networks of extended kin and community members makes this a risky choice, with the potential for an individual or even an entire family's reputation to be damaged. This example shows that transnational caregiving activity and its circulation wax and wane over the individual and family life course and migration process and members may be *dormant* in some periods and *reactivated* in others (Grillo, 2008). Economically vulnerable family members in particular, including refugees, migrants without legal status, and those with inadequate or unreliable incomes, might break

ties when demands for transnational support are too onerous but reactivate them when they are better able to provide support.

The demands for and provision of financial support are themselves a form of receiving and giving care. In Western contexts, the close association of love and money is often denied, disguising the ways in which constructs of family are in large part about “strong bonds of collective welfare” (Huang, Yeoh, and Lam, 2008). In some cases, the provision of money is more important in demonstrating love than is the communication in language of words such as *I love you*. It is from this perspective that Coe (2011) approaches the expression of love within families in which the children remain in Ghana while their parents migrate for work. She explains that, for the children, love between adults and children is present when adults are willing to share their available resources, and a child feels freely able to ask that adult to meet their needs. It is important to recognize that children in Ghana do not necessarily live with their parents, instead being located in those households and with those adults who have a better capacity to provide for their needs. In this context, migrant parents in transnational families are not judged on whether or not they are able to sustain emotional intimacy, as is emphasized in the case of Filipina transnational mothering. Rather, migrant parents who remitted money were typically perceived as good parents, and their absence was not lamented. It was the migrant parents who failed to remit who were typically identified as neglectful and a source of unhappiness. However, children also struggled to retune their *cultural calculus* to a transnational context, not least because they were not always aware of how much of the remittances sent from their parent to their caregiver were being used to support their needs and how much were being withheld or redistributed by the caregiver. Family relationships, expectations, and obligations become more complex as a result of the separation of care into everyday care and financial/material care. In some cases, the caregivers become the focus of everyday frustrations and tensions, while the migrant parents are idealized, safely distant from issues of discipline and management of daily life.

Caregiving provides a window on the emotional intersubjectivities at the heart of all relationships, especially those between family and kin-like friends. In the study of transnational families, the epistemological notion that the self is created through intersubjective relations (shared dialogue and activity) is examined in contexts where people are *living apart together*. A central challenge posed by a mobilities paradigm is how to locate the interdependencies that characterize caring relationships into a transnational context. To this end, the concept of *virtual* and other forms of *copresence* (proxy, imagined, *soft*, *hard*) provides frameworks to explore how people maintain a sense of *being there* for each other, including the special role of visits, remittances, and communications. What then emerges are questions about the implications of these increasingly common practices, of breaching mobility and overcoming distance, on the development of theories of family life. It has become clearer that an assumption of physical copresence and *being there* as the bedrock of family caregiving relationships can no longer be taken for granted. Yet, it remains to be asked just how effective the forms of exchange that are available in transnational contexts can be in approximating or *standing in for* family as a local phenomenon. In addressing these issues, the variability of family practices, expectations, and obligations becomes highlighted in both transnational and local sets of relationships.

Transnational Families: Policy Implications

In this section, we turn to address the fourth and final challenge to the analysis of transnational family forms. This relates to the practical question of how the governing structures of nation-states can meet the needs of families that stretch across borders. Before considering this key issue, it is important to acknowledge that state policies, particularly migration policies, can be implicated in the formation of transnational families in the first place. Many migrants do not *choose* to leave family members behind when they migrate, but are forced to because migration policies create barriers for families to migrate together. This is especially the case for migrants moving from the *global south* to major labor migrant-receiving regions of the world including much of Europe, all of North America and Oceania, and parts of Asia and the Middle East. While migration policies vary significantly across and within those regions, a common trend is to more tightly manage and control immigration flows. The motives for this vary, too, but include a desire to restrict migration to only those persons seen as economically useful, a related desire to prevent *welfare dependency* among immigrants and a desire to limit the long-term settlement of immigrants, especially among groups perceived to be difficult to *integrate* or *assimilate* into the receiving country because of religious or *cultural* differences. One result is that countries may permit the entry of a worker deemed instrumental to the economic needs of the country, but not allow (all) his or her dependants' entry or impose strict conditions on their entry which migrant workers find impossible to meet. In such cases, migrants and their families have little or no choice but to live apart.

