

Fathers and Parental Leave Policies: International comparisons

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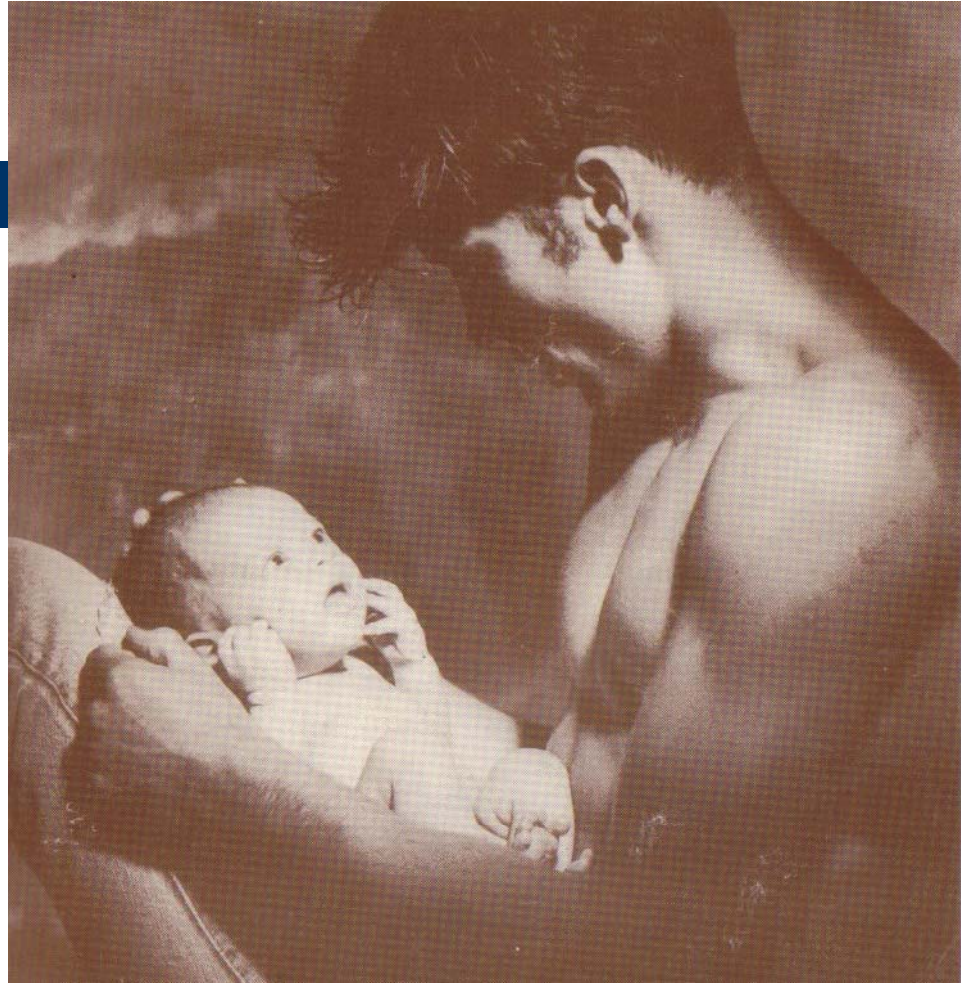
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The paper

