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INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL TOPIC FORUM

ADVANCING AND EXPANDING WORK-LIFE THEORY FROM MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

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Research on the work-life interface has exploded over the past five decades because of trends in the nature of gender roles, families, work, and careers. However, work-life theory has not kept up with the explosion in research. The purpose of this special topic forum is to offer a corrective by developing new theory to make sense of the research to date and to guide future research. The six articles in this forum make substantial contributions to work-life theory individually and collectively. They provide useful guidance for future work-life theory and research from multiple theoretical perspectives that vary in their level of analysis and in their focus on decision making, diversity, and temporal dynamics. In addition, these six articles offer innovative implications for practice by employees, couples, supervisors, organizations, communities, and societies.

Research on the work-life interface has exploded over the past five decades. To illustrate, PsycINFO searches using the terms *work-life*, *work-nonwork*, and *work-family* produced 68 hits from 1970 to 1979, 520 hits from 1980 to 1989, 1,094 hits from 1990 to 1999, 3,131 hits from 2000 to 2009, and over 5,000 hits from 2010 to the time of writing. Several edited scholarly books entirely devoted to work-life issues have been published over the last decade (e.g., Allen & Eby, 2016; Grzywacz & Demerouti, 2013; Hobson, 2014; Korabik, Aycan, & Ayman, 2017; Poelmans, Greenhaus, & Las Heras Maestro, 2013), as well as several chapters in edited scholarly handbooks (e.g., Allen, 2012; Greenhaus & Allen, 2011; Hammer & Zimmerman, 2011; Shockley, 2018). A new interdisciplinary professional association, the Work

and Family Researchers Network, was formed and held its first biennial conference in 2012. What may have once been considered a peripheral topic is now recognized as a flourishing and essential focus of study in a variety of disciplines, including management and organizational behavior, human resource management, industrial-organizational psychology, social psychology, family studies, human development, sociology, economics, gender studies, communications, and occupational health.

REASONS FOR THE EXPLOSION IN WORK-LIFE RESEARCH

The growing scholarly attention paid to work-life issues has been motivated by greater societal interest in the topic, which stems from several social trends, such as the changing nature of gender roles, families, work, and careers. We discuss these changes below.

Nature of Gender Roles

Traditional gender roles suggest that men's primary focus should be on their work role as

"breadwinners" and that women's primary focus should be on their family role as "homemakers" (Eagly & Wood, 2012; Wood & Eagly, 2010). However, these assigned roles have been increasingly flouted in recent decades. For example, women's educational attainment—often considered a prerequisite for managerial and professional careers—has increased substantially. In the United States the proportion of college degrees earned by women across all disciplines has increased since 1970 from 43 percent to 57 percent at the bachelor's level and from 39 percent to 59 percent at the master's level. Moreover, the proportion of college degrees earned by women in business disciplines has increased since 1970 from 9 percent to 47 percent at the bachelor's level and from 4 percent to 47 percent at the master's level (U.S. Department of Education, 2018: computed from Tables 318.10 and 325.25). Worldwide, reversing the status quo in 1970, more women than men now graduate from college in most higher-income countries and many lower-income countries (Becker, Hubbard, & Murphy, 2010; Van Bavel, Schwartz, & Esteve, 2018). These trends reflect a major societal shift toward the enhancement of women's credentials and an increased commitment of women to managerial and professional careers. Overall, the level of sex segregation in occupations has dropped in most countries since the 1970s, primarily because of the increased employment of women in managerial and professional occupations (Powell, 2019).

Further, men are expressing greater interest in balancing their work life with their home life. Many men, particularly recent entrants into the labor force, are rejecting the traditional male gender role that specifies their proper role as primarily focused on work (Ernst & Young, 2015; Galinsky, Aumann, & Bond, 2011). In response, some companies that rely on an infusion of young talent are now competing to offer the most generous parental leave and other "family-friendly" benefits directed toward both fathers and mothers in order to attract and retain employees (Alsop, 2017). Thus, the applicability of traditional gender roles to actual gender roles, or how women and men really behave, has become increasingly blurred (Greenhaus & Powell, 2017; Powell, 2019).

Nature of Families

As a result of blurred gender roles, the nature of family structures has been changing. For example,

according to U.S. statistics for families with children, the "new traditional" (i.e., most prevalent) family structure has become the dual-earner married couple, with 42 percent of families with children falling into this category (U.S. Department of Labor, 2018: computed from Table 4). In contrast, only 20 percent of families with children exhibit the once traditional family structure—a married couple with the father as breadwinner and mother as homemaker. The proportion of female-headed families in which the mother is employed (18 percent) has become almost as high as the traditional breadwinner-homemaker family structure. Statistics on family structures typically do not include unmarried couples who live together in a committed relationship. Unmarried partners, many of whom are in dual-earner couples, represent what has become an increasingly common family structure as either an alternative to or as a step toward marriage (Copen, Daniels, & Mosher, 2013).

As a result of these trends in family structures, more employees than ever before face the need to juggle multiple roles, which include work and family as well as other important personal roles or activities for each family member, such as those related to community, religion, politics, friendships, hobbies, leisure, and self-development (Greenhaus & Powell, 2017). Also, because of trends toward delayed childbearing and increased life expectancies, an increasing number of employees are members of the "sandwich" generation, with responsibility for the care of both their children and their aging parents (Neal & Hammer, 2007). These care responsibilities can result in employees' postponing their retirement owing to the need for extra income, thereby extending the duration of their work-life interface into what otherwise might be the postwork stage of their lives (Broadbridge & Moulettes, 2015).

