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DOMESTIC AFFAIRS AND NETWORK RELATIONS

Beverly Wellman & Barry Wellman
University of Toronto, Canada

We examine how spouses and community members provide social support: companionship, emotional aid and services for dealing with domestic situations. Torontonians engage their networks from their homes; there is no Bott-ian tendency for networks to lure people away from their spouses. Spouses exchange a wide range of support, but most community members provide specialized support. We develop a typology based on the extent of support that people receive from spouses and networks. Networkers, with much spousal and network support, tend to be in their thirties, parents of preschoolers, with wives who are home much of the time, have larger networks and more contact with network members. Householders, with spousal support but little network support, tend to be in their forties, with both spouses doing paid work, have the smallest networks and do not have much contact with the members of their small networks. Self-Reliants, getting little support from spouses and networks, tend to have no children living at home, small networks and little contact with network members.

Many studies of community networks and of marital relations have been dealing with the same basic question: What is the nature of present-day interpersonal relations under the impact of the large-scale social changes such as bureaucratization, urbanization and the (post)-industrial revolutions? Despite this common interest, community and marital analyses have developed separately. Community sociologists have largely examined the networks of *individ-*

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uals without considering the extent to which the networks of husbands and wives fit together (Wellman, 1988). Family sociologists have been interested only in the effects of the community on *household* marital relations rather than in how households use their community ties to gain useful resources (see the reviews in Milardo, 1988).

Our principal concern here is to link the study of marital relations, community relations and social support. We use a network analytic approach to examine how both spouses and community members provide such supportive resources as companionship, emotional aid and material aid. Are spouses and community networks *competitive*, with people relying principally on either their spouse or their friends and relatives? Are they *complementary*, with spouse and network each providing unique kinds of support? Are they *parallel*, providing similar kinds of support?

Our research group has been studying the support that community members provide to Torontonians. We have come to see that *interpersonal support* from community members is one of the five principal ways by which people and households get resources, along with *market exchanges* (as purchases, barter or informal exchanges); *institutional distributions* (by the state or other bureaucracies as citizenship rights, organizational benefits or charitable aid); *coercive appropriations* (such as robbery or expropriations by interpersonal or institutional bullies); *self-provisioning* (such as growing one's own food or improving one's house).

To transcend the former bias in community research in looking only at neighbourhood and kinship solidarities, we have defined community as a *personal community network* consisting of an individual's active ties with people outside their household no matter where they are located or how they are related (Wellman & Leighton, 1979). In this article, we expand our research group's focus on personal community networks to see how social support from *spouses* fits together with support from *community members*: kin, friends, neighbours and workmates.

Competition or complement? Several family studies looking at the interplay between households and community networks have seen their relationship as competitive. These family scholars built on the work of Elizabeth Bott (1971) which reasoned from the kinship group to the household. Bott argued that the density of kinship networks affects the extent to which husbands and wives act separately or jointly in domestic matters. She suggested that strong, densely knit kinship groups often pull spouses apart while weaker kinship groups allowed spouses to act jointly.

Bott's demonstration that kinship networks could affect something as primal as marital relations inspired sociologists to take network analysis seriously. Her work pioneered the study of egocentric networks (a focal person's set of ties) and began the systematic measurement of network properties. Although Bott's inspiration and method deservedly continue, her particular findings have not been reliably documented in North American studies (Bott, 1971; Lee, 1979).

We think that this failure of network characteristics to explain marital relationships stems from differences between present-day North America and Britain in the 1950s. Bott's analysis depended on the capacity of many British kinship groups to enmesh their members in their communal daily routines. Wives would visit Mum and sisters at their homes, husbands would drink with Dad and brothers at the pub.

The differences between Bott's research and more recent North American research may reflect changes in both countries from the 1950s to the 1970s and 1980s. The picture Bott paints of a local, kin-dominated society seems like the nostalgic last stand of British households on the brink of breaking away in upward social mobility and outward residential mobility. Indeed, Allan's (1989) and Willmott's (1986) reviews suggest that present-day British community networks are similar to North American community networks (Wellman, 1988, 1990, 1992b).

Solidary conditions are rarely present in present-day North America and certainly not in our sample. Network members — including kinfolk — are probably more residentially dispersed in North America than in Britain. North Americans move more, and they move farther away. Ties with friends and kin extend well beyond the neighbourhood. Most are to persons elsewhere in the same metropolitan area, but many are long-distance ties (Fischer, 1982; Wellman, 1988, 1990). Although parents, siblings and adult children maintain more contact than do other residentially dispersed network members, it is difficult for them to operate as a collective solidarity (Wellman & Tindall, 1992).

North Americans also have a lower proportion of kin in their active networks than did the 1950s British. For example, in Cochran & Gunnarsson's (1990) Welsh–American comparison of married couples with children, kin are usually at the centre of

networks in both countries. Yet the Welsh networks are smaller, more dominated by kin and more focused on practical help, especially with childcare. By contrast, North American networks contain a higher proportion of friends who are focused on emotional support and sociability as an end in itself. Moreover, the 30–60 adult kin the average person knows are only a small fraction of the 1000 or more people they know overall (Wellman, 1990). North Americans have only a few active relationships with extended kin who are not parents, children or siblings. Such ties are usually the least active and supportive in the networks (Popenoe, 1988; Wellman & Wortley, 1989a).

North American networks are diversified. Friends as well as kin help with daily hassles, neighbours mind each other's children, friends and sisters provide emotional support and family care (e.g. Fischer, 1982; Wellman, 1988, 1990; Wellman & Wortley, 1989a, 1990). Not only do community ties provide important support, but they consume major portions of a person's day: Larson & Bradney (1988) estimate that working people are likely to spend 10–15 percent of their waking time with friends and relatives, 30–40 percent with co-workers, as compared to 20–40 percent with household members.

These British–North American differences suggest that network dynamics in North America work from the household out, not from kinship and community in. North American communities have become liberated from the constraints of space and the claims of kinship, neighbourhood and work groups. North Americans feel they must rely on their own efforts rather than depend on the group. They fashion a life in which they can operate on their own and with their spouses, manoeuvring through their networks to interact more with compatible and useful friends and relatives (Gans, 1988). For example, one midwest US study found that 'spouses are about thirty times as likely to be selected as a confidant than an extended relative, . . . about seven times as likely to be chosen as a parent, ten times as likely as an adult child, and fifteen times as likely as a sibling' (Hoyt & Babchuk, 1983: 84).

