



Sociology Working Papers

Paper Number 2010-03

**Gender Convergence in Domestic Work: Discerning the Effects of
Interactional and Institutional Barriers in Large-Scale Data**

Man Yee Kan,

Oriel Sullivan

Jonathan Gershuny,

Department of Sociology

University of Oxford

Manor Road

Oxford OX1 3UQ

www.sociology.ox.ac.uk/swp.html

**Gender Convergence in Domestic Work: Discerning the Effects of
Interactional and Institutional Barriers in Large-Scale Data**

**Man Yee Kan, Oriel Sullivan and Jonathan Gershuny,
University of Oxford**

This work was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council through the grant for Developing the Centre for Time Use Research (award nos. RES-060-25-0037) and the British Academy through the Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme.

Direct correspondence to: Oriel Sullivan, Department of Sociology, Manor Road Building, Oxford, OX1 3UQ, UK. Email: oriel.sullivan@sociology.ox.ac.uk

Gender Convergence in Domestic Work: Discerning the Effects of Interactional and Institutional Barriers in Large-Scale Data

ABSTRACT

Cross-national trends in paid and unpaid work time over the last 40 years reveal a slow and incomplete convergence of women's and men's work patterns. A simplistic extrapolation would indicate a 70-80 year process of gender convergence, with the year 2000 representing an approximate mid-point. However, in conformity with the expectations of gender theory, time use data shows that gender segregation in domestic work is quite persistent over time. Women still do the bulk of routine housework and caring for family members while men have increased their contributions disproportionately to non-routine domestic work, suggesting that gender ideologies and the associated 'doing' of gender in interaction remain important features of the division of domestic labour. The effects of institutional barriers are also apparent, with differential changes in women's proportional contribution to routine housework and caring activities related to different national policy regimes.

Gender Convergence in Domestic Work: Discerning the Effects of Interactional and Institutional Barriers in Large-Scale Data

Introduction

In this paper we analyse changes over time in the gender patterning of various types of domestic work (routine housework, non-routine housework and caring activities), and in the institutional (policy regime) context of these changes. We argue that it is possible to find evidence in large-scale nationally-representative data for the effects of both interactional and institutional barriers to such change. The research is part of a wider project investigating the processes underlying increases in gender equality in the division of work, as a means of promoting further change.

Over the past four decades there have been significant changes in the economic structure and labour markets of the countries of Europe and North America: most notably, the growth of the service sector and the rise in women's labour force participation. Such changes have brought some gender convergence in working time patterns. For example, overall paid work time in the UK, the US and most industrial countries has decreased for male and increased for female workers. For unpaid work there has been an overall fall for women, especially for those in employment, and a moderate but continual increase in men's participation (Gershuny 2000; Robinson & Godbey, 1999; Hook 2006). Even though women are still responsible for the major share of unpaid work, these studies suggested that the gender gap in both paid and unpaid work time was also closing slowly (Gershuny 2000; Gershuny and Sullivan 2003; Sullivan, 2000). Recent analyses, presented below, update the evidence incorporating time use surveys conducted in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Given the general trends over the past four decades, a simple interpretation based on a linear extrapolation would suggest that we are in the middle of a 70-80 year process of gender convergence in work patterns, with the year 2010 representing an approximate mid-point on the road to equality. Nevertheless, as has frequently been noted (e.g. Deutsch 2007; Risman 2004), there remain considerable barriers to further gender convergence in both paid and unpaid work. These barriers exist at several levels, including both the institutional and the interactional levels (Risman 2004). In empirical

research, however, the identification and demonstration of the effects of these barriers is not straightforward. In this paper we present analyses of time use data suggestive of the existence of both sorts of barrier to gender convergence. Focusing on the sphere of domestic work¹, we show how these barriers have conditioned the contours of change over a range of countries and regime types. We approach this firstly by showing how changing differences in gender segregation between the different categories of domestic work point to the ongoing significance of gender ideologies and ‘doing gender’ at the interactional level. Secondly, we examine systematic differences in the pace and level of change between welfare regime types, suggestive of the significance of institutional barriers in inhibiting change.

Data and measures

The data come from the Multinational Time Use Study (MTUS), a harmonized database of large nationally-representative time-use diary surveys collected from the 1960s to the 2000s². The database currently contains more than 50 surveys from over 20 countries recording more than 550,000 diary days. There is considerable variation in the modes of collection of these data, so in the MTUS these surveys are harmonized to a common format, with an identical set of activities and socio-demographic variables. We selected sixteen countries with good quality data representing four different welfare policy regime types—these types emerging from the debate initiated by Esping Andersen (1990) and discussed below in the section on institutional barriers³. The selected countries include 512,065 diary cases from 44 surveys; here we use only the 348,204 diary days recorded by respondents aged 20-59. Since we have multiple surveys for most of these countries we are able to plot trends over time. In some cases, however, (in particular for two of the three countries representing the Southern regime which have been included to give a more complete picture of regime types) only single time-points are available. In general it will be seen that the single point estimates correspond quite well to the relevant trend lines.

Recent trends in domestic work

Previous cross-national time use research on trends in domestic work have largely been based upon data ranging from the 1960s to the 1990s (e.g. Gershuny, 2000; Robinson & Godbey, 1999; Hook 2006). Recent surveys conducted in the first decade of the 21st century permit an updating of the evidence using evidence from sixteen economically developed countries (see Table 1).

| Table 1. Men's and Women's Total Domestic Work Time (Minutes per Day) | | | | | | | |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| MTUS respondents aged 20 – 59: women's total/men's total | | | | | | | |
| | 1961-69 | 1970-75 | 1976-84 | 1985-89 | 1990-94 | 1995-99 | 2000-04 |
| Men | | | | | | | |
| Canada | | 341/127 | 291/146 | 276/128 | 276/144 | 272/156 | |
| UK | 369/90 | 304/91 | | 320/133 | | 274/137 | 280/148 |
| USA | 361/105 | 320/132 | | 277/147 | 238/140 | 283/190 | 272/173 |
| Australia | | 362/105 | | 309/125 | 318/150 | 308/147 | |
| France | 425/114 | 368/114 | | | | 302/157 | |
| Netherlands | | 356/118 | 363/127 | 349/136 | 308/125 | 288/136 | 278/133 |
| Germany | 392/102 | | | | 323/155 | | 292/155 |
| Austria | | | | | | | |
| Slovenia | | | | | | | 300/162 |
| Denmark | 320/64 | | | 234/131 | | | |
| Norway | | 367/125 | 305/138 | | 279/155 | | 276/173 |
| Finland | | | 259/126 | 251/145 | | 255/150 | |
| Sweden | | | | | 289/171 | | 205/142 |
| Italy | | | | 375/69 | | | 341/97 |
| Spain | | | | | | | 317/105 |
| Israel | | | | | 302/93 | | |