Nature of Work

As work has become increasingly virtual over recent decades, especially for managers and professionals, the proportion of employees who telecommute has been increasing (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015; Spreitzer, Cameron, & Garrett, 2017). Telecommuters face the challenge of managing the interface between their work and personal life roles, perhaps even more so than nontelecommuters, because of the blurring of physical boundaries between their work and nonwork lives (Golden, Veiga, & Simsek, 2006).

Adding to the challenge of managing their work-life interface, managers and professionals are increasingly pressured by their employers to devote as many hours to work as possible (Burke & Cooper, 2008). Organizational cultures that stress long work hours decrease the amount of time, or at least "quality time," that employees have available to devote to other life roles. Such cultures have been facilitated by the availability of computer-mediated technologies (e.g., smartphones) that allow the encroachment of work life on employees' personal lives. These technologies have created greater opportunity for employees to devote time to work anytime and anywhere, ever more blurring the line between work and nonwork (Allen, Cho, & Meier, 2014). When employees are technically at home but digitally "tethered to work," establishing satisfactory boundaries between their work and personal lives can be difficult (Ferguson et al., 2016; Gadeyne, Verbruggen, Delanoeije, & De Cooman, 2018; Lanaj, Johnson, & Barnes, 2014; Perlow, 2012).

Nature of Careers

There has been a basic change in recent decades in the nature of people's careers (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2019). The traditional model of careers, consisting of upward mobility within a single organization, is no longer applicable to the contemporary careers of most employees (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014). Instead, people now pursue alternative career paths that scholars have characterized in different ways. One stream of research has focused on *boundaryless* careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Greenhaus, Callanan, & DiRenzo, 2008; Tams & Arthur, 2010). Boundaryless careers depart from the traditional assumptions of vertical mobility in and long-term commitment to a single organization. In contrast, employees with boundaryless careers may move laterally within one organization, move frequently between organizations, and identify more with their profession than their current employer; they may also move between employment by others and self-employment. Because boundaryless careers are less predictable and more subject to sudden changes than traditional careers, they present a greater challenge to managing the interface between work and nonwork roles (Greenhaus & Powell, 2017).

Another stream of research has focused on *protean careers* (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; DiRenzo, Greenhaus, & Weer, 2015; Hall, 2004). Protean careers are characterized by two features. First, they are driven more by employees' decisions than by employers' decisions. Second, they are driven more by individuals' own values and goals than by organizational or societal norms imposed on them (e.g., earn as much pay as possible, climb every organizational hierarchy). Individuals with protean careers are more likely than individuals with traditional careers to take their whole life into account when making decisions about any one role in their life (Greenhaus & Powell, 2017). Further, individuals may have *customized careers* that they idiosyncratically design to meet their particular family and personal circumstances (Valcour, Bailyn, & Quijada, 2007).

THE STATE OF WORK-LIFE THEORY

All of these trends have stimulated considerable growth in the body of research on the work-life interface over the last five decades. However, work-life theory has not kept up with the explosion in work-life research. Existing research has been guided by a limited number of theoretical frameworks.

Historically, work-life research has been primarily guided by role theory in placing attention on the conflicts that occur between work and other life roles (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). Role theory was extended by the development of theoretical frameworks specifically intended for investigation of work-family conflict, interference, and negative spillover, representing negative work-life interdependencies (Carlson & Frone, 2003; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). More recent theoretical frameworks have examined work-family enrichment, facilitation, and positive spillover, representing positive work-life interdependencies (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Grzywacz, Carlson, Kacmar, & Wayne, 2007; Hanson, Hammer, & Colton, 2006) and role boundary management and transitions (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996). Recent attempts have also been made to clarify the conceptualization of the ubiquitous work-life balance construct (Casper, Vaziri, Wayne, DeHauw, & Greenhaus, 2018; Greenhaus & Allen, 2011; Wayne, Butts, Casper, & Allen, 2017). Other theoretical frameworks commonly invoked in work-life research, such as social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), the conservation of resources model (Hobfoll, 1989), and the job demands-resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), were developed

in other contexts and have been applied to the study of the work-life interface.

Although these theoretical frameworks have served us well, new theory is essential to understand the connections between work and other parts of life in contemporary society. Despite work-life scholars' past criticism of the lack of theoretical development within the field (e.g., Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005), relatively few theoretical developments have emerged in recent years to address this gap. This special topic forum is intended to stimulate further theoretical development on the work-life interface. Tests of new work-life theories have the potential to have an enormous impact outside of the academy by informing organizational and societal actions. More theoretically grounded research can facilitate a more sophisticated understanding of how working adults manage their work and nonwork lives so that effective interventions, policies, and practices can be developed and implemented.

Before we proceed, we need to address the reality that most extant theories and studies of the work-*life* interface have been theories and studies of the work-*family* interface. Separate PsycINFO searches at the time of writing produced almost twice as many hits since 1970 with "work-family" in the title than with "work-life" in the title and very few hits with "work-nonwork" in the title. Greenhaus and Powell provided the following justification for a focus on work and family roles:

> Work and family are the two roles in many people's lives in which they have the greatest amount of involvement and with which they identify the most. Further, much of the scholarship . . . has examined concepts such as *work-family* balance, conflict, and enrichment (2017: 3, emphasis added).

However, they also noted that most of the policies and practices that societies and organizations may adopt to be more "family-friendly" also make them more "life-friendly."