The sense of control that North Americans have over their lives is usually independent of their involvement with kin, for kinfolk are only one discretionary component of their community networks (Popenoe, 1988; Oliveri & Reiss, 1981). Those couples with the most openness to solving domestic problems usually have large, sparsely knit and complex networks rather than densely knit

networks dominated by kin. It is the sparsely knit, complex networks that facilitate access to more diverse social milieus and resources (Granovetter, 1982; Oliveri & Reiss, 1981). When the persons at the centres of such networks need help, they scan friends, neighbours and workmates as well as kin. They examine the quality of the relationship, the reciprocal obligations, the resources of each network member and the extent to which mutual network links can encourage the provision of support.

North American cities foster private community. Homes stand detached from their neighbours, while public spaces have become residual places to pass through, to shop in, or to loiter in isolation (Sennett, 1977; Whyte, 1980; Popenoe, 1985). As a result, the community relations of North Americans are often selective, private encounters with residentially dispersed network members. For example, the active network members of the Torontonians we are studying live at a median distance of 10 miles apart and see each other on the average of once every 2 weeks.

The separation of homes from public community has helped bring husbands and wives together. Domestic pursuits dominate, as people are in no mood to go out after they wearily commute from work. Husbands and wives spend nights and weekends together with each other instead of men going off to the pub and women going off to their immediate family (Popenoe, 1985, 1988). Canadian men watched a daily average of 3.2 hours of television in 1987 while Canadian women watched 3.8 hours (Young, 1990). Torontonians rarely overcome their isolation by getting together in public places or in large groups. Rather, they visit each other's homes and summer cottages and they chat on the telephone (Wellman, 1992a; Wellman & Tindall, 1992). Their cars leave garages as sealed units, opened only on reaching the others' home. Their telephones stay indoors, engaged in private duets. As Torontonian Marshall McLuhan observed, they go out to be private — in streets where no one greets each other — but stay in to be public — to meet their friends and relatives (McLuhan, 1973: 16). There are costs to this: Popenoe (1985: 84) reports that home-centred Americans are surrounded by environmental squalor while the British experience 'social comfort in aging, urban villages'.

One result of this domestication of community is that Torontonians must work at maintaining socially supportive ties. There is little opportunity for casual contact. They must invite people over or telephone them. There is little group solidarity in most personal

community networks. People must maintain friendship ties separately and reinforce them directly. Kinship ties, although more densely knit, differ greatly in their supportiveness and centrality to Torontonians' lives. To obtain a wide range of support, Torontonians get different sorts of resources from strong and weak ties; kinfolk, friends and neighbours (Wellman & Wortley, 1989a, 1990).

This view of Torontonians as actively operating their networks from their households is the reverse of the Bott-ian view of networks acting on domestic relations between husbands and wives. It suggests that we can treat marital support similarly to community network support and ask in similar ways about the resources people get from their spouses and their personal community networks. The key question moves from one of marital support to one of personal and household strategies: How do people and households use interpersonal resources to manage their lives? (see also Pahl, 1984).

Women as community keepers

Women have historically been the 'kinkeepers' of Western society, with mothers and sisters keeping relatives connected (Bott, 1971; Rossi & Rossi, 1990). A maintenance man we interviewed calls his mother 'the central switchboard'. As community has become more private, community-keeping has become an extension of kin-keeping, with both linked to domestic management. North American women still maintain more ties with kin than do men (Hoyt & Babchuk, 1983; Wellman, 1990). Yet informal ties among women friends, neighbours and kin form the basis for many women's relationships (Oliker, 1989). Wives arrange companionship as well as support for their households. They organize the get-togethers between couples that have become an important venue for friendship. Where male friends once gathered separately from their wives in clubs and cafes, friendship is now often an extension of marital relations (Riley, 1990; Wellman, 1992a).

Because community network studies (including our own) have tended to focus on the individual's networks, little is known about the extent to which North American husbands and wives have shared or separate ties with friends, neighbours and relatives (Stein et al., this issue, pp. 365–83). We have found that a substantial minority of the Torontonians' ties are between couples (Wellman, 1992a). Relationships probably become more shared over

time (Milardo, 1982, 1986; Milardo & Lewis, 1985), although a couple's kin are rarely linked with their friends (Wellman et al., 1991).

When wives must handle a double load of paid work along with domestic work, the demands on their time and energy can affect their availability for 'net work' — maintaining their households' community networks (Gordon & Downing, 1978; Wellman, 1985). As a Toronto secretary says, 'I don't go out much during the week because I always promise myself that I am going to get home, and I never get home early.' In part, the income generated by wives becomes part of the household's survival strategy (Pahl, 1984; Espinoza, 1992). Women's paid employment consumes the resource of time and brings in the resource of money; store-bought meals substitute home-cooking (Spitze, 1988). Unlike men, wives give precedence to domestic concerns even when they do paid work (Bielby & Bielby, 1989). Although they would like to see their friends, they have scant time to do so. But supportive community ties are best maintained through large inputs of caring time; they are difficult to purchase.

It is in this way that the wives' relations of production — their involvement in paid work — can affect the household's relations of reproduction — the involvement of husbands as well as wives with their personal community networks. Yet family analysts have not given much attention to how the very act of doing paid work outside the home affects community ties. To be sure, they have looked at how variations in households' socioeconomic status affects relations with community members (e.g. Lee, 1979; Cochran & Gunnarsson, 1990), and they have considered how doing paid work affects domestic relations (e.g. Spitze, 1988; Bielby & Bielby, 1989). There has been little research that connects paid work, domestic relations and community relations.