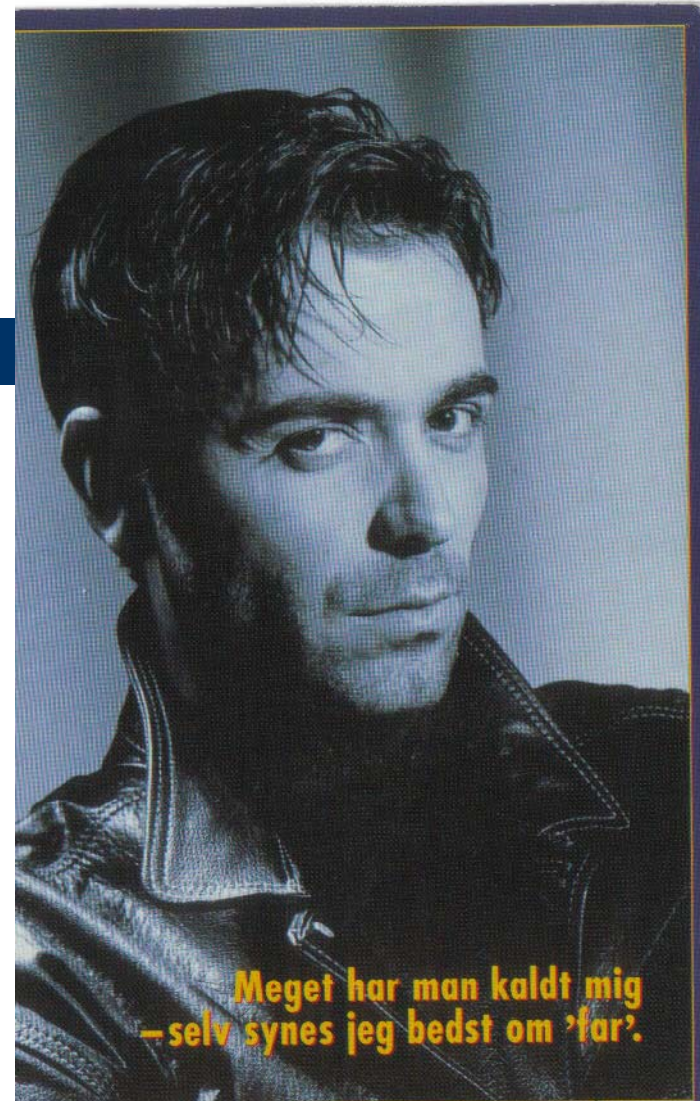
- Comparative analysis of paternity & parental leave provisions in 24 countries (2003-2007).
 - Annual audit data International Leave network
 - Father-sensitive typology of current policy measures
- Utilization Patterns
- Child quality of life theme.

Culture(s) of fatherhood

- 'The father we live by' (Gillis, 1996)
- Fathers in transition- transformation from a cultural script of 'father right' to 'father love'?
- Fathers in crisis- unable to care or provide cash?



*“Real men aren’t
afraid to take
paternity leave.”*



Father-care Sensitive Parental Leave typology

- Concept of “father-care sensitive” leave- the extent to which leave policy context enables fathers to exercise caring at/ around childbirth and in the early years.
- Other leave models have focused on ‘breadwinning’ concept /men’s labour market activity.

Meanings: paternity leave and parental leave?

Policy

- *Paternity leave* a statutory entitlement to enable a father to be absent from work for a period of time when a child is born.
- *Parental leave* a statutory entitlement to be absent from work after initial early maternity and paternity leave.

Psychological

- Macro/ distal context to enhance *paternal availability* to infant with the potential for direct *paternal interaction* (Lamb, et al 1987) and financial *paternal capital* (Pleck, 2007)
- Macro/ distal context for optimal “infant quality of life”.

Father-care Sensitive Parental Leave typology

- ***Leave Duration:***

the amount of time fathers are allowed away from the work-place.

'Extended' time covers those provisions of ***more than 14 days.***

'Short' is reserved for countries where time away from the work place is ***14 days or less.***

Father-care Sensitive Parental Leave typology

- ***Level of Income replacement***: the extent to which a country provides income substitution during the leave period.

'High income' replacement is defined as an entitlement paid to all eligible fathers at more than 50% of earnings

'Low income' replacement is defined as an entitlement paid to all eligible fathers *either* at a low flat rate, *or* earnings related at less than 50% of earnings, *or* for less than the full period of leave.

Statutory Father-care Sensitive Parental Leave Models by Selected Countries

Extended father-care leave with high income replacement:

Finland, Germany, Iceland, Norway, Portugal, Quebec, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.

Short father-care leave with high income replacement

Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Greece, Hungary, Netherlands.

Short/ Minimalist father-care leave with low/ no income replacement

Australia, Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Poland, UK.