Nonetheless, although more sophisticated theories of work-family phenomena are welcome, we need new theories that explain work-life phenomena in a broader sense. Following the lead of many organizations that have initiated work-life practices to support the myriad of commitments employees have outside of work (e.g., nuclear and extended family, friendships, community, leisure, and self-development), future work-life research awaits theory that is more inclusive in its

consideration of multiple life roles. This special topic forum includes four articles that adopt a work-life perspective, in recognition of the need to go beyond work and family roles to understand the interface among the many life roles that people may invest in, and two articles that adopt a work-family perspective, in recognition of the primacy of these two roles in many people's lives.

THE ARTICLES

We now turn to the six articles in this forum. Table 1 presents a brief summary of each article, including its primary purpose and whether (and, if so, how) it displays each of the five perspectives suggested for contributions in the call for papers for this forum: a work-life perspective, a multilevel perspective, a decision-making perspective, a temporal perspective, and a diversity perspective. However, each article is more nuanced than any such table can capture. In fact, it would take an *n*-dimensional diagram to depict all of the ways the similarities among and differences between these articles could be characterized, with *n* representing a large number of dimensions beyond the capabilities of *AMR*'s online platform.

In this section we first discuss each article and then review some of the perspectives and exemplary features they exhibit.

Individual Articles

Leslie, King, and Clair propose the theoretical construct of work-life ideologies, which they define as employees' "beliefs regarding how work and life are related to one another" (2019: 73). Analogous to employees' implicit leadership theories (Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; Junker & van Dick, 2014; Lord, Foti, & De Vader, 1984), their work-life ideologies may be regarded as implicit work-life theories. The authors propose three independent work-life ideologies: a fixed pie versus expandable pie ideology, a segmentation versus integration ideology, and a work versus life priority ideology. They argue that these ideologies are influenced by primes, or cues from the environment, such that scarcity primes contribute to a fixed pie ideology, boundary primes to a segmentation ideology, and market primes to a work priority ideology. They provide examples of cues from four levels—family, organization, community, and society—for each type of prime, thereby providing a multilevel perspective, although their model

TABLE 1
Content and Characteristics of the Special Topic Forum Articles

Article	Primary Purpose	Work-Life Perspective?	Multilevel Perspective?	Decision-Making Perspective?	Temporal Perspective?	Diversity Perspective?
Leslie, King, & Clair	To propose the construct of work-life ideologies, three independent types of work-life ideologies, and a model of their antecedents and consequences	Yes	Yes, primarily employee level, with antecedents at family, organizational, community, and societal levels	No, focus on cognitive processes and work-life interdependencies	Yes, exposure to primes over time as antecedent of work-life ideology strength	Yes, sex, family size, marital status, extended family, etc. as antecedents of primes
Bear	To propose the construct of caregiving ambition, which varies along the independent dimensions of direct provider of care and indirect provision of care, and a model of care, and a model of their antecedents and consequences	Yes	Yes, primarily employee level, with antecedents at societal level and moderators at organizational and societal levels	No, focus on cognitive processes and work-life interdependencies	Yes, life stage as an antecedent	Yes, sex and gender role socialization as antecedents
Ladge & Little	To propose the construct of work-family image and a model of three types of work-family image impression management strategies and work-family identity adaptation	No, focus on work-family perspective	Yes, primarily employee level, with antecedent of work-family norms as family, organizational, and societal expectations	Yes, focus on employees' decisions regarding work-family impression management strategies	Yes, antecedent of work-family norms influenced by parenting stage	Yes, antecedent of work-family norms influenced by sex, religion, and parenting stage

Hirschi, Shockley, & Zacher	To propose a model of four types of strategies to achieve work-family balance and antecedents, outcomes, and dynamics of strategy choice	No, focus on work-family perspective	Yes, primarily employee level, with antecedents of work-family demands, resources, and barriers at several levels	Yes, focus on decisions about strategy to achieve work-family balance	Yes, time to deadline for achieving work and family goals as moderator	Yes, gender roles at societal level and discrimination against working mothers at organizational level as barriers to work and family goal attainment
Bourdeau, Ollier-Malaterre, & Houlfort	To propose a model of employees' use of enabling versus enclosing organizational work-life policies, supervisors' attributions, and career consequences for employees	Yes	Yes, supervisor-employee dyad and employee levels, with work-life policies and moderator at organizational level	Yes, focus on employees' decisions about use of work-life policies and supervisors' decisions about employees	No, temporal factors not explicitly considered	Yes, gender and motherhood as proxies for supervisors' perceptions of employees' work ethic as moderator
Crawford, Thompson, & Ashforth	To propose a model of dual-earner couples' and partners' sensemaking of work-life shock events and couples' resource investment decisions	Yes	Yes, dual-earner couple and partner levels, with family dominance influenced by gender roles at societal level	Yes, focus on decision making in response to shock events	Yes, shock events are sudden rather than gradual and often call for a quick response with little time to decide	Yes, gender identity as a moderator, intracouple dominance by one partner as relational identity factor influenced by gender roles

primarily focuses on work-life ideologies and their direct and indirect consequences at the employee level (work-life preferences, inputs, and positive and negative interdependencies). Overall, Leslie and colleagues offer a unique take on how employees' beliefs about work and life are shaped by contextual factors and, in turn, shape how they navigate the work-life interface.