Studying marital and network relations

To find out about community networks we interviewed 20 married Torontonians in 1978, 9 women (45 percent) and 11 men (55 percent) with a mean age of 42. They are a subsample of the 845 randomly sampled residents of the Toronto borough of East York who had first been surveyed in 1968 (Wellman et al., 1973; Wellman, 1979). The interviews lasted 10–15 hours, providing information about the respondents' ties with their household members and the 217 active members of their community networks. (For details of the interview and variable definitions, see Wellman, 1982, 1985; Wellman & Wortley, 1989a, 1989b, 1990.) Although we interviewed fewer respondents than do most other community network surveys, we

can analyse a greater number and variety of ties in each network — and in much more detail. Most community network surveys have looked only at the 3–6 most intimate ties in a network (Wellman, 1988, 1990). Moreover, the fit of our findings with those from large surveys, including our first East York study (Wellman, 1979), gives us confidence in the usefulness of analysing this small sample in depth (Wellman, 1988).

All but two of the respondents were British–Canadian. Like other North American marital households, these respondents lived in nuclear families in which their spouses were usually the only other adults present (Kobrin, 1976). Thirteen (65 percent) had children living at home, 4 had adult children who all lived outside the home and 3 were childless. The adult children living at home were rarely present, preparing to leave the nest, physically, financially and emotionally. Unlike many Third World households and aged Americans, these children were not major providers of supportive resources to their parents.

Ten male respondents and 5 female respondents did paid work: 3 women exclusively did housework in their own homes, while 1 man and 1 woman were retired (as were their spouses). In this analysis, households as well as individuals are relevant units of analysis. Eleven of the wives in these 20 households (female respondents and the wives of male respondents) did paid work: 6 worked part-time, 5 worked full-time, 7 were homemakers and 2 were retired. The women held white-collar and service jobs such as secretary, insurance claim examiner and waitress. Seventeen husbands in these 20 households (male respondents and husbands of female respondents) did full-time paid work: white-collar, skilled and semi-skilled jobs such as electrician, production manager and truck driver.

The respondents' 217 active ties were with 93 socially close intimates (43 percent) and 124 less intimate but still significant network members with whom they were in active contact. Women had somewhat larger networks because of their greater number of significant (non-intimate) ties with women neighbours also engaged in household care (Wellman, 1985, 1992a). Most networks were predominantly composed of kin and friends, with one or two neighbours and workmates. The persons whom the respondents saw most frequently — usually neighbours and workmates — tended not to be their intimates. Although most kin were actively linked with each other, most friends did not have strong ties with each other, and there were very few ties between kin and friends (see also Wellman et al., 1991). Although the networks often had a densely knit core cluster of a few kin, they were sparsely knit overall. Their mean density of .33 means that only one-third of all possible active ties among active network members exist (Wellman et al., 1988). Unlike many of Bott's British subjects, these Torontonians were not enmeshed in densely knit solidarities of local kin and neighbours.

Social support

Support from network members. We used a systematic questionnaire in conjunction with the interviews to learn if the respondents reported receiving 18 types of social support from each member of their networks (Table 1). Many network members provided some form of *sociable companionship* (especially discussing or doing things with each other), *emotional aid* (especially during routine or minor upset and advice about family problems) or *small services* (around the house and otherwise). Only a small minority of ties provided major kinds of help — in major emotional crises, with large services or large amounts of money — or help in dealing with external organizations (including searching for jobs or homes).

TABLE 1
Percentage of ties, networks and spouses providing support

	Percentage of ties providing support	Mean no. of support strands	Percentage of networks having at least 1 strand of support	Percentage of spouses providing support
Goods and services:				
Minor household aid	38	4.2	90	NA
Minor services	41	4.5	85	NA
Major household aid	16	1.7	65	95
Major services	8	.9	50	65
Organizational aid	11	1.2	35	70
Lend items	40	4.8	85	NA
Minor financial aid	16	1.8	60	NA
Major financial aid	5	.6	30	30
Mortgage aid	5	.6	35	NA
Emotional aid:				
Family problems advice	46	5.0	75	75
Minor emotional aid	48	5.2	75	90
Major emotional aid	32	3.5	65	80
Information:				
Job opening info.	9	1.0	50	30
Job contacts	6	.7	35	20
Housing vacancy info.	4	.5	30	40
Companionship:				
Informal activities	38	4.0	90	NA
Group activities	24	2.6	55	NA
Shared interests	46	4.6	90	NA
n	*217*	*20*	*20*	*20*

NA = not available.

The most active ties in a person's network usually provided only specialized support with only a few ties providing many kinds of support. The average network member provided the average Torontonian with a mean of 3.8 strands of support out of the 18 types we surveyed, ranging from a low of 0 for one male loner to a high of 7.8 for one gregarious woman with a chronically ill child (see also Wellman et al., 1988; Wellman & Wortley, 1989a, 1990). When we take into account the number of network members as well as the number of strands of support they provide, the average respondent had a total of 47 supportive strands with active network members.

Even if most ties do not provide many strands of support, it may be sufficient for people to receive support from somewhere in their networks. Indeed, most respondents received from at least one network member 13 types of support. The exceptions are aid with organizations, major financial aid (for housing or not), job contacts and aid in finding housing (Table 1). Most respondents usually had alternative sources of each kind of support available. In most networks, at least 4 active ties provided routine emotional aid, small services and sociable companionship (Table 1). The mean number of supportive network members varied from 5.2 for minor emotional aid, 5.0 for advising on family problems and 4.8 for lending household items to .5 for help in finding a house and .6 for help in buying a house or getting large sums of money for other purposes (Table 1).

Within the networks, different types of ties tended to provide different types of

support. At the core were a few densely linked immediate kin — parents, adult children and siblings — often the respondents' closest confidants (Wellman, 1979), and prominent providers of emotional support, services and financial aid (see also Hoyt & Babchuk, 1983). Friends provided the bulk of companionship, with intimate friends being important sources of emotional support and services. Women exchanged much emotional support with other women — kith or kin — and also gave emotional aid to their brothers, fathers and sons (see also Wright, 1989; O'Connor, 1991; Wellman, 1992a). Those who were accessible and aware of minor problems provided small services. These network members were usually neighbours (see also Campbell & Lee, 1992) and those who saw the respondents several times per week even though they lived elsewhere in metropolitan Toronto. The few extended kin (aunts, grandparents, etc.) who were named as active network members usually provided the least support.