For those families separated by borders, a significant issue is whether and how policies facilitate or impede their exchange of care and support. Despite claims that processes such as globalization have led to the *unsettling* of the nation-state, "relocating it in new systems of governance, beyond and within the nation" (Clarke, 2005, p. 408), this remains a relatively recent and challenging question for policy makers who in the main continue to work within social policy environments which are nationally bounded and which assume that *normal* family life is too. Among the first to acknowledge that there was a policy dimension to the growth in transnational families were Baldassar, Baldock, and Wilding (2007) when they argued that transnational caregiving practices are mediated by "a dialectic encompassing the *capacity* of individual members to engage in care-giving and their culturally informed sense of *obligation* to provide care, as well as the particularistic kin relationships and *negotiated family commitments* that people with specific family networks share" (p. 204). Subsequent research has sought to unpack the "capacity" element of the dialectic by identifying firstly the resources required for transnational caregiving and, secondly, the institutions through which those resources are in part derived.

Merla and Baldassar (2011) have identified six interconnected resources needed to underpin transnational caregiving. Firstly, *mobility* refers to the ability to travel to receive or give care. Secondly, *communication* means being able to communicate at a distance and to send items across borders and includes having the physical ability to communicate. Thirdly, *social relations* refers to access to a social network of mutual support in the receiving and home country, which can

represent a useful resource for the exchange of information about travel and accommodation and can provide financial and practical support to carers and cared-for. Fourthly, *time allocation* involves having the capacity to take time for exchanging care. Fifthly, *education and knowledge* refer to the possibility to learn how to use communication technologies and to learn the local language. It also includes having one's qualifications recognized, which can influence access to paid work and thus indirectly affect the ability to exchange care. Finally, *paid work* encompasses having access to a satisfying employment position and, if unemployed, to sufficient benefits in order to have the necessary funds to invest in caregiving. Kilkey and Merla (2013) subsequently added a seventh resource – *appropriate housing* – which is crucial for the settlement of immigrant families and can also be a prerequisite for eligibility to family reunification. Moreover, adequate housing is important for family members who travel to provide or receive proximate care, as issues such as lack of space and privacy can create tensions between visitors and their hosts. Appropriate housing, including appropriate institutional care, is also essential for care-receivers who remain in their home country.

The relevance of all seven of these resources to how families care transnationally is captured in the stories of Alberto, Maria, and Stella set out at the beginning of this chapter. Less explicit in those accounts was the set of institutional arrangements, in both the home and the migrant-receiving societies that contribute to realizing these resources. Here, the work of Kilkey and Merla (2013) is instructive. They start with the premise articulated by the concept of *care circulation* (Baldassar and Merla, 2013) discussed earlier that transnational families engage in proximate and transnational practices of care, that care flows are multidirectional, and that care relations are multigenerational. They develop the notion of a *situated transnationalism* and draw on *regime* theory, arguing that the capacity to care transnationally is influenced by migrants and their kin's respective positioning in the migration, welfare, gendered care, and working-time regimes of their societies of origin and destination. By migration regime, they refer to "immigration policies – rules for entrance into a country (quotas and special arrangements), settlement and naturalization rights, as well as employment, social, political and civil rights" (Williams, 2010, p. 390), and which also includes migration cultures in home and host societies. The welfare regime refers to the configuration of social protection for workers (Esping-Andersen, 1990). The gendered care regime aims at capturing who is responsible for care, the nature of state support for nonfamilial care, and provisions for care leave (Williams, 2010), as well as dominant national and local discourses – *care cultures* – on what constitutes appropriate care (Williams and Gavanas, 2008) and gender equality expectations and outcomes associated with care arrangements (Pfau-Effinger, 2000). The working-time regime, finally, includes the set of legal, voluntary, and customary regulations which influence working-time practice (Rubery, Smith, and Fagan, 1998). Kilkey and Merla (2013) also highlight that policies around the regulation of cross-border transport, including its availability and affordability, and around the quality and accessibility of the communications' infrastructure, especially telephone and the Internet, are also important.