No Statutory father-care sensitive parental leave

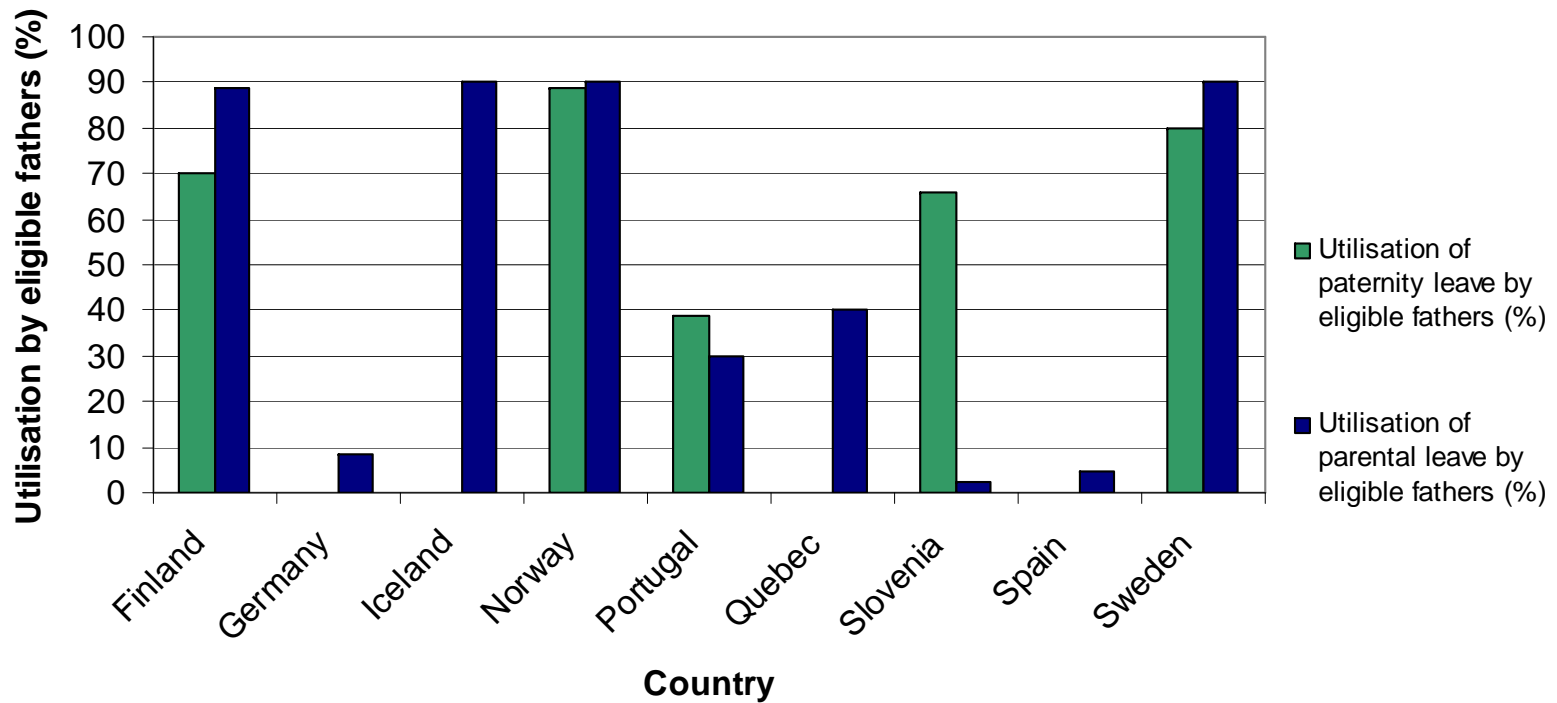
USA

Utilization Patterns- fathers' utilization of both paternity and parental leave

- is higher under the 'Extended father-care leave with high income replacement' model.
 - > 70% eligible fathers
- is lower under the 'Short/ minimalist father-care leave with low/ no income replacement' model.
- Financial incentives+ father targeting vital

