

**Working Parents: Multidimensionalism and Working-
Class Social Feminism – Lessons for Reconciling Family and Work in Israel**
Arianne Renan Barzilay

This article confronts a most pressing problem for many Israeli families: the constant “juggling” between work and family, and the law’s role in regulating the work-family conflict. This issue recently drew a measure of public attention due to the Vered Perry case, in which the Supreme Court held that childcare expenses should be tax deductible. The legal and public debate this case gave rise to had the potential to transform the lives of working parents in Israel, but that did not occur; not surprisingly, given the prevailing legal conceptions in Israel relating to work, parenting, and the combination of work and parenting. These legal conceptions—which the article defines as embodying a conception of parenthood as “launch and forget” and of work as “total”—do not promote any significant integration of work and parenting in Israel. The article articulates an alternative theoretical legal conception, which is anchored in the experience of working-class social feminists active in the U.S. early in the twentieth century. This is a forgotten strand of feminism on which the article turns a spotlight, presenting its central agents and their vision and conceptualizing its principles. Inspired by these principles of working-class social feminism, the article develops the multidimensional approach as a broad theoretical underpinning for the integration of work and family in Israel. The multidimensional approach proposes to recognize the various dimensions of human life—such as work, family, political life and cultural life—and award them significant weight. The article develops this as a theoretical conception (external and internal multidimensionalism), and clarifies why such an updated conception is required for both men and women in Israel. Finally, the article demonstrates how the multidimensional approach works by revisiting the Perry case in light of it, and points to other courses of action for integrating family and work, which are being pursued today in other countries and better accord with the proposed multidimensional approach.