Support from spouses. Our focus on community networks affected how we asked about the support that spouses and other adult household members provided. We asked the respondents to tell us if their adult household members provided 10 of the same types of support which we had also asked about for network members. We did not ask about the other 8 types of support because pretesting suggested that almost all spouses provided them.

Spouses were more broadly supportive than were active network members: they provided a mean of 6.0 strands of support (out of the 10 we surveyed) compared to the 3.8 that the average network member provided (out of 18). The intimacy and frequent contact of spouses made them aware of each other's needs and responsive to dealing with them. There is much less possibility for specialization within the household.

All spouses provided some type of emotional support and household services. Of the 10 types of support we did ask about, most spouses provided large household services, minor emotional aid, major emotional aid and family advice. Almost half of the respondents also got support in the form of large services or aid in dealing with large organizations (Table 1). All of these types of support call for intangibles: time, effort and sympathy. All except aid in dealing with organizations focus almost entirely on domestic needs.

Four other types of support were available only from a minority of spouses. These require money (large loans and gifts) or specialized information (job contacts, housing search aid). Large loans and gifts were the only type of aid (about which we enquired) that husbands were more apt to give to their wives than wives to their husbands. Financial aid and information about jobs and housing may not have been needed or wanted by all respondents. These are more likely to be one-time events, thereby decreasing the frequency with which they are needed. Or, if wanted, information and large sums of money may have to be sought outside the household from formal institutions or network members.

Support from spouses is a large fraction of the total support these respondents received, especially if we take into account the more frequent face-to-face contact between spouses. A heuristic set of calculations is indicative, although far from accurate given the unreliability of respondent-recalled data and the assumptions we make. Let us assume that each type of support is provided on one-quarter of the days that respondents are in face-to-face contact with spouses and network members. Let us also assume that spouses provided an average of 14 support strands: the 6.0 measured above plus the 8 that pretesting suggested that virtually

all spouses provided. Then arithmetic reveals that the average spouse provided 1278 *support strand days*, a measure developed for this article as a crude indicator of the extent of social support: 14 strands × 365 contact days / 4 = 1278. For example, if a spouse gave minor emotional aid, family problems advice and large household services in 1 day, we would say that the spouse provided 3 support strand days. Using the same reasoning, the members of an average active community network provided a total of 671 support strand days *in toto*: 3.8 strands × 65.4 mean days of face-to-face contact × 10.8 mean number of network members / 4 = 671.

This calculation suggests that spouses may have provided about two-thirds (66 percent) of the total strands of support provided by all of those with whom respondents were actively involved: that is, spouses and active network members. Taken as indicators rather than as accurate measures, these numbers suggest that spouses provided more strands of support during the year than the entire active network did. Moreover, the calculations do not even take into account the greater amount of time spouses spend together in a day and the probably greater intensity of their interactions. To be sure, people probably have an additional 1000 informal relationships in addition to their active network ties. Yet such weaker ties might at most provide another 1000 or so strands of support (Erickson et al., 1988), suggesting that spouses may provide about half of all informally provided strands of support.

These calculations place network support in perspective, but they do not trivialize it. Network support not only complements spousal support, it provides an alternative to it. Respondents often find the marital embrace too suffocating or too demanding. Network members provide goods and services that spouses do not know how to do, from baking cakes to fixing cars to advising on marital disputes. Moreover, network relationships are often bridges to other social circles, providing information and access to friends of friends (and relatives).

The domestic nature of support. No personal characteristic of the respondents or their spouses was associated with the extent to which networks provided support. Roughly similar amounts of support were available to men and women; young, middle and old; upper middle class, middle class and working class. Only the mix of provided support changed, and in unsurprising ways. Women got more help with the household; younger adults got more large financial aid.

It was the nature of the *household*, not the respondent, which affected the extent of interaction with network members. Respondents raising preschool children (aged 0–5) had significantly larger networks (mean = 13.8) than respondents whose youngest child at home was aged 6–17 (10.1) or those respondents who were childless or whose youngest child was at least 18 years old (9.6). The parents of preschoolers got the most support, and the most of all kinds of support, be it large services or minor emotional aid. They also had significantly more contact with network members, face-to-face and by telephone: an average of 5.6 network members per day compared to 3.4 network members for parents of younger children and 2.3 network members for the childless.

There was a similar, but smaller difference in the number of support strands that spouses provided. Parents of preschool children got a mean of 6.4 strands of spousal support, parents of older children got 6.0 and the childless got 5.6. There appears to be a floor effect in what most spouses gave each other and a ceiling effect in the strands of support that spouses delivered. Although our measures do not

show the intensity or the duration of this support, qualitative analysis suggests that parents of preschoolers got more services and emotional aid than the statistical measures indicated.

Integrating spousal and network support

The interrelationship of spousal and network support. The Toronto data suggest a modification of the Bott-ian argument that much involvement with networks causes little involvement with spouses. Contradicting the argument, there is a moderate positive correlation ($r = .23$) between the number of strands of support that active networks provide and the number of strands that spouses provide. There are also moderate positive correlations between spousal support and network size, total frequency of face-to-face contact with network members, and total frequency of telephone contact. However, neither network density nor the number and proportion of immediate kin in a network are correlated with spousal support. While spouses in densely knit, kin-dominated networks do not provide less support to each other (contrary to Bott), those who are in large, frequently interacting networks receive more support from network members.

To understand how these Torontonians used the support they get from spouses and networks, we plotted the number of support strands that respondents reported that they received from their spouses and their active networks. The respondents cluster into four interaction categories on the basis of the amount of support that they reported receiving from spouses and network members: (1) *Networkers* reported receiving high levels of support from both spouses (5+ strands) and their networks (40+ strands). (2) *Householders* reported receiving high levels of support from their spouses (5+ strands) but below-average support from their networks (< 40 strands). (3) *Self-Reliants* reported receiving low levels of support from both their spouses (< 5 strands) and their networks (< 40 strands). (4) One *Spouse-Avoider* man who reported receiving a high level of support from his network (40+) and below-average support (< 5 strands) from his wife. This single case is not discussed further in this article.