Extended Father-Care Leave with High Income Replacement

Utilisation of Paternity and Parental Leave by Fathers



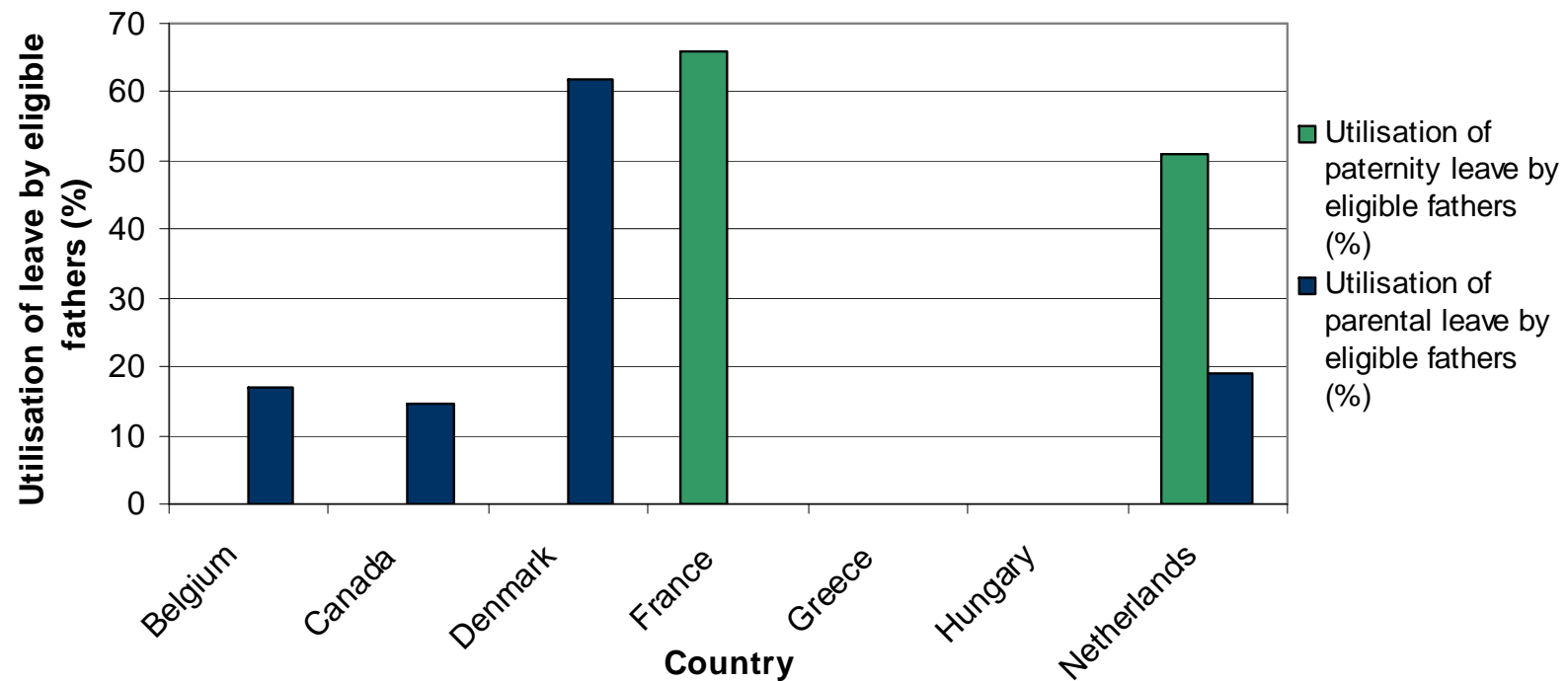
	Percentage of fathers who use leave	Number of weeks of paid parental leave available for fathers*
1988	0.6	16
1989	1.0	18
1990	1.7	22
1991	2.0	24
1992	2.3	27
1993	4.1	29 + 4
1994	45	29 + 4
1995	57	29 + 4
1996	61	29 + 4
1997	75	29 + 4
1998	80	29 + 4

Number of weeks at $\frac{1}{2}$ 100 percent of ordinary wage; may be extended with proportional wage reduction

Source: The National Insurance Association, Norway. Cited in Brandth and Kvande (2002)

