

## Living Arrangements

*All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players:  
They have their exits and their entrances;  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,  
Mewing and puking in the nurse's arms.  
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school, And then the lover  
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,  
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,  
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,  
Seeking the bubble reputation  
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,  
In fair round belly with good capon lined,  
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,  
Full of wise saws and modern instances,  
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts  
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon  
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,  
His youthful hose well saved a world too wide  
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,  
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes  
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange eventful history,  
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything*  
William Shakespeare, As You Like It

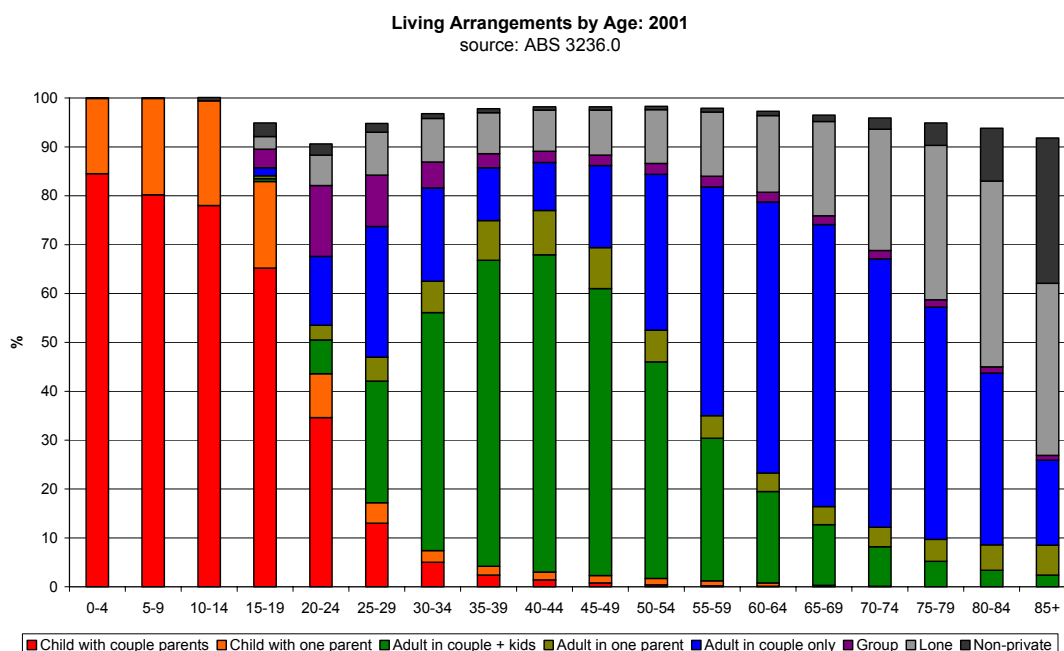
Shakespeare's stages are evident in our changing living arrangements - see Chart 1.

Under the age of 20, most people are living with parents. The 20 to 24 age group is the most diverse, with over 40% still living with parents but one-third are living in a group household, in a couple without children relationship or alone. A further 10% have one or more offspring.

The proportion with children increases until the 40 to 44 age group. Then the couple only (empty nest) household starts to dominate. The lone household increases quickly after the age of 65 and then over the age of 85 an increasing proportion of people are living in a non-private dwelling such as a nursing home.

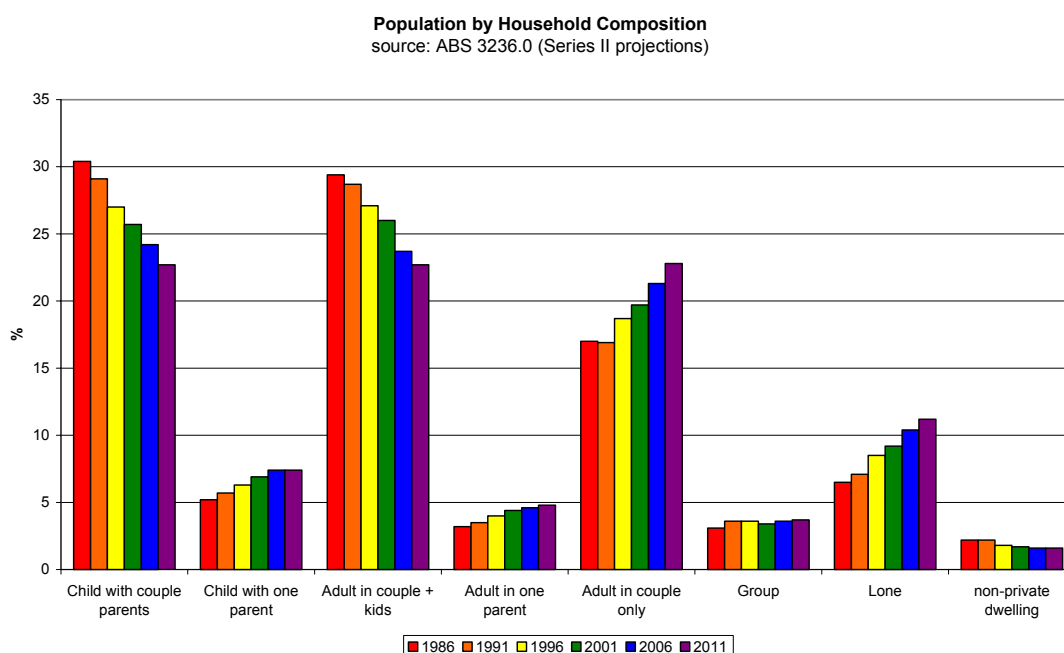
In the interest of clarity, we have omitted from Chart 1 various other living arrangements which mostly involve siblings living in the same household.