In 19 out of 20 cases, support from spouses was the base upon which large or small amounts of network support were added. The only Spouse-Avoider is a man contradicting the Bott-ian argument that Spouse-Avoiders tend to be women. Indeed, men account for nearly one-half of the high-involvement Networkers as well as about half of the Householders and Self-Reliants. The gender of respondents is not related to the nature of the support they receive; the nature of their household and work situations is.

Networkers' personal, household and network characteristics. The 9 Networkers, by definition, received above-average levels of support from their spouses and their networks. These 4 men and 5 women were younger than other respondents and had been married for a shorter time. They were more apt than members of the other categories to be parents of young children, with the mean age of the youngest child being 7.6 (Table 2). There were no appreciable differences in the educational level or occupational status of the three groups.

The large size of the Networkers' networks was consistent with the greater amount of network support they got (Table 2). Indeed, previous research has found that not only do large networks provide more strands of support, each member of a large network is more apt to be supportive (Wellman et al., 1987). Although kin and friends comprised the majority of the Networkers' active ties, they did not

TABLE 2
Personal and network characteristics by interaction category

	Networkers mean	Householders mean	Self-Reliants mean
Respondent characteristics:			
Age	35	47	55
Length of marriage (years)	13	20	27
No. of children at home	1.9	1.7	1
Age of youngest child (years)	7.6	11.2	25
Respondents employed full-time (%)	56	67	50
Respondents employed part-time (%)	22	33	0
Wives[a] — employed full-time (%)	22	33	25
Wives[a] — employed part-time (%)	33	50	0
Occupational prestige score[b]	53	56	55
Network characteristics:			
No. of network members	14.4	8.5	10.2
Network density (%)	47	44	59
No. of immediate kin	4.4	3.5	5.7
No. of extended kin	1.3	.3	1
No. of friends	4	2.7	1.7
No. of neighbours	3.4	1.2	1.5
No. of co-workers	1.3	.8	.3
No. of intimates	5.2	5.2	2.7
Contact characteristics:			
Mean residential distance (miles)	152.8	186.4	1238.5
Mean face-to-face contact (days/year)	84	45.6	54.2
Total face-to-face contact (days/year)	1172	388	415
Mean telephone contact (days/year)	59	35	26
Total telephone contact (days/year)	822	277	263
Social context of ties:			
In dyads (%)	40	19	12
In couples (%)	19	33	64
In groups (%)	41	48	23
n	9	6	4

NA = not applicable. [a] 'Wives' are either female respondents or wives of male respondents. [b] See Blishen & McRoberts (1976).

dominate these networks. A comparatively low percentage (36 percent) of ties were with intimates. The larger size of the Networkers' networks (as compared to the other two categories) is due in part to a slightly larger number of kin and intimates but more to a larger number of non-intimate friends and neighbours.

The Networkers lived closer to network members than respondents in the other two categories (Table 2), although most of their network members lived in different neighbourhoods. Networkers also had the highest levels of both face-to-face and telephone contact with network members. On the average, they either saw or spoke on the phone with 5.8 network members per day, and they were in face-to-face contact and telephone contact with almost all network members at least once per week. Eighty-nine percent of the Networkers said they would like even more frequent contact with network members; Householders and Self-Reliants rarely wanted this.

Companionship. Networking husbands and wives were more than companions, they were good friends. They spent most of their leisure time sharing similar interests, doing things together and socializing with friends inside and outside their homes. All 9 Networkers saw the basis of companionship with network members as

similar to companionship between spouses: shared interests, activities, experiences and confidences. A fireman married for 8 years with two young children, shared interests in sports and socializing with his wife. Other Networkers were more sedate, preferring to stay home and watch television. Their interactions usually revolved around children, sports, summer cottages, organizational activities and just doing and discussing things together. As one woman said: 'We pretty much do everything together — play cards, go to the kids' sports, and watch movies.'

In 8 of the 9 households, male and female respondents agreed that it was the wives who kept groups connected. They worked hard at kin-keeping, remembering birthdays, calling up friends and relatives and having get-togethers. Six of the Networkers felt close to their family and considered many to be intimate friends. Forty-one percent of their relationships principally took place in groups of kin or friends. As a firefighter reported: 'My wife keeps everyone in touch. When our friends are having a party, we're told and then asked if we'd invite the others. So Debbie would be the main pivot. [She also] knows pretty well everybody on the street. She's home more often. In the summer, she's out putting band-aids on the kids or something, so she sees everybody.'

The interviews suggest that this intense networking is due to the wives having the time and energy to maintain contacts. Only 2 had the traditional double load of doing full-time paid work and domestic work. Three did a few hours of part-time work per week while 4 spent all of their time caring for their homes and families. One of the 2 wives who did full-time paid work was a newlywed who maintained a large circle of young married friends. The other fully employed wife was part of a large Japanese–Canadian kinship network where several sisters (who did not do paid work) kept kin connected and supportive.

Not only did networking couples have the most extensive joint involvement with friends, neighbours and kin, husbands and wives also had the most extensive separate involvement with friends, neighbours and even kin. Their dyadic ties — when the respondent and the network member interacted only as a twosome — comprised 40 percent of their relationships, more than twice the percentage of the Householders and the Self-Reliants (Table 2). Woman Networkers maintained daytime relationships with woman neighbours. They also worked hard to maintain ties with friends and kin. One full-time homemaker said 'I just try to keep friendships going with the kind of hours Adam works. You have no idea how difficult it is. If I didn't do something myself, then I would have no one.'

The men often had a few buddies whom they socialized with outside their homes. Their get-togethers in public spaces centred around sports and occasional nights out. As a maintenance man put it, if his best friend 'has been uptight or I have been uptight, we get together and have a couple of drinks. We enjoy each other's company and we can relax.' In short, both women and men used same-gender friendships to find space from their intense, joint household life and group support.

Support. On the average, the Networkers got slightly more spousal support than did the Householders and 50 percent more than the Self-Reliants (Table 3). All Networkers got help from their spouses for minor and major emotional aid, and discussed family problems. Most got aid for major household and non-household services and for dealing with organizations. Fewer got information about jobs or housing or large sums of money. They may have had less need for it or their spouses could not supply it.