Men's domestic work time has in general displayed an upward trend over the past four decades. In the UK and the US, for example, men's overall contribution to domestic work increased from 90 and 105 minutes per day respectively in the 1960s, to 148 and 173 minutes per day respectively in the early 2000s. Similar levels of increase were observed in the continental European and Nordic countries. However, there may be indications of a slowing of this trend in the most recent period. In three out of six countries where data is available both for the 1990s and the period 2000-2004 there is a slight decline or

levelling off in men's contributions between either the late 1990s and the early years of the 21st century (in the USA and the Netherlands), or between the early 1990s and the early years of the 21st century (in Sweden). Note however that the figures for the late 1990s in the USA and for the early 1990s in Sweden were exceptionally high in relative terms (at 190 minutes per day and 171 minutes per day respectively). In Australia a slight decrease is observed over the decade of the 1990s, while in Germany no change is observed between the early 1990s and the early years of the 21st century. Two countries (UK and Norway) show a steady continuation of an upward trend in men's overall contributions into the 21st century.

Women's domestic work time was significantly longer than men's in all periods and countries documented, and the trends over the past four decades have been more cross-nationally consistent. In contrast to the trends for men, women's domestic work time has displayed a gradual decline. All countries analysed showed an overall steady decline over the three decades from the 1960s to the 1990s. In the 1960s, women's domestic work time totalled over 360 minutes in the UK and the US and even reached 425 minutes in France. By comparison, it stood at 274 minutes per day (UK), 283 minutes per day (USA) and 302 minutes per day (France) by the late 1990s. This general trend continued into the early years of the 21st century. Of the six countries for which data is available from both the 1990s and the period 2000-2004, only the UK showed an increase in women's domestic work over this most recent decade, from 274 minutes per day to 280 minutes per day. The figures for the USA, which had showed an increase during the 1990s, had again declined by the early years of the 21st century to 272 minutes per day.

The implication of these trends for the *relative* contributions of men and women to domestic work is a reasonably steady and continuous fall in women's proportion of domestic work over four decades, with perhaps some indication of levelling off in the early years of the 21st century in those countries where men's contribution shows signs of levelling off or declining.

We would not, of course, expect trends in the direction of greater gender equality to be either rapid or smooth in progression. Barriers of the kind identified in Risman 2004 may, for example, possibly account for the recent slowing in men's contributions

(also discussed in relation to Australia by Bittman 1995), and for the apparent recent stalling of the growth in women's labour market participation in the USA described in Cotter et al (2005). In the remainder of the paper we investigate whether it is possible to find evidence for the effects of these barriers in large-scale cross-national data. In the figures that follow, we plot changes in men's and women's contributions to the different categories of domestic work in order to trace ongoing gender segregation. The different categories we define, for reasons explained below, as routine housework (including daily routine types of housework such as cleaning, doing the laundry and cooking), caring for family members (including care for children and adults⁴) and other domestic work (including non-routine types of household work such as shopping, gardening and household repairs).

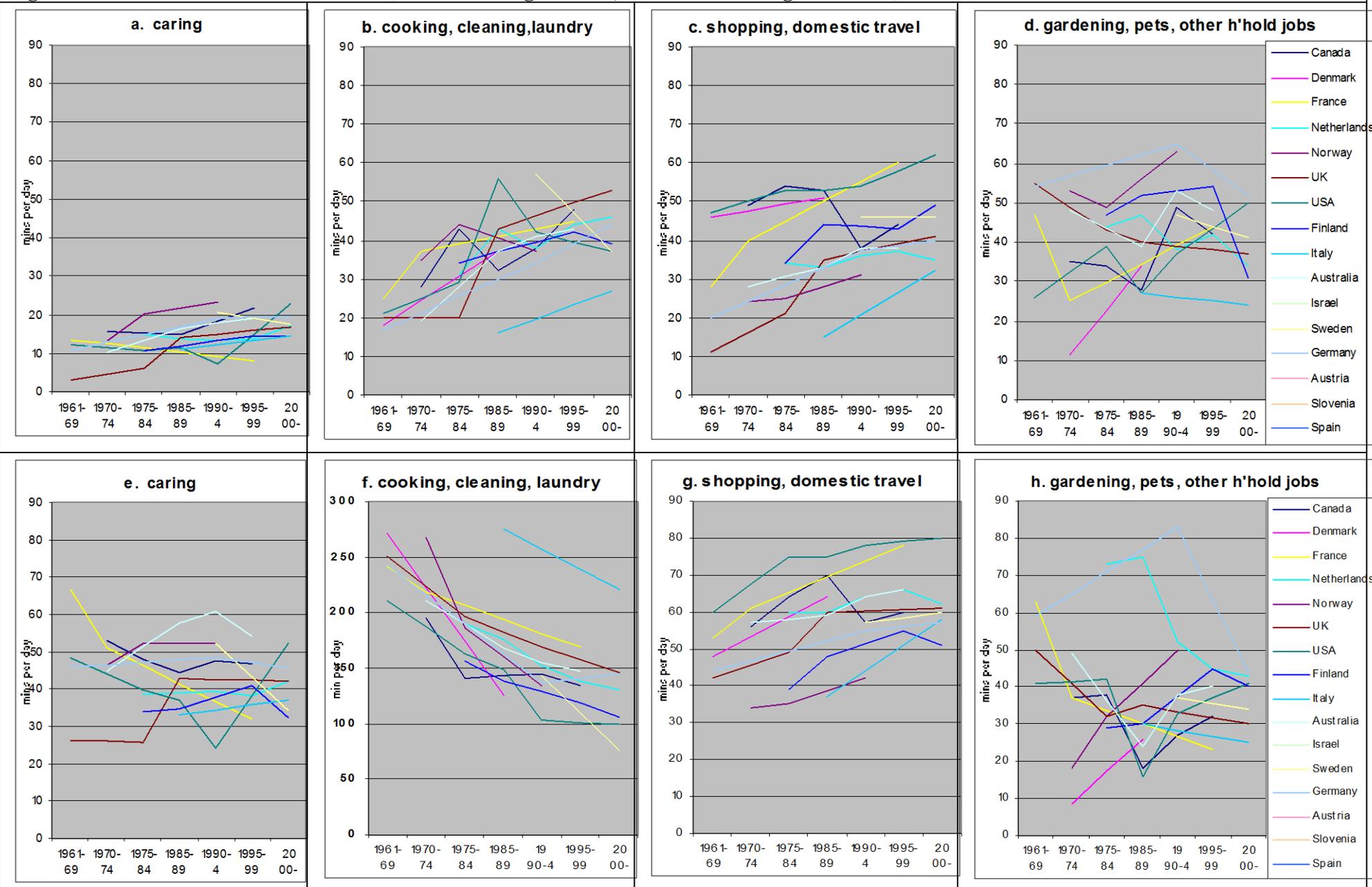
Interactional barriers to gender convergence

Gender segregation between the different categories of domestic work appears quite persistent (e.g. Sullivan 1997; Bittman and Wajcman 2000; Kan and Gershuny 2010). While men are slowly increasing their contributions in all categories of domestic work, they still spend comparatively little time overall on routine housework, much less on child care, and concentrate their domestic work time mainly on the less routine types of chores such as DIY. Despite the overall evidence for slow gender convergence over time, women still undertake the bulk of each type of domestic work, and focus particularly on routine housework (cleaning, and cooking, with laundry exhibiting the highest level of female specialisation). The continuing gender segregation among these categories of domestic work points to the ongoing significance of gender ideologies and the interactional aspects of gender ('doing gender') in the performance of domestic work. According to traditional gender ideologies, family work of all kinds is in general defined as 'feminine', but caring activities and routine chores such as cooking, cleaning and clothes care are particularly strongly feminine-defined. On the other hand, non-routine chores such as DIY, outside work and general 'fixing' are masculine-defined. In order to conform to their appropriate normative gender identities, men and women perform housework activities accordingly. Figure 1 shows how differences in gender participation for the different categories of domestic work have changed over time. We

present the data in graphical form for each category by sex, making it easier to see the differences in changes between the different categories of domestic work. Placing the graphs adjacent to each other enables a clear focus on the general patterns of change for the different categories.

Comparing changes between the four categories of domestic work, we can see a clear pattern of gender segregation persisting over time: although women spend much more time in general on domestic work than men, they concentrate their time mainly on routine housework, while men spend the largest proportion of their time on non-core domestic work. Note that the vertical scale is 0-90 minutes per day for all the figures apart from that for women's routine housework, where the scale is 0-300. If all these graphs were shown on the same scale, the amount of time that women spend in routine housework activities would dwarf all other categories of domestic work. At the same time it is evident that the overall decline in the proportion of domestic work undertaken by women over the years is mainly due to the reduction in their routine housework time. From Figure 1f, we can see that women's average time spent in routine housework was very high in the 1960s (between 210 and 270 minutes per day in the countries where data were recorded). These figures dropped rapidly to between 120 and 190 minutes in the late 1980s, except in Italy where the time spent in routine housework was significantly longer (at 275 minutes per day). In the same period, men's routine housework time increased gradually from around 20 minutes to an average of about 40 minutes in most of the countries. From the late 1980s to the early 2000s, women's routine housework continued to decline and men's increased slightly, though on average at a slower rate than in the earlier period.

Figure 1 Domestic work in 16 countries (a. to d. Men aged 20-59, e. to h. Women aged 20 to 59)



Time spent caring for other family members (primarily children) shows a somewhat different pattern of change. In contrast to the routine housework performed by women, the time they spent on care fluctuated and increased to some extent over the past four decades. Men spent relatively little time on care overall (an average of between 15-20 minutes a day in the early 2000s), despite some increases since the 1960s. Shopping and domestic travel times show a rising trend for both sexes (due to the increasing size of retail outlets, schools and other service establishments, which lead to growing trip lengths and transaction times) and are less unequally divided, though women still do the largest part of these activities.

Figures 1d and 1h provide no clear picture of a gender divide in the case of non-routine housework. By the early 2000s in both the UK and Norway men undertook slightly more non-routine domestic work than women (at 78 and 86 minutes per day respectively), and there was no significant gender difference in the USA (with both men and women recording about 110 minutes per day). However, women spent longer on non-routine domestic work than men in some of the other European countries including Italy and Germany. In the UK, women's time spent on non-routine domestic work decreased slightly from the 1970s, but the figures fluctuated slightly or remained relatively stable in other countries. Overall, despite some fluctuations in the data, men's time on non-routine domestic work has not changed very significantly over the years.

To summarize, men and women tend to undertake different types of domestic work. Women have been responsible for the bulk of routine housework and caring for others, while men tend to spend their domestic work time on non-routine domestic work. There is evidence to show that the gender gap in routine housework is narrowing gradually. This finding is consistent with previous results from smaller groups of countries and shorter time-spans (e.g., Robinson and Godbey 1997; Sullivan 2000). Nevertheless, this narrowing is achieved mainly through a large reduction in women's routine housework time, as well as through a less substantial increase in men's.

From this evidence, it seems that there remains a substantial barrier presented by the gender segregation of domestic tasks to further rapid gender convergence in domestic time use. The persistence of this segregation in the face of women's increasing time spent in paid employment over the past forty years lends strong and direct support to

gender theory. Domestic tasks remain divided as ‘masculine’-defined and ‘feminine’-defined, and these divisions are not particularly susceptible to change even in countries where gender ideologies are considered to be relatively non-traditional (the Scandinavian countries). This suggests that gender ideologies and the interactional accomplishment of gender (‘doing gender’) according to normatively defined gender ideologies of masculinity and femininity remains a significant feature of the contemporary division of domestic labour, and that gender equality will be most difficult to achieve in the feminine-defined areas of domestic work.

Institutional barriers to gender convergence

Current literature has classified public policy regimes in developed countries into a small number of types according to the level of social equity, state intervention in welfare provision and gender ideologies (see for example, Esping-Andersen, 1990, 1999; Gauthier, 1996; Goodin et al., 1999; Lewis, 1993; O’Connor et al., 1999; Sainsbury, 1999). Various attempts have been made to relate domestic work to these regime types, on the basis that the division of labour is partly dependent on public policy affecting both the structure of employment and the provision of services and/or benefits designed to enable citizens to combine employment with the care of family members, particularly children (see, for example, Fraser 1994; Gershuny and Sullivan 2003; Gornick, Meyers and Ross 1997; Hobson 1990; Lewis 1992; O’Brien, Brandth and Kvanne 2007; O’Connor, Orloff, and Shaver 1999; Pfau-Effinger 2004; Sullivan et al 2009). In this section of the paper, we use a relative measure of the division of domestic work – the ratio of women’s time to the total (men’s plus women’s) time devoted to (a) routine housework and (b) caring activities – and examine changes in this measure between four commonly-recognized regime categories: (1) liberal regimes, (2) social democratic (‘nordic’) regimes, (3) the social capitalist (or the conservative/corporatist) regimes and (4) the southern, or Mediterranean, regimes. This characterization of the broad types of policy regime is in line with the typology described by Esping-Andersen (1990). Several critics have subsequently argued that issues of gender and the family are not adequately addressed within this theoretical framework (e.g., Gauthier, 1996; Lewis, 1993; O’Connor et al., 1999; Sainsbury, 1999). Nevertheless, the classifications that later

authors in this area have proposed, which take account of gender-related policies and outcomes, still to a considerable extent overlap with Esping-Andersen's original typology. This may be so because in general gender ideologies overlap with, though may not exactly parallel, state welfare policy packages (Gornick and Meyers 2004). For example, Gauthier (1996) compares state policies regarding childcare, maternity leave and cash benefits and concludes that the US and Great Britain are representatives of the non-interventionist (liberal) model, while Sweden and Denmark are considered to be the most egalitarian typology.

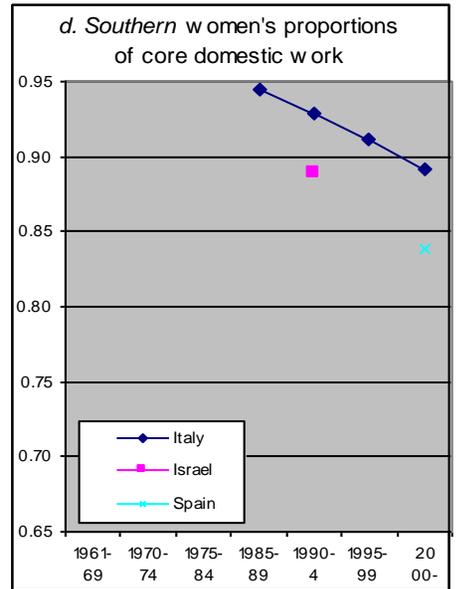
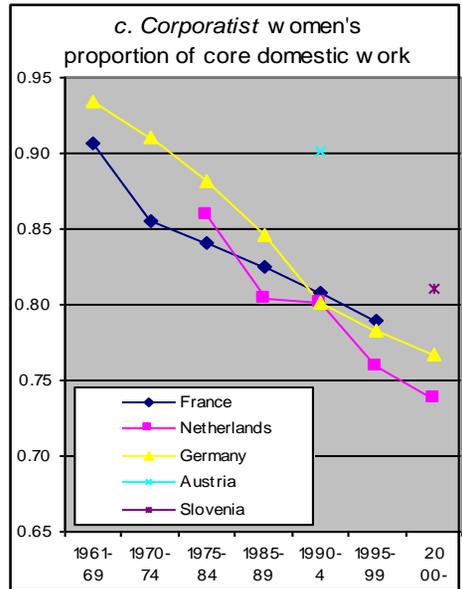
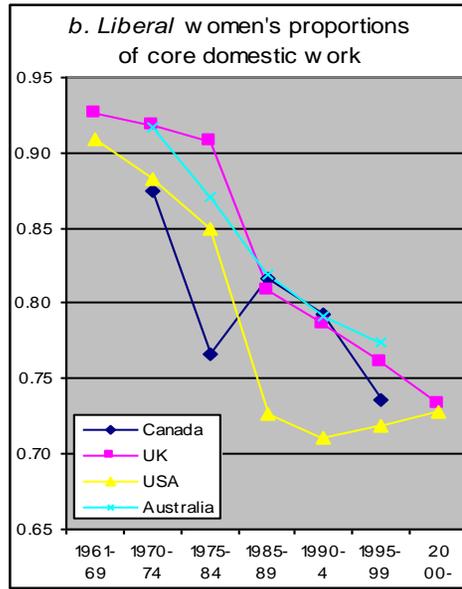
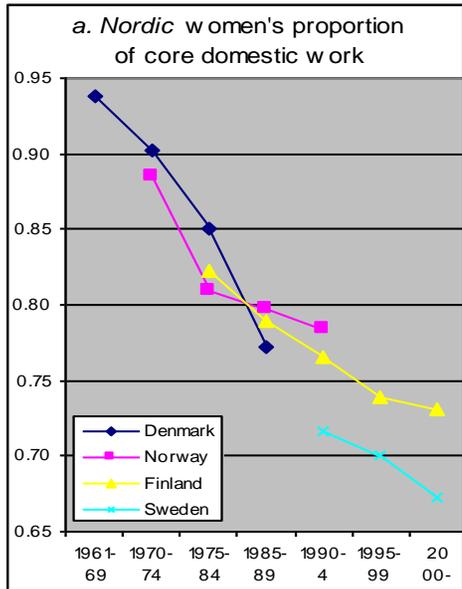
In liberal regimes (which are often Anglophone) the state generally provides a low level of welfare support, but specific measures such as means testing are used to direct benefits to those most in need. Liberal regime social policies carry a general assumption that the market mechanism is more efficient than state intervention in promoting social development. So the total social expenditure is relatively low, and welfare provision (variously, in such countries, pensions, unemployment benefits, medical care) depends on private insurance schemes. A "modified breadwinner" gender ideology model, where most women are employed but are still expected to fulfil the major domestic caring role, is characteristic of this type of regime. Parents generally have to rely on market-based childcare solutions to work-family conflicts, either through employers or child care services. Consequently, the society is usually highly stratified. The UK, the USA, Canada and Australia are considered examples of this type.

In the social democratic regimes, the state takes a strong role in providing services and benefits for the majority of the population. Social and public policies are based on a consideration of citizen's right and have as an objective raising the employment rate of both women and men in fulfilment of a dual earner family model. Gender equality of access to the primary labour market is promoted through the provision of high-quality public services for child- and-elder care, and women's attachment to the paid labour market is promoted by encouraging fathers to take parental/paternal leave. The level of social equality is higher in these countries, with substantial proportions of workers in well-paid professional occupations. Denmark, Norway, Finland and Sweden are commonly considered to be representatives of this regime type.

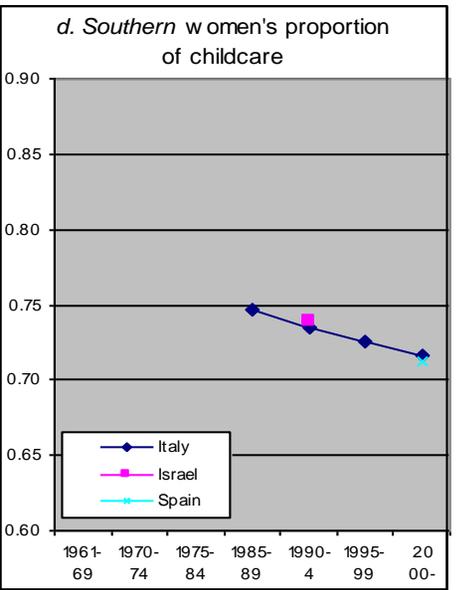
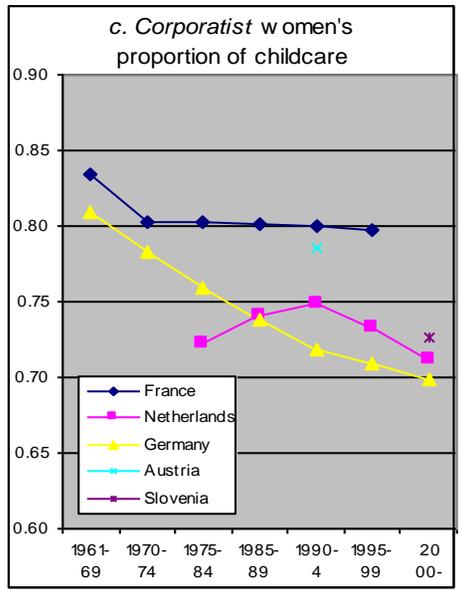
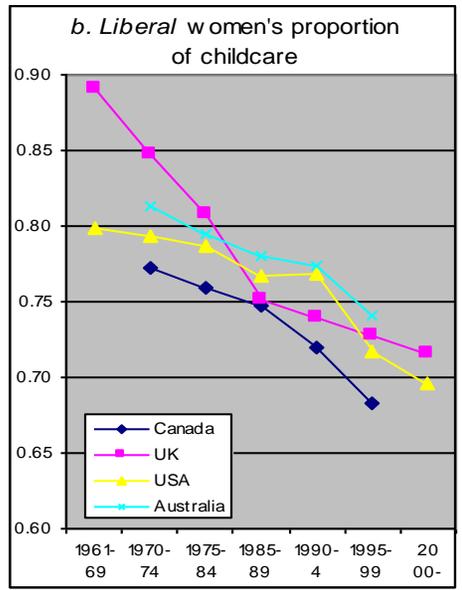
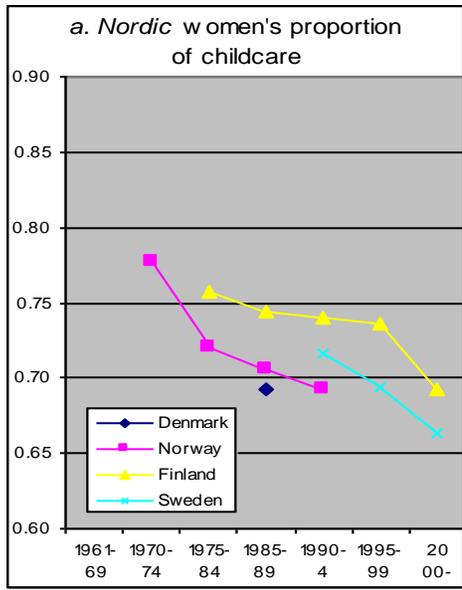
Continental Catholic European countries such as France and Germany are generally considered to be examples of the social capitalist (or conservative/corporatist) regime. The state provides social services mainly through social insurance programmes, which are organized to maintain relatively wide social differentials between occupational groups. While women and families benefit from leave policies that grant them paid time off to care for their young children and labour market regulations that shorten their regular working time throughout their children's lives, there is an underlying ideological assumption regarding men's role as breadwinners and women's as carers in the family. So whilst the state takes on a subsidiary role in the provision of social services, traditional family responsibilities are assumed in the formulation of public policies.

The Southern or Mediterranean regime type is a later addition to welfare regime typologies (see Ferrara 1996). This regime type is most similar to the Conservative regime type of continental Europe, but public social security systems are here less highly developed. Social rights are in general weaker, and gender ideology is more traditional with a strong emphasis on women's family roles. In consequence labour markets are highly segmented with women not being strongly represented in the primary full-time labour force. In relation to caring more emphasis is put on informal welfare provision through family networks. Countries such as Spain and Italy are commonly considered as representative of this regime type.

Figures 2a to 2d. Women's proportion of total of core domestic work (men and women aged 20-59)



Figures 3a to 3d. Women's proportion of total caring activity (men and women aged 20-59)



There are variations in welfare policies within each regime type of course, so we do expect to find cross-national variations in gender and work time allocation among countries within regime types. Nevertheless, we also expect to find some consistencies according to regime type. In the graphs that follow, we present for each regime type two indicators of the changing division of domestic work: women's proportion of overall routine housework and women's proportion of caring activities. So while Figure 1 showed the absolute contributions of women and men to the different categories of domestic work, in Figures 2 and 3 we illustrate how changes over time in the relative contribution of women to these two key categories of domestic work differ according to regime type. While overall a decline in women's proportion of both routine housework and caring is observable in each of the figures, the differences by regime type may be interpreted as indicating the varying impact of institutional barriers arising from welfare policy regimes to gender convergence in domestic work.

These figures show an unambiguous overall decline in women's relative contribution to routine housework. Women's contribution was very high in the 1960 and 70s, at around 90-95% in the Liberal, Nordic and Corporatist regimes. While we do not have data for this early period from the countries of the Southern regime, women's relative contribution in those countries was still over 90% by the late 1980s-early 1990s, and would have been at least equal to this (or even higher) in the 1960s. What varies between regime types is the progressive reduction in women's relative contributions from the 1960s into the first years of the 21st century. Here a clear variation in trends between regime types is evident. The majority of the Nordic and Liberal regime countries show quite a similar decline from the 1960s, where women performed 90-95% of routine housework, to the early years of the 21st century when women contributed less than 75%. The main exception to this appears to be in Sweden, where women's relative contribution was already under 75% by the early 1990s and declined still further to 67% by the period 2000-2004. Women's relative contributions experienced a particularly steep fall (to 71%) in the USA during the late 1970s-early 1980s, before rising again slightly into the 21st century.

In the Corporatist countries of continental Europe the decline in women's relative contributions has been less dramatic over the 40 years from the 1960s, so that by the

early years of the 21st century women were contributing between 75% and 80% of all routine housework (and something over 80% in Slovenia). The data for the Southern regime type are more patchy, but by the period 200-2004 women's relative contribution to routine housework was still relatively high by comparison, at between 80-90%. Among the southern European countries commonly considered as representative of the Southern regime type, the figure for Italy stood at 89%, while that for Spain was a little lower, at 84%.

For caring activities (primarily child care) the picture is less clearly patterned by regime type. The majority of countries record a consistent decline in the relative contribution of women to caring, but initial levels in the early periods (1960s and 1970s) vary more by country than is the case for routine housework. If we focus, rather, on levels of women's relative contributions in the later periods, some regime effect may be discernable. By the mid 1990s women's relative contribution to caring activities had already fallen in all the countries of the Nordic regime type to below 70%, from levels of between 70 and 75% in the 1970s and 1980s (Denmark already recording a figure below 70% in the late 1980s). The most marked decline was recorded for Norway, where women contributed 78% of caring time in the early 1970s, falling to below 70% by the early 1990s. By the decade around the turn of the 21st century women's relative contribution to caring activities in the countries of the liberal market regime had declined to either side of the 70% mark. The countries of North America (the USA and Canada) were more gender equal in this area than those of Europe, both recording percentages below 70%, while the UK and Australia were still in the 70-75% range. All countries, however, recorded a consistent decline from rather different levels in the 1970s, with the UK recording the steepest decline from 85% (down from 88% in the 1960s) to 72%.

The countries of the Corporatist regime started from levels of women's relative contribution to caring activities above the 80% mark in the 1960s, but only in Germany was the decline similar to those experienced in the countries of the liberal market regimes, reaching 70% by the early years of the 21st century. In France the initial decline leveled off by the 1970s, and remained at or around the 80% mark until the late 1990s. For the countries of the Southern regime type we only have a trend available from the data for Italy, which also shows a decline from 75% to 72% over the period from the late 1980s.

The single-point surveys available for the other countries, however, show considerable consistency with the trend line for Italy.

While the differences in trends and levels observed in Figures 2 and 3 may be considered small in terms of percentage changes over several decades, they are nevertheless consistent in showing an overall decline in women's proportionate contribution to both routine housework and care over the different regime types. In addition, both levels and trends are also broadly in line with the expectations of policy regime analyses which link the organization of institutional welfare to gender and gender ideology (see concluding discussion below), lending support to accounts which focus on the links between the institutional and ideological level of the gender structure in determining the development of specific policies.

To this point, we have presented trends based on the raw data. Figure 4 shows women's proportion of all domestic work by regime type, here including a modelled trend line for each regime type. In order to maximise sample numbers for modelling purposes, domestic work here comprises all the categories of domestic work included in Figure 1.

The multivariate analysis on which the modelled trend is based is shown in Table 2. The model is estimated on the basis of a pair of OLS regressions on men's and women's domestic work totals, and includes controls for age, year of survey, age of youngest child and regime type. The regime type*survey year coefficients model the relationship over time for each regime type. The survey year coefficients are defined as 2004 minus the survey year, in order to reflect the declining curvilinear shape of the relationship.

Figures 4a to 4d Women's proportion of all domestic work (men and women aged 20-59)

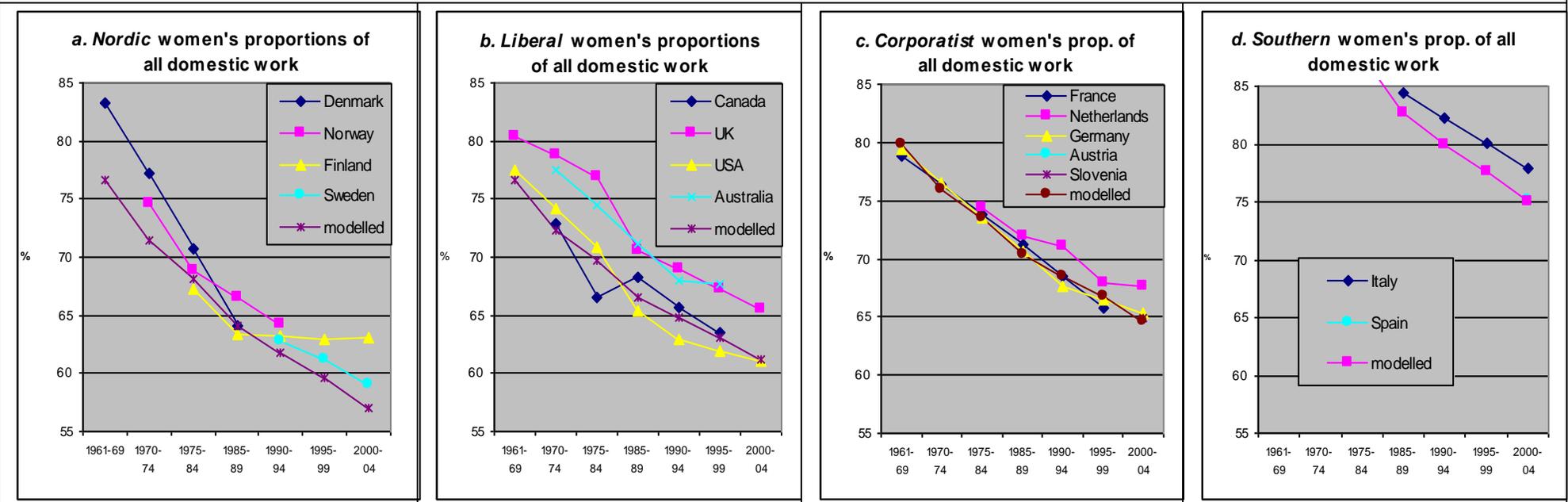


Figure 4 shows that, as for routine domestic work and caring, a slightly decelerating decline in women's proportion of all domestic work is apparent for all of the regime types. The similarities within each regime, and the differences between the regimes, are both clearly apparent. From Table 2 the regime*survey year coefficients for women are substantially positive reflecting (since the survey year variable is counted backwards) the substantial downward trend of women's domestic work total over this period, whereas the equivalent coefficients for men are smaller but negative reflecting the growing male contribution to domestic work. The coefficients for regime type and the regime*survey year interaction terms are all highly statistically significant (in all but one case at $p < .0000$). The conclusion is that institutional factors - the differing patterns of policy regulation in the various regime types associated with differing gender ideologies - do indeed have real consequences for the pace of change in trends towards greater gender equality.

Table 2: Determinants of domestic work time (minutes per day)

MTUS Men and women aged 20-59 (OLS regression , * $p < .0000$)**

| | Women | (sig) | Men | (sig) |
|--|---------|-------|--------|-------|
| Model Multiple R | 0.524 | | 0.345 | |
| Survey Year (Number of Years before 2004/10) squared | -2.81 | *** | -3.22 | *** |
| Nordic*Survey Year | 2.80 | *** | -0.54 | *** |
| Corporatist*Survey Year | 4.08 | *** | 0.13 | ns |
| Liberal*Survey Year | 2.15 | *** | -0.60 | *** |
| Southern*Survey Year | 2.73 | *** | -1.24 | *** |
| Age | 14.12 | *** | 3.02 | *** |
| Age squared | -0.12 | *** | -0.01 | *** |
| Youngest child aged 0-4 | 203.22 | *** | 58.86 | *** |
| Youngest child aged 5-15 | 70.68 | *** | 7.60 | *** |
| Nordic | -47.51 | *** | 14.88 | *** |
| Corporatist (ref) | | | | |
| Liberal | -8.48 | *** | 15.50 | *** |
| Southern | 49.87 | *** | -35.16 | *** |
| (Constant) | -131.80 | *** | 30.05 | *** |

Discussion and conclusions

We have charted changes in the division of domestic work time between men and women over the past four decades, using nationally representative time diary data from fifteen countries. Overall, women's time in domestic work has been declining while their paid work has been on the rise so that, on average, we see a slow but continuing trend of gender convergence in work time and the domestic division of labour regardless of welfare policy regime types. Will this trend continue? A simple linear extrapolation of the overall trends for a further 20 years might suggest that, sometime in the later 2020s, the proportion of domestic work undertaken by women would decline to about fifty percent of the total. However, we should not expect a smooth progression to gender equality in the division of work for, as has frequently been discussed in the literature, there remain substantial and persistent obstacles. These obstacles exist at different, although interconnecting, levels. Among these levels we can point to both interactional and institutional barriers, both of which are imbued in complex interplays of causality with gender ideologies (Risman 2004). In this paper we attempt to show how the effects of both interactional and institutional barriers can be identified from large-scale cross-national data charting women and men's contributions to the different categories of domestic work.

Firstly, the findings reveal that gender segregation in domestic work continues to pose a barrier to gender equality. Greater gender inequalities are found in routine housework and caring for others, which are traditionally more feminine-associated than non-core domestic work. In all regime types women still undertake the bulk of routine housework and care, while men have disproportionately increased their contributions to non-routine domestic work. Women and men continue to 'do gender' within the home by emphasizing their gender-appropriate tasks and responsibilities. The decline in women's domestic work time is due largely to a reduction in the time they spend on routine housework, as well as to a less substantial increase in men's domestic work time. Despite equality in educational access and in legal requirements for equality of treatment in the workplace, women still take a primary role in domestic work, while men are doing more, although primarily in the masculine-defined non-routine domestic tasks. This suggests that the influence of normative ideologies of gender on the division of domestic labour

remains quite strong, and points to the significance of other factors such as the growth of demand for women's participation in the labour market, and the diffusion of modern domestic technologies that increase efficiency in housework (Gershuny 1983, 2004) as explanations for the decline over the decades in women's domestic work time.

Various institutional processes operate to maintain the gender division in domestic work times. There is evidence, for example, that the continuing effects of gendered domestic work ideologies may operate dynamically through the life-course (Kan and Gershuny, 2009). Once a couple adopt an even slightly traditionally gendered work distribution (i.e., men doing more paid work, women more domestic) - perhaps subsequent to the birth of a first child - the woman then accumulates human capital at a slower rate than does the man, further increasing the pressure for gendered specialization. In addition, the development of dispersed work-time schedules characteristic of post-industrial economies may also not be favorable to processes of equality in the division of domestic labour. The growth of the service sector has made atypical work schedules (shift work, long and/or fragmented hours) more common. The gendered pattern of work schedules has reinforced the traditional domestic division of labour, particularly for housework which has to be undertaken on a routine basis and does not match well with men's long workweek schedules (Kan and Lesnard 2009).

Additionally, the systematic variation by regime type in the rates of decline in women's proportional contribution to the various types of domestic work indicate that welfare and other public policies impact on gender equality by influencing the pace of trends. The clearest divide lies between the Southern/Corporatist and the Nordic regimes. While women's proportion of domestic work has been declining in all the countries, countries of the Southern and Corporatist regimes (e.g. Italy and Germany), where traditional family functions and the male breadwinner family models are maintained through policy implementation, still show a significantly higher level in the early 2000s. In addition, countries of the social democratic regimes (e.g. Denmark, Sweden and Norway), where social equality is considered to be a major goal of public policy, have shown a relatively faster declining trend since the 1990s.

One of the main features of note in the analysis of regime types is that the differences between regimes in respect of routine housework are more pronounced than

those for caring activities. In general the policy literature on the relationship between domestic work and regime type has tended to focus on care as the aspect of domestic work primarily affected by the *direct* consequences of policy aimed at supporting employed parents through the provision of early childhood education and care ('ECEC'), and much research effort has been directed at trying to show an effect of such policies in large-scale data. We can reasonably assume that state policies are likely to have less *direct* influence on the performance of routine housework than on the taking of parental leave in order to care for small children, for example. However, the results shown here imply that the direct effects of ECEC policies may not be as significant as, for example, the effect of policies aimed at supporting female engagement in the primary labour market (and leading indirectly to a decline in the proportion of routine housework undertaken by women). This in turn points to the importance of influencing change in the gender ideologies underpinning the different regime types. Regime types are an outcome of a complex interplay of causality between ideology and policy, and the gender ideology and structure within particular regime types (which may account for differential changes in the relative contribution of men and women to domestic work) is complexly interlinked with the development of particular policies.

References

- Bittman, Michael. 1995. 'Recent changes in unpaid work'. Australian Bureau of Statistics Occasional Paper No. 4154
- Bittman, Michael and Wajcman, J. 2000. 'The rush hour: the character of leisure time and gender equity'. *Social Forces* 79 (1): 165-189
- Cotter, David A., Joan M. Hermsen and Reeve Vanneman. 2005. 'Gender Inequality in Work' pp. 107-137 in David A. Cotter, Joan M. Hermsen and Reeve Vanneman *The American People*. New York: Russell Sage.
- Esping-Andersen, Gösta. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- _____. 1999. *Social Foundations of Post-Industrial Economies*. Oxford, UK: Oxford

- Gauthier, Anne Helene. 1996. *The State and the Family: A Comparative Analysis of Family Policies in Industrialized Countries*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gershuny, Jonathan. 1983. *Social Innovation and the Division of Labour*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2000. *Changing times: work and leisure in postindustrial society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2004. 'Domestic Equipment Does Not Increase Domestic Work: a response to Bittman, Rice and Wajcman'. *British Journal of Sociology* 55:425-431.
- Gershuny, Jonathan and Oriel Sullivan. 2003. 'Time Use, Gender, and Public Policy Regimes'. *Social Politics* 10:205-228.
- Deutsch, Francine M. (2007) 'Undoing gender' *Gender and Society* 21 (1): 106-127
- Ferrera, Maurizio (1996). 'The "Southern" Model of Welfare in Social Europe'. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 6, 17-37
- Fraser, Nancy. 1994. 'After the family wage: Gender equality and the welfare state'. *Political Theory* 22(4): 591-618.
- Goodin, Robert E., Bruce Headey, Ruud Muffels, and H. Driven. 1999. *The Real Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Gornick, Janet C., and Marcia K. Meyers. 2004. "Welfare Regimes in Relation to Paid Work and Care." Chapter 3 in Janet Zollinger Giele and Elke Holst (eds.) *Changing Life Patterns in Western Industrial Societies*. Netherlands: Elsevier Science Press, 45-67.
- Gornick, Janet C., Marcia K. Meyers, and Katherin E. Ross. 1997. 'Supporting the employment of mothers: Policy variation across fourteen welfare states'. *Journal of European Social Policy* 7(1): 45-70.
- Hobson, Barbara. 1990. 'No exit, no voice: Women's economic dependency and the welfare state'. *Acta Sociologica* 33 (3):235-50.
- Hook, Jennifer L. 2006. "Care in context: Men's unpaid work in 20 countries, 1965-2003". *American Sociological Review* 71 (4): 639-660.
- Kan, Man Yee and Jonathan Gershuny. 2010 (in press). 'Gender Segregation and Bargaining in Domestic Labour: Evidence from longitudinal time use data'. In

- Rosemary Crompton, J. Scott, and C. Lyonnette (eds) *Gender Inequalities in the 21st Century*. Edward Elgar.
- ___ 2009. 'Gender and Time Use Over the Life-course'. in Malcolm Brynin and J. Ermisch (eds) *Changing Relationships*. New York & Oxford: Routledge.
- Kan, Man Yee and Laurent Lesnard. 2009. 'Comparing Working Week Schedules in France 1998-99 and UK 2000-01'. Paper presented at the 31st International Association for Time-Use Research Conference (23 September-25 September). Lüneburg, Germany: Leuphana University.
- Lewis, Jane. 1993. *Women and Social Policies in Europe: Work, family and the state*. Aldershot, UK: Edward Elgar.
- ___ 1992. 'Gender and the development of welfare regime'. *Journal of European Social Policy* 2(3): 159-173.
- O'Brien, Margaret, Berit Brandth, and Elin Kvande. 2007. 'Fathers, work and family life: Global perspectives and new insights'. *Community, Work & Family* 10 (4): 375-386.
- O'Connor, Julia S., Ann S. Orloff, and Sheila Shaver. 1999. *States, Markets, Families: Gender, Liberalism and Social Policy in Australia, Canada, Great Britain and the United States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pfau-Effinger, Birgit. 2004. *Development of culture, welfare states and women's employment in Europe*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Risman, Barbara. 2004: 'Gender as a social structure: theory wrestling with activism'. *Gender & Society* 18/4: 429-450
- Robinson, John P. and Geoffrey Godbey. 1997. *Time for life: The surprising ways Americans use their time*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania States University Press.
- Sainsbury, Diane. 1999. *Gender and Welfare State Regimes*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Sullivan, Oriel 2000. "The division of domestic labour: Twenty years of change?" *Sociology* 34:437-456.
- ___ 1997. "Time waits for no (wo)man: an investigation of the gendered experience of domestic time". *Sociology* 31(2): 221-39.

Sullivan, Oriol, Scott Coltrane, Linda McAnnally and Evrim Altintas. 2009 (forthcoming).

'Father-friendly policies and time use data in a cross-national context: potential and prospects for future research' *Annals of the American Academy for Political and Social Science*

¹ In this paper we present only analyses of domestic work (i.e. excluding elements of unpaid work such as volunteering). We have also performed similar analyses for paid work, since clearly a full assessment of the road to gender equality in the division of labour requires consideration of both paid and unpaid work.

² The database has been assembled and harmonized by Centre for Time Use Research at the University of Oxford. More information and data downloads from <http://www.timeuse.org/mtus>.

³ The countries are: Canada, the UK, the US, and Australia (representing liberal market regimes); the Netherlands, France, Slovenia Germany and Austria (representing corporatist/conservative regimes); Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway (representing the Social Democratic regimes); and Spain, Italy and Israel (representing the Southern regimes).

⁴ Overall, child care dominates this category.