Bear proposes the theoretical construct of caregiving ambition, which she defines as an employee's "aspirations to nurture and care for others above and beyond any obligation" (2019: 99). Caregiving ambition varies along two independent dimensions: to be the direct provider of care and to procure the indirect provision of care. This construct represents a combination of the notion of "caregiving," which is typically associated with one's family and other nonwork roles that involve relationships, and the notion of "ambition," which is typically associated with one's work role. Bear's model of caregiving ambition proposes antecedents at the employee (biological sex and life stage) and societal (gender role socialization) levels. Bear also proposes moderators at the organizational and societal levels of the relationship between employees' caregiving ambition and their work-life interdependencies and engagement. The model provides a multilevel perspective of caregiving ambition in its specification of antecedents and moderators at the organizational and societal levels, although its analysis is primarily at the employee level. Overall, Bear offers a creative blend of two existing constructs—caregiving and ambition—that broadens the scope of how each construct is conceptualized and blurs the boundary between these constructs, as well as a useful model of the processes by which caregiving ambition is formed and, in turn, impacts the nature of the work-life interface.

Ladge and Little propose the theoretical construct of work-family image, which they define as a "cross-domain, collective image representing how competent an individual is perceived to be as a parent and a professional by key constituents in both work and life domains" (2019: 126). When employees become aware of discrepancies between their desired and perceived work-family images, they may engage in one of three types of work-family impression management strategies: work-focused or family-focused social recategorization or positive distinctiveness. Thus, Ladge and Little extend a familiar construct—impression management (Leary & Kowalski, 1990)—and conceptualize strategies for managing impressions that are particularly applicable to the work-family interface. Further, impression management strategies may lead to asymmetry between employees' work-family image and identity (which is more of a self-description), which they may address (or not) such that their work-family identity is either restructured, integrated, or confused. Work-family norms at the societal, organizational, and family levels serve as antecedents of work-family image discrepancies. Ladge and Little provide a multilevel perspective, although their analysis is primarily at the employee level. Overall, they offer an insightful view of how employees monitor their image and manage others' perceptions regarding their competence in both work and family roles.

Hirschi, Shockley, and Zacher (2019) start with a familiar construct—work-family balance (Casper et al., 2018)—and propose a comprehensive model of how employees decide on strategies to achieve it. They conceptualize two types of engagement strategies (allocating and activating resources, changing resources and barriers) and two types of disengagement strategies (sequencing work and family goals, revising and developing new work and family goals) that employees may choose from in seeking to achieve work-family balance. Work and family demands, resources, and barriers at several levels (e.g., family, job, team, supervisor, organizational, and societal, including gender roles and discrimination against working mothers) serve as antecedents of the choice of strategy. Work and family goal attainment is both an outcome of strategy choice and an antecedent of strategy adaptation; goal attainment, in turn, influences work-family balance. Further, employees assess the amount of time needed for their goals to be achieved, which influences their choice and adaptation of strategy to achieve work-family balance and adds a temporal dimension to the model. Hirschi and colleagues' analysis is primarily at the employee level, although antecedents of work and family demands, resources, and barriers may exist at many levels. Overall, they focus on the active role of employees as decision makers in choosing strategies to achieve work-family balance and the dynamic interplay among factors that both influence and are influenced by their choice.

Bourdeau, Ollier-Malaterre, and Houlfort (2019) start with a familiar phenomenon—organizational work-life policies (Greenhaus & Powell, 2017; Kelly et al., 2008). They conceptualize a continuum along

which work-life policies may differ, anchored at the ends by enabling policies, which the authors define as those policies that enable employees "to spend time and energy outside of work to take care of themselves and their family members," and enclosing policies, which they define as those policies that "promote greater availability for work and longer hours on work premises by providing services that employees would otherwise seek outside the workplace" (Bourdeau et al., 2019: 173). In so doing, they attempt to explain mixed research results regarding the career outcomes of employees' use of such policies. They argue that employees' use of enabling versus enclosing policies influences supervisors' attributions about their work devotion, with the use of enabling polices promoting negative supervisory attributions and career outcomes for employees and the use of enclosing policies promoting positive attributions and career outcomes. These linkages among policy usage, attributions, and career outcomes are influenced by moderators at the employee, supervisor, and organizational levels. Bourdeau and colleagues' model focuses on processes at the supervisor-employee dyad level and antecedents and outcomes at the employee level, all influenced by organizational norms to be more or less life-friendly. Overall, they offer a creative deconstruction of organizational work-life policies and model of career consequences of their utilization by employees.

Crawford, Thompson, and Ashforth (2019: 195) propose a model of how dual-earner couples make sense of and decisions about a shock event, which they define as "a disruptive, novel, and critical event . . . necessitating that additional resources be invested in the domain the shock originated from" (e.g., a diagnosis of a major illness, an unexpected lay-off or promotion opportunity, an unplanned pregnancy). They extend Morgeson, Mitchell, and Liu's (2015) conceptualization of attention-demanding events that may occur at any organizational level by adapting it to the work-life interface experienced by dual-earner couples and identifying particular decisions that couples may make in response to such events. The authors delineate a two-stage model of responses to shock events, first at the partner level, as each partner seeks to make sense of the event, and then at the dual-earner couple level, as the couple collectively makes sense of the event and jointly makes resource investment decisions regarding time and energy in

the originating domain. Crawford and colleagues' article is the only one in this special topic forum to focus on phenomena at the family couple level while incorporating phenomena at other levels, such as sensemaking at the partner level and gender roles at the societal level, that may influence family power dynamics, thereby resulting in one partner's dominance over the other. Overall, they offer an inventive model of the complex interplay between partners in dual-earner couples that results in couple-level decisions in response to shock events.