Support from network members did not replace support from spouses, it complemented it. Network members provided Networker households with a good deal of services and emotional support for minor, routine and domestic situations (Table 4). By definition, Networkers got the most support in the sample, a median of 72 strands. Because the Networkers had more network members, more contact with network members and more support from each network member, they had vastly more support strand days from their networks: 12 times more than the Householders and 42 times more than the Self-Reliants (Table 4). Taking both spousal and network support into account, the Networkers got twice as many support strand days from their spouses and active ties as did the Householders and three times as many as did the Self-Reliants. The Networkers were the only respondents who got as many support strand days from their networks as from their spouses. In fact, one of the Networkers' defining characteristics of companionship was the readiness of themselves and their network members to provide help of any kind whenever asked. As one full-time homemaker said of her best friend: 'I'd only have to pick up the telephone and she would be there for me. I know she feels the same way.' Indeed, the very relationship of companionship gives a person an emotionally important sense of belonging and being wanted.

TABLE 3
Percentage of spouses providing support by interaction category

Interaction types	Networkers	Householders	Self-Reliants
Goods and services:			
Major household aid	89	100	100
Major services	56	100	50
Organizational aid	67	83	75
Major financial aid	33	50	0
Emotional aid:			
Family problems advice	100	83	0
Minor emotional aid	100	100	50
Major emotional aid	100	83	25
Information:			
Job opening info.	44	33	0
Job contacts	33	17	0
Housing vacancy info.	56	33	25
No. of strand support days/year	1460	1368.8	1049.4
n	9	6	4

Much of the support that Networkers exchanged was emotional aid: advice with family problems, minor emotional aid and even major emotional aid. Goods and services also came from many network members: lending household items such as food and tools, minor household help such as minor repairs, minor services such as childcare and errands, and major services inside and outside the household. Such major services often consisted of major home renovations or long-term health care. The female respondent who got the most social support had deliberately mobilized a large network to help care for her hyperactive child and to agitate for public awareness about food allergies and hyperactivity.

Most support came from kin and friends who lived in the neighbourhood, or at least within an hour's drive. Although people living a drive away are not as handy for borrowing electric drills or floor shampooers, frequent contact among intimates kept them in touch with needs. The telephone played a key role in providing

TABLE 4
Mean number of network members providing support by interaction category

Interaction types	Networkers	Householders	Self-Reliants
Goods and services:			
Minor household aid	12.9	3.3	4.5
Minor services	14.2	4.3	3.5
Major household aid	5.3	1.3	2.0
Major services	2.9	1.3	.5
Organizational aid	4.2	.3	0
Lend items	14.0	6.3	4.5
Minor financial aid	5.3	1.7	.5
Major financial aid	2.2	.3	0
Mortgage aid	1.8	.7	0
Emotional aid:			
Family problems advice	17.6	3.7	1.5
Minor emotional aid	16.0	8.0	1.0
Major emotional aid	12.9	1.0	.5
Information:			
Job opening info.	3.6	.7	0
Job contacts	2.7	.3	0
Housing vacancy info.	1.6	.3	0
Companionship:			
Informal activities	4.4	3.5	4.5
Group activities	2.9	2.3	2.8
Shared interests	5.9	4.0	3.5
No. of strand support days/year	1462.5	121.5	34.2
Spousal support of total spouse and network support (%)	50	92	97
n	9	6	4

emotional support and arranging for the provision of goods and services (Wellman & Wortley, 1990; Wellman & Tindall, 1992).

In Networking households, there were important differences in the support that men and women got. Women were apt to name their sisters and mothers as their closest confidante. They relied on these sisters and mothers for emotional aid and major services and on women neighbours for minor services. In a sense, such neighbours were co-workers on the domestic assembly line, mutually sharing the burdens of raising husband and children. Both immediate kin and neighbours were relied on, separately and jointly, for routine services and emotional support.

Male respondents reported getting more supportive services than emotional aid, congruent with other researchers' findings that 'women express, men repress' (Perlman & Fehr, 1987: 21). As one community organizer put it, 'I don't really share my problems with other people. If I can't discuss them with my wife, I solve them myself.' The services that men got reflect traditional Canadian divisions of labour, with men responsible for mechanical maintenance and rarely mentioning childcare. Where women relied on kin and neighbours, men relied on their buddies. Their friendships were expressed through doing things together, and these activities often involved fixing up homes and cars (Wellman, 1992a). For example, an electronic technician phoned his best friend to say, '"I need your help. I'm doing aluminium siding. What are you doing this weekend?" He said, "Fine. I'll earmark the weekend for you." He stayed till Monday.'

The men's other major source of everyday help was immediate kin — both men and women. Not only did they get small services from kin, but they turned to them for advice about marital and other family problems that they felt they could not discuss with their wives. This is one of the few situations where network support was a substitute for spousal support.

Householders' personal, household and network characteristics. The 6 Householders, by definition, received above-average support from their spouses, but below-average support from their networks. They were older than the Networkers and they had been married longer (Table 2). Four couples had school-age children living at home. Householders tended to own their houses and to be preoccupied with raising families and earning a living.

The smaller-sized networks of the Householders contained a mean of 8.5 active ties. Not only did Householders' networks provide less support than the Networkers' networks, the average member of the Householders' networks provided less support. This lack of supportiveness occurred even though a high percentage (60 percent) of the Householders' networks were composed of intimates. Although Householders and Networkers both had an average of 5.2 intimate network members, Householders had only 3.3 weaker active ties compared to the Networkers' 9.2. Compared to the Networkers, the Householders named fewer immediate kin, friends, neighbours, workmates and extended kin (Table 2). In short, the Householders' networks were smaller, the network members were less supportive, and the Householders were apt to rely on a small circle of intimates rather than reaching out to other worlds through weaker, but still significant, ties.

The Householders' networks were the least densely knit (Table 2). The networks' greater geographical dispersion increased the difficulty of maintaining contact. The Householders only saw network members a mean of 46 days per year, and talked on the telephone an average of 35 days per year. They were in contact (face-to-face or phone) with only 1.1 network members per day. The Householders' feelings about their networks were consistent with their interactions. Only 17 percent said they valued densely knit networks, and only 50 percent valued frequent contact with network members.

