



Problems with paternal leave policy – why it will not work

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Expected problems based on previous research

- Fathers are more likely to take daddy leave if it is non transferable between men and women (use it or lose it)
- Mainly better educated men and ones married to professional wives take it up
- If fathers should become involved in childcare they should not take leave at the same time as mothers

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More problems...

- Employers discourage men from taking paternity leave and are more likely to turn down a request for flexible working
- Parents' decisions about taking paternity leave influenced by greater earning power and prospects of men
- Fathers work longer hours than other men except in France where 35 hour weeks stops it

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Caring work by fathers – are they doing domestic labour?

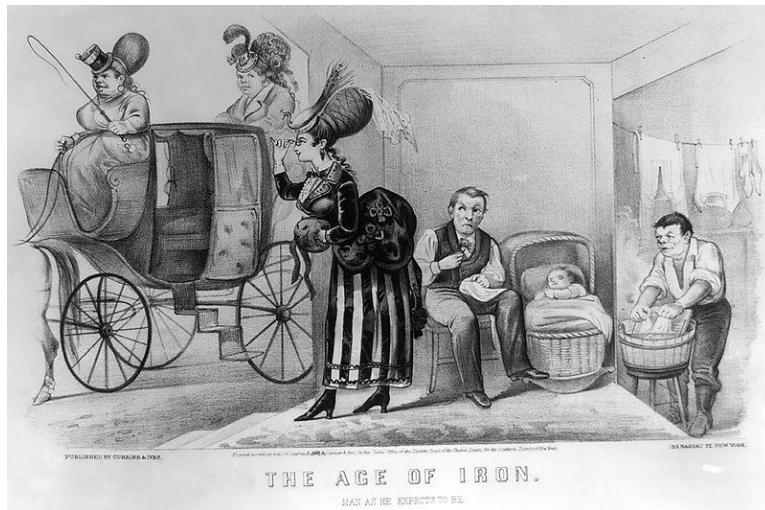


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Context of problems

- UK family policy promote and reinforce the view that mother is the main carer
- Assumes that domestic and childcare work is mainly done by women
- Men may share in parenting, but what about all the rest of the work?
- Clear that this will not help to promote gender equality of the sharing of caring responsibilities

Goes against dominant gender ideologies





Our proposals

- A period of more than 2 weeks should be reserved just for fathers on a 'use it or lose it' basis
- Paternity leave should be well compensated (at least 50% of earnings)
- Fathers should not be able to take paternity leave at same time as mothers are on maternity leave
- Need to encourage employers to recognise fathering roles of men

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Our proposals continued

- Government should enforce shorter hours to stop the long hours culture among fathers
- Amend legislation on entitlement to flexible working so that employers have to justify refusing requests
- Compensate parental leave for children under five with a proportion ring fenced for fathers
- Encourage gender equality policies in the labour market and reduce gender pay gap
- Ensure that parents have access to flexible childcare which is high quality and affordable including after school and holiday care for school aged children

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Fathers' involvement leads to better relationships with children



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