Articles from Multiple Perspectives

As can be gleaned from Table 1, each of the six articles in this forum advances and expands work-life theory from multiple perspectives. We now review these perspectives and how the various articles exhibit each perspective.

First, as noted earlier, four of the articles (Leslie et al., Bear, Bourdeau et al., Crawford et al.) adopt a work-life perspective, whereas the remaining two articles (Ladge & Little, Hirschi et al.) adopt a work-family perspective. However, all of these articles represent contributions to work-life theory, in that "family" is an important role for many employees and conceptualizing its interface with the work role contributes to understanding a significant portion of the work-life interface. Also, in our view, the work-family theories offered by Ladge and Little and by Hirschi and colleagues could readily be extended to incorporate non-family personal life roles.

Second, all six articles incorporate a multilevel perspective. Work-life theories are needed that incorporate significant interdependencies across multiple levels of analysis. More specifically, theories are needed that recognize that employees' well-being is best understood in the context of the society and community they live in, the employer they work for, the supervisor they report to, the work team they are embedded in, and the other people outside of work whose lives intersect with their own. Although four of the articles offer theories that are primarily at the employee level of analysis (Leslie et al., Bear, Ladge & Little, Hirschi et al.), each incorporates antecedents and/or moderators at the family, work team, organizational, community, and/or societal levels. The other two articles offer theories that incorporate analysis at the supervisor-employee dyad level (Bourdeau et al.) and dual-earner

couple level (Crawford et al.), as well as at the employee, organizational, and/or societal levels.

Third, four of the articles (Ladge & Little, Hirschi et al., Bourdeau et al., Crawford et al.) adopt an explicit decision-making perspective. The work-life literature historically has emphasized situational demands and resources as determinants of role conflict, enrichment, and balance. However, scholars have increasingly recognized that employees influence their work-life outcomes through the decisions they make and the strategies they pursue. For example, employees may modify demands or learn how to manage them, and they may acquire resources and learn how to make best use of them. In fact, employees are increasingly making what may be called "work-life decisions"—decisions in one role that are informed by consideration of other roles (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012, 2017). New theory is required to understand the processes by which individuals make work-life decisions. In this forum employees are depicted as making work-life decisions when they choose work-life impression management strategies (Ladge & Little), choose strategies to achieve work-family balance (Hirschi et al.), make requests to use enabling versus enclosing organizational work-life policies (Bourdeau et al.), and participate as partners in dual-earner couples when making resource investment decisions necessitated by shock events (Crawford et al.). Although the other two articles do not explicitly incorporate work-life decision making, the decision-making implications of employees' work-life ideologies (Leslie et al.) and caregiving ambition (Bear) may be inferred from their models.

Fourth, five of the articles (Leslie et al., Bear, Ladge & Little, Hirschi et al., Crawford et al.) adopt a temporal perspective. The role of time in work-life dynamics generally has been neglected. Although time (or lack thereof) is an essential element of such constructs as conflict, enrichment, and balance, work-life theories and research have rarely considered the duration of temporal intervals when examining such constructs. Understanding when things happen is fundamental for understanding work-life phenomena. New theory that takes into account temporal factors is essential for advancing our understanding of work-life experiences. In this forum a temporal perspective is exhibited when exposure to primes over time influences the strength of work-life ideologies (Leslie et al.); when life stage, which is associated with the evolving nature of role

demands and career management issues, is an antecedent of caregiving ambition (Bear); when parenting stage is an antecedent of norms about what a favorable work-family image looks like (Ladge & Little); when employees' time to deadline for achievement of work and family goals is a moderator of key relationships regarding strategies to achieve work-family balance (Hirschi et al.); and when shock events require a quick response from dual-earner couples under the pressure of time, which can affect the quality of their response (Crawford et al.). Although Bourdeau and colleagues do not overtly incorporate temporal factors into their model, they imply the passage of time by depicting work-life phenomena as influencing other phenomena.

Fifth, all six articles adopt a diversity perspective, primarily by incorporating issues of sex and gender. As commonly used by scholars, the term *sex* (or biological sex) refers to the categories of male and female as determined by the biological characteristics of individuals. In contrast, the term *gender* refers to the psychosocial implications of being male or female (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Powell, 2019; Unger, 1979). For example, gender roles represent beliefs about the behaviors that are appropriate for females and males (Eagly & Wood, 2012; Wood & Eagly, 2010), and gender role socialization refers to the processes by which these beliefs are instilled (Powell, 2019). As noted earlier, the explosion in work-life research over the past five decades may be attributed at least partly to the blurring of gender roles and the resulting advent of dual-earner couples as the predominant family structure (Greenhaus & Powell, 2017; Powell, 2019). However, the focus on sex and gender in work-life theories seems to have dwindled in recent years, despite the persistence of gender-related norms that influence the ways women and men experience work and other life roles. As Table 1 indicates, the articles in this forum, in different ways and collectively, offer a corrective to the lack of recent emphasis on issues of sex and gender in work-life theory.

The authors incorporate other diversity-related considerations into several of the articles. For example, Leslie and colleagues argue that family-related factors, such as family size, marital status, and proximity to extended family members, serve as antecedents of primes that influence work-life ideologies. Hirschi et al. and Bourdeau et al. refer to biases and discrimination against working mothers (i.e., a "motherhood

penalty"), thereby invoking an influence of parental status on women's work-life experiences. Ladge and Little refer to religion and parenting stage as influencing work-family norms. Overall, the articles in this special topic forum reinsert diversity-related issues, especially issues of sex and gender, into work-life theory.

