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The Effect of Family Policy on the Household Division of Labour: A Comparison of East and West Germany

by Lynn Duggan*

Prior to their post-war division, East and West Germans were one citizenry under a strong state that had gone through three distinct political regimes. The subsequent divergence and 40 year maturation of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic provide a unique opportunity to analyze the impacts of different economic systems on gender relations: central planning in East Germany, and the market, moderated by the welfare state, in West Germany.

The cumulative effect of the divergence in economic system on East and West German women's economic position was significant. The East German labour force was 49 percent female in 1989, yet approximately 91 percent of East German women became biological mothers. By contrast, the West German labour force was 38 percent female in 1988, and only about 80 percent of West German Women became biological mothers (Ott et al. 1990). In essence, West German women were both less likely to work for pay and less likely to bear children than were East German women. The split between "career women" and mothers was accordingly more pronounced in West than in East Germany, though that motherhood was not the only factor determining women's lower rates of employment in West Germany.

Neither central planning nor social democracy as practiced in most countries has normally had the policy goal of integrating men into the household sphere, for parenting or for housework. Women are thus left with most of the time costs of childrearing, constraining their labour force participation; women's economic independence and bargaining power within the household are correspondingly diminished by their lower access to earnings, further training, and leadership positions.

Family policy in both East and West Germany reflected the belief that the mother should be the primary parent in a male-female couple, an orientation shared by most governments of the world. Chodorow (1978), Okin (1989) and others have challenged this precept as unscientific, maintaining that gender roles and all divisions of labour are socially constructed, rather than biologically given.

Rather than address the household division of labour through policy, both the East and West German governments enacted measures that reinforced women's responsibility for housework and childrearing. Three policies illustrate East Germany's gender role assignments: 1) As part of the initiative to encourage women to work full-time in the labour force, beginning in 1952 all married women and single mothers were allowed one day off with pay per month to catch up on household chores¹. 2) As of 1976, women with two or more children were eligible for a 40-hour work

week, rather than the standard 43³/₄ hour week. 3) Only since 1986 has it been formally possible for men to take, in place of their wives, a part of the government-sponsored year-long paid parental leave, and then only with special permission, so very few men have done so (MdJ, 1988). Single fathers qualified for these benefits, but since mothers nearly always received custody of children in East German divorce court there were very few single fathers in East Germany.

These policies in effect institutionalized women's responsibility for home and children. Partly as a result of this, East German employers, like their West counterparts, perceived all women as less reliable and less dedicated to their jobs, since only women were expected to take time off to care for children.

West German policies, basically the same now as in 1989 are not overtly gendered, but tax regulations, public school hours, a scarcity of subsidized childcare, and other policies reduce women's labour force participation. Income tax "splitting", for example, offers couples lower marginal tax rates the lower the earnings of one partner, reducing incentives for married women's work hours, employment, and career attachment. This policy, along with a lack of public daycare and a half-day public school schedule, clearly perpetuates women's dependence on men and a "marriage career".

East German women did advance economically over their West sisters, in that they were able to enter the traditionally male sphere of lifetime employment and social security regardless of childbearing decisions. This is seen most vividly in women's labour force participation rates: about 90 percent for East and 63 percent for West German women aged 16 through 60 (Datenreport 1992). Women's earnings amounted to an average of 41 percent of household income in the East and 18 percent of household income in the West. This difference is smaller when non-employed women are excluded, but women still earned a greater share of household income in the East than in the West, at 44 percent and 38 percent respectively (DIW 1990a).

About 27 percent of all employed East German women worked part time, but part-time work was difficult to find and was common only among middle-aged women, usually consisting of more than 24 hours per week with full benefits. By comparison, as many as 41 percent of all employed

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¹ This policy was amended in 1986 to apply to all single men and women over 40 in addition to married women, single mothers, and single fathers.

West German women worked part-time, usually less than 24 hours per week and often without benefits (DIW 1990a).

East German women's economic independence was underwritten by policies that ensured a certain level of economic well-being for single mothers. In the 1960s to the 1970s single mothers in East Germany (including those who were divorced and widowed) received longer maternity leave, priority for a nursery spot, and paid leave to care for sick children, while married mothers did not receive these benefits until the 1970s to 1980s. Such support, along with increased provision of state childcare, seems to have resulted in a steady increase in the percentage of out-of-wedlock births from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s. By 1985 about a third of all children were born to unmarried women.

West Germany had no specific policies other than welfare that supported single parents. The corresponding rate of out-of-wedlock births in West Germany by the late 1980s was about 10 percent (Statistical Yearbooks of East Germany (1991) and West Germany (1991)).

The East German state enforced and insured child support payments until a child reached age 16 (MdJ 1988). It was thus possible for single mothers to benefit from part of a male wage without a marriage contract and without the West German problems of lawyers' fees and a 3-year or age 6 cut-off date for state child support insurance (Helwig 1987).

Mothers in East Germany were postponing or neglecting marriage; many out-of-wedlock births took place within non-marital partnerships. The percentage of parents without partners was also higher in East than in West Germany, at about 18 percent of all East German families with children and 13 percent of all West German families with children. Single fathers comprised 4 percent of all unmarried parents in East Germany and 13 percent in West Germany (Winkler 1990a, Diakonisches Werk 1989, Datenreport 1992). In brief, many East German women who weighed the benefits of marriage against those of nonmarriage decided that the security of a marriage contract did not outweigh the incentives to postpone marriage or to give birth outside of any long-term partnership.

The high childrearing subsidies, along with employment security, also made it easier to end unstable relationships or marriages. Inability to reconcile conflicts over the division of household work was commonly given as the reason for divorce in East Germany (Winkler 1990a).

England and Kilbourne (1990) make use of Hirschman's (1970) "exit, voice, or loyalty" framework to analyze partners' choices in a relationship. According to their analysis, since the 1950s, women's rising incomes have allowed them the option to bargain harder for what they want in marriage. Higher divorce rates over the last few decades, along with the "anomaly" that women continue to be responsible for most household work despite their increased employment, suggest that women may be using their gains in

bargaining power to opt for "exit," rather than, or in addition to, "voice." Viewing East German trends within this framework suggests that the combination of increased female power and male inflexibility with regard to household labour (in part policy-related) may have been one driving force behind the growing East German trend toward "exit" from marriage.

The Division of Household Work

I turn now to an investigation of household work in East and West Germany, using the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP). The East German data which follow are from 1990, just before the currency union, while the West German data are from 1989. Data on foreigners are excluded from this analysis of the gender division of labour because non-German households would be subject to some additional and countervailing cultural and economic influences. Household work is defined here to include shopping, housework, childcare, gardening, and household and auto repairs.

The GSOEP is the only data set that is comparable for East and West Germany prior to reunification. However, the data are collected using a simple recall, rather than a diary, method, and time use data collected is thus inexact. The GSOEP time use variables also frequently represent time that was not devoted to one activity exclusively, so that a sum of the variables representing hours absorbed in the above household tasks substantially inflates the actual time taken up by these activities. Childcare is the activity that most frequently overlaps with other household work. Due to the overlapping of different aspects of household work, it is necessary to use the category of "volume of household work," a term reflecting both abundance of household chores and magnitude of time involved in each task. This is constructed by summing the variables representing time absorbed in the various component tasks of household work. Although the resulting volume is noted in hours, it is not to be viewed as the actual time devoted to household work.

Labour force work is not likely to overlap with other activities, because it is measured by just one variable, rather than separated into its component tasks. The volume of labour force work is thus biased downwards, relative to the volume of household work. However, since the GSOEP data for East and West Germany were collected in the same way in both countries, biases are similar for both countries. The use of these data for comparison therefore remains valid.

Due to the collection method for these time use variables in the GSOEP, the standard deviations of the descriptive statistics given below are very high. Thus no differences in means are statistically significant. However, a brief summary of certain trends apparent in these averages reveals a systematic trend consistent with these two countries' different childcare institutions.

Table 1

The Volume of Household Work in Hours per Week for East and West German Men and Women in Couples
includes overlapping tasks^{a)}

| | Men | | Women | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | East | West | East | West |
| All Couples | 35.0 (21.5) | 21.5 (18.3) | 54.0 (29.4) | 53.2 (24.7) |
| Woman Employed \geq 35 Hrs/Wk | 34.8 (19.8) | 20.0 (17.1) | 47.8 (22.6) | 28.9 (19.9) |
| Without Kids | 27.2 (15.9) | 17.2 (12.6) | 36.6 (17.2) | 23.8 (12.6) |
| With Kids | 41.5 (20.5) | 32.1 (26.2) | 57.6 (22.2) | 51.4 (28.8) |

^{a)} Standard deviation is in parentheses.
Source: German Socio-Economic Panel for East Germany in 1990 and West Germany in 1989.

As can be seen in Table 1, the average weekly volume of household work done by an East German woman was about 54 hours, while that done by an East German man was about 35 hours. Table 2 shows that the average male share of the total volume of household work was 39 percent. The average weekly volume of household work done by a West German woman was about 53 hours, while that done by a West German man was 21 hours, an average male share of 30 percent².

Looking only at households in which women were employed full-time (at least 35 hours per week), male shares of the volume of household work tended to converge in East and West at 41 percent and 39 percent respectively. Further, in households of women employed full-time in which there were no children, the male share of household work was actually greater in the West than in the East, at 44 percent and 41 percent respectively.

However, East Germans in households of two full-time employees with no children at home did an absolutely higher volume of household work, at 27 hours per week for men and 37 for women. West German volumes were 17

hours per week for men and 24 for women. These are households in which men and women did similar amounts of labour force work and in which the difference between state-funded childcare in the East and largely private childcare in the West Germany played no role. There was also less potential for overlapping of household tasks due the absence of children.

The impact of state versus private daycare institutions on men's and women's lives in East and West Germany shows up most clearly when we focus on households with children. Free public childcare eliminated a considerable amount of household work for East German couples with children. Accordingly, in West Germany the volume of men's household work did not keep pace with women's when children were added, while just the opposite was true in the East; the volume of men's domestic work rose at a rate proportional to women's when children were added.

² The male share of total household work was set at .5 for households in which both partners reported doing no household work.

Table 2

Average Male Share of Household Work and of Total Work Done in East and West German Couples^{a)}

| | Male Share of Household Work | | Male Share of Total Work | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|
| | East | West | East | West |
| All Couples | .39 (.15) | .30 (.19) | .45 (.13) | .44 (.15) |
| Woman Employed \geq 35 Hrs/ Wk | .41 (.13) | .39 (.19) | .45 (.09) | .44 (.11) |
| Without Kids | .41 (.14) | .44 (.11) | .44 (.10) | .44 (.11) |
| With Kids | .41 (.12) | .36 (.18) | .45 (.08) | .42 (.09) |

^{a)} Standard deviation is in parentheses.
Source: Socio-Economic Panel for East Germany in 1990 and West Germany in 1989.

This is also because East German mothers usually returned to the labour force after their year of parental leave, while West German mothers more frequently left employment for at least several years.

In households with children in which women were employed at least 35 hours per week the male share of household work rose to 36 percent in the West and 41 percent in the East. But such households were very uncommon in the West. This sample contains only 85 West German households with children in which mothers were employed full-time, or 4 percent of the data set. The sample contains 438 such East German households, or 28 percent of the data set.

Both men and women's labour force hours were longer in East than in West Germany, due to a standard East German work week of about 44 hours. In addition, the average level of housework was higher in the East because a scarcity of consumer goods and technical appliances made shopping and housework more time-consuming. Some of this shopping was done during hours of employment. The following figures on total work are probably biased slightly upward for East Germany due to the greater tendency to shop during working hours there.

As can be seen in Table 3, women's total volume of household and labour force work combined was 15 hours greater in East than in West Germany. The average East German woman's total work volume was 81 hours per week, whereas that of the average West German woman was 66 hours per week. The average East German man's total work volume was 17 hours greater per week than that of the average West German man, about 70 hours and 53 hours respectively.

To summarize, trends we observe when comparing division of household and total work among different groups of families in East and West Germany have much to do with the difference between state-provided childcare in the East and largely private childcare in the West: West German women left the labour force to bear and raise children, as well as for homemaking in general, more often than did East German women. Consequently, West German men performed a lower share of household work than did East German men. Both East and West German men did a larger share of household work when their female partners worked full-time, but, within this group, East German men did more in couples with children because the state took over some of the burden of childcare, while West German men did a greater share of household work in couples without children. Male shares of total work were similar in East and West, except in households with children in which women were employed full-time, where East German men tended to do a slightly greater share.

Bargaining Power and the Male Share of Household Work

Women's bargaining power is defined for this study as the standard of living of women and children outside of a partnership relative to their standard of living within a partnership, or relative to an absolute income level, such as the poverty line. Bargaining power is related to the ability to make credible threats, which requires a fall-back position. A woman's income and education represent her absolute fall-back position, while her earnings relative to her partner's represent her relative fall-back position.

Table 3

Total Volume of Work Hours and Gender Work Gap per Week for East and West German Men and Women
includes overlapping tasks^{a)}, ^{b)}

| | Total Work | | | | Gender Work Gap | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | Men | | Women | | | |
| | East | West | East | West | East | West |
| All Couples | 69.8 (29.9) | 53.4 (24.7) | 80.9 (31.0) | 66.2 (33.9) | 11.1 (31.0) | 12.7 (32.4) |
| Woman Employed ≥ 35 hours per week | 76.6 (25.0) | 56.8 (20.7) | 90.8 (22.5) | 70.7 (20.9) | 14.2 (25.1) | 13.9 (23.7) |
| Without Kids | 67.2 (22.7) | 53.8 (18.4) | 80.4 (17.4)* | 65.4 (13.7) | 13.1 (23.8) | 11.7 (20.0) |
| With Kids | 84.8 (24.0) | 70.1 (24.6) | 99.9 (22.5) | 93.8 (29.4) | 15.1 (26.3) | 23.7 (34.4) |

^{a)} Total work includes housework, shopping, childcare, gardening, repairs, and labour force work. Gender work gap measured as total hours more work done by the woman than by the man per week. — ^{b)} Standard deviation is in parentheses.

Source: Socio-Economic Panel for East Germany in 1990 and West Germany in 1989.

According to neoclassical theory, households allocate domestic work and labour force work according to individuals' different productivities, which are reflected by their wages and are related to individuals' investments in human capital. However, in interpreting time use data it is impossible to differentiate completely between allocation of work based on bargaining power and allocation based on productivities. In fact, time allocation decisions based solely on differences in men's and women's productivities at performing household work and labour force work result in and reproduce bargaining power differentials. While relative wages and educational levels are a measure of productivity differences, these are also a measure of relative power.

As we have seen, women were more often employed and employed for longer hours in East than in West Germany, contributing a larger fraction of household earnings in the East. Women's fall-back position was thus higher, relative to men's, in East than in West Germany. But despite East German women's greater fall-back position and bargaining power, East German men with partners who were employed full-time did only a slightly larger share of household work and total work than similar West German men. In households in which women worked full-time with no children living at home, East German men tended to do a slightly smaller share of household work and total work than similar West German men.

One reason for this apparent contradiction may be that a West German woman's decision to work was influenced to

some extent by her partner's willingness to share household work and to accept her professional commitment. In comparing East and West households of full-time employed women, we may be comparing a large group of East German households with men of average willingness to do domestic work to a more select group of West German households with men of greater willingness. In households without children this self-selection bias would play a relatively minor role, however.

Another possible explanation has to do with the higher burden of total work in the East. We cannot know how West German men would have responded to a higher volume of work, but we can assume that increasing marginal disutility of work sets in at higher work levels. This is true for women as well as men, but gender power imbalances may have resulted in women's "taking up the slack" rather than a more equal division of the extra work in East Germany. It is possible that there is an upper level of household work beyond which men do not respond to women's increasing work loads, or respond at a decreasing rate, given the social conditioning and policies which reinforce this. Thus it may be that East German women's greater bargaining power was absorbed in achieving only a slightly greater male share of household work than the West German male share, due to the absolutely higher volume of total work in the East.

The available data do not shed any light on these alternative explanations but do make it possible to assess the ef-

Table 4

Definition of Variables

| Variable | Definition |
|------------------------------|---|
| Male Share of Household Work | includes housework, childcare, shopping, gardening, household and auto repairs |
| Male Share of Total Work | includes housework plus total work |
| Female Education | female education, levels one through four (below high school, high school, trade school — junior college, university) |
| Male Education | male education, as above |
| Female Relative Wage | ratio of female hourly wage to total wages (female hourly wage plus hourly wage of the male partner) |
| In Female Earning | natural logarithm of female earnings ^{a)} |
| In Male Earnings | natural logarithm of male earnings |
| In Female Non-Wage Income | natural logarithm of female non-wage income |
| In Male Non-Wage Income | natural logarithm of male non-wage income |

a) The use of the natural logarithms of wage and non-wage incomes causes the constants in these estimated equations to incorporate a de facto exchange rate, the ratio of different incomes in East versus West Germany. Average gross monthly income for all East German employees (in East Marks) was 1311 M in 1989. Average gross monthly income in West Germany (in Deutsch Marks) was 3,400 DM for workers and about 4,400 for salaried employees in 1987.

fect of individual bargaining power on the male share of household work in East and West Germany. I turn now to a model designed for this comparison.

A Model of the Division of Household Work

Bargaining power can best be approximated by two components: individual incomes, such as earnings, and institutional assistance. Given a country's institutions, the variations in bargaining power of individuals within each country can be seen to be based primarily on male and female wages, potential wages, earnings, assets, and social assistance. My investigation focusses on how institutions in East and West Germany condition or govern women's effective use of bargaining power.

As proxies for income-related bargaining power, this analysis makes use of the ratio of female hourly wages to total hourly wages (the sum of female wages and those of the spouse or partner); absolute levels of male and female education (representing potential wages); and the natural logarithms of gross female monthly earnings and female non-wage income. Zeros were substituted for the hours, incomes, and wages of women not in the labour force. Gross male monthly earnings and non-wage incomes are included to control for male bargaining power.

All of these variables representing income-related bargaining power may also reflect intrahousehold cooperative behavior based on relative productivities, as noted above. To rule out the possibility that male/female productivity differences are the sole determinant of the division of household work, the same model was estimated twice, regressing two different dependent variables, the male share of household work and the male share of total work, on the same set of independent variables, as defined in Table 4.

There is some degree of simultaneity in these models because income and labour force hours, as well as other variables in the model, are also affected by the dependent variables, male share of household work and male share of total work. These effects are of second order importance however.

As discussed above, theory suggests that bargaining power influences the gender allocation of household work and total work. I hypothesize that increases in women's monthly earnings, their monthly nonwage income, their educational backgrounds, and the ratio of female to total (female plus male) hourly wages result in increased male shares of household work in Model 1 and increased male shares of total work in Model 2.

Variations in individual (income-related) bargaining power should have a greater effect on the male share of household labour in West Germany, because East German family policy explicitly assigned the role of primary parent to women. Also, as discussed above, incomes were only one factor among many accounting for women's high degree of economic independence in the East. In addition, incomes

were not as useful in East as in West Germany, given the shortages of consumer goods. Social networks played a greater role in distributing goods in the East.

Finally, individual incomes should have a similar positive effect on the male share of total work in East and West Germany, because East German gender role assignments did not affect total work itself but only the composition of total work.

Results

I estimated separate equations for male participation in household work for East and West Germany, the key results of which are given in Table 5³. Male shares of household work and total work are affected by female bargaining power. In the West German case this is indicated by positive coefficients on the variables representing woman's wage and nonwage income⁴. In the East German case this is indicated by the positive coefficient on male education⁵.

The coefficient on woman's percent of the couple's total wage rates is not significant for West or for East Germany, and educational level is not significant for West Germany. One interpretation of the lack of significance of relative wages is that women's fall-back position of absolute income is a source of more bargaining power than her (and her children's) standard of living within, relative to outside of, marriage, which is reflected in relative wages. The impact of relative wages also varies considerably according to hours of employment, which would tend to diminish the ef-

³ As a robustness check, cases in which either partner reported a volume of total work exceeding 133 hours per week (about 100 per country) were excluded and the equations were reestimated. The results of these estimations were consistent with those of the original estimations.

⁴ The coefficients on the natural logarithm of female earnings and female nonwage income may be affected by the bias introduced (in Models 1 and 2) by the data collection method: Time absorbed by labour force work is not inflated because employment is not divided into its component tasks, while the variable constructed to represent volume of household work is a sum of the component household tasks. The male share of the volume of total work increases as women's share of labour force work increases. This bias would logically be negative in the case of female earnings, however, because as women's time in the labour force increases, female earnings increases; thus the coefficient would result in an underestimation of the coefficient on this variable. It would be positive in the case of female nonwage income, hence would overestimate the coefficient on the latter, because as women's labour force time increases, nonwage income decreases.

⁵ The coefficient on the logarithm of male monthly nonwage income is positive for West Germany not because of a bargaining power effect (which would be represented by a negative coefficient), and is probably the result of lower hours of employment of the men receiving nonwage income. This variable most frequently represents transfer income, including unemployment insurance, student stipends, state child support insurance, and paid job retraining. The coefficient on the logarithm of male monthly earnings is not significant, probably due to the fact that men's incomes do not vary as much as women's. Because of the lower variance in male incomes, women's ability to augment their fall-back positions is the driving force behind changes in relative bargaining power and the resulting coefficients on income.

Table 5

Key Regression Results (OLS)

| Bargaining Power Proxy Variables | Model 1 Dependent Variable Male Share of Household Work | | Model 2 Dependent Variable Male Share of Total Work | |
|---|--|-------------------|--|-------------------|
| | East | West | East | West |
| Female Education | .0085 (.006) | .0041 (.007) | .0050 (.004) | -.0026 (.002) |
| Male Education | -.0112** (.006) | -.0091 (.006) | -.0155** (.004) | -.0081* (.004) |
| Female Relative Wage | .0309 (.027) | -.0059 (.025) | .0511** (.020) | .0530** (.014) |
| ln of Female Wage Income | .0044 (.005) | .0105** (.003) | -.0069 (.003) | -.0000 (.003) |
| ln of Male Wage Income | -.0013 (.004) | -.0005 (.002) | .0040 (.003) | -.0030 (.002) |
| ln of Female Non-Wage Income | .0012 (.003) | .0055** (.002) | .0022** (.002) | .0046** (.002) |
| ln of Male Non-Wage Income | .0000 (.003) | .0043* (.002) | -.0028 (.002) | -.0026 (.002) |
| R ² | .070 | .194 | .151 | .202 |
| Number of Observations | 1465 | | 2036 | |
| * Significant at 10 percent confidence interval in a two-tailed test. — ** Significant at 5 percent confidence interval in a two-tailed test. | | | | |

fect of this bargaining power variable on the allocation of household work (but not total work). The coefficient on educational level may be insignificant for West Germany due to multicollinearity with earnings and with the female percent of the couple's total hours employed.

Most of the proxy variables for bargaining power were significant for Model 2, upholding the hypothesis that increases in women's bargaining power raise male shares of the volume of total work in East and West Germany.

The effect of individual bargaining power on male shares of household work is greater in West than in East Germany. Although the coefficient on male educational level was significant in the East and not in the West, this is the only proxy for bargaining power which was significant in East Germany. This may be due to a status effect, in addition to or instead of an income-related bargaining power effect, since incomes did not correspond as closely to education in East as in West Germany.

Women's bargaining power affects the male share of total work similarly in both East and West Germany. In this estimation the coefficient on the woman's share of the couple's total wages, was positive, significant, and very similar in East and West: an increase of 10 percentage

points in this variable is associated with an increase of .5 percentage points in the man's share of total work in both countries⁶.

In summary, higher incomes and wages exerted an equalizing effect on men's and women's total workloads in both East and West Germany, and there was little difference in the effect of income related bargaining power between the two countries. The difference in East German women's ability to bargain for greater male participation in household work and their ability to bargain for greater equality of total work supports the claim that East German family policy constrained women's bargaining power in households' allocation of domestic work. East German gender role assignments are also one cause of the difference in R² in Models 1 and 2 for East Germany. The constraints these imposed on women's effective use of bargaining power reduced the relationship between the

⁶ The coefficient on the female share of couples' total wages is not affected by the bias introduced by the fact that time absorbed by labour force work is not inflated by the data collection method while time absorbed in household work is inflated. Households in which women are not employed and thus no wage is earned would increase the intercept but not the slope of the regression.

proxy variables for income-related bargaining power and the male share of household work (Model 1).

Model 2 helps to illuminate ambiguities in Model 1. The significance of, and the coefficients on, income-related variables in Model 2 indicate that bargaining power affects the distribution of total work among men and women in both countries. Although households may allocate household and labour force work based on members' productivities, such efficiency considerations do not explain differences in shares of total work. In addition, the fact that income-related variables exert influence on male shares of total work in East Germany but do not exert influence on male shares of household work supports the idea that gender role assignments eroded East German women's bargaining power.

Conclusion

Using data from the German Socio-Economic Panel, I have shown empirically that family policy can influence gender divisions of labour. My results indicate that differences in income-related bargaining power influenced ratios of male to female household work slightly in East Germany and more decidedly in West Germany. The lower ef

fectiveness of income-related bargaining power on East German men's shares of household work is very likely the result of the gender role assignments contained in East German family policy. Gendered policies took housework allocation decisions out of the hands of couples who might have responded more creatively to non-gendered policies.

In summary, because East German family policy facilitated women's lifetime employment, the average share of household work for men as a whole was about ten percentage points higher (or 30 percent) in East than in West Germany. West German family policy reinforced a more traditional division of labour in the family through policies that did little to help integrate women's employment and motherhood, much less fathers' employment and parenthood.

But East German women were burdened with more household work and total work than East German men. They were consequently left with less time for income-enhancing labour force work and for leisure. Rather than address this inequality at its source, the household, East German family policy obstructed transformations of gender roles, institutionalizing women's double burden and second class status.

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