

## **Is the Second Demographic Transition Coming to North America or just to Quebec? The Changing Effect of Children on the Stability of Nonmarital Cohabitation in the US and Canada**

Pierre Turcotte, Pascale Beaupré, and Frances Goldscheider

Cohabitation is not only a rapidly spreading phenomenon, it is a rapidly evolving one, with reversals in selectivity (from the more to the less educated) and evidence of increased likelihood of childbearing in such unions. A major issue in the growth of cohabitation is the stability of cohabiting unions with children. In the US, children conceived during cohabitation (but born in marriage) increase union stability while children conceived and born during cohabitation do not. A recent study on Quebec, however, has shown that recently created cohabiting unions with children are more stable than those created earlier. Could Quebec, which has a longer tradition of cohabitation than elsewhere in Canada, now be at a different stage of its “*Second Demographic Transition*”?

Data are drawn from two nationally representative surveys, 2001 Canadian General Social Survey (GSS) and the 2002 US National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). We use measures of both stable and time-varying respondent characteristics based on continuous time event history analysis techniques (Cox regression). Time-varying indicators include women’s labor force participation, level of education, school attendance and the arrival of a second child. Time-constant indicators include age of women at union, union rank, religious practice, childhood family structure, number of siblings, region, and in-country birth for the United States and Canada, language for Canada and ethnicity (Black, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic white) for the US. Given our focus on change, we highlight differences in union stability for women entering motherhood at different periods.