Geist Claudia (Orcid ID: 0000-0003-1901-3429)

Mission Impossible? New Housework Theories for Changing Families

Claudia Geist *University of Utah*

Leah Ruppanner *University of Melbourne*

Theoretical approaches to housework do not reflect contemporary families and gender relations. We evaluate assumptions about gender and families in three dominant explanations and propose theoretical extensions. First, we suggest a work–family fit approach that examines housework and resources at a household level. Second, we propose the diverse capital perspective that extends earnings centered assessments of housework bargaining. Finally, a "doing genders" approach captures how gender shapes housework in nuanced ways. Our study does not focus on the more general issue of power in relationships, nor do we seek to dismantle existing theoretical perspectives or solve all shortcomings of the inherently couple-centered and cissexist heteronormative approach to families that primarily focuses on the United States. Rather, we provide some insight into how these theories can be expanded given the realities of diverse family arrangements, stalled gender revolutions, and shifts and fluidity in gender and sexual identities.

Key Words: Gender relations, household labor, housework, nonmarket work.

This is the author manuscript accepted for publication and has undergone full peer review but has not been through the copyediting, typesetting, pagination and proofreading process, which may lead to differences between this version and the Version of Record. Please cite this article as doi: 10.1111/jftr.12245

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Author Manuscript

Author Manuscript

The study of the division of housework has a long scholarly history as a key dimension of larger time demands, a site of bargaining power within partnerships, and a source of patriarchal domination (Davis & Greenstein, 2013; Hartmann, 1981; Oakley, 1975). Typically, housework refers to "domestic chores," such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, repairs, and maintenance, but also to more amorphous tasks such as running errands or paying bills (Coltrane, 2000). These chores are often further distinguished into routine (e.g., daily and ongoing tasks like dishes) and nonroutine (e.g., episodic chores that can be delayed, like mowing the lawn), with women disproportionately responsible for the routine chores and men the nonroutine ones. Time-use studies have even more fine-grained approaches of what is included and are at times able to account for the fact that people can perform multiple activities at once, or multitasking (Offer & Schneider, 2011; Sullivan & Gershuny, 2013).

Care work, especially child care, is not usually included in discussions of housework because it holds different symbolic value, is seen as more pleasurable and enriching, and is thus more equally shared. Housework and childcare also draw on distinct theoretical arguments and thus should be considered separately (Sullivan, 2013). Thus, our focus here is on housework and not the general concept of care work. We focus on the inadequacy of theoretical approaches that focus on who does what primarily developed in the 1980s and 1990s and thus are not adequate to address the new demands of modern families (Becker, 1981; Berk, 1985; Coverman, 1985; Ferree, 1990; South & Spitze, 1994; West & Zimmerman, 1987).

Notably, the demographic transitions within families—the rise of cohabitation, as well as single-parent, remarried, and multigenerational households—and the shifting racial

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

composition of the United States are not adequately theorized in the existing frameworks, and these frameworks require reconceptualization. The literature on the division of housework is an important component of family research, as it links work, family, and gender. In this article, we critique and extend existing theoretical approaches to housework to more adequately understand this gendered process and speak to debates about stalled gender revolutions and shifts towards gender convergence. Although there is empirical evidence that supports the continued utility of current theoretical frameworks (Davis & Wills, 2014), we argue that in their current form, theoretical approaches of time availability, bargaining, and gender display are insufficient to account for the division of housework in many contemporary families. We first provide an abbreviated discussion of the dominant theories, with a focus on critically evaluating the assumptions about gender and families embedded in these three approaches. Next, we discuss a range of family arrangements that are insufficiently theorized in current approaches, and finally, we propose three extensions to existing theory: (a) a new work–family fit approach that examines the division of labor and resources (both time and financial resources) at a household level (b) the economic, emotional, and relationship capital model to extend earnings-only assessments of housework bargaining, and (c) a "doing genders" approach to more explicitly capture the role of gender in shaping housework patterns in populations previously excluded from this theoretical framework. We do not, and cannot, address the fundamental problem of the couple- and child-centric nature of research on family. Rather, we lay out some of the more ambitious issues that need to be addressed to provide a truly inclusive (and realistic) approach to contemporary families in our discussion. Davis and Greenstein (2013) called for a sharper

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

theoretical focus on power to understand housework. We complement this theoretical innovation by adding a renewed focus on how power is embedded in divergent contemporary family arrangements, paying careful attention to gender, the domestic division of labor, and gender inequality.

Dominant Theoretical Approaches

Time Availability and Its Assumptions

The time-availability perspective identifies the gender distribution of housework as one dimension of an individual's larger time set. Time is a zero-sum game, so time in one domain (here, housework) requires a trade in time in another domain (here, employment) (Coverman, 1985; England & Farkas, 1986; Shelton, 1992). The time-availability perspective is gender neutral in that time is a finite resource for both men and women. This perspective has been used to support a range of scholarship documenting that individuals who have greater employment time demands spend less time in housework, and those with greater childcare demands spend less time in employment (and more time in housework) (Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, & Robinson, 2000; Bianchi, Sayer, Milkie, & Robinson, 2012; Coltrane & Ishii-Kuntz, 1992; Fuwa, 2004; Hook, 2006). In this regard, time availability is structured as rational trades from one domain to another (Coverman, 1985; Spitze & South, 1985).

Although this perspective is well supported in the housework literature, it does not adequately address the growing time demands of families with dual full-time earners and cannot account for multitasking, outsourcing, or the role of nonstandard schedules. Further, the theory does not adequately explain reverse causality, where increases in work demands limit time in domestic pursuits or vice versa. These experiences can have very different

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

mechanisms (large work projects vs. the birth of a child), with important consequences for long-term housework divisions and economic inequality.

Moreover, if only paid work is typically taken into consideration, the time availability approach is at risk of systematically overestimating women's "availability" as women often spend less time in paid work. Time spent on volunteer work (often associated with children's schooling) is not considered as being unavailable for housework and is more likely to be performed by women (see Hook, 2004, for an exception). Thus, women engaged in high levels of unpaid work are not weighed against their total time available, underestimating nondomestic time demands. Time-use studies have made strides toward a more complex approach to time availability and allow for researchers to measure domestic time in distinct domains—unpaid work, commuting, and other activities (Moen, 2003; Bittman & Wajcman, 2000).

Although time availability accounts for the amount of time, it does not incorporate the way housework and employment time are structured by institutional pressures including shifting structures of work (e.g., the rise of nonstandard and shift work) that disproportionately burden poor and racial minority workers. Although nonstandard work hours can have some advantages for some domestic and administrative tasks (e.g., daytime appointments or errands), they can also add an additional burden, for example when meals need to be prepared in advance or when nightshifts or irregular hours are involved (Hewitt, Baxter, & Mieklejohn, 2012).

This issue of temporality and pace is also evident in the time-use measures. Even the most accurate measurement of work time (rather than usual work time) does not account for

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

the flexibility of hours or the location of work. Flexibility of hours, especially in conjunction with working from home, imposes many fewer constraints on the ability to perform housework (e.g., briefly interrupt work to get dinner started) than does employment with an inflexible schedule with a commute. The percentage of Americans working from home has increased from 19% in 2003 to 24% in 2015, with 38% of workers in managerial positions reporting spending some time working from home (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). Work from home allows for multitasking, which changes the way paid work time reduces time available to for household chores. Flexible work is increasingly offered to professional workers (Gornick & Meyers, 2003; Kelly & Moen, 2007; Kelly, Moen, & Tranby, 2011) and to other, less skilled workers in the area of sales (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). The timing, location, and flexibility of work-from-home employees is an increasingly relevant dimension of gendered employment, yet the time-availability perspective is relatively silent on these increasingly important workplace dimensions. What is more, the time-availability perspective does not adequately theorize causality, leaving questions of whether women with high family demands work from home to incorporate domestic and paid work, or whether working from home makes women more vulnerable to increased domestic chores. It is likely that the causal arrows run both ways, but the theory on these questions is absent. With increases in flexible work, these questions are important.

Inflexibility in temporality and space should also be theorized given the disproportionate clustering of poor and minority women in inflexible, poorly resourced jobs. Although the flexible work time provided to professional workers draws women into more housework, the inflexibility of low-skilled jobs, compounded with the inconsistency in work

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

hours, means that families with more work–family stress rely more heavily on children (Gager, Sanchez, & Demaris, 2009), and girls especially have increased responsibilities in low-income families (Dodson & Dickert, 2004). Questions about employment characteristics require more inquiry, as time and place are essential underlying theoretical mechanisms for understanding housework.

