

Documentary: The Motherload ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

The Motherload, a documentary on work-life balance

When: On CBC-TV's Doc Zone, Thursday Jan. 9 at 9 p.m.

Full episode online ^[2]

Why would a recent article in The Atlantic called "Why Women Still Can't Have It All" create such an international sensation? Why does the announcement of a new CEO of a Fortune 500 company make headlines because she is also pregnant? Why does a billionaire Facebook boss feel compelled to break her silence and speak out about the lack of women at the top? Why all the fuss?

Perhaps it's because it was all supposed to have changed by now. Dads were supposed to carry more of the load. Motherhood was not supposed to become so idealized. Employers were supposed to be more flexible. Women were supposed to climb higher up the ladder, but feel less guilty. Society was supposed to live up to the promises our mothers made. From single moms to CEOs - a generation of burnt-out, disillusioned moms are waking up and smelling the coffee. Forget having it all - today's working moms are doing it all. Call it "The Motherload".

"If you ratchet up the standards at work, and you ratchet up the standards of motherhood, you're gonna get to be overwhelmed," notes Joan C. Williams, Law Professor and advocate for better workplace practices for both women and men.

The motherload takes an in-depth and new look at the subject of working mothers - the current issues, challenges and triumphs that come from trying or having to do it all. And compares Canadian women's lives to their even more troubled American counterparts - where women are struggling with work-life balance and paying a heavy price with their health.

And it doesn't stop with women, as now men are starting to feel the weight of "The Motherload". As writer and Washington Post reporter, Brigid Schulte says "this is not just a mommy issue. This is a human rights issue." When we meet Brigid, she is working on a book called "Overwhelmed" about her struggles to maintain a demanding career and be an attentive mother of two.

As a key foreign policy advisor to the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Anne-Marie Slaughter appears to have it all. Some would say a dream job, a real position of power. But when time comes to sign up for another two years, Anne-Marie, a mother of two, surprises her boss and herself - she quits. "You cannot tell Egypt to hold the revolution because your policy planner has to go home for the weekend". She returns home to her family and her job as a University Professor and writes "Why Women Still Can't Have It All" for The Atlantic Magazine. The article becomes an international sensation, sparking debate, discussion and a whole lot of controversy.

Sheryl Sandberg is the billionaire COO of Facebook, but she is also a mom - one who was afraid to admit that when she leaves work at 5:30 pm, it's to have dinner with her kids. Her best-selling book "Lean In" is, she hopes, a call to arms for women to not give up on their ambition. "The revolution has stalled" states Sandberg and that "It's important we acknowledge this stagnation for women."

In the documentary THE MOTHERLOAD, we profile several working mothers struggling to just keep working - much less advance in their careers. Emilie, a prosecutor for the federal government and mother of three, who has just returned to work after her third and final maternity leave (Emilie also happens to be the daughter of former Canadian Supreme Court Justice Louise Arbour), Kimeiko, also a mother of three, on a year leave from her job as a college professor, and Helen, a divorced mother of two, who chose to be let go of her position as a plant manager instead of continue to strain under the high expectations at work while trying to care for her kids. We also meet the ultimate in doing it all mothers -- divorced, single mom Cathy is on her own - she works two jobs when we first meet her while also caring for her two young sons.

THE MOTHERLOAD is produced and directed by Cornelia Principe for Border City Pictures. Executive producer is Bob Culbert.

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: gender ^[4]

work/life balance ^[5]

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