The articles may be characterized in other ways not captured by Table 1. For example, although we do not classify the articles according to whether (and, if so, how) they display a cognitive perspective, all of the articles invoke cognitive processes of some kind (e.g., sensemaking, monitoring goal discrepancies). The outcomes included in the theories presented are varied, including balance, conflict, enrichment, engagement, identities, work-life decisions, and career consequences.

Further, a shared characteristic of the articles is that each proposes a new theoretical construct or an original extension of an existing construct. The work-life literature, similar to the literature in many fields, does not suffer from a lack of theoretical constructs, whether adapted from constructs developed elsewhere or generated for purposes of explaining the work-life interface. For example, extant role-related constructs in the work-life field include work (or life/family/nonwork) satisfaction (Ford, Heinen, & Langkamer, 2007), investment (Lobel, 1991), involvement (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Collins, 2001), engagement (Rothbard, 2001), identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), salience (Stryker, 1968), and boundary permeability (Ashforth et al., 2000). As noted earlier, extant interrole-related constructs include work-life (or work-family/work-nonwork) balance (Casper et al., 2018; Greenhaus & Allen, 2011; Wayne et al., 2017); conflict, interference, or negative spillover (Carlson & Frone, 2003; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000); and enrichment, facilitation, or positive spillover (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Grzywacz et al., 2007; Hanson et al., 2006). The challenge in proposing a new work-life construct or an extension of an existing construct is to justify its significant and unique contribution to the work-life literature. All six articles effectively meet this challenge.

Articles As Exemplars

As well as advancing and expanding work-life theory from multiple perspectives, the articles in this special topic forum represent exemplars of how to do so. Here we identify one of each article's special features that is exhibited particularly well:

1. Leslie and colleagues demonstrate how to incorporate a wide variety of contextual factors—three factors each pertaining to families, organizations, communities, and societies—into a multilevel model of the work-life interface.
2. Bear demonstrates how to build on constructs typically associated with different employee domains—ambition from the work domain and caregiving from nonwork domains—to conceptualize a new construct—caregiving ambition—that may be displayed across work and life domains.
3. Ladge and Little demonstrate how to conceptualize the complex linkages between a frequently invoked construct in the work-family literature (identity) and a related but distinct construct that has been seldom invoked in this literature (image, both desired and perceived).
4. Hirschi and colleagues demonstrate how to fully integrate a temporal perspective into work-life theory by conceptualizing how changes in inputs (demands, resources, and barriers) relate to the choice of different strategies to achieve work-family balance at different life stages.
5. Bourdeau and colleagues demonstrate how to move beyond a unidimensional view of frequently studied work-life phenomena—organizational work-life policies—and their outcomes by conceptualizing two distinct types of policies—enabling versus enclosing—with very different career outcomes for employees.
6. Crawford and colleagues demonstrate how to incorporate phenomena at both the individual partner level and dual-earner couple level into a dyadic and dynamic approach to work-life theory.

Each of the articles exhibits other exemplary features, and each of their theories may be extended in ways both suggested by the author(s) and inspired in the readers. Collectively, in addition to the theoretical contributions of their models, the articles provide guidance for future work-life theory development by showing how it can be done—and done well.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WORK-LIFE THEORY

The articles in this special topic forum begin to address the need for new work-life theory to both keep up with the explosion in work-life research and keep the explosion going. In this section we offer our thoughts, beyond those offered by the authors of the six articles as possible ways to extend their own theories, about what is needed to continue the advancement and expansion of work-life theory.

First, as we suggested in the call for papers, more work-life theory is needed from a careers perspective. In this forum a careers perspective is advanced by Bourdeau and colleagues, who specify career consequences as the major outcome of their model, and by Bear, who specifies life stage, which includes career stage, as an antecedent in her model. A careers perspective may be regarded as an extension of a temporal perspective because a career is essentially about the unfolding of work experiences over time (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014). Work-life scholars have rarely incorporated career issues in their theories, and careers scholars have rarely incorporated nonwork considerations into their theories. Work-life theory would benefit from a further integration of career-related phenomena, such as career success (Ng, Eby, Sorenson, & Feldman, 2005) and career self-management (Greenhaus et al., 2019), with nonwork aspirations, responsibilities, experiences, and outcomes.

Second, also as suggested in the call for papers as well as in some of the articles (Bear, Bourdeau et al., Crawford et al.), more work-life theory is needed from a societal or national culture perspective. In this forum a societal culture perspective is suggested by Leslie and colleagues, who specify societal travel and immigration policies and social welfare systems as antecedents of primes that shape work-life ideologies in their model, and by Bear, who specifies societal policies that support caregiving as a moderator in her model. Also, several articles in this forum incorporate the influence of societal culture in their models by including gender roles and gender role socialization as phenomena shaped by societal forces. However, dimensions of national culture that may influence linkages among work-life phenomena have seldom been explicitly incorporated into work-life theories to make them "culture sensitive" (Powell, Francesco, & Ling, 2009). We recommend additional theory that examines the role of societal similarities and differences in the meaning of work and other parts of life to explain how dimensions of national culture affect relationships among work-life phenomena.