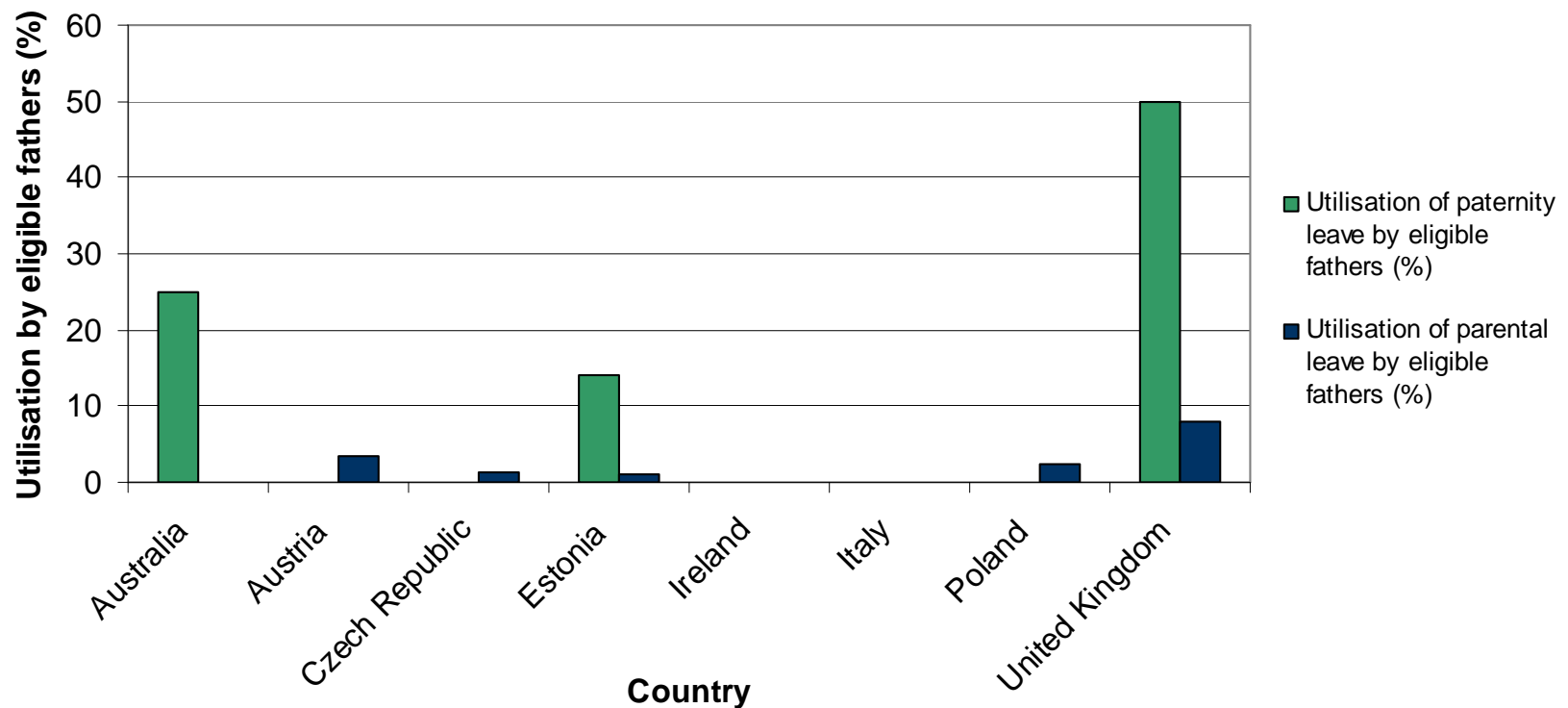
Short Father-Care Leave with High Income Replacement

Utilisation of Paternity and Parental Leave by Fathers



Short/ Minimalist Father-Care Leave with Low/ No Income Replacement

Utilisation of Paternity and Parental Leave by Fathers



Impact- benefits of leave

- Methodologically complex- a black box of diverse arrangements. Process and impact studies underdeveloped.
- Job protected *paid* parental (mostly maternal) leave associated with lower rates of infant mortality, controls for birth weight and public expenditure on families and children (Tanaka, 2005)
18 OECD countries.
- Job protected *paid* parental (mostly maternal) leave is associated with higher rates of breast-feeding (Ruhm, 2000; Galtry, 2003).

Impact- benefits of leave taking- for some?