The time-availability perspective also fails to account for the extent to which some families are better able to buy out of domestic time. As Americans increasingly report an intensification of work, class-based differences in the ability to outsource housework—such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry—are likely more pernicious (Killewald, 2011). Individuals' ability to free up time through outsourcing depends on their economic resources (Treas & De Ruijter, 2008), which can further exacerbate inequality in housework between rich and poor households (Heisig, 2011). Although current levels of outsourcing are relatively low for routine housework tasks, especially relative to childcare (Killewald, 2011), grocery delivery services, meal-kit options, and robotic vacuums are increasingly popular. Given the rapid changes in the accessibility of these services, it will be interesting to see whether future research continues to find little to no effect of outsourcing on the gender balance of housework or perceived time pressures (Craig & Baxter, 2016). Theoretically, and to a limited extent empirically, time detracted from housework may be invested in other enriching domains such as employment (potential economic benefit) and leisure (potential health benefit) (Sayer, 2005).

Reductions in housework time may also translate into greater childcare investments, as suggested by previous research, compounding intergenerational transmissions of inequality

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

(Sullivan, Gershuny, & Robinson, 2015). These issues underscore class- and race-based differences whereby households mimic broader neoliberal race and class dynamics by employing paid help within the home and through market-based outsourcing products (e.g., prepackaged lunches). To this point, outsourcing demands also capture broader global mechanisms of gendered and racial migration, illuminating patterns of global inequality (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001). Although understanding these time trades is implicit to the time-availability perspective, a detailed understanding of who outsources and how that structures family time is an important theoretical extension, especially in light of growing race and class inequalities.

Bargaining Perspective and Its Assumptions

The bargaining perspective is rooted in rational choice logic and is used to explain the gendered distribution of financial resources within partnerships (Becker, 1981). According to this perspective, each individual brings his or her own economic resources into the partnership, which are then used to bargain out of housework. Income, both aggregated and as a relative share, is shown to structure housework allocations such that partners who hold more financial resources account for a smaller share of the domestic work (Becker, 1981; Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Brines, 1994; Greenstein, 1996). The partner with less financial clout is hypothesized to contribute more housework to "make up" for this deficit through nonfiscal (here, housework) contributions. A key assumption of bargaining theory is that earnings serve as a proxy for power.

Feminist scholars have challenged the bargaining perspective more broadly for its rational choice roots, to identify power, patriarchy, and hegemonic norms as key detriments

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

to women's bargaining power (Ferree, 1990; Lundberg & Pollak, 1993). Although housework research estimates bargaining through detailed income measures (absolute and relative earnings), others highlight the importance of accounting for the diversity in families and family dynamics, employing a range of methodologies to gain a more inclusive perspective on the matter (Allen & Jaramillo-Sierra, 2015). The bargaining perspective's concept of power is very couple-centric and does not fully account for more complex family structures—multiple-generation families or families with coresidential adult children—and their divisions of housework. Those who do not cohabit with a partner are not viewed as having a bargaining counterpart and are excluded from the theoretical perspective. Further, it discounts the other ways in which economic power is minimized, notably through race- and class-based institutional discrimination.

Simply, other dimensions beyond income and patriarchy may structure couples' housework negotiations. When weighing economic vitality, couples are likely considering additional employment dimensions including career trajectories, current workload of each partner, and future work and family aspirations. These tensions may be especially pernicious among dual full-time-earner couples for whom both partners are negotiating domestic and employment demands and among couples at key life course transitions (e.g., birth of a child, retirement) (see Baxter, Hewitt, & Haynes, 2008; Szinovacz, 2000; Yavorsky, Kamp Dush, & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2015).

These underexplored dimensions of couples' housework negotiations may help explain the persistent puzzle that women with higher relative earnings shoulder a larger share of housework. We propose that they may assume this additional work not to protect men's

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

masculinities, as proposed by the gender display perspective (see subsequent section), but rather because they weigh their and their partners' larger career trajectories in dividing housework. Thus, the singular focus on earnings as a source of bargaining power is limited, and it requires more detailed analyses to weigh these alternative arguments.

What is more, less is known about how working in low-status and/or low-resourced jobs structure housework allocations within families as compared to higher-status and/or higher-resourced jobs. Much research has focused on the nonlinearity in the relationship between earnings and women's greater housework contribution at the top end of the income spectrum (Brines, 1994; Schneider, 2011). High-earning women may utilize cultural capital to strengthen bargaining power, a resource not equally available to women in low-status and/or low-resourced jobs. For example, a female lawyer preparing for a case may have more bargaining clout to negotiate out of immediate housework responsibility than does a childcare worker preparing for a holiday celebration. Both have time boundaries and consequences for job quality, yet the status afforded to high-status positions may increase the bargaining power in the domestic sphere. Among couples in which both hold low-resourced and/or low-status jobs (between gender comparison), gender may (or may not) provide an additional resource to reduce housework contributions.

What is more, the exclusive focus on couple-level resource negotiations neglects the tendency of low-income earners to draw on the economic resources of an extended social support network (Cantor, 1979; Henly, Danziger, & Offer, 2005). In this respect, this approach may have distinct theoretical power across class and income gradients. Simply, explanations rooted in bargaining may be less applicable to these groups. Across these two

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

dimensions, job status and resources from extended family networks, the bargaining perspective theory requires revision in the context of modern families.

Another key shortcoming of operationalizing bargaining through income is that it neglects crucial issues of job security and consistency in earnings (i.e., dependence on the availability of shifts, contracts, sales) (Kalleberg, 2009). One partner's higher earnings may not carry as much bargaining weight if they were due to overtime or a bonus, or if there were a history of substantial fluctuation in earnings. A partner whose job is perceived to be at risk or unstable may not be able to compromise work hours in an effort to preserve employment, and an occupation's status may be a bargaining chip above and beyond earnings. In fact, in times of employment uncertainty (e.g., corporations downsizing, economic recession), workers in unstable jobs may invest more time at work to signal organizational devotion (Anger, 2008; Engellandt & Riphahn, 2005), with the other partner potentially having to intensify domestic work. Further, couples likely weigh additional nonearnings benefits that accompany employment, such as retirement benefits and especially health plans that may also cover multiple family members, which may make some jobs more valuable than they may appear based on earnings alone. Nonfiscal employment resources may be even more important among low-income families who rely more heavily on pooled resources to support the family (e.g., health care).

Finally, the bargaining perspective's singular focus on economic power neglects the fact that, for many couples, power is derived from multiple sources (Davis & Greenstein, 2013; Duncombe & Marsden, 1995; Harvey, Beckman, Browner, & Sherman, 2002; Van de Rijt & Macy, 2006). We propose an expansion that includes intimacy, emotions (protecting

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

one's own or that of the partner), and relationship history (e.g., knowledge of the other partner and previous conflicts). This theoretical focus on earnings is a consequence of the economic legacy of the bargaining perspective, developed along an economic model of utility (Becker, 1981). Expanding capital to include couples' diverse types of resources more accurately captures their negotiation process. We theorize emotional and relationship capital as important dimensions explaining partners' housework allocations.

Gender Display and Its Assumptions

The gender-display perspective identifies gender as an orienting status for housework divisions. Anchored in separate spheres and ideologies, gender display posits that women remain disproportionately responsible for the domestic work (housework and childcare) solely because of their gender (not economic resources or time availability). The idea of "doing gender" (West & Zimmerman, 1987) conceptualizes certain actions (or inactions) as a way in which individuals actively affirm their identity as women and men (South & Spitze, 1994). Deutsch (2007) has called for posing the question of whether or when gender becomes less relevant and widening the scope of research to also include the active "undoing" of gender.

Another formulation of the doing-gender approach focuses on the reduction of gender deviance rather than the affirmation of gender (Bittman, England, Sayer, Folbre, & Matheson, 2003; Gupta, 2007; Sullivan, 2011), but we refer to both of these as gender display. The gender display approach also takes into account that individuals are socialized into heteronormative, cisgender roles, which shapes their expectations of how much and what kind of domestic labor they expect to perform. Part of this perspective also accounts for

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

gender as a master status, with norms of domesticity rooted within the status (Robinson & Milkie, 1998). In addition, gender display accounts for housework as a performance (or nonperformances), tied to cultural scripts of femininity and masculinity (Goffman, 1959; Thébaud, 2010). These aspects of gender display explain why women, even when they are single, spend more time on housework than their male counterparts (Sayer 2005; South & Spitze, 1994, West & Zimmerman, 1987), and that gender gap further expands when women enter heterosexual marriage (Gupta, 1999; Shelton & John, 1993). Although there is some evidence that resources, rather than gender display, explain changes in housework patterns in couples over time (Sullivan & Gershuny, 2013), the notion that internalized gender roles are displayed through actions and interactions leaves little room for active resistance (Butler, 2011).

We do not claim that gender ideologies do not matter; in fact, attitudes related to gender often stand in as a measure of broader ideology and, implicitly, proneness to "do" gender. Rather, we argue that most questions about gender ideologies as well as the gender display perspective rely on the assumption that heteronormative gender roles are internalized in a somewhat uniform way across groups of individuals. Direct measures of gender inequality within countries have remained contested (see discussion about the gender-related development index, the gender empowerment measure in Dijkstra & Hanmer, 2000, and Klasen, 2000).

