# Doing Housework: A Longitudinal Study of Whether People Are "Doing Gender" When They Do Housework*

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# Doing Housework

**ABSTRACT**

Recent evidence finds that the gender gap in time spent on housework between married men and women is larger than the gap between single men and women. Some researchers have interpreted these findings about housework to suggest that individuals act out gender roles, i.e., "do gender" when doing housework in intimate relationships. These findings, however, are based on cross-sectional data. The interpretations, therefore, are weakened by a lack of evidence about how housework behaviors change when people make the actual transition to married life. Using panel data from the 1997-1998 and 1992-1994 National Surveys of Families and Households, I find that household composition, and not marital status, is the best predictor of the amount of housework that people do. I use these findings to specify under what conditions housework is a symbolic activity by which an individual displays particular behaviors in order to reinforce and reconstruct their gender identity.

# Doing Housework

The primary goal of research on household labor has always been to explain why women perform more housework than men. Housework consists of the daily tasks performed to produce goods and services for personal upkeep and household maintenance. Housework would include tasks such as cooking and cleaning. Nevertheless, this definition of housework does not include childcare tasks such as babysitting or activities such as auto maintenance. Some researchers have interpreted the gender gap in housework to suggest that housework is a means by which men and women act out gender roles, that is “do gender.” Most of studies, however, focus only on housework in households with intimate heterosexual partners. This severely limits the original concept of “doing gender.”

The conceptual term, “Doing Gender,” describes the symbolic enactment of behaviors in order to display or affirm one’s gender. When applied to housework, the amount of housework performed is expected to change based on the context of social interactions, as a way of displaying, affirming and maintaining the social expectations of one's

gender identity. Many studies have attempted to provide evidence that men and women are "doing gender" in relation to housework (Fenstermaker Berk 1985; Brines 1994; Coltrane 1989). These studies investigated only married and cohabiting couples. Therefore, their conclusions fail to account for the range of social interactions and contexts in which housework can take place.

Using a nationally representative sample of all household types, South and Spitze (1994) found that married women perform more housework than single women. Conversely, married men perform less housework than single men. Researchers have suggested that these findings confirm the notion that people are more likely to act out gendered behaviors, “do gender”, when married. This conclusion, however, can not be supported by the cross-sectional data used to generate the findings. Cross-sectional data fails to control for whether the differences in housework might have proceeded marital status. Therefore, we do not know whether women who were married did more housework before they were married than women who remained single.

Using follow-up interviews (performed six years later) with the same respondents that South and Spitze investigated, I will test whether men and women in marriage

are more likely to use housework as an activity by which they could “do gender.” In addition, I consider other household composition changes in order to specify the conditions under which the process of “doing gender” operates in housework. My specific research question is how do changes in marital status and household composition affect changes in the time that an individual spends doing housework.

I have organized the paper as follows. First, I review previous research on why women perform more housework than men, and summarize the expected results based on existing explanations. Next in the data and methods section, I describe the sample and the particular advantages that this longitudinal approach offers over previous cross-sectional designs. In the findings section, I describe how changes in marital status and household composition influences the amount of housework that an individual does. I also investigate how other sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., income, labor force participation, etc.) influence changes in the time a person spends doing housework. In the discussion section, I summarize my finding that change in household composition and not marital status is the primary predictor of changes in a person’s housework hours. Finally

in the conclusion, I discuss how these findings can be used to inform future research and refine the "doing gender" perspective.

## DOING GENDER: LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

“Doing gender” is the current dominant perspective in explaining the gender gap in housework. The perspective is adapted from West and Zimmerman’s (1987) definition of gender as “a routine accomplishment embedded in everyday action. An activity of managing situated contact in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one’s sex category” (p. 125, 127). The process of displaying and affirming gender identity serves to reinforce or recreate the gender identity of the actors in a social interaction. In the study of household labor, the "doing gender" perspective suggests that housework is a symbolic enactments of gender relations. Specifically, housework involves attitudes and behaviors that are appropriate for one's sex category. Moreover, these behaviors, and hence housework itself, serves to reinforce or reconstruct a person's gender identity.

**Subordination-Domination.** Berk (1985) explained the gender gap in housework by suggesting that married couples act out behaviors symbolic of subordination and domination through housework performance and avoidance. This hypothesis recommends that one should expect men entering marriage to decrease their housework as a display and affirmation of domination. Consequently, men would increase their housework after exiting a marriage. Conversely, women would decrease their housework after getting married and increase their housework after exiting a marriage as a display of subordination.

**Femininity-Masculinity.** Brines (1994) explained the gender gap in housework by suggesting that married couples act out behaviors symbolic of femininity and masculinity through housework performance and avoidance. Brines found that husbands who become more economically dependent on their wives performed less housework as away to affirm their fragile masculinity.

Femininity and masculinity are characteristics that easily extend beyond marriage to households where issues of subordination-domination are unlikely to exist. For example, there are a number of circumstances where men and women of the opposite-sex might join a household without

producing a change in relationship status. These circumstances include the additions of parents or roommates. If housework is an activity to display the behaviors of masculinity and femininity, then we should see its influence in opposite-sex households regardless of marital status. Therefore, one would expect that women would increase their housework as a display of femininity when new adult men enter the household. Conversely, one would expect that an increase in adult women would cause men to decrease the amount of time they spend performing housework.

**Nurturing.** Some researchers have suggested that women do housework as an expression of love and nurturing (Ferree 1991; DeVault 1991). These studies would suggest that the gender gap in housework results from women using housework as a means by which to display love and nurturing. If love and nurturing are gendered behaviors associated with women, then one would expect the addition of children to increase a woman's housework. Teens likely contribute enough housework to limit visible increases in women's housework (see review of children's contribution to household labor in Shelton and John 1996). Therefore, one would expect teens not to significantly increase the amount of housework

that women do. Researchers never established the process of housework as a nurturing expression for men. Therefore, one would expect that men's housework would not change as this hypothesis assumes that love and nurturing are behaviors deemed normative for women only.

To summarize, previous research suggests that the display of subordination, domination, femininity, masculinity, or nurturing may serve to reinforce or construct an individual's gender identity. I intend to test whether housework operates as a means by which people display those gendered behaviors.

An alternative to "doing gender" is the resource-based perspective. In the study of household labor, the resource-based (or rational choice) explanations assume that people rationally negotiate between alternative resources to decide how much time to spend performing housework. Therefore, people use resources such as free time, income, and education to negotiate how people divide housework in multiple person households. Typically, these explanations have either failed or produced weak results (see review in Shelton and John 1996; and Milkman and Townsley 1994). Moreover, with the exception of free time, one needs a great leap of faith to extend these explanations to single

person households. Therefore, I will only examine the change in resources such as free time, income, and education as control variables.

## DATA AND METHODS

### Sample

For this study, I use the original and follow-up responses to the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH1 and NSFH2). The surveys asked questions related to household composition, marital and cohabitation history, social background, education history, employment history and income. Of particular interest to this study, the survey also asked questions regarding the time spent on household tasks per week. This data is uniquely suited to my research question because it is the best available longitudinal sample with questions asked of specific housework tasks, marital status, and household composition.

The NSFH1 surveyed a national probability sample of 13,007 adult respondents between 1987 and 1988. The NSFH2 re-interviewed 10,005 respondents between 1992 and 1994 (Sweet, Bumpass, and Call 1988; Sweet and Bumpass 1996). The NSFH1 used a disproportionate stratified sampling

technique to obtain adequate numbers of persons from less common household types. The oversampled respondents represent 25% of the original respondents. I investigated the data unweighted and weighted. Weighted descriptive statistics and analyses were not substantially different from the unweighted data. I present weighted and unweighted descriptive statistics together in Table 1 for purposes of comparison. I describe and analyze all findings throughout this paper using unweighted data. I have not imputed any data, and I have excluded all cases with unrecognizable or missing values in relation to the dependent and independent variables used in these analyses. This process reduced the final sample to 5,660 respondents, of which 3,368 were women and 2,292 were men.

Authors have found that respondents provide higher time estimates to the direct questions of the NSFH than they would to time diaries (Shelton and John 1996). This analysis, however, measures responses from the same person at two points in time. Therefore, any overestimation would be consistent in both periods, thereby becoming irrelevant because I use change between time two and time one as the measures of my dependent variable.

**Dependent Variable**

Respondents completed a form approximating the number of hours per week on the following activities: "preparing meals," "washing dishes and cleaning up after meals," "cleaning house," "shopping for groceries and other household goods," and "washing ironing, and mending." I define these tasks as "female" household tasks. The dependent variable is the hours that a respondent spent performing those "female" household tasks per week in the follow-up interview subtracted from the hours reported in the initial interview.

The survey also inquired about four other household tasks not included in the construction of the dependent variable: "outdoor and other household maintenance tasks," "paying bills and keeping financial records," "automobile maintenance and repair," and "driving other household members to work, to school, or other activities." These tasks have often been classified as "male" or "gender-neutral" (Ferree 1991; South and Spitze 1994). These questions were not included in the construction of the dependent variable because they do not fit the definition of housework.

These four "male" tasks are qualitatively different from the five "female" tasks generally thought of as housework, because they are neither monotonously routine nor time-consuming. Moreover, three of the "male" tasks are not applicable across all households. Auto maintenance and driving will not exist in households without automobiles. In addition, individuals living in rental units likely do not have outdoor and household maintenance chores.

The mean change in housework hours per week using the five "female" housework tasks was -2.23 hours for women with a standard deviation of 24.21 hours and 0.02 hours for men with a standard deviation of 14.51 hours.

Table 1 about Here

**Independent Variables**

The marital status variables provide the empirical test for whether women entering marriages will increase their housework and men will decrease their housework. I categorize nine marital status transitions into mutually exclusive bivariate variables: married in both periods, cohabiting in both periods, single in both periods (not married and not cohabiting), from married to cohabiting,

from married to single, from cohabiting to married, from cohabiting to single, from single to married, from single to cohabiting. In the analyses, I use respondents married at both times as the reference group. The majority of female (40%) and male respondents (54%) are married at both surveyed times. The next largest category of marital status is being single at both surveyed times (39% of women and 24% of men). The fewest respondents reported cohabiting at both periods or being previously married and currently cohabiting. Less than 15 individuals comprise either of those categories. I present the descriptive variables for these and all variables in Table 1.

Household composition variables provide an empirical method to define the conditions under which "doing gender" takes place. The question is whether "doing gender" functions in all or only certain gender relations. These variables also serve to determine the actual amount of additional non-child care housework produced by additional children. The household composition variables measure the change in the number: of boys (younger than 13), girls, male teenagers (age 13 to 17), female teenagers, male adults (age 18 and over), and female adults. As seen in

table 1, there was not much change in household composition among the respondents.

**Control Variables**

I control for a number of potential explanatory variables: change in hours employed per week, change in respondent's total income, variables measuring ideological beliefs at time two, change in years of education, time elapsed between interviews, age at the time of the second survey, change in disability status, change in school enrollment status, and race. Change in the usual number of hours worked per week in the labor force controls for the possibility that people who spend more time outside the home spend less time performing housework (Becker 1981). Change in the total income controls for the possibility that that individuals spend less time performing housework when they earn more money (Goldscheider and Waite 1991).

In this sample, men report a decrease in employment hours per week of one hour and 45 minutes with an income increase of nearly $9,870. Women report almost no change in employed hours in the labor force and their total income increased by only $5,770. Despite working fewer hours, men's incomes are increasing faster than women's incomes are. The results

here are fascinating evidence of an increasing wage gap between men and women (worthy of a paper in itself).

Variables measuring beliefs about the role of women in families and households control for the possibility that the gender gap reflects gender ideology (and not gender identity behaviors). The gender ideology variables consist of three separate responses to a question asked during both interviews. I use the responses to the second survey in the analyses, as there was virtually no noticeable change between the two interviews for respondents. On a 1-5 scale, ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree,” respondents were asked how much they agreed with the following three items: "It is much better for everyone if the man earns the main living and the woman takes care of the home and family," "Preschool children are likely to suffer if their mother is employed," and "mothers who work full-time when the youngest child is under age five". For this analysis, responses were re-scored such that higher values on each response indicate traditional (patriarchal) ideologies. Men and women both provided similar neutral responses.

Change in the years of education controls for the possibility that more educated men in heterosexual

relationships spend more time performing housework than less educated men do (Huber and Spitze 1983). On average, men (51 days) and women (58 days) experienced slight increases in their education.

The variables time elapsed between surveys and age at time two are attempts to control for whether changes in housework are associated with age and changes in age. Both men and women were typically re-interviewed five years and ten months later. The average male respondent was 45 years old and the average female respondent was approaching 47 years of age.

Change in disability status measures whether the respondent noted a physical or mental condition that limits their ability to day-to-day tasks in any way. I measure transitions in disability through four mutually exclusive bivariate variables: never disabled, became disabled, overcame disability, and always (remained) disabled. Most respondents, 80% of women and 85% of men, were never disabled.

Change in school enrollment measures whether the respondent is or was attending school during the survey periods. This variable attempts to control for the possibility that students have time limitations similar to

employed workers, despite not having recorded employed hours in the labor force. I measure transitions in school enrollment through four mutually exclusive bivariate variables: never in school, entry into school (enrolled at time two), exit from school (enrolled at time one not and not time two), and always in school (enrolled at both times). Most respondents, 89% of women and 90% of men, were never in school.

Finally, the static variable race is an attempt to control for potential differences between persons of varied ethnic groups (Kamo and Cohen 1998). 76% of women and 82% of men surveyed are White. Black women (17%), Latino women (5%), Black men (11%), and Latino men (5%) comprise the significant remainder of respondents.[1]

**Design Advantages**

Panel data has the advantage over previous studies in its ability to control for multiple threats to internal validity. Previous studies were unable to assess whether their results relate to unmeasured gender role socialization history (Blair and Lichter 1991) or overestimation of housework performed (Shelton and John

1996). Using longitudinal data, I can control for role socialization, childhood housework experiences, respondent overestimation, and other personal characteristics that remain constant over time.

In addition to research design constraints, the bulk of household labor studies have been limited to heterosexual couples. Studies that neglect non-couple households have limited capacity for generalization. Even single people have to cook meals, clean dishes, and do laundry. By including single persons, I can apply my findings to households ranging from adults living alone to those married with children. Moreover, the results are from a national probability sample. Therefore, I can generalize the findings to the entire population of American households.

**Methods**

Table 2 presents four separate OLS regression analyses modeling the effects of various predictors on change in time spent performing housework. Each analysis is modeled separately for male and female respondents. **Model one** includes only the nine bivariate marital status transition

[1] Correlation matrices for these variables are reported separately for men and women in the appendices.

variables. Model one examines whether changes in marital status affects changes in the amount of housework that people do. **Model two** adds the six variables that measure change in female children, male children, female teens, male teens, female adults, and male adults. This model investigates whether changes in household composition, regardless of marital status, influences the amount of housework people perform. **Model three** introduces the control variables: change in hours employed per week, change in respondent's total income, variables measuring ideological beliefs at time two, change in years of education, time elapsed between interviews, age at the time of the second survey, change in disability status, change in school enrollment status, and race.

**Model four** controls for hours employed at time one, annual total income at time one, and household composition at time one. I generated the final model to determine whether change in the time spent on housework differs depending on the initial value of the independent variables. Holding all things constant, if a childless household adds a child, then one would expect a different change in time spent on housework than if the household originally had ten children and added one. This is a reasonable assumption considering

there are diminishing marginal returns for housework and a limit to how much housework a person can do.

Table 2 about here

**FINDINGS**

Model one demonstrates how changes in marital status influence changes in household labor. Women entering marriage increased their housework by 3 hours and 41 minutes per week. Women exiting marriage decrease their housework 6 hours and 20 minutes. After marrying, men decreased their housework by 2 hours and 40 minutes. Men leaving a marriage increased their housework by 3 hours and 50 minutes. The other transition statuses did not provide results statistically significant at the conventional .05 level. The lack of results for cohabiting people suggests that men and women are not "doing gender" when cohabiting. In other words, cohabiting people are not using housework as an activity in which to display gendered behaviors for the sake of constructing or reinforcing their gender identity. However, there is some initial evidence of men and women "doing gender" when they marry. These initial

findings are only tentative as three of the four transitions lose significance in model two.

Model two adds variables that measure change in household composition. The only marital status transition situation that remains statistically significant is women exiting marriage who decrease their housework 5 hours and 47 minutes. Therefore, change in marital status no longer influences changes in household labor for men.

Household composition has a substantial impact on women's housework performance. Women increase their housework by 3 hours and 30 minutes with each additional female child. The addition of a male child increases women's housework by 3 hours and 7 minutes. The final significant household composition change on women is a decrease in housework by 2 hours and 22 minutes with each additional female adult. Changes in the number of female teens, male teens, or male adults have no effect on changes in women's housework.

Conversely, household composition has little impact on men's housework. Men decrease their housework by 3 hours and 5 minutes when a female adult joins his household. Changes in the number of children, teens, or male adults have no effect on changes in men's housework.

Model two is a substantial improvement over model one in both the proportion of variance explained ($R^2$) and the ratios of variance (F-Statistic). Therefore, household composition has a greater impact than marital status transition on changes in household labor.

To summarize the findings from model two, women increase housework as children join the household and decrease housework as other female adults join the household. Moreover, women decrease housework after exiting marriages. Changes in marital status have no effect on men. Change in household composition influences men's housework only when any additional woman joins his household. Men decrease their housework performance in the presence of each additional woman. Despite changes in the coefficient size, the statistically significant findings in model two remain significant throughout the remaining models.

Model three adds the control variables with little disruption of the effects found in model two. Women exiting marriage decrease their housework 5 hours and 4 minutes. Women increase their housework by 3 hours with each additional female child and 2 hours and 40 minutes with each addition male child. Finally, each additional female adult reduces housework for women by 2 hours and 23 minutes

and for men by 3 hours and 3 minutes. Changes in hours employed in the paid labor force is the only control variable with statistically significant results. These results, however, are not substantial. Women decrease their housework by 9 minutes (and men decrease their housework by only 2 minutes) with each increase of one employed hour in the labor force.

Model three is a substantial improvement over model two in the $R^2$. This means that model three is a better predictor of the value of the change in housework hours. The F-Statistics, however, has decreased. Therefore, the control variables do not influence changes in household labor as much as household composition and marital status transition combined.

Model four adds the control variables along with the value of all non-static variables at time one. This model does not substantially change the general findings formed in model two. Women exiting marriage decrease their housework 4 hours and 20 minutes. Women increase their housework by 2 hours and 6 minutes with each additional female child and 2 hours and 37 minutes with each addition male child. Finally, each additional female adult reduces housework for women by 1 hour and 25 minutes and for men by 2 hours and

31 minutes. All of those findings, with the exception of additional adult women on female respondent's housework, remain statistically significant in model four as they were in model two. Changes in hours employed produce statistically significant, but unsubstantial, results. Women decrease their housework by 8 minutes (and men decrease their housework by only 2 minutes) with each increase of one employed hour in the labor force.

Model four also reveals that the number of female children (for both sexes) and male teens (for women only) at time one have significant effects on the change in household labor. I interpret these results by considering the regression equation: Dy = a + bDx + cXt1 + e. "Dy" is the change in the hours of housework. My regression coefficient constant is a. The other regression coefficients are "b" and "c". Using female children as an example, "Dx" is the change in number of female children. "Xt1" is the value of the number of female children at time one. The error term, "e", includes unmeasured factors such as standards of cleanliness and housework preferences. I expect Dy (housework hours) to increase as Dx increases (number of female children), therefore I would also expect Xt1 (the number of female children at time one) to have a negative

sign. In other words, the more children one has at T1 the less Dy (housework hours) changes at any given value of X at t1. Each of the statistically significant time one values has negative coefficients, which support the expectations of diminishing marginal returns.

Model four is a substantial improvement over model two and model three in the $R^2$. This means that of all the models analyzed, model four best predicts the value of the change in housework hours. The F-Statistics, however, has decreased. Therefore, the variables measuring values at the first survey time do not influence changes in household labor as much as the model two combination of changes in household composition and changes in marital status.

**Discussion**

In this section, I will summarize the findings with respect to the hypotheses generated earlier in the review section. According to the subordination-domination hypothesis, we would expect women entering a marital or cohabiting union to increase their housework, as a means of displaying subordinate behavior deemed normative for the gender role of wife or female partner. Conversely, men should decrease housework as a display of domination when

entering unions. The findings, however, demonstrate that entering and exiting marriage or cohabitation has little influence on housework. Marital status change affected housework only for women exiting marriages, who subsequently decreased their housework. These findings suggest that housework is not an activity by which individuals display subordinate or domineering behavior to reinforce or reconstruct gender identity.

Based on the femininity-masculinity hypothesis, we would expect women to increase their housework to display and affirm their femininity in the presence of other men regardless of relationship status. Conversely, men should decrease housework as a display of masculinity in the presence of all other women. I find, however, that the addition of male adults produces no changes in women's housework. Interestingly, men's housework indeed did indeed decrease when any woman joined the household. These findings suggest that housework is not an activity by which women display or affirm their femininity. On the other hand, men’s avoidance of housework could be a display or affirmation of masculinity to reinforce or reconstruct their gender identity.

One could extend the femininity-masculinity hypothesis beyond opposite-sex interactions to same-sex interactions. This is a condition worth examining, because there are situations, such as athletic competition, where there is a great display of masculinity by men toward other men. Examining the femininity-masculinity hypothesis in same-sex social interactions, we would expect women to increase their housework to display and affirm their femininity in the presence of other women. Conversely, men should decrease their housework around other men. The findings, however, are that women decrease their housework in the presence of other women. Moreover, other men joining the household did not influence changes in men's housework. Therefore in relation to housework, the femininity-masculinity hypothesis does not extend beyond opposite-sex interactions. Moreover, the findings herein only provide support for men’s avoidance of housework around other women as a means by which gender may be socially constructed.

The nurturing hypothesis predicts women to increase their housework in the presence of children and partners as a display of love and nurturing. Moreover, the process of housework as a nurturing expression for men had never been suggested. Therefore, men’s housework should not change in

the presence of children and partners, as this hypothesis assumes that love and nurturing are behaviors deemed normative for women only. Women, in fact, did increase their housework in the presence of children. Although women did not increase their housework upon entering marriage, they did decrease their housework upon exiting marriage. These findings suggest that housework may be an activity by which people display nurturing behavior as a means to reinforce or reconstruct gender identity.

## CONCLUSION

I believe that previous studies advancing the “doing-gender” perspective were unable to provide convincing evidence of the social construction of gender in housework. These studies were unable to provide convincing causal arguments due to limitations of cross-sectional data. Other studies were unable to provide generalizable results because their sample only included marital or cohabiting households.

Using panel data from a national probability sample, I have demonstrated that there is evidence for "doing gender" under certain conditions. Women increase housework as

children join the household and decrease housework as other female adults join the household. Men decrease their housework performance in the presence of each additional woman. Finally, women decrease housework after exiting marriages. As stated in the discussion section, these findings do not provide any evidence for the notion that housework is a display of subordination or femininity among women. There is also no evidence that housework is a display of domination among men.

My findings, however, do support the notion that housework is a symbolic social act of masculinity among men and nurturing among women. Moreover as discussed in the review section, these symbolic social acts serve to reinforce or reconstruct gender identity for men and women. I would hesitate to extend my results beyond housework as a symbolic enactment of gender relations. The conditions under which "doing gender" takes place for housework are likely different than those for other activities suggested to construct and reproduce gender and gender differences.

**Directions for Future Research**

There remain alternative explanations to previous (and current findings) on gender differences in housework that

have yet to be investigated. Could women and men have different standards of what is necessary housework? Perhaps women prefer things to be cleaner and more orderly than men do. Perhaps men are more likely to use paper plates or microwave food, whereas women prefer the aesthetics of fine dishes, the taste of gourmet meals, and or the challenge of a culinary creation. Are women more likely to be taught housework skills (home economics)? Rarely do the available data sets, this one included, ask questions related to the house and household management. What is the size of living space? Are the floors carpeted or hardwood? Under what circumstances do men and women choose to hire a housekeeper?

I believe that this study can be an example or a motivation for researchers of household labor and gender. Future research on housework should use a longitudinal approach to address questions of standards, tastes, housework education, and household management. Future research on gender should refine concepts to address not only the lives of women and wives, but also of single men and husbands.

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**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics for Changes in Hours Spent on Housework Per Week and for Explanatory Variables, by Gender: NSFH data, Wave 1 – 1987 to 1988, Wave 2 – 1992-1993

| standard deviations in parenthesis | Unweighted | | | | Weighted | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Women | | Men | | Women | | Men | |
| **Change in housework hours per week** | -2.31 | (30.79) | -0.41 | (23.15) | -1.74 | (29.76) | -0.22 | (23.72) |
| **Housework hours per week T1** | 37.31 | (29.59) | 21.53 | (22.74) | 36.31 | (27.54) | 20.63 | (23.85) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Change in fem-housework hours per week** | -2.23 | (24.21) | 0.02 | (14.51) | -1.98 | (24.00) | 0.47 | (14.09) |
| **Fem-housework hours per week T1** | 30.91 | (23.18) | 12.00 | (14.51) | 30.45 | (22.42) | 10.97 | (14.47) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Marital status transition** (Nine Transition Categories) | | | | | | | | |
| Married at time 1 and time 2 | 0.40 | (0.49) | 0.54 | (0.50) | 0.49 | (0.50) | 0.59 | (0.49) |
| Cohabiting at time 1 and time 2 | 0.00 | (0.04) | 0.00 | (0.06) | 0.00 | (0.05) | 0.00 | (0.05) |
| Nonunion at time 1 and time 2 | 0.39 | (0.49) | 0.24 | (0.43) | 0.31 | (0.46) | 0.22 | (0.41) |
| From married to cohabiting | 0.00 | (0.05) | 0.00 | (0.02) | 0.00 | (0.04) | 0.00 | (0.02) |
| From married to nonunion | 0.06 | (0.25) | 0.07 | (0.25) | 0.07 | (0.26) | 0.06 | (0.24) |
| From cohabiting to married | 0.02 | (0.15) | 0.03 | (0.16) | 0.02 | (0.13) | 0.02 | (0.13) |
| From cohabiting to nonunion | 0.02 | (0.16) | 0.03 | (0.17) | 0.02 | (0.15) | 0.02 | (0.14) |
| From nonunion to married | 0.09 | (0.29) | 0.10 | (0.29) | 0.08 | (0.26) | 0.09 | (0.29) |
| From nonunion to cohabiting | 0.01 | (0.08) | 0.00 | (0.04) | 0.00 | (0.06) | 0.00 | (0.04) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Change in hours employed per week** | 0.02 | (22.48) | -1.76 | (23.64) | 0.05 | (22.12) | -1.68 | (24.18) |
| **Hours employed per week at T1** | 22.40 | (21.84) | 36.96 | (22.80) | 21.53 | (21.52) | 36.11 | (22.96) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Change in total income (1/1000)** | 5.77 | (15.76) | 9.87 | (32.42) | 6.12 | (15.85) | 9.96 | (34.03) |
| **Total income (1/1000) at T1** | 12.67 | (12.03) | 26.24 | (26.92) | 12.01 | (11.96) | 27.57 | (28.12) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Household size** | | | | | | | | |
| Change in no. of female children | -0.02 | (0.65) | 0.03 | (0.67) | -0.02 | (0.63) | 0.00 | (0.67) |
| No. of female children at T1 | 0.37 | (0.70) | 0.30 | (0.61) | 0.33 | (0.67) | 0.29 | (0.62) |
| Change in no. of male children | 0.00 | (0.65) | 0.01 | (0.64) | 0.00 | (0.63) | -0.04 | (0.62) |
| No. of male children at T1 | 0.37 | (0.69) | 0.31 | (0.63) | 0.34 | (0.66) | 0.31 | (0.64) |
| Change in no. of female teens | 0.00 | (0.46) | 0.01 | (0.40) | -0.02 | (0.45) | 0.00 | (0.41) |
| No. of female teens at T1 | 0.10 | (0.34) | 0.07 | (0.27) | 0.10 | (0.34) | 0.08 | (0.28) |
| Change in no. of male teens | 0.01 | (0.47) | 0.02 | (0.41) | 0.01 | (0.44) | 0.02 | (0.43) |
| No. of male teens at T1 | 0.10 | (0.33) | 0.07 | (0.27) | 0.08 | (0.31) | 0.08 | (0.29) |
| Change in no. of female adults | 0.02 | (0.56) | 0.06 | (0.63) | -0.08 | (0.61) | -0.01 | (0.67) |
| No. of female adults at T1 | 0.16 | (0.45) | 0.81 | (0.57) | 0.28 | (0.58) | 0.96 | (0.61) |
| Change in no. of male adults | 0.09 | (0.64) | -0.02 | (0.55) | -0.03 | (0.66) | -0.10 | (0.66) |
| No. of male adults at T1 | 0.63 | (0.62) | 0.19 | (0.49) | 0.84 | (0.65) | 0.32 | (0.62) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Patriarchal ideology** | | | | | | | | |
| Disagree men earn women home | 3.06 | (1.29) | 3.12 | (1.18) | 3.11 | (1.29) | 3.14 | (1.19) |
| Working mom not bad for prek | 3.08 | (1.12) | 3.39 | (1.03) | 3.13 | (1.11) | 3.40 | (1.05) |
| Full-time working mom child <5 ok | 2.82 | (1.04) | 3.04 | (1.02) | 2.90 | (1.05) | 3.09 | (1.01) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Change in years of education** | 0.16 | (0.60) | 0.14 | (0.60) | 0.19 | (0.67) | 0.17 | (0.67) |
| **Years of education at T1** | 12.60 | (2.72) | 13.11 | (3.04) | 12.73 | (2.64) | 13.22 | (2.94) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Time between interviews** | 5.79 | (0.49) | 5.81 | (0.51) | 5.79 | (0.49) | 5.80 | (0.50) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Respondent age (at time two)** | 46.71 | (15.85) | 44.95 | (14.25) | 47.52 | (16.33) | 45.79 | (14.99) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Disability status** | | | | | | | | |
| Never disabled | 0.80 | (0.40) | 0.85 | (0.35) | 0.80 | (0.40) | 0.86 | (0.35) |
| Became disabled | 0.11 | (0.31) | 0.07 | (0.26) | 0.11 | (0.31) | 0.07 | (0.25) |
| Overcame disability | 0.02 | (0.14) | 0.01 | (0.12) | 0.02 | (0.13) | 0.01 | (0.12) |
| Always disabled | 0.03 | (0.17) | 0.02 | (0.13) | 0.03 | (0.17) | 0.01 | (0.12) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **School enrollment status** | | | | | | | | |
| Never in school | 0.89 | (0.31) | 0.90 | (0.29) | 0.88 | (0.32) | 0.89 | (0.31) |
| Entry into school | 0.05 | (0.21) | 0.03 | (0.17) | 0.04 | (0.21) | 0.03 | (0.17) |
| Exit from school | 0.05 | (0.23) | 0.05 | (0.23) | 0.06 | (0.24) | 0.07 | (0.25) |
| Always in school | 0.01 | (0.10) | 0.01 | (0.10) | 0.01 | (0.12) | 0.01 | (0.10) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Race:** | | | | | | | | |
| White | 0.76 | (0.42) | 0.81 | (0.39) | 0.82 | (0.38) | 0.85 | (0.36) |
| Black | 0.17 | (0.37) | 0.12 | (0.33) | 0.11 | (0.31) | 0.08 | (0.27) |
| Latino | 0.05 | (0.22) | 0.05 | (0.23) | 0.05 | (0.22) | 0.06 | (0.24) |
| Asian | 0.01 | (0.10) | 0.01 | (0.09) | 0.01 | (0.12) | 0.01 | (0.09) |
| Other | 0.00 | (0.06) | 0.00 | (0.06) | 0.00 | (0.06) | 0.00 | (0.06) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Number of Cases | 3368 | | 2292 | | 2746 | | 2739 | |

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

**Table 2.** OLS Coefficients for Regression of Changes in Hours Spent on Housework Per Week on Assorted Explanatory Variables, by Gender: NSFH data, Wave 1 – 1987 to 1988, Wave 2 – 1992-1993

| | Women | | | | | | | | Men | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Model One | | Model Two | | Model Three | | Model Four | | Model One | | Model Two | | Model Three | | Model Four | |
| **Constant** | -2.48 *** | (0.66) | -2.50 *** | (0.66) | -2.68 | (5.27) | -4.57 | (6.56) | 0.36 | (0.41) | 0.51 | (0.41) | 1.96 | (3.87) | 4.44 | (4.74) |
| **Marital status transition** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Married at time 1 and time 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cohabiting at time 1 and time 2 | 15.64 | (9.88) | 13.94 | (9.81) | 16.35 | (9.74) | 16.35 | (9.80) | 6.49 | (5.48) | 5.95 | (5.46) | 6.28 | (5.48) | 5.60 | (5.51) |
| Nonunion at time 1 and time 2 | 0.53 | (0.94) | 1.04 | (0.93) | 1.02 | (1.00) | 1.90 | (1.57) | -1.30 | (0.74) | -1.35 | (0.74) | -1.36 | (0.76) | -0.82 | (1.15) |
| From married to cohabiting | -0.24 | (9.15) | -1.53 | (9.07) | -1.19 | (9.00) | -0.03 | (9.01) | 1.64 | (14.46) | 3.49 | (14.41) | 2.75 | (14.43) | 2.13 | (14.44) |
| From married to nonunion | -6.33 *** | (1.76) | -5.78 ** | (1.86) | -5.07 ** | (1.86) | -4.40 * | (1.95) | 3.84 ** | (1.24) | 2.38 | (1.30) | 2.32 | (1.32) | 2.65 | (1.37) |
| From cohabiting to married | 1.37 | (2.90) | 0.36 | (2.88) | -0.02 | (2.89) | -0.32 | (2.91) | -1.91 | (1.88) | -2.24 | (1.88) | -2.63 | (1.91) | -2.75 | (1.93) |
| From cohabiting to nonunion | -0.33 | (2.72) | 0.19 | (2.71) | 0.34 | (2.70) | 0.66 | (2.73) | -0.72 | (1.80) | -2.05 | (1.81) | -2.29 | (1.83) | -2.24 | (1.87) |
| From nonunion to married | 3.69 * | (1.54) | 2.37 | (1.70) | 1.85 | (1.71) | 2.24 | (1.86) | -2.66 * | (1.06) | -0.96 | (1.17) | -0.81 | (1.20) | -0.74 | (1.35) |
| From nonunion to cohabiting | 9.31 | (4.97) | 9.37 | (5.00) | 9.10 | (4.98) | 9.81 | (5.04) | -0.11 | (7.24) | 1.03 | (7.22) | 0.97 | (7.26) | 1.58 | (7.32) |
| **Household size** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Change in no. of female children | | | 3.48 *** | (0.68) | 3.01 *** | (0.68) | 2.11 * | (0.82) | | | 0.79 | (0.48) | 0.81 | (0.49) | 0.54 | (0.58) |
| No. of female children at T1 | | | | | | | -2.45 ** | (0.81) | | | | | | | -1.31 * | (0.66) |
| Change in no. of male children | | | 3.13 *** | (0.68) | 2.68 *** | (0.68) | 2.62 ** | (0.81) | | | 0.50 | (0.51) | 0.55 | (0.51) | 0.54 | (0.60) |
| No. of male children at T1 | | | | | | | 1.14 | (0.81) | | | | | | | -0.09 | (0.64) |
| Change in no. of female teens | | | 0.37 | (0.95) | 0.21 | (0.95) | 2.27 | (1.52) | | | -0.70 | (0.79) | -0.65 | (0.79) | 0.89 | (1.13) |
| No. of female teens at T1 | | | | | | | 1.93 | (1.98) | | | | | | | 2.22 | (1.61) |
| Change in no. of male teens | | | 1.10 | (0.94) | 0.90 | (0.93) | -1.31 | (1.50) | | | 0.51 | (0.77) | 0.64 | (0.78) | 0.56 | (1.10) |
| No. of male teens at T1 | | | | | | | -3.99 * | (2.02) | | | | | | | -0.88 | (1.59) |
| Change in no. of female adults | | | -2.37 ** | (0.77) | -2.39 ** | (0.77) | -1.42 | (0.97) | | | -3.08 *** | (0.55) | -3.06 *** | (0.55) | -2.53 *** | (0.70) |
| No. of female adults at T1 | | | | | | | 1.73 | (1.23) | | | | | | | 1.15 | (0.91) |
| Change in no. of male adults | | | 0.40 | (0.79) | 0.61 | (0.78) | 1.44 | (0.96) | | | -0.51 | (0.58) | -0.50 | (0.58) | -0.31 | (0.77) |
| No. of male adults at T1 | | | | | | | 1.36 | (1.24) | | | | | | | 0.15 | (0.92) |
| **Change in hours employed per week** | | | | | -0.15 *** | (0.02) | -0.13 *** | (0.02) | | | | | -0.04 ** | (0.01) | -0.04 * | (0.02) |
| **Hours employed per week at T1** | | | | | | | 0.02 | (0.03) | | | | | | | 0.00 | (0.02) |
| **Change in total income (1/1000)** | | | | | -0.04 | (0.03) | -0.04 | (0.03) | | | | | -0.01 | (0.01) | 0.00 | (0.01) |
| **Total income (1/1000) at T1** | | | | | | | 0.01 | (0.04) | | | | | | | 0.02 | (0.01) |
| **Patriarchal ideology** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disagree men earn women home | | | | | -0.70 | (0.38) | -0.57 | (0.39) | | | | | -0.24 | (0.30) | -0.30 | (0.31) |
| Working mom not bad for prek | | | | | 0.10 | (0.46) | 0.06 | (0.46) | | | | | -0.03 | (0.37) | -0.05 | (0.37) |
| Full-time working mom child <5 ok | | | | | -0.31 | (0.48) | -0.24 | (0.48) | | | | | -0.21 | (0.36) | -0.19 | (0.36) |
| **Change in years of education** | | | | | -0.92 | (0.78) | -0.95 | (0.78) | | | | | 0.25 | (0.62) | 0.22 | (0.62) |
| **Years of education at T1** | | | | | | | 0.03 | (0.18) | | | | | | | -0.23 | (0.12) |
| **Time between interviews** | | | | | 0.57 | (0.84) | 0.60 | (0.84) | | | | | -0.04 | (0.61) | -0.05 | (0.61) |
| **Respondent age (at time two)** | | | | | 0.01 | (0.03) | 0.00 | (0.04) | | | | | 0.01 | (0.02) | -0.01 | (0.03) |
| **Disability status** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Never disabled | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Became disabled | | | | | -0.66 | (1.33) | -0.46 | (1.34) | | | | | -1.98 | (1.20) | -1.95 | (1.21) |
| Overcame disability | | | | | -3.51 | (2.93) | -3.67 | (2.93) | | | | | -0.94 | (2.58) | -1.21 | (2.60) |
| Always disabled | | | | | -0.28 | (2.45) | -0.17 | (2.46) | | | | | 1.46 | (2.42) | 1.09 | (2.45) |
| **School enrollment status** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Never in school | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Entry into school | | | | | -1.99 | (1.98) | -1.70 | (1.98) | | | | | -1.20 | (1.77) | -1.25 | (1.77) |
| Exit from school | | | | | 3.33 | (2.05) | 2.91 | (2.06) | | | | | 0.90 | (1.60) | 1.12 | (1.61) |
| Always in school | | | | | -7.51 | (4.24) | -7.76 | (4.24) | | | | | 2.54 | (3.10) | 2.68 | (3.10) |
| **Race:** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Black | | | | | -0.54 | (1.15) | -0.47 | (1.16) | | | | | -0.20 | (0.95) | -0.47 | (0.97) |
| Latino | | | | | -3.10 | (1.88) | -3.07 | (1.92) | | | | | 0.35 | (1.35) | -0.06 | (1.39) |
| Asian | | | | | 0.84 | (4.05) | 0.42 | (4.06) | | | | | 1.20 | (3.25) | 1.39 | (3.26) |
| Other | | | | | 9.71 | (6.90) | 9.33 | (6.89) | | | | | 2.90 | (4.83) | 2.86 | (4.84) |
| Number of cases | 3368 | | 3368 | | 3368 | | 3368 | | 2292 | | 2292 | | 2292 | | 2292 | |
| R2 | .008 | | .028 | | .052 | | .058 | | .010 | | .027 | | .035 | | .040 | |
| Adjusted R2 | .006 | | .024 | | .043 | | .046 | | .007 | | .022 | | .021 | | .022 | |
| F-Statistic | 3.599 | | 6.903 | | 5.771 | | 4.993 | | 2.992 | | 4.598 | | 2.535 | | 2.279 | |
| Prob. F | .000 | | .000 | | .000 | | .000 | | .000 | | .000 | | .000 | | .000 | |

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (two-tailed tests)

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.