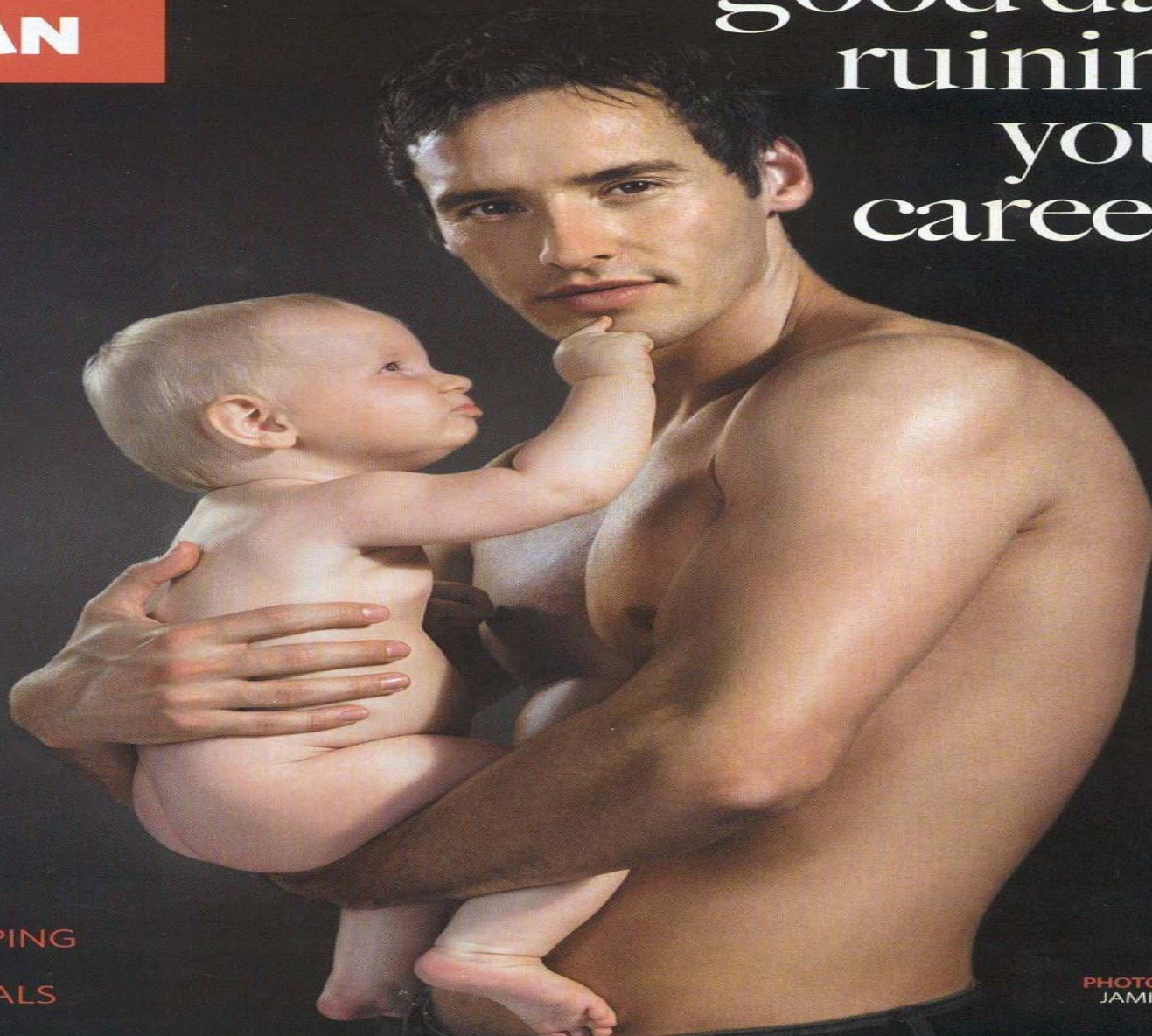
- Daddy quota 'home alone' parental leave Norwegian fathers report more awareness of infant life 'slow time' than fathers having 'home together' leave (Brandth and Kvande, 2001)
- Paternal leave taking boosting father involvement at 9 months (Tanaka and Waldfogel, 2007) and in reading to child at 3 years (Dex, 2007).
- Low access for parents with insecure work histories prior to childbirth.
- Potential for 'parental leave rich' and 'parental leave poor' polarisation – infants in poor households may receive less maternal and paternal investment (caring and economic).

Conclusions

- Infant care is no longer a private “mother-only” family matter- governments are becoming involved too.
- Implementation of father-care sensitive leave more successful when schemes do not subtract from support to mothers.
- Men’s behaviour very receptive to public policies to enhance their availability to infants - birth + 13-15 months.
- Financial incentives + explicit father targeting vital.
- “Parental leave poor” + “parental leave rich” nations and children – another inequality.

Observer
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good dad
ruining
your
career?



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40 BEST BIKINIS
BEACH ESSENTIALS

PHOTOGRAPH
JAMIE BAKER

UK- Current leave policy (2008)

- **Paternity Leave (from 2003)**

- 2 wks @ £117 /wk

Future: Additional 'paternity' leave APL up to 26 weeks in child's second 6 months, contingent on mother returning to work- by April 2009.

- **Maternity Leave (from 1977)**

- 52wks: 6 wks @ 90% earnings, 33 wks @ £117/wk; 13 wks unpaid
- Future: extension of payment to 52 wks.

- **Parental Leave (from 1999)**

- 13 wks per parent unpaid, for under 6yr child