Measuring predominant ideologies within society is even more challenging. Gender relations are based on assumed universal heterosexuality and ideals for appropriate behavior. Thus, ideas about men and women are assumed to be consistent within societies, and

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

countries' averages in attitudes towards women's employment or role in the household are used as an indicator of shared gender ideology. Beyond questions about the acceptability of homosexuality and attitudes toward same-sex marriage or gays and lesbians in different contexts (e.g., Powell, Bolzendahl, Geist, & Steelman, 2010), there is an emergent body of literature that links gender ideologies to housework patterns in nonheterosexual couples (Goldberg, 2013; Perlesz et al., 2010). Even less is known about gender ideology and housework patterns for individuals who identify outside the gender binary.

We do not presume that the majority of housework scholars specifically seek to exclude respondents with diverse sexual identities. However, there is little theoretical guidance about how to utilize the gender-display perspective of the division of household labor outside of heterosexual cisgender couples (see a discussion of Goldberg's, 2013, application of doing gender with same-sex couples below). Ideas about gender expression also vary across racial/ethnic and social class groups within society, as do ideas about gendered behavior (illustrated by differences in attitudes toward women's roles in society) (Connell, 2014). Although gender-display theory identifies how expectations of gender roles structure behavior, its application beyond heteronormative couples is limited. Incorporating a more nuanced understanding of gender display outside of cisgender heterosexuality can provided renewed energy to the doing-gender perspective and add broader insights about gender and inequality across different family forms.

THE PERSISTENCE OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN HOUSEWORK AND THE NEED FOR NEW OR EXPANDED THEORIES

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

The division of housework is persistently gendered across couples, context, and time (England, 2010). In their influential piece, Bianchi et al. (2000) apply time-use data to document trends in housework time from 1970 to 1990. The study produced two main findings: (a) Women have reduced their housework time over this period, narrowing the gender gap in housework, and (b) men have slightly increased their housework time, yet their levels of housework do not match those of women. Revisiting these time trends for 2003–2004 through 2009–2010, Bianchi et al. (2012) found that the gender gap in housework remains, with women contributing 1.6 times the amount of housework as compared to men. Although some have argued that housework is slowly converging toward equality (Sullivan et al., 2015), others have argued that the persistence of a gender gap in housework constitutes a stalled gender revolution (England, 2010; Gerson, 2009).

The continued usefulness of the three theoretical approaches has been both supported (Davis & Willis, 2014) and contested (Treas & Lui, 2013). Here, we identify substantive issues that remain either underexplained by or omitted from current frameworks. We identify modern family forms that are currently not adequately theorized—dual-breadwinner, same-sex couples, nonpartnered families—and highlight the compounding impact of race and class. We then discuss the limitations of existing explanatory frameworks explanations, especially in relation to these family forms, and propose extensions of existing theory to incorporate these variations. We conclude with a discussion of the broader implications for these extensions.

Dual-Breadwinner Couples

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Since the 1970s, women's movement into continuous full-time employment has marked a significant social change. Across the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries, about 78% of all "prime age" (25–54) women worked full-time in 2015. Maternal full-time employment has also kept pace in many countries, and women's full-time employment is largely stable throughout the life course (OECD, 2015). In the context of the normative dual-breadwinner, or dual full-time-earner families, many of the theoretical perspectives lose explanatory power. For example, the time-availability perspective identifies full-time employment as a deterrent to time in housework (Coverman, 1985; Spitze & South, 1985). The time-availability perspective does not explain the persistent gender distribution of housework even among full-time working couples.

This theoretical gap is also problematic for the bargaining perspective, as salaries of husbands and wives are increasingly similar (Cohen, 2012), and about one-quarter of dual-earner married couples in the United States earn within $5,000 of each other (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Less is known about relative earnings in couples outside of heterosexual marriage, but we might expect the level of earnings equality to be even larger. Further, the fact that earnings vary dramatically across racial groups adds complexity for couples bargaining within discriminatory institutional contexts (Cancio, Evans, & Maume, 1996; Grodsky & Pager, 2001; McCall 2001; Pager & Shepherd, 2008). Existing research has narrowly estimated bargaining power through earnings (each respondent's and relative to each other), which neglects other types of resources and the potential for some groups' resources to be discounted on the basis of race or class. Narrow definitions of power can limit insights into how social context more broadly shapes intimate relationships (Davis &

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Greenstein, 2013). For example, increases in earnings may hold less negotiating power when earned in a lower-prestige service-sector position compared to a higher-prestige professional occupation (Pyke, 1994). Thus, modern families may not bargain for the others' housework participation in the same theoretically simple way that breadwinners and homemakers allocate economic and time resources, thus indicating the need for these relationships to be further tested.

To address these gaps, housework scholars have relied heavily on the gender display perspective, identifying gender and its performance as a mechanism that explains the persistence of housework inequality among dual-earner, full-time working couples (Brines, 1994; Chesters, 2013; Schneider, 2011). According to this theory, women maintain a persistently larger share of the housework by the nature of being women and the domestic responsibilities that this status entails (Berk, 1985; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Full-time working women spend more time in housework as a way to "care" for their families, motivated by the symbolic (gendered) norms of womanhood and motherhood.

A controversial area of research documents a nonlinear (U-shaped) relationship between women's earnings and housework time (Brines, 1994; Schneider, 2011; Shelton & John, 1993). Specifically, among partnered women, female sole breadwinners spend even more time in housework than do equal-earning women. By relying on gender display theories, this paradox is explained by women with more relative earnings supposedly enacting traditional gendered scripts to protect their lower-earning husbands' masculinity (Brines, 1994). We make a case against this argument, as we argue other forms of capital and relationship dynamics may be at play. Empirical evidence by Gupta (2007) also calls into

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

question the usefulness of bargaining and gender display in dual-earner couples. Without an adequate theoretical foundation to explain the new normative family form—dual full-time-earner couples—the existing housework theories fall flat and lack empirical rigor.

What is more, the gender-display theory relies heavily on gender norms and internalized, rigid ideas of gender as essential for allocating housework between partners. The assumption that gender norms are the dominant framework through which housework is allocated neglects the power of race and class as master statuses through which time is allocated. Drawing on the tools identified in the intersectional theoretical approaches provides a useful anchor for understanding how gender, class, and race are interconnected matrices of oppression through which couples' time, resources, and gender identities are negotiated (e.g., Crenshaw, 1991; Dillaway & Broman, 2001; McCall, 2005; Shields, 2008). Issues of race and class add an additional layer of sociological inquiry as individual resources are bolstered or discounted by the institutionalization of race, class, and gender differences. An increased research emphasis on fathering will further enrich our understanding of how racial/ethnic as well as sexual and gender minority men participate in domestic chores and care work (Doucet & Lee, 2014). Although existing housework studies focus on how institutional contexts structure housework equality, less is known about whether these relationships vary by race and class (Fuwa, 2004; Geist, 2005; Hook, 2006; Ruppanner, 2009). In the U.S. context, understanding these differences across geographies is valuable given the stark race and class differences within and across U.S. cities and states.

Blended and Multigenerational Families

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

The limitations of the marital-dyad assumption are further exemplified by the diversity of modern families. The bargaining and time-availability perspectives start from the assumption of a couple dyad through which negotiations are deployed in a theoretically neat means of exchange. However, families are increasingly diverse in their structure, and many individuals experience multiple family forms over the life course. Current estimates show that the divorce rate is half the marriage rate (3.2 and 6.9 per 1,000 population in 2014) (National Center for Health Statistics, 2017), with 23% of all marriages capturing divorcees recoupling (Lewis & Kreider, 2015). Despite falling remarriage rates, divorced men are more likely to remarry than are divorced women (Coleman, Ganong, & Fine, 2000; Manning, 2015), but gender relations within remarriages are somewhat less traditional than within first marriages, both with respect to housework (Coleman et al., 2000; Ishii-Kuntz & Coltrane, 1992; Sullivan, 1997) and women's labor supply (Aughinbaugh, 2010).

The fragility of these theories in the context of new and emerging modern family forms is even more explicit when we consider single, multigenerational, and same-sex families in which the actors assumed to bargain housework are absent (e.g., single parents), expansive (e.g., multigenerational families), or of equivalent gender (e.g., same-sex families). The failure of the bargaining and time-availability perspectives to account for diversity in family forms and resources beyond income and time for negotiation indicate the need for revision. Although the gender-display perspective suggests that individuals act in gendered ways to reaffirm femininity in the absence of an "audience," there is relatively little room for variation in how individuals do gender on the basis of race, ethnicity, and sexuality and gender identity. This suggests a need for retheorization.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

In multigenerational households, culturally specific norms of domesticity may guide divisions of housework rather than gender essentialism, given established racial patterns of housework (Sayer & Fine, 2011). Finally, the aging population indicates that many more family members will be called on to provide familial care, of which housework is a time-consuming component (Dautzenberg, Diederiks, Philipsen, & Tan, 1999). Given complex household composition (Lofquist, Lugaila, O'Connell, & Feliz, 2012), the negotiation of tasks and responsibilities across family generations, nuclear and extended family members, and nonfamily members warrants further theoretical discussion.