Companionship. The 6 Householder couples had strong, joint relationships. They consciously valued being closer to their spouses more than to the members of their networks. For example, one part-time sales clerk, married 14 years, said: 'I am more close to my husband than anybody' and that they are a 'self-contained' couple. A marketing manager had made an explicit project of drawing closer to his wife in order to overcome initial marital difficulties and was proud of the progress they had made together over 16 years.

Both spouses worked in 5 of the 6 households (the other couple was retired), and even the women who worked part-time reported putting a good deal of time and effort into their jobs. Four respondents said that their jobs and their spouses' jobs greatly limited the time they had for companionship with network members. Job loads made marital relations strong but insular. Husbands and wives depended on each other a lot for companionship, and they shared joint friends, activities and interests. A truck driver lamented, 'We don't have too many friends. We don't have time for them really.' For one plumber, reality had meshed with ideology: 'As far as I'm concerned, relatives aren't worth shit.'

Although 5 of the 6 wives in these households acted as social connectors, they tended to telephone or send cards more than to arrange get-togethers. The truck

driver said, 'If it wasn't for my wife, I wouldn't know any of my kin. She sends them Christmas cards.' One woman, working part-time, named several neighbours and kin as intimates even though she saw them only a few times a year. Because they were too busy to arrange things themselves, only 19 percent of their ties operated dyadically, on a one-to-one basis. Rather, the Householders were the most likely of all three categories to get together in large groups (48 percent), as relatively passive recipients of others' social arrangements.

Support. Householders got about as much support from their spouses as did Networkers, and of the same types (Table 3). However, just as they had less companionship with network members than did Networkers, Householders got fewer services and less emotional aid from them — a median of 30 strands of support from network members or 121.5 support strand days (Table 4). Their combination of high spousal support and low network support means that 92 percent of their support strand days came from their spouses. Thus 4 Householder men proudly asserted that they did not rely on anyone for help in routine, everyday matters, while one woman paid a neighbouring friend for childcare.

To some extent, what people said and what they did differed. Although Householders acknowledged having only minimal needs or desires for help, their detailed comments in the interviews showed support being provided — mostly from old friends and neighbours and to a lesser extent from kin and workmates. They reported getting help with moving, borrowing household items, getting the house painted and with filling out income tax forms. The Householders' networks usually provided the same types of supports as the Networkers' — emotional aid and small services — but in much smaller numbers (see Table 4). When the network members of Householders provided support, it tended to be a single event rather than a continuing supportive relationship.

Householders turned to the same persons in emergencies. Thus a full-time homemaker treasured her best friend who she had counted on in a health crisis. On the other hand, when the upholsterer needed emotional help, he had no one to turn to, as he had nothing to do with his neighbours, little to do with his kin outside of a non-intimate sister, and no friends or workmates. Hence he sought professional help.

Self-Reliants' personal, household and network characteristics. The 2 male and 2 female Self-Reliants reported low amounts of support from spouses or network members. Self-Reliants were the oldest of the three categories and they had been married the longest (Table 2). Only 1 had non-adult children (aged 8 and 11), 2 had adult children (1 at home and 1 near-by), while 1 was childless.

The Self-Reliants' networks were usually larger than the Householders although smaller than the Networkers. They had the same balance of intimates and non-intimates in their networks as did the Networkers. Their composition was quite different, however, with immediate kin comprising a majority of network members, along with a few friends, neighbours and extended kin (Table 2).

The Self-Reliants lived the furthest apart of the three categories (Table 2). In the extreme case, most of one woman's ties were in Germany, although she had not lived there for many years. Although their mean face-to-face contact with network members was higher than the Householders, their mean telephone contact was low. Their small networks and their low telephone use meant that they tended to be in contact with fewer network members than Networkers and more than Householders — a median of 2.5 network members per day. This contact was almost always face-to-face. The Self-Reliants, like the Householders, had little enthusiasm for frequent contact with network members. Although they had some kind of contact with many network members, this contact was rarely supportive.

Companionship. Where almost all Networkers and Householders enthusiastically said that their spouses were companions who shared activities and interests, the Self-Reliants described their marital relationships more minimally. On the one hand, all of the Self-Reliants reported that they and their spouses jointly did household chores, watched television and engaged in leisure-time activities such as snowmobiling and renovating the house. On the other hand, all explicitly said they were 'loners' and preferred interests that were solitary in nature. For example, a business machine technician said he preferred the solitary recreations of growing plants and fixing things, depending on his wife to be 'the extrovert': 'We pretty well go our own way. She is very interested in theatre and going to concerts which I can't stand.' Or as a retired office clerk succinctly stated, 'My life is very plain, and I am very plain living.'

As 'the extrovert' comment suggests, the two male Self-Reliant respondents did not encourage their wives to be their companions or links to network members. Both male Self-Reliants found it difficult being close with people except for a few close siblings. They insisted throughout the interview that they were self-contained and independent, doing their own thing and going their own way inside the household and out. The same business machine technician said, 'I don't have any friends; I don't need them. I have casual friends at work, but friendships don't develop. My main friends and the people I feel the closest to are all relatives: brothers, sisters, brothers-in-law.' All the Self-Reliants consciously were involved only marginally with their networks, remote and closed in a sea of weak ties. The retired office clerk kept saying, 'I have nothing in common with them' to explain the lack of contact and supportiveness in her few relationships.

Thus the Self-Reliants' relationships were considerably different from those of the Networkers and the Householders. They are obviously less involved with their networks than the Networkers. They rarely bothered to maintain dyadic, one-on-one ties (Table 2). The percentage of their ties that operated in groups (23 percent) was about half that of the Networkers and the Householders. Their rare get-togethers were with another couple (64 percent of ties).

Where the Householders saw their marriages and families as flourishing, joint, self-contained ventures, the Self-Reliants emphasized that they walked alone, in minimal contact with spouse and network. If they were men, they disengaged from their wives' efforts to maintain contact with *their* kin and *her* friends. Yet even here, the dynamics were from the person and the household outward and not from the network inward. These Self-Reliants were not afraid of being smothered by networks because their networks appeared to be as disconnected as they were. They just did not want to reach out.