Third, as noted earlier, the diversity perspectives displayed in this forum primarily focus on issues of sex and gender (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Powell, 2019; Unger, 1979). These issues are obviously an important component of diversity issues that may influence the work-life interface. However, more work-life theories are needed that incorporate other forms of diversity, such as race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and socioeconomic class (Ammons & Edgell, 2007; Özbilgin, Beauregard, Tatli, & Bell, 2011; Sawyer, Thoroughgood, & Ladge, 2017). In addition, we recommend work-life theories that further examine the influence of the intersection of various dimensions of diversity on work-life phenomena and the relationships among them (Özbilgin et al., 2011).

Finally, most extant theories in this field are about the work-"something" interface. Fiske said about scholars of sex and gender issues in her own discipline, "Psychologists love dichotomies. They love to slice and dice a broader population into two categories" (2010: 688). In the same vein, many scholars in the work-life field tend to slice and dice the various domains that are important to people into two categories—the work domain and all other domains—which are lumped together as "life" (as if real life excluded work) or, more accurately but less frequently, "nonwork." However, the interplay between work and the rest of life is more complex than a dichotomy between work and life suggests. As Hall, Kossek, Briscoe, Pichler, and Lee put it, "Life outside of work and career is indeed multidimensional" (2013: 539).

For example, one of the authors of this introduction (Powell) has wondered how his evening MBA students, virtually all of whom work full time, manage to juggle their work, family, and educational roles at a life stage when, for many, they are receiving managerial assignments and promotions, making changes of employer, forming (and in some cases formalizing) relationships with significant others, bearing children, buying houses or condominiums, forming community ties, pursuing personal interests (e.g., hobbies, religious or political activities), and so on. In short, many of these students are experiencing what may be called the work-education-partner-parent-homeowner-community-personal interests interface at a minimum. Further, they may have to manage interface issues within each of these domains. It is difficult to imagine what a theory of such an interface would look like or how it could be depicted. However, this level of complexity is similar to how life unfolds for many people as they manage the interplay between multiple life domains and goals that are important to them (and others that are not so important to them but require attention as well). Our challenge as scholars is to conceptualize the intricacy

of relationships among significant life domains for people in a way that goes beyond a dichotomous view of the "work-life" interface.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WORK-LIFE RESEARCH

Beyond the recommendations for future research in the articles in this forum related to their specific content, we offer the following recommendations for future work-life research.

First, although research on non-U.S. populations has been growing in recent years, there are considerable gaps in our knowledge concerning work-family issues cross-nationally. These gaps limit our ability to reach conclusions about the influence of societal culture and may contribute to cultural bias in the design of studies to test work-life theories and the interpretation of results (Ollier-Malaterre & Foucreault, 2017; Powell et al., 2009; Shockley et al., 2017). Extant cross-cultural work-life research has failed to fully explore the various cultural dimensions that have been identified in prevailing conceptual frameworks (e.g., Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 2000; Hofstede, 2001; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004), with the dimensions of individual-collectivism (Gelfand, Bhawuk, Nishii, & Bechtold, 2004) and gender egalitarianism (Emrich, Denmark, & Den Hartog, 2004) most researched and other dimensions less researched (Ollier-Malaterre & Foucreault, 2017). In addition, there are several regions of the world, such as the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia, with very little representation in work-life research (Allen, French, Dumani, & Shockley, 2015). Thus, it is important to keep in mind that the generalizability of work-family research across the globe remains uncertain.

Second, much of the extant work-life research has been conducted on restricted populations within nations. As Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood, and Lambert concluded, "Most of what researchers know about (work-family) issues in IO/OB is based on the experiences of heterosexual, Caucasian, managerial and professional employees in traditional family arrangements" (2007: 37). Greater diversity in the nature of the populations studied is necessary to fully test proposed diversity perspectives of work-life issues and to increase our understanding of how these issues unfold in populations that tend to be overlooked in work-life research.

Third, as Leslie and colleagues and as Bear suggest for their respective constructs of work-life

ideologies and caregiving ambition, it is important to test the validity and reliability of all measures of new work-life constructs and extensions of existing constructs before they are used to test work-life theories. The dimensionality of constructs with proposed multiple dimensions needs to be tested with exploratory factor analysis. Researchers also need to examine whether employees, couples, families, organizations, communities, and societies actually exhibit the proposed constructs in a stable manner.

Fourth, the models in these articles and other models of work-life phenomena are best tested using multiple methods (Casper et al., 2007). A wide array of qualitative (e.g., Gatrell, 2018; Radcliffe, 2018) and quantitative (e.g., Chen, 2018; Powell, 2018) approaches may be used to test work-life theories. As suggested by Leslie and colleagues, other approaches, such as geographic information systems mapping, may be used to test the influence of constructs such as diversity at the community level of analysis (e.g., King et al., 2011) in work-life research.

Fifth, as Crawford and colleagues recommend for testing their own model, longitudinal studies are necessary to test any work-life theories that emphasize a temporal perspective involving changes in work-life phenomena and the linkages among phenomena (Matthews, Wayne, & Ford, 2014). Whenever theories propose dynamic aspects of work-life phenomena, theory testing requires the analysis of data collected or observations made over time (e.g., across days, weeks, months, or even years).