**Chart 1**



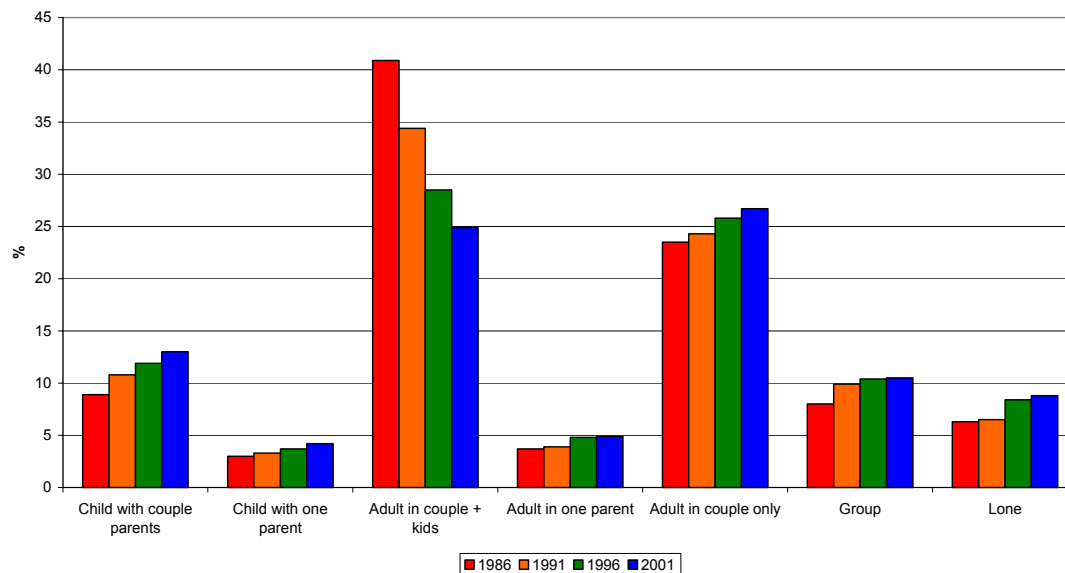
There has been rapid growth in couple only households and lone households as the proportion of people in households with children has declined (Chart 2). These trends are projected to continue and by 2011 it is expected that there will be as many adults in couple only households as there are in couple with children households. The rapid growth in couple only households is partially due to the ageing population, specifically a larger proportion of people in the 50 to 59 age bracket where empty nests are dominant. But another factor is the rise of the younger couple only household – Dual Income No Kids (DINKs) – see Chart 3.

**Chart 2**



### Chart 3

Population Aged 25 to 29 by Household Composition  
source: ABS 3236.0



In the 25 to 29 age group, there are now more adults in couple only households than in couple plus children households, a rapid change over the past 15 years. There has also been strong growth in the proportion of 25 to 29's who still live with parents.

There are some important implications of these changes. People living in the rapidly growing couple only households will have different lifestyles to adults living in couple plus children households. For example, people in their late 20's will now spend less time at home with children and will tend to watch less television. In addition, the trend towards smaller households means increased preference for small food pack sizes. But where are the small tins of tomatoes and small packs of milk varieties? Where can one buy single eggs?

Perhaps most importantly, the rapid growth in couple only (and lone) households means that more people have to spread their income over fewer people, often only themselves. Thus, we can expect a trend towards more expensive lifestyles and quality products.