Support. The Self-Reliants received much less support from spouses and network members than did the Networkers or the Householders. Compared to these other respondents, Self-Reliants received only about three-quarters as many support strand days from their spouses (Table 3). No Self-Reliant got advice about family problems from their spouses, only one had received major emotional support, and two had received minor support. By contrast, the great majority of other respondents had exchanged all forms of emotional aid with their spouses (Table 3). The Self-Reliants also talked less about job openings and housing vacancies. Although

their marital support was largely confined to goods and services, rather than emotional aid or information; their even thinner network support means that the Self-Reliants got 97 percent of their support strand days from their spouses.

A similar situation occurs with network members. Self-Reliants only got a median total of 10 strands of support from all of their 10 or so network members — much less than even the Householders (Table 4). Four of these 10 strands provided companionship: discussing things and doing things with network members. The other 6 strands were the rare relationships that provided minor emotional aid and services. Many Networkers got more support from one network member than the Self-Reliants got from all their network members.

For a structural analysis of personal relationships

The Torontonians' milieu is household centred and wife operated. People use their community ties almost exclusively to deal with domestic concerns. (By contrast, many in the Third World and Eastern Europe rely on their networks for economic and political survival [e.g. Sik, 1988; Espinoza, 1992].) We suspect that this domestic focus reflects the lack of public community in contemporary Toronto (and elsewhere in North America). Private, personal communities continue to flourish and support a wide array of network members. People are no longer stuck with unwanted kin or neighbours; nor must they put up with disliked habitués of pubs and cafes. They can now range far and choose widely in maintaining viable network ties. But they operate such personal communities from their home, and not from kinship groups or neighbourhood haunts. The result is that the home has won the competition with kin group and community in capturing the attention of men and women.

Among the Torontonians, networks do not compete actively with spouses (see also O'Connor, 1991). In part, this is because husbands and wives share many ties to other couples, groups and even single network members (such as a parent). In part, this is because husbands and wives keep domestic affairs and network members separate to forestall potential problems. Wives explicitly work from the household out. For example, Toronto housewives carefully suspend relations with their neighbours (in reality, fellow co-workers) at 5 p.m. to spend the evenings solely with their husband and children (Wellman, 1985). Oliker (1989) reports that when an American woman senses antagonism between her husband and her woman friend, she puts her relationship with her husband first. Spouses negotiate areas of individual

liberty and communal responsibility. Similarly, at the community network level, Torontonians typically have a densely knit core of immediate kin to provide reliable, sustained support and a sparsely knit set of friends to provide companionship and access to diverse worlds (Wellman et al., 1988). Rather than seeing people as either enmeshed in a densely knit, kin-dominated network or swinging happily through a sparsely knit, diversified network, it is usually more accurate to see most people drawing upon both forms of relationship in their own network just as husbands and wives sometimes act jointly and sometimes separately.

Our findings suggest that two modifications of the Bott argument apply in present-day North America. First, interactions operate from the household outward and not from the network inward. Second, the most supportive networks coexist with the most mutually supportive marriages.

Two phenomena affect how people engage with their networks. Both are characteristics of the household and not the individual respondent: the presence and age of children, and the heavy involvement of wives in paid work.

Those households with preschool children get (and probably need) a good deal of support — from spouses and networks. Spouses and networks provide parallel support, with the networks supplementing the spouses' efforts. Husbands and wives balance their joint ties to kin and friends with separate relations with friends of the same sex. When younger wives are not heavily involved in paid work, they have the time to maintain network ties, and their households have larger, more supportive networks. But even in these actively networking situations, it is the household that engages the network and not vice versa.

Those households with somewhat older children are heavily involved in domesticity. The household has competed with the network, and has easily won. Spouses exchange a good deal of support and engage the world jointly. Reflecting their strong domestic base, the networks of these Householders' are quite introverted: densely knit, kin dominated, meeting in groups, but not getting together frequently. It takes less effort to maintain a kinship system — one active kin-keeping sister or mother can do it — than a large, disconnected set of friends. The comparatively high use of the telephone among Householders suggests that committed kin spend a good deal of time calling and integrating.

The Self-Reliants, with their small amount of interaction and support, proudly affirm that they are 'loners'. They are usually older, longer married and with minimal child-rearing responsibilities. Their intimates are more likely to have died recently or to have moved away to retirement. Their small, sparse networks leave thin ties between couples as their principal form of interaction. They have raised their children, fixed up their homes and made separate peace with their spouses. We wonder if the Networkers and Householders will recapitulate this cycle, if our cross-sectional results are specific to each cohort, or if the types represent distinct and stable styles of marriage.

Taking into account informal relations with both spouses and active network members allows us to extend and modify Wellman's (1979) original typology of communities. Network support is only present — but not always present — when there is extensive spousal support. The Self-Reliants get neither, exhibiting 'community lost' in their households as well as in their community networks. Although they do not see their self-reliance that way, it is possible that they are the victims of the diminished public community that may well have accompanied the (post)-industrial revolution (Wellman, 1992a). The Householders exhibit a solidary 'community saved' pattern in how they rely on their intense marital relations and their immediate kin and intimates to protect their base. The Networkers add extensive network support to the great deal of help they get from spouses. They, too, have a densely knit core of immediate kin and intimates as a base. But they network beyond this base, jointly and separately, to engage in a diversified set of relations with a variety of network members. They enjoy their spouses and immediate kin, but they are 'liberated' from being confined there.

Yet even the Self-Reliants have networks and are in daily contact with network members. Community, and network support, is far from dead in Toronto. However, their communities are private affairs used principally to meet domestic needs. These Torontonians get their food, clothing and shelter through market transactions, and they get their education and most health care through as-of-right institutional distributions. They get help from their networks to feather (and renovate) their nests and to smooth over household disturbances. Their ties give them a sense of being wanted, useful and socially connected. The ties connect them to other social groups. Seen from the perspective of large-scale social systems, such ties provide the cross-cutting links that integrate societies and allow resources to flow between social circles.

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