Finally, underlying processes are often inferred that are not fully specified and incorporated into work-life theories. For example, Leslie and colleagues call for testing of whether work-life ideologies have consequences through active (i.e., conscious) versus passive (i.e., unconscious) processes not incorporated in their theory. We recommend research that examines the nature of cognitive processes such as sensemaking (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014; Weick, 1995) and priming and automatic information processing (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999; Uhlmann et al., 2012) underlying the proposed relationships among work-life phenomena.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WORK-LIFE PRACTICE

Corley and Gioia (2011) argued that making a theoretical contribution involves not only scientific utility but practical utility as well. The

theories advanced in this special topic forum have practical implications for work-life decisions made by various parties at multiple levels. In this section we identify, from a decision-making perspective, implications for practice that are either raised in the articles or inspired by them.

First, employees' work-life decisions, defined earlier as decisions in one role that are informed by consideration of other roles (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012, 2017), have significant consequences. In this forum, employee decisions about work-family impression management strategies (Ladge & Little), strategies to achieve work-family balance (Hirschi et al.), use of organizational work-life policies (Bourdeau et al.), and resource investment in response to a shock event (Crawford et al.) may affect the employees' work-family image, work-family balance, career advancement and other career-related outcomes, and success in coping with the shock event, respectively. Employees' work-life decisions may help them achieve their work and life goals, hinder their goal achievement, or leave them stalled. It is to their advantage to make work-life decisions with an understanding of the likely and potential consequences for themselves and their families. When they live together with a partner in a committed relationship, it is also to employees' advantage to make major (or "anchoring"; Radcliffe & Cassell, 2014) family work-life decisions—those decisions regarding one or both partners' involvement in work and other life domains—collaboratively with their partner (Greenhaus & Powell, 2017).

Second, supervisors' decisions about employees have consequences. These decisions are influenced by perceptions of employees' work-life values and behaviors proposed at the employee level in this forum that may be applied at the supervisor level. For example, Leslie and colleagues note that the result of supervisors' own work-life ideologies may be that employees with different work-life ideologies are penalized. This notion can be extended to the potential influence of supervisors' caregiving ambition (Bear), desired and perceived work-family image (Ladge & Little), work ethic and use of organizational work-life policies (Bourdeau et al.), responses to shock events in their own lives (Crawford et al.), and so on. Thus, supervisors need to be careful to keep biases based on their own work-life preferences or interface from influencing their decisions that affect employees' work-life interface. Family-supportive supervisory behaviors have received considerable attention in the work-life literature (e.g., Greenhaus, Ziegert, & Allen, 2012; Hammer, Kossek, Zimmerman, & Daniels, 2007). This forum suggests what some of the practical implications of family-supportive supervisory behaviors may be.

Third, organizational work-life decisions, or decisions about practices and programs that are informed by consideration of employees' need to meet work and other life responsibilities (Greenhaus & Powell, 2017), have consequences. For example, if organizations offer a range of enabling and enclosing policies with different consequences for employee utilization (Bourdeau et al.), or offer policies that favor certain work-life ideologies over others (Leslie et al.), employees may experience unanticipated negative outcomes from taking advantage of some of the policies offered. For employees, the practical implication is to be careful in deciding whether to take advantage of particular policies so as to minimize negative consequences and maximize positive consequences.

Fourth, senior executives' decisions about how they manage their own work-life interface have consequences. For example, as Ladge and Little suggest, senior male executives who take advantage of paternity leave made available by an organizational work-life policy, even though it is an enabling rather than enclosing type of policy (Bourdeau et al.), may reduce the stigma associated with lower-level male employees' taking such a leave. Also, when the CEO of a major subsidiary of Google (YouTube) took paid maternity leave a total of five (!) times along the way to attaining her position and while in it (Wojcicki, 2014), she sent a message to lower-level female employees that taking such a leave need not derail their careers. Thus, senior managers may act as role models for employees in their organizations in the ways they meet their own work and life goals.

Fifth, societal work-life decisions, or decisions about laws and public policies that are informed by consideration of their citizens' need to meet work as well as other life responsibilities (Greenhaus & Powell, 2017), have consequences. For example, as Bear notes, nations differ in their policy support for caregiving. Overall, nations exhibit a wide range of work-life decisions on laws and policies regarding maternity and

paternity support, public expenditures on child care and early education, regulations regarding part-time work, vacations, holidays, and so on (Greenhaus & Powell, 2017). Societal work-life decisions may provide opportunities for citizens to meet their work and life goals that would not be available otherwise, and societal mandates for organizations may affect employees' goal attainment.

Finally, although not addressed in this forum, communities' work-life decisions, or decisions about laws and public policies that are informed by consideration of their present and potential residents' need to meet work as well as other life responsibilities, have consequences. For example, communities may devote resources to extensive school transportation and after-school care that help to alleviate working parents' work-family conflict (Skinner & Ichii, 2015; Voydanoff, 2005). Communities' resource investment decisions about public transportation and safety may influence exactly where (i.e., in what municipality and neighborhood) employees and their families choose to reside. Further, cities may develop and promote master planned communities and office or industrial parks that meet residents' demands for housing and jobs and that attract new residents (Williams & Pocock, 2010). Any community decisions that influence where individuals live and work influence the nature of their work-life interface.

CONCLUSION

The articles in this special topic forum make substantial contributions to work-life theory both individually and collectively. They have implications for future work-life theory and research from multiple theoretical perspectives, including multiple levels of analysis and different decision-making, diversity, and temporal perspectives. In addition, they have implications for practice at the employee, couple, supervisor, organizational, community, and societal levels. It is our hope that this forum advances and expands work-life theory, gives a needed nudge to future theory development and research, and provides recommendations with practical utility for how all parties may make work-life decisions to their mutual advantage.

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