The purpose of this article is not to redress all these theoretical gaps but to highlight and justify the need to revise the theories. In the theoretical models of existing housework studies, the implicit assumption is that interactions with partners occur within heterosexual couples and that wives and mothers use housework to display gender and care for family members. This neglects the growing, perhaps even dramatically shifted, role of men in childcare and housework (Coltrane, 1997) and does not fully acknowledge the shifting gender roles of masculinity and femininity within families (Coltrane, 1997; Pedulla & Thébaud, 2015). Thus, a revision of the relevance of traditional breadwinner–homemaker ideologies for modern couples and the expansion of normative expectations of gender across multiple domains and its variation across class, race, sexuality and genders is warranted.

Moreover, although marriage remains a central social institution and most adults (at least in the United States) will be married at some point in the lives, marriage rates have been falling and marriage age increasing across the world (Geist, 2017). In this context, singles are an increasingly neglected category. Singles include the never-married, widowed, as well as

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

separated and divorced individuals, and even people who have nonresidential romantic partners. Many single households have children present. Although in its formulation, doing gender is directed at the self and at others, we argue that it is typically operationalized on the basis of the assumption of the self evaluating status relative to the presence of a partner. Thus, the theory, in its current application, is inadequate for explaining how singles decide to allocate their time to housework and why gender divisions remain evident among groups without an explicit "audience."

Same-Sex Couples and Gender Minorities

Although gay and lesbian couples were included in the American Couples study by Blumstein and Schwarz as early as 1983, data limitations have, until recently, restricted empirical research. This is particularly problematic as social acceptance of same-sex marriage and "gay families" have become increasingly accepted as normative families (Powell et al., 2010), with slightly more than 60% of Americans supporting same-sex marriage (Masci, Brown, & Kiley, 2017; McCarthy, 2017). Empirically, same-sex couples will remain a minority, but theoretically, exploring housework arrangements between partners who identify as gay, lesbian, and bisexual holds great promise for theory revision.

Housework patterns in gay and lesbian couples have largely been evaluated through the lens of them "doing" and "undoing" gender (Goldberg, 2013; Kelly & Hauck, 2015; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Those who have investigated same-sex couples' housework allocations document greater equality than in heterosexual couples (Goldberg & Perry-Jenkins, 2007; Peplau & Fingerhut, 2007; Perlesz et al., 2010). Explanations center on the decreased importance of gender display among partners of the same gender but also on the

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

greater importance of ideas of equality (Patterson, Sutfin, & Fulcher, 2004; Tornello, Sonnenberg, & Patterson, 2015) and personal preferences (Perlesz et al., 2010).

Tornello et al.'s (2015) study provides evidence regarding time availability but not relative resources. On the surface, studying same-sex couples provides the opportunity to focus on time availability and relative economic resources in the absence of heterosexual gender dynamics. But research has shown that different types of housework tasks still cluster together—those who perform more childcare also do more of the "feminine" tasks (Goldberg, Smith, & Perry-Jenkins, 2012). What is lacking is an integrated framework that does not simply assume that gay and lesbian relationships are the opposite (here, ungendered) of heterosexual unions (here, doing gender). Sullivan's review of quantitative evidence from gender display approach spells out that "the interesting issue of gender display in same-sex households has not been addressed to date in this literature" (Sullivan 2011, p. 1).

Research on gender minorities is rapidly expanding. Relative to research on mental health, victimization, health behavior, and discrimination (Eriksen & Einarsen, 2004; Mayer et al., 2008; Mereish, O'Cleirigh, & Bradford, 2014; Reisner, Greytak, Parsons, & Ybarra, 2015), research on inequality, particularly in the area of housework, has lagged behind in including transgender individuals and those outside the gender binary (Geist, Reynolds, & Gaytán, 2017). However, this population is theoretically important as decisions about doing (or not doing) gender may be more conscious among gender minorities compared to heterosexual cisgender individuals for whom affirmation of gender identity is likely to be less existential and central in their lives.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Below, we call for a theoretical perspective that explicitly includes sexuality and multiple dimensions of gender, including gender identity, in the theorizing of housework.

Cannot Be Ignored: Race and Class in Families

In the context of rising inequality, sociological studies of race and class become increasingly important. Although distinct concepts, intersectionality highlights the extent to which these experiences overlap, creating matrices of oppression (Crenshaw 1991). Family types are disproportionately grouped by race and class, with White Americans being most likely and Black Americans being least likely to marry. In addition to low marriage rates, Black Americans also have the highest rates of single parenthood, with the largest portion of poor single mothers. As sociologists have long argued, the rising income gap has the most severe effect on poor and minority individuals and families. Although much attention has been placed on the global forces structuring rising inequality, less is known about how these gaps structure interpersonal housework dynamics. The time availability perspective theorizes rational trades between work and family. Yet it neglects the extent to which institutional factors including institutionalized racism, gaps in wages and government poverty thresholds (e.g., health care, welfare), restrict individual decisions about how to allocate time (to work or housework). Building on these ideas, Gupta, Evertsson, Grunow, Nermo, and Sayer (2010) investigated housework time across income deciles and found that women at the bottom 10% of the income distribution spend significantly more time in housework than do those in the top 10%. They argue that poverty, including lack of time-saving household appliances (e.g., dishwashers) increase total housework burden, limiting the time available for other

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

endeavors. Similarly, Goldberg and Perry-Jenkins (2004) also suggested that social class shapes the ways in which women define their role relative to their male partners.

Bargaining perspectives also lose theoretical power among those in single or multigenerational households, where housework is shared among children or grandparents rather than one's partner. That these families are more common among racial and ethnic minorities underscores the importance of taking an intersectional approach to understanding time-availability, bargaining, and doing-gender perspectives. Sayer and Fine (2011) investigated housework time across racial/ethnic groups and found that the association between earnings and housework varies across groups. Yet research explicitly investigating these experiences is few and far between. What is more, class-based differences also warrant additional attention. Although scholars have consistently documented that holding a college education or higher helps equalize housework between spouses, no study to date has investigated how housework is distributed among those with high school or less education by race and class. Given that poor employment opportunities are increasingly clustered among those with lower levels of education and within certain geographies, understanding how housework is distributed among these intersections is explicitly important to understanding structural barriers to economic inequality. Below, we outline how expanding existing theories can be more inclusive of the undertheorized aspects of contemporary families.

Expanding Theoretical Approaches to Housework

Work–Family Fit

We identify three major limitations in the assumptions of the time-availability model. First, the time-availability model distinguishes paid and unpaid time, with a central assumption that

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Author Manuscript

paid work is primary and unpaid work secondary. This fails to account for other unpaid work demands—such as commuting and dressing for work—that may reduce time and energy available for domestic chores. Moreover, it does not incorporate forms of unpaid work that are structured, consistent, and time intensive (e.g., volunteer work). Given that work patterns are gendered, these omissions impose bias on measurements across men and women.

Second, the time-availability perspective does not theorize distinctions in work location—home versus elsewhere. This has important consequences for domestic time, in that working from home may more readily allow for multitasking and eliminates commute times compared to working in a separate location, such as an office, factory floor, or retail store. These issues underscore race- and class-based processes.

Finally, and perhaps most important, time availability rests on a central assumption that people trade time from one domain (work) to another (family). Modern families juggle time demands from both domains (multitasking work and family) simultaneously and across shorter, more intensive periods of time. These realities of many modern families are absent from this discussion but are increasingly important for housework time and issues of mental health and fatigue. Further, the ability for some families to utilize market-based substitutes for time intensive demands identifies issues of class and race hierarchies that are essential to broader forms of inequality. Lesnard's (2008) work on the complex scheduling patterns for family time in French dual-earner couples is an exciting direction for research. Further, Moen, Kelly, and Huang (2008) make a case for a multidimensional life course fit model that takes into account both the ecologies of work and home. Finally, Perry-Jenkins and Wadsworth (2017b) underscore the importance of applying an ecological perspective to

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

understand work–family issues given changing temporal and geographical definitions of work and the permeability of work and non-work life (see also Perry-Jenkins, Newkirk, & Ghunney, 2013 and Perry-Jenkins and Wadsworth, 2017a). These studies point to the importance of deconstructing theoretical approaches but also to expanding social science data sources to estimate complicated estimates of couples work–family approaches.