Conclusion and Future Directions

It has become necessary to conceptualize transnational families as a growing family form in its own right. To do this, we need to revise and extend definitions and understanding of family practices and processes and the factors that influence them. Households and their members can no longer be conceived as fixed in place, static, and sedentary but must be understood as also potentially extended across space and time. The important work of social reproduction needs to be mapped out across the globe to examine the ways local households and their members are linked into transnational social fields and networks of relationships as well as the global circulation of labor, goods, and services. The policies that govern the well-being of families, so tightly fastened within national frames, need to be loosened and expanded to accommodate the way families and their members increasingly live their lives across national borders. New appreciation and awareness of local, transnational, and global inequalities that impede the ability of family members to sustain family relationships across distance must be factored in to service delivery. We need to imagine into being a future where aged care doctors and nurses regularly schedule Skype or phone meetings with the adult children of their patients living abroad; where images of good mothers include those that are separated from their children; where notions of good parenting encompass the caregiving of extended kin and close friends; where school teachers are prepared to liaise directly with parents based overseas; and where entry and exit visas, basic health cover, and leave from work are provided to ensure family members can give and receive the care they need to and from family members around the globe. In order to support these changes, we need to further develop our understanding of the meanings, actual practices, and obstacles related to *doing* family in a context of increased mobility and geographical distance. Transnational families are as diverse as geographically proximate families, and this variety also needs to be better reflected. This can be done not only by exploring the wide range of transnational families in terms of socioeconomic background, gender, ethnicity, age, etc., but also by including contemporary family forms such as recomposed families and *chosen* families, such as nonheterosexual relationships and friends considered as *family*.

References

- Alba, R. and Waters, M. (eds) (2010) *The Next Generation: Immigrant Youth in a Comparative Perspective*, New York University Press, New York.
- Amelina, A., Nergiz, D.D., Faist, T. and Glick Schiller, N. (2012) *Beyond Methodological Nationalism: Research Methodologies for Cross-Border Studies*, Routledge, London and New York.
- Appadurai, A. (1991) Global ethnoscaples: notes and queries for a transnational anthropology, in *Recapturing Anthropology* (ed. R. Fox), School of American Research Press, Santa Fe, pp. 191–210.
- Baldassar, L. (2008) Missing kin and longing to be together: emotions and the construction of co-presence in transnational relationships. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 29 (3), 247–266.

- Baldassar, L. (2011) Italian migrants in Australia and their relationship to Italy: return visits, transnational caregiving and the second generation, in *Of Home, Belonging and Return: Transnational Links of the Mediterranean-Origin Second Generation* (eds. R. King and A. Christou), Special Issue of *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 20 (2), 255–282.
- Baldassar, L. and Merla, L. (eds) (2013) *Transnational Families, Migration and the Circulation of Care: Understanding Mobility and Absence in Family Life*, Routledge, London.
- Baldassar, L., Baldock, C. and Wilding, R. (2007) *Families Caring Across Borders: Migration, Aging and Transnational Caregiving*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Baldock, C. (2000). Migrants and their parents: caregiving from a distance. *Journal of Family Studies*, 21 (2), 205–224.
- Banfi, L. and Boccagni, P. (2011) Transnational family life and female migration in Italy: one or multiple patterns? in *Gender, Generations and the Family in International Migration* (eds. A. Kraler, E. Kofman, M. Kohli, and C. Schmoll), Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, pp. 285–310.
- Blanc, C., Basch, L. and Glick Schiller, N. (1995) Transnationalism, nation-states and culture. *Current Anthropology*, 36 (4), 683–686.
- Bryceson, D. and Vuorela, U. (2002) *The Transnational Family: New European Frontiers and Global Networks*, Berg, Oxford, New York.
- Bowlby, J. (1969) *Attachment and Loss. Vol. I: Attachment*, Hogarth, London.
- Chavkin, W. and Maher, J.M. (eds) (2010) *The Globalization of Motherhood. Deconstructions and Reconstructions of Biology and Care*, Routledge, Abingdon, New York.
- Clarke, J. (2005) Welfare states as nation states: some conceptual reflections. *Social Policy and Society*, 4 (4), 407–415.
- Coe, C. (2011) What is love? The materiality of care in Ghanaian transnational families. *International Migration*, 49 (6), 7–24.
- di Leonardo, M. (1987) The female world of cards and holidays: women, families, and the work of kinship. *Signs*, 12 (3), 440–453.
- Dilworth-Anderson, P., Williams, I.C. and Gibson, B.E. (2002) Issues of race, ethnicity and culture in caregiving research: a 20-year review (1980–2000). *The Gerontologist*, 42 (3), 237–272.
- Douglass, M. (2006) Global householding in Pacific Asia. *International Development Planning Review*, 28 (4), 421–446.
- Douglass, M. (2012) Global householding and social reproduction: migration research, dynamics and public policy in East and Southeast Asia. ARI working paper No.188.
- Erel, U. (2012) Introduction: transnational care in Europe – changing formations of citizenship, family, and generation. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 19 (1), 1–14.
- Eriksen, T.H. (1991) The cultural contexts of ethnic differences. *Man* (N.S.), 26, 127–144.
- Esping-Andersen, G. (1990) *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Falzon, M.-A. (ed) (2009). *Multi-Sited Ethnography: Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research*, Ashgate, Farnham.
- Filho, W.T. (2009) The conservative aspects of a centripetal diaspora: the case of the cape verdean tabancas. *Africa*, 79 (4), 520–542.
- Finch, J. and Mason, J. (1993) *Negotiating Family Responsibilities*, Tavistock, Routledge, London, New York.
- Fisher, B. and Tronto, J. (1990) Toward a feminist theory of caring, in *Circles of Care* (eds. E.K. Abel and M.K. Nelson), State University New York Press, Albany, pp. 35–62.
- Fog Olwig, K. (2013) Migration and care – intimately related aspects of Caribbean family and kinship, in *Transnational Families, Migration and the Circulation of Care*:

- Understanding Mobility and Absence in Family Life* (eds. L. Baldassar and L. Merla), Routledge, London.
- Gardner, K. and Grillo, R. (2002) Transnational households and ritual: an overview. *Global Networks*, 2 (3), 179–190.
- Gille, Z. (2012) Global ethnography 2.0 – from methodological nationalism to methodological materialism, in *Beyond Methodological Nationalism: Research Methodologies for Cross-Border Studies* (eds. A. Amelina, D.D. Nergiz, T. Faist, and N. Glick Schiller), Routledge, London, pp. 91–110.
- Glick Schiller, N., Basch, L. and Szanton-Blanc, C. (1992) *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration*, New York Academy of Sciences, New York.
- Grillo, R. (ed) (2008) *The Family in Question: Immigrant and Ethnic Minorities in Multicultural Europe*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam.
- Hage, G. (2005) A not so multi-sited ethnography of a not so imagined community. *Anthropological Theory*, 5 (4), 463–475.
- Hardill, I. (2004) Transnational living and moving experiences: intensified mobility and dual-career households. *Population, Space and Place*, 10 (5), 375–389.
- Hochschild, A. (2000) Global care chains and emotional surplus value, in *On the Edge: Living with Global Capitalism* (eds. W. Hutton and A. Giddens), Jonathan Cape, London, pp. 130–146.
- Hochschild, A. (2005) Love and gold, in *Feminist Politics, Activism and Vision: Local and Global Challenges* (eds. L. Ricciutelli, A. Miles, and M.H. McFadden), Zed/Innana Books, Toronto, pp. 34–46.
- Huang, S., Yeoh, B. and Lam, T. (2008) Asian transnational families in transition: the liminality of simultaneity. *International Migration*, 46 (4), 3–13.
- Huang, S., Thang, L. and Toyota, M. (2012) Transnational mobilities for care: rethinking the dynamics of care in Asia. *Global Networks*, 12 (2), 129–134.
- Kilkey, M. and Merla, L. (2013) Situating transnational families' care-giving arrangements: the role of institutional contexts. *Global Networks*. published online. doi: 10.1111/glob.12034.
- Kilkey, M., Perrons, D. and Plomien, A. with Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. and Ramirez, H. (2013) *Gender, Migration and Domestic Work: Masculinities, Male Labour and Fathering in the UK and USA*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Kofman, E. (2012) Rethinking care through social reproduction: articulating circuits of migration. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 19 (1), 142–162.
- Leira, A. and Saraceno, C. (2006) Care: actors, relationships, contexts. *SOSIOLOGI I DAG*, 36 (3), 7–34.
- Lutz, H. and Palenga-Möllnbeck, E. (2010) Care work migration in Germany – compliance and complicity. *Social Policy and Society*, 9 (3), 419–430.
- Lutz, H. and Palenga-Möllnbeck, E. (2012) Care workers, care drain, and care chains: reflections on care, migration, and citizenship. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 19 (1), 15–37.
- Madianou, M. and Miller, D. (2012) *Migration and New Media: Transnational Families and Polymedia*, Routledge, Abingdon and New York.
- Mahler, S.J. and Pessar, P.R. (2001) Gendered geographies of power: analyzing gender across transnational spaces. *Identities* 7 (4), 441–459.
- Marcus, G.E. (1995) Ethnography in/of the world system: the emergence of multi-sited ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24, 95–117.

- Merla, L. (2012) Salvadoran migrants in Australia: an analysis of transnational families' capability to care across borders. *International Migration*, Vol 50, Nov 29 published online. doi: 10.1111/imig.12024.
- Merla, L. and Baldassar, L. (2011) Transnational caregiving between Australia, Italy and El Salvador: the impact of institutions on the capability to care at a distance, in *Gender and Well Being: The Role of Institutions* (eds. E. Addis, P.D. Villota, F. Degavre, and J. Eriksen), Ashgate, London, pp. 147–162.
- Miller, D. and Slater, D. (2000) *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach*, Berg, Oxford.
- Morgan, D.H.G. (2011) *Rethinking Family Practices*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nurse, K. (2004) *Policy Paper: Diaspora, Migration and Development in the Caribbean*, Ottawa: FOCAL–Canadian Foundation for the Americas.
- Ortner, S. (1997) Fieldwork in the postcommunity. *Anthropology and Humanism*, 22 (1), 61–80.
- Parreñas, R. (2001) Mothering from a distance: emotions, gender, and intergenerational relations in filipino transnational families. *Feminist Studies*, 27 (2), 361–390.
- Parreñas, R. (2003) The care crisis in the Philippines: children and transnational families in the new global economy, in *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy* (eds. B. Ehrenreich and A.R. Hochschild), Granta Books, London, pp. 39–54.
- Parreñas, R. (2005) *Children of Global Migration: Transnational Families and Gendered Woes*, Stanford University Press, Stanford.
- Pfau-Effinger, B. (2000) Conclusion: gender cultures, gender arrangements and social changes in the European context, in *Gender, Economy and Culture in the European Union* (eds. S. Duncan and B. Pfau-Effinger), Routledge, London and New York.
- Riak Akuei, S. (2005) Remittances as unforeseen burdens: The livelihoods and social obligations of Sudanese refugees, in *Global Migration Perspectives* 18, Global Commission on International Migration, Geneva.
- Rubery, J., Smith, M. and Fagan, C. (1998) National working time regimes and equal opportunities. *Feminist Economics*, 4 (1), 71–101.
- Ryan, L. (2007) Migrant women, social networks and motherhood: the experiences of Irish nurses in Britain. *Sociology*, 41 (2), 295–312.
- Sarti, R. and Scrinzi, F. (2010) Introduction to the special issue: men in a woman's job, male domestic workers, international migration and the globalization of care. *Men and Masculinities*, 13 (1), 4–15.
- Segal, A. (1996) Locating the swallows: Caribbean recycling migration. Paper presented at the Caribbean Studies Association Conference, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- Sørensen, N.N. and Guarnizo, L. (2007) Transnational family life across the Atlantic: the experience of Colombian and Dominican migrants in Europe, *Living Across Worlds: Diaspora, Development and Transnational Engagement* (ed. N.N. Sørensen), International Organization for Migration, Geneva, pp. 151–176.
- Stacey, J. (1998) *Brave New Families: Stories of Domestic Upheaval in Late Twentieth Century America*, Basic Books, New York.
- Urry, J. (2000) *Sociology Beyond Societies: Mobilities for the Twenty-first Century*, Routledge, London.
- Widmer, E. and Jallinoja, R. (2008) *Beyond the Nuclear Family: Families in a Configurational Perspective*, Peter Lang, Bern.
- Wilding, R. (2006) Virtual intimacies? Families communicating across transnational contexts. *Global Networks*, 6 (2), 125–142.
- Williams, F. (2010) Migration and care: themes, concepts and challenges. *Social Policy and Society*, 9 (3), 385–396.

- Williams, F. and Gavanas, A. (2008) The intersection of child care regimes and migration regimes: a three-country study, in *Migration and Domestic Work. A European Perspective on a Global Theme* (ed. Helma Lutz), Ashgate, Avebury, pp. 13–28.
- Wimmer, A. and Glick Schiller, N. (2002) Methodological nationalism and beyond: nation-state building, migration and the social sciences. *Global Networks*, 2 (4), 301–334.
- Yeates, N. (2009) *Globalising Care Economies and Migrant Workers: Explorations in Global Care Chains*, Palgrave, Basingstoke.
- Zentgraf, K.M. and Chinchilla, N.S. (2012) Transnational family separation: a framework for analysis. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38 (2), 345–366.

UNCORRECTED PROOFS