We propose the work–family fit perspective as an updated theoretical approach to more inclusively account for dual earners' competing demands. In most full-time dual-earner households, where time is scarce and demands are high, we expect couples to allocate housework across weekdays and weekends differently and to spend much time in simultaneous domestic work (housework and childcare). In this, timing may be especially important with housework reserved to the early mornings and evenings and most domestic work occurring simultaneously at the couple level (e.g., one partner cooking dinner while the other is bathing children) and the individual level (e.g., cleaning while minding children while checking emails). Clearly, these allocations will be especially salient among parents for whom domestic demands (childcare and housework) are greatest.

We argue that couples are not just accounting for their work schedules as predicted by the time-availability perspective but rather housework is allocated based on the demands of the entire family. Thus, taking a family-level approach to work–family fit for these respondents may illuminate the persistence of gender inequality in housework (Voydanoff, 2014). This might help us understand not only who prioritizes what but also why. Further, it enables us to incorporate the work and family demands of multiple family members rather than just relying on the couple dyad. Given that many existing large surveys provide detailed

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

measures of workplace demands, immediate investigation of these mechanisms is possible. Time-diary data can allow for an investigation of the distribution over day and week. What is more, the European Social Survey specifies housework time by weekend and weekday, and couples are shown to shift housework to weekends in countries with high female labor force participation (Ruppanner & Treas, 2014).

We also call for a more comprehensive understanding of outsourcing in the context of growing class-based time patterns and the rise of the global chain of reproductive labor (Hochschild, 2003; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001; Parreñas, 2012). Families today may be more reliant on global outsourcing resources, including prepared foods, dining out, and housekeeping services, with strong class-based patterns. Although qualitative studies of housework identify outsourcing as central in many families' domestic strategies, comprehensive measurements of outsourcing in quantitative data are scarce (Hochschild, 2003). Those who do apply quantitative data show that the frequency of outsourcing is less common than expected (Killewald, 2011; de Ruijter, Treas, & Cohen 2005). Yet these studies rely on small sample expenditure data, which can be subject to recall bias. Innovations in data analysis that draw on more concrete accounts (e.g., bank records, supermarket receipts) would provide a more robust estimate of outsourcing. We hope that future research, perhaps with the aid of technology and mobile applications, can find creative ways to explore spending patterns. This omission captures a wider issue with collecting comprehensive data on work–family fit to more accurately measure the experiences of American families. Thus, we argue that four dimensions can help explain dual full-time-earner couples' housework allocations: (a) synchronization of work schedules; (b) time of day and day of the week; (c)

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

flexibility, employment schedules, and job-based resources; and (d) multitasking and outsourcing as nontraditional ways of doing housework. Of course, a work–family fit approach can also increase our understanding of singles and all types of family. We merely argue that the greatest theoretical need is in a better understanding of dual earner couples.

Among single or multigenerational families, the work–family fit model requires an expansion of measures. Here, data collection advancement is essential, requiring surveying of all family members rather than a family representative or couples. Among multigenerational families, questions of work–family fit will require a detailed understanding of demands at each life stage, with careful attention paid to ecological issues of space and place (Becker & Moen, 1999; Han & Moen, 1999; Moen & Yu, 2000; Perry-Jenkins & Wadsworth, 2017b). Given the rise in women sandwiched between child and parent care, understanding the physical needs of aging household members, children, spouses and the prime aged respondents is essential (Ingersoll-Dayton, Neal, & Hammer, 2001). These could be derived from surveys administered to all family members or through mixed methods approaches that draw on qualitative and quantitative data to understand the nuance in time allocations, household bargaining, and gender display among these family types. In Germany (German Socio-Economic Panel), the United Kingdom (British Household Panel Survey), and Australia (Household, Income, and Labour Dynamics in Australia) panel data with relevant information are available and can be expected to provide greater insights in the future.

These questions of care across the life course are increasingly important in the context of an aging population that will intensify family care demands for a larger segment of the population. Among single-parent families who are increasingly time starved, questions of

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

institutional resources and demands are of increasing importance. Research consistently shows single-parent families are time starved, time pressed, and experiencing worse physical and mental health (Jacobs & Gerson, 2001; Southerton & Tomlinson, 2005). Less is known about how the institutional barriers to employment structure family time demands, notably time in housework. Conversely, institutional resources to support low-income families may also structure housework allocations by incentivizing (or penalizing) paid employment through welfare-to-work schemes. The instability of employment coupled with government-provided resources encouraging maternal employment regardless of quality may intensify low-income and single-parents' experiences of work–family incompatibility. As a result, housework may either be neglected or offloaded to other family members.

Diverse Capital Perspective

We identify three main theoretical limitations of the bargaining perspective as it addresses couples' housework. First, bargaining is assumed to be conducted predominantly along economic lines. Although feminists have documented that women's power is discounted by patriarchy, feminist theorizing focuses on economics and power as resources. We argue that other dimensions of couples' employment are likely considered in housework bargaining. Some of these may have economic value (e.g., health care and retirement attached to one partner's job), but others may be more subjective (e.g., career aspirations). Here, the role of power in the relationship may be especially important for understanding which dimensions have greater (or less) value to negotiate housework (Davis & Greenstein, 2013) . In this, couples may allocate housework to invest in one spouse rather than negotiating out of the housework.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Second, couples likely bring other noneconomic resources to bargain housework. This may include emotional capital developed over the duration of a relationship (e.g., understanding spouses' trigger points for conflict) and relationship capital (e.g., credit from previous negotiations or helping one's spouse on another task). These dimensions are likely touchstones in relationship negotiations. Third, bargaining perspectives neglect the race- and class-based differences in the utilization, value, and networks of resources. Existing literature shows stark class-based differences in resource utilization, with lower-income individuals drawing on a wider network of friends and family for resources (Dominguez & Watkins, 2003; Hofferth, 1984; Kim & McKenry, 1998). By contrast, upper-class families, which are predominantly White, rely more narrowly on the downward transmission (e.g., parent-to-child) of resources, with intergenerational transfers increasing in importance in the polarized labor market (Corak, 2013) and across generations (Lindahl, Palme, Massih, & Sjögren, 2015). Whether these class-based differences in networks have an impact on the structure housework divisions and weaken (or strengthen) effectiveness of couples' resources to bargain out of housework warrants additional theoretical and empirical inquiry.

We propose an expansion of the bargaining model to include multiple forms of capital. The bargaining perspective is consistently estimated through earnings (specified by gender) or relative earnings (specified by couple). Sullivan and Gershuny (2016) have proposed an expanded bargaining model that includes human capital more broadly. We build on their work by arguing that to fully understand bargaining we must consider a range of resources rather than focusing exclusively on earnings. We further propose an expansion of economic measures that capture the quality of the job, including fiscal benefits like health

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

care and retirement, as well as aspirational career and family measures (e.g. potential for job advancement, career centrality, desire and timing of children). This might be implemented more easily in contexts with rich register and administrative data in conjunction with family-level data collection, but we hope that it might be included more readily in future mixed-methods data collection efforts. In addition to the expansion of empirical measures, there is also a need to expand theory to understand how multiple forms of capital structure housework divisions. This specification illuminates housework measures across a range of career- and family-oriented dimensions that deepen estimations of economic and career- and family-based resources. Further, by expanding bargaining, we can more explicitly estimate differences across groups based on race and class. Underscoring these differences is the importance of expanding our understanding of resources drawn from networks beyond the couple dyad.

We also propose the addition of nonfiscal resource constructs capturing emotional and relationship capital. We theorize that individuals negotiate housework based on knowledge derived from their relationships. An emerging research area assesses how housework divisions structure sexual frequency utilizing bargaining concepts about economic and sexual currencies (Kornrich, Brines, & Leupp, 2013). Although sex may be one form of currency, we theorize that knowledge of the partner (e.g., their current emotional state, triggers for conflict), and currency developed (or lost) in previous conflicts are used to perpetually negotiate (and renegotiate) housework allocations. This adds a temporal dimension to understanding housework allocations, requiring scholars to estimate the short-term emotional states of the couple and the long-term history of negotiation and conflict (Gottman, 2011).

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

We identify these as two distinct categories—emotional capital (understating one partners' emotional state) and relationship capital (currency developed in previous conflicts), both of which will be important theoretical concepts for future data collection. To fully understand multiple forms of capital requires a multimethodological approach to housework utilizing qualitative and quantitative couple-level data over time. The addition of this method of social inquiry would illuminate the types of capital utilized in housework negotiations.

Doing Genders

We identify three main theoretical limitations of the gender-display theory. First, many women and men reject traditional heteronormative gendered expectations of domesticity and may use housework as a signal for nonconformity rather than a way to reaffirm their masculinity or femininity. Further, these distinctions may vary across race, ethnicity, class, and sexual identity, underscoring the fact that gender is not a singular concept but sensitive to multiple interpretations and implementations.

Second, it is unclear how individuals who are not cisgender and not heterosexual use gender as a cue for behaviors. Specifically, in the context of housework, more work is needed on the extent to which the symbolic enactment of "traditional" femininity or masculinity is used to reaffirm one's gender identity when it is performed for same-sex partners and how this affects individuals' internalized perceptions of the self (Glazer, 2014). Even for cisgender heterosexual men and women, the idea of traditional femininity or masculinity seems too rigid to fully capture the commitment to traditional roles and overstates homogeneity within men and women with respect to adherence to ideas about masculinity and femininity (Geist et al., 2017; Westbrook & Saperstein, 2015). Finally, we question the assumption of housework

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

as enactment or expression of femininity in light of men's growing engagement in domestic life. Men's participation in housework (and childcare) has risen relative to women's from the 1960s to the 1990s but has stalled ever since (Bianchi et al., 2012) Justifying these changing trends as weakening traditional gender role ideologies seems too narrow an explanation for a complicated process.

Because of issues with sample size, scholars are often unable to examine same-sex couples in great detail in general population samples. However, what might be more problematic is that scholars often make assumptions about gender relations in heterosexual relationships, which arguably are crucial for the domestic division of labor (Gates & Steinberger, 2009). This question is complicated by the fact that gender is not enacted or displayed within couples in easily measured or consistent ways. In heterosexual couples, men's and women's adherence to "traditional" roles in the home and family context has been primarily measured through self-reports on attitudes toward working mothers and women's patterns of participation in the labor force (Becker, 1985; Bianchi et al., 2000; Hartmann, 1981; Hegewisch & Gornick, 2011; Korpi, Ferrarini, & Englund, 2013; Pettit, Hook, & Hagan, 2009). However, this does not give us a complete picture. Individuals hold complex and varying ideas about gender, equity, equality, and housework that are instilled in them early in life (Butler, 2004, 2011; Cunningham, 2005).

Although the enactment of femininity and masculinity may be strongly socially constrained among heterosexual couples, it might be less so for same-sex couples (Goldberg, 2013). A doing-genders approach needs to focus on how respondents do their gender; that is, how they enact and affirm their gender to themselves and others. A more nuanced approach

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

to conceptualizing gender outside of a fixed idea of just "one way" to do gender has the possibility to help us understand how different dimensions of gender matter for housework performance. Specifically, we should not assume that all cisgender women have higher standards or feel more adept at certain tasks compared to cisgender men. Rather, gender may be iterative, changing, and constantly negotiated. Explicitly allowing various aspects of gendered selves to matter (including self-perception and expected perception by others) allows us to expand binary gender to incorporate a more accurate continuum of gender identities and changes across this spectrum while engaged in various household tasks. Building on research on sexual fluidity, future work on gender performance and expression might also recognize time and context when as relevant dimensions.

We acknowledge that research, in particular survey research, might never be able to capture fully genders such as agender, bigender, genderqueer, or other groups who do not identify "neatly" along the gender binary. But we can certainly theorize and capture much more of the variation of gender than a categorical approach that just classifies by individual's sex and sex of partner. Sample sizes remain small in nationally representative samples, but oversampling gender and sexual minority individuals, and assessing variation of gender expression within cisgender heterosexual populations is warranted (Geist et al., 2017, Westbrook & Saperstein, 2015).

Our expanded approach to doing genders seeks to explicitly link different dimensions of gender to the performance housework. First, we expect that acceptance and internalization of gender normative scripts of femininity is associated with greater performance of housework if a respondent also has a female gender identity, regardless of sex. The less

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

firmly an individual identifies as female and the less they subscribe to idea of normative femininity, the less housework we expect them to do. We expect partners to come into play not merely based on their own sex but also on what a partner expects or desires. Cisgender women who are partnered with somebody who prefers their wives to have traditionally feminine traits may be more likely to try to embody and enact this type of femininity through, among other things, housework.

Our expanded doing-genders approach does not require the presence of a partner, and by not merely classifying couples on the basis of sex, we avoid artificial distinctions between gay, lesbian, and heterosexual individuals (and those who often remain ignored: bisexual individuals and those outside the cisgender gender binary), and those who do not live with a partner. By specifying these mechanisms more clearly, housework scholars are better equipped to test arguments of gender display, gender neutralization, and gender deviance than simply through attitudinal measures of gender role ideology or specification by sex. A clearer link between internalized gender identities and externalized gender behaviors across a range of outcomes (e.g., work, home, family) would expand an understanding of gender display and its interaction with domestic work. By more fully estimating these experiences, scholars will be better equipped to understand whether gendered divisions of housework are unique relative to individuals' broader gendered selves.

Although adequate sample sizes remain an issue, most survey instruments no longer simply assume that partners and spouses (whether coresident or not) are of the "opposite" sex (Gates & Steinberger, 2009). We argue that in addition to specifically asking about the sex of a person's partner or spouse, a respondent's sexual and gender identities should be a standard

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

aspect of surveys. It is only through questions such as these that researchers will be able to identify respondents' sexuality identity, as well as respondents along a gender continuum. In the past, questions about sexual orientation or identity were omitted for fear of alienating the respondents and jeopardizing survey quality and samples. This is no longer justifiable (Geist et al., 2017). Without more detailed attention, we are unable to further develop ideas of how gender, outside the confines of heterosexual relationships of cisgender men and women, shapes housework. The inclusion of specific questions of gender identity that do not simply seek to identify cisgender versus transgender individuals is also crucial. To better understand lived experiences, we also need to capture self-perception and gender expression with more nuance, such as how feminine and/or masculine and/or androgynous individuals see themselves.

Summary and Conclusion

In this article, we summarized and critiqued the three existing theories to housework—time availability, bargaining, and gender display. These theories were developed in the 1980s and 1990s and have found strong empirical support across housework studies. Davis and Wills (2014) have shown that the three core theoretical explanations of the domestic division of labor continue to be empirically supported. Their findings notwithstanding, we argue here that these theories are limited in their rigor and scope to explain housework allocations for diverse contemporary family forms. After identifying explicit limitations, we provided clear theoretical expansions to direct future research.

First, we propose a new work–family fit model to understand housework as one dimension of broader work and family tensions. We theorize that the synchronization of work

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

schedules, time of day and day of the week, flexibility, employment schedules, and job-based resources as well as multitasking and outsourcing are missing from existing theory. Given the shift in technology, work culture, and shift work, we argue that the timing and location of work and housework are increasingly important. The rise in flexible work, including working from home, and the omnipresence of electrical devices means many families are working in multiple locations while performing multiple boundary spanning tasks (e.g., answering emails while cooking and minding children).

At the other end of the spectrum, more families are experiencing an intensification of work demands through low-pay, nonstandard shift work. These differences in experiences, which are often drawn along race and class lines, capture the diverging trajectories of families in professional versus service jobs. Existing theoretical approaches specifying trades between work and family demands neglect the deep interconnections between work and family lives of modern families and the shifting structure of work. The work–family fit model updates these theories to redress the gaps.

We also identify gaps in the bargaining model by proposing an expansion to include multiple forms of interpersonal capital—the economic, emotional, and relationship capital model. We acknowledge that income remains an important source of power within couples, but we also identify other dimensions of couples' work lives used to allocate housework. These include objective employment benefits (e.g., retirement, health care) that may support the family and thus give primacy to one partners' job over the other, but also subjective employment and family dimensions that hold future economic benefits (e.g., career trajectories, career and family aspirations).

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Further, we also propose an expansion of capital to include emotional and relationship capital, differentiating between short- and long-term emotional dispositions (e.g., having a draining week vs. being easily angered) and relationship histories (e.g., couple always fights over laundry vs. one partner is in debt to the other from a previous compromise). Of course, emotional and relationship capital may interact (e.g., one partner is stressed so the other increases domestic work and, in the future, demands repayment), and these experiences may compound over time (e.g., the couple always fights about laundry so both dig in on the issue). Thus, measuring emotional and relationship capital requires a design that accounts for short- and long-term relationship patterns. But expanding bargaining theory to include multiple forms of capital will capture how housework, conflict, and relationship quality intersect.

Finally, we propose an expanded gender-display theoretical approach. Gender display identifies housework as a means to do gender, or exhibit femininity, within heterosexual unions. Although we do not dispute that housework and gender are intimately linked, we challenge the assumption that gender is enacted consistently across couples. Recent research on same-sex couples' housework challenges theoretical debates of doing and undoing gender (Deutsch, 2007).

Our expanded gender(s) display perspective posits two shifts in existing theory. First, we argue for more comprehensive measures of sexual orientation and gender, across a spectrum. Second, we argue for an explicit measurement of femininity–masculinity across housework tasks and gender identities while performing these tasks. For example, men and women may view cleaning as a feminine task, but men and women may (or may not) feel feminine when doing the task. This will highlight tensions between externalized and

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

internalized gender role expectations and allow for estimation of differences across race, ethnicity, and class. These types of questions can identify differences in seeing and doing different forms and aspects of gender.

Although we provide some insight into the gaps in housework theories, our critiques and directions forward are not without limitations. We focus on the ways in which the three existing theories provide insight into modern families' housework allocations. However, the retention of the three core theories may be less important to explain current housework allocations. There is an expectation among housework scholars to see this trifecta weighed when examining housework, but these theories may have more or less relevance among modern families. Thus, there needs to be greater flexibility in identifying and applying the appropriate theory for examination. We argue that one of these theories may be adequate to explain housework allocations among specific groups and for specific research questions, documenting the need to drop the other theories or provide new theoretical perspectives when relevant.

Also, we provide an U.S.-centered approach to these issues, summarizing existing literature and barriers for this cultural context. A rigorous stream of research shows that housework varies across nations and is structured by institutional characteristics (Fuwa, 2004; Geist, 2005; Hook, 2006; Ruppanner, 2009). Across most cross-national studies, these three theories are applied identifying an inherent North America–centric approach. Identifying the America-centered cultural bias inherent in many of the top sociology journals limits theoretical expansion to more accurately explain differences in gender, resources, time, bargaining, and housework across countries. Our contentions may not be generalizable across

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

nations, but we use this piece as a starting point for a broader discussion. We also acknowledge that our discussion of existing theoretical problems and potential extensions has emphasized quantitative research. We believe that methodological pluralism is essential in understanding different aspect of the ways in which gender, families, and the division of labor operate in complex, intersectional, and international realities (Allen & Jaramillo-Sierra, 2015, 2016; Jaramillo-Sierra & Allen, 2016).

In summary, we provide an overview of existing housework theories, documenting the gaps in each theory and providing directions forward. This article serves as another step forward in a discussion about how to better measure housework allocations in modern families.

AUTHOR NOTE

Both authors contributed equally to this manuscript.

REFERENCES

Allen, K. R., & Jaramillo-Sierra, A. L. (2015). Feminist theory and research on family relationships: Pluralism and complexity. *Sex Roles*, 73(3–4), 93–99.

Allen, K. R., & Jaramillo-Sierra, A. L. (2016). Feminist perspectives on family relationships: Part 3. *Sex Roles*, 75(1–2), 1–3.

Anger, S. (2008). Overtime work as a signaling device. *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, *55*(2), 167–189.

Aughinbaugh, A. (2010). The effects of remarriage on women's labor supply. *Journal of Population Economics*, *23*(4), 1151–1176.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Baxter, J., Hewitt, B., & Haynes, M. (2008). Life course transitions and housework: Marriage, parenthood, and time on housework. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *70*(2), 259–272.

Becker, G. S. (1981). *A treatise on the family*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Becker, G. S. (1985). Human capital, effort, and the sexual division of labor. *Journal of Labor Economics*, *3*(1, Part 2), S33–S58.

Becker, P. E., & Moen, P. (1999). Scaling back: Dual-earner couples' work–family strategies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *61*, 995–1007.

Berk, S. F. (1985). *The gender factory: the apportionment of work in American households*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Bianchi, S. M,. Milkie, M. A., Sayer, L. C., & Robinson, J. P. (2000). Is anyone doing the housework? Trends in the gender division of household labor. *Social Forces, 79*(1), 191–228.

Bianchi, S. M., Sayer, L. C., Milkie, M. A., & Robinson, J. P. (2012). Housework: Who did, does or will do it, and how much does it matter? *Social Forces, 91*(1), 55–63.

Bittman, M., & Wajcman, J. (2000). The rush hour: The character of leisure time and gender equity. *Social Forces*, *79*(1), 165–189.

Bittman, M., England, P., Sayer, L., Folbre, N., & Matheson, G. (2003). When does gender trump money? Bargaining and time in household work. *American Journal of Sociology, 109*(1), 186–214.

Blood, R. O., & Wolfe, D. M. (1960). *Husbands & wives: The dynamics of married living.* Oxford, UK: Free Press.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Blumstein, P., & Schwartz, P. (1983). *American couples: Money, work, sex*. New York, NY: Morrow.

Brines, J. (1994). Economic dependency, gender, and the division of labor at home. *American Journal of Sociology, 100*(3), 652–688.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2016, July 8). *24 percent of employed people did some or all of their work at home in 2015.* Retrieved from https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2016/24-percent-of-employed-people-did-some-or-all-of-their-work-at-home-in-2015.htm

Butler, J. (2004). *Undoing gender.* London, UK: Psychology Press

Butler, J. (2011). *Gender trouble: Feminism and subversion of identity.* London, UK: Routledge.

Cancio, A. S., Evans, T. D., & Maume, D. J., Jr. (1996). Reconsidering the declining significance of race: Racial differences in early career wages. *American Sociological Review*, *61*, 541–556.

Cantor, M. H. (1979). Neighbors and friends: An overlooked resource in the informal support system. *Research on Aging*, *1*(4), 434–463.

Chesters, J. (2013). Gender convergence in core housework hours: Assessing the relevance of earlier approaches for explaining current trends. *Journal of Sociology, 49*(1), 78–96.

Cohen, P. N. (2012, September 10). End-of-Men-Richer-Sex reality check, 40 years of pants edition. *Family Inequality*. Retrieved from https://familyinequality.wordpress.com/2012/09/10/end-of-men-richer-sex-reality-check-40–years-of-pants-edition/

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Coleman, M., Ganong, L., & Fine, M. (2000). Reinvestigating remarriage: Another decade of progress. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *62*(4), 1288–1307.

Coltrane, S. (1997). *Family man: Fatherhood, housework, and gender equity*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Coltrane, S. (2000). Research on household labor: Modeling and measuring the social embeddedness of routine family work. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *62*(4), 1208–1233.

Coltrane, S., & Ishii-Kuntz, M. (1992). Men's housework: A life course perspective. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 54*(1), 43–57.

Connell, R. W. (2014). *Gender and power: Society, the person and sexual politics.* New York, NY: Wiley.

Corak, M. (2013). Income inequality, equality of opportunity, and intergenerational mobility. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *27*(3), 79–102.

Coverman, S. (1985). Explaining husbands' participation in domestic labor. *Sociological Quarterly, 26*(1), 81–97.

Craig, L., & Baxter, J. (2016). Domestic outsourcing, housework shares and subjective time pressure: Gender differences in the correlates of hiring help. *Social Indicators Research*, *125*(1), 271–288.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, *43*(6), 1241.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Cunningham, M. (2005). Gender in cohabitation and marriage the influence of gender ideology on housework allocation over the life course. *Journal of Family Issues, 26*(8), 1037–1061.

Dautzenberg, M. G., Diederiks, J. P., Philipsen, H., & Tan, F. E. (1999). Multigenerational caregiving and well-being: Distress of middle-aged daughters providing assistance to elderly parents. *Women & Health*, *29*(4), 57–74.

Davis, S. N., & Greenstein, T. N. (2013). Why study housework? Cleaning as a window into power in couples. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, *5*(2), 63–71. https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12004

Davis, S. N., & Wills, J. B. (2014). Theoretical explanations amid social change: A content analysis of housework research (1975–2012). *Journal of Family Issues*, *35*(6), 808–824.

De Ruijter, E., Treas, J. K., & Cohen, P. N. (2005). Outsourcing the gender factory: Living arrangements and service expenditures on female and male tasks. *Social Forces*, *84*(1), 305–322.

Deutsch, F. M. (2007). Undoing gender. *Gender & Society*, *21*(1), 106–127.

Dijkstra, A. G., & Hanmer, L. C. (2000). Measuring socio-economic gender inequality: Toward an alternative to the UNDP gender-related development index. *Feminist Economics*, *6*(2), 41–75.

Dillaway, H., & Broman, C. (2001). Race, class, and gender differences in marital satisfaction and divisions of household labor among dual-earner couples: A case for intersectional analysis. *Journal of Family Issues*, *22*(3), 309–327.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Dodson, L., & Dickert, J. (2004). Girls' family labor in low-income households: A decade of qualitative research. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *66*(2), 318–332.

Dominguez, S., & Watkins, C. (2003). Creating networks for survival and mobility: Social capital among African-American and Latin-American low-income mothers. *Social Problems*, *50*(1), 111–135.

Doucet, A., & Lee, R. (2014). Fathering, feminism (s), gender, and sexualities: Connections, tensions, and new pathways. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, *6*(4), 355–373.

Duncombe, J., & Marsden, D. (1995). "Workaholics" and "whingeing women": Theorising intimacy and emotion work—the last frontier of gender inequality? *Sociological Review*, *43*(1), 150–169.

England, P. (2010). The gender revolution uneven and stalled. *Gender & Society, 24*(2), 149–166.

England, P., & Farkas, G. (1986). *Households, employment, and gender: A social, economic, and demographic view*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine.

Engellandt, A., & Riphahn, R. T. (2005). Temporary contracts and employee effort. *Labour Economics*, *12*(3), 281–299

Eriksen, W., & Einarsen, S. (2004). Gender minority as a risk factor of exposure to bullying at work: The case of male assistant nurses. *European Journal of Family Issues, 26*(8), 1037–1061.

Ferree, M. M. (1990). Beyond separate spheres: Feminism and family research. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 52*(4), 866–884.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Fuwa, M. (2004). Macro-level gender inequality and the division of household labor in 22 countries. *American Sociological Review, 69*(6), 751–767.

Gager, C. T., Sanchez, L. A., & Demaris, A. (2009). Whose time is it? The effect of employment and work/family stress on children's housework. *Journal of Family Issues*, *30*(11), 1459–1485.

Gates, G. J., & Steinberger, M. D. (2009). *Same-sex unmarried partner couples in the American Community Survey: The role of misreporting, miscoding and misallocation*. presentation at annual meeting of the Population Association of America, Detroit, MI.

Geist, C. (2005). The welfare state and the home: Regime differences in the domestic division of labour. *European Sociological Review*, *21*(1), 23–41.

Geist, C. (2017). Marriage formation in context: Four decades in comparative perspective. *Social Sciences*, *6*(1), 9.

Geist, C., Reynolds, M. M., & Gaytán, M. S. (2017). Unfinished business: Disentangling sex, gender, and sexuality in sociological research on gender stratification. *Sociology Compass*, *11*(4), e12470.

Gerson, K. (2009). *The unfinished revolution: Coming of age in a new era of gender, work, and family.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Glazer, D. (2014). LGBT parenting: The kids are all right—LGBT transitions to parenthood. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Mental Health*, *18*, 213–221.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City, NY: Anchor.

Goldberg, A. E .(2013). "Doing and "undoing" gender: The meaning and division of housework in same-sex couples. *Journal of Theory & Review, 5*(2), 85–104.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Goldberg, A. E., & Perry-Jenkins, M. (2004). Division of labor and working-class women's well-being across the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *18*(1), 225–236.

Goldberg, A. E., & Perry-Jenkins, M. (2007). The division of labour and perceptions of parental roles: Lesbian couples across the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 24*(2), 297–318.

Goldberg, A. E., Smith, J. Z., & Perry-Jenkins, M. (2012). The division of labor in lesbian, gay, and heterosexual new adoptive parents. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *74*(4), 812–828.

Gornick, J. C., & Meyers, M. (2003). *Families that work: Policies for reconciling parenthood and employment*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Gottman, J. M. (2011). *The science of trust: Emotional attunement for couples*. New York, NY: Norton.

Greenstein, T. N. (1996). Husbands' participation in domestic labour: Interactive effects of wives' and husbands' gender ideologies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 58*(3), 585–595.

Grodsky, E., & Pager, D. (2001). The structure of disadvantage: Individual and occupational determinants of the Black–White wage gap. *American Sociological Review*, *66*(4), 542–567.

Gupta, S. (1999). The effects of transitions in marital status on men's performance of housework. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *61*, 700–711. https://doi.org/10.2307/353571

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Gupta, S. (2007). Autonomy, dependence, or display? The relationship between married women's earnings and housework. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 69*(2), 399–417.

Gupta, S., Evertsson, M., Grunow, D., Nermo, M., & Sayer, L. C. (2010). Economic inequality and housework. In J. Treas & S. Drobnic (Eds.), *Dividing the domestic: Men, women, and housework in cross-national perspective* (pp. 105–123). Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Han, S. K., & Moen, P. (1999). Work and family over time: A life course approach. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *562*(1), 98–110.

Hartmann, H. I. (1981). The family as the locus of gender, class and political struggle: The example of housework. *Signs, 6*(3), 366–394.

Harvey, S. M., Beckman, L. J., Browner, C. H., & Sherman, C. A. (2002). Relationship power, decision making, and sexual relations: An exploratory study with couples of Mexican origin. *Journal of Sex Research*, *39*(4), 284–291.

Hegewisch, A., & Gornick, J. C. (2011). The impact of work–family policies on women's employment: A review of research from OECD countries. *Community, Work & Family*, *14*(2), 119–138.

Heisig, J. P. (2011). Who does more housework: Rich or poor? A comparison of 33 countries. *American Sociological Review*, *76*(1), 74–99.

Henly, J. R., Danziger, S. K., & Offer, S. (2005). The contribution of social support to the material well-being of low-income families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *67*(1), 122–140.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Hewitt, B., Baxter, J., & Mieklejohn, C. (2012). Non-standard employment and fathers' time in household labour. *Journal of Family Studies*, *18*(2–3), 175–186.

Hochschild, A. R. (2003). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hofferth, S. L. (1984). Kin networks, race, and family structure. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 791–806.

Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (2001). *Doméstica: Immigrant workers cleaning and caring in the shadows of affluence*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Hook, J. L. (2004). Reconsidering the division of household labor: Incorporating volunteer work and informal support. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *66*(1), 101–117.

Hook, J. L. (2006). Care in context: Men's unpaid work in 20 countries, 1965–1998. *American Sociological Review, 71*(4), 639–660.

Ingersoll-Dayton, B., Neal, M. B., & Hammer, L. B. (2001). Aging parents helping adult children: The experience of the sandwiched generation. *Family Relations*, *50*(3), 262–271.

Ishii-Kuntz, M., & Coltrane, S. (1992). Remarriage, stepparenting, and household labor. *Journal of Family Issues*, *13*(2), 215–233.

Jacobs, J. A., & Gerson, K. (2001). Overworked individuals or overworked families? Explaining trends in work, leisure, and family time. *Work and Occupations*, *28*(1), 40–63.

Jaramillo-Sierra, A. L., & Allen, K. R. (2016). Feminist perspectives on family relationships: Part 2. *Sex Roles*, *74*(11–12), 477–479.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Kalleberg, A. L. (2009). Precarious work, insecure workers: Employment relations in transition. *American Sociological Review*, *74*(1), 1–22.

Kelly, M., & Hauck, E. (2015). Doing housework, redoing gender: Queer couples negotiate the household division of labor. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies, 11*(5), 438–464.

Kelly, E. L., & Moen, P. (2007). Rethinking the clockwork of work: Why schedule control may pay off at work and at home. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 9*(4), 487–506.

Kelly, E. L., Moen, P., & Tranby, E. (2011). Changing workplaces to reduce work–family conflict schedule control in a white-collar organization. *American Sociological Review, 76*(2), 265–290.

Killewald, A. (2011). Opting out and buying out: Wives' earnings and housework time. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 73*(2), 459–471.

Kim, H. K., & McKenry, P. C. (1998). Social networks and support: a comparison of African Americans, Asian Americans, Caucasians, and Hispanics. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *29,* 313–334.

Klasen, S. (2000). *Does gender inequality reduce growth and development? Evidence from cross-country regressions* (Working Paper No. 7). Washington, DC: World Bank.

Kornrich, S., Brines, J., & Leupp, K. (2013). Egalitarianism, housework, and sexual frequency in marriage. *American Sociological Review, 78*(1), 26–50.

Korpi, W., Ferrarini, T., & Englund, S. (2013). Women's opportunities under different family policy constellations: Gender, class, and inequality tradeoffs in western countries re-

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

examined. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, *20*(1), 1–40.

Lesnard, L. (2008). Off-scheduling within dual-earner couples: An unequal and negative externality for family time. *American Journal of Sociology*, *114*(2), 447–490.

Lewis, J. M., & Kreider, R. M. (2015, March). *Remarriage in the United States*. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/acs/acs-30.pdf

Lindahl, M., Palme, M., Massih, S. S., & Sjögren, A. (2015). Long-term intergenerational persistence of human capital: An empirical analysis of four generations. *Journal of Human Resources*, *50*(1), 1–33.

Lofquist, D., Lugaila, T., O'Connell, M., & Feliz, S. (2012). *Households and families: 2010. 2010 Census Briefs.* Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

Lundberg, S., & Pollak, R. A. (1993). Separate spheres bargaining and the marriage market. *Journal of Political Economy, 101*(6), 988–1010.

Manning, W. (2015, June 2). *Remarriage in the United States: If at first they don't succeed, do most Americans "try, try again"?* Retrieved from https://contemporaryfamilies.org/remarriage-brief-report/

Masci, D., Brown, A., & Kiley, J. (2017). *5 facts about same-sex marriage*. Retrieved from http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/06/26/same-sex-marriage/

Mayer, K. H., Bradford, J. B., Makadon, H. J., Stall, R., Goldhammer, H., & Landers, S. (2008). Sexual and gender minority health: What we know and what needs to be done. *American Journal of Public Health*, *98*(6), 989–995.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

McCall, L. (2001). Sources of racial wage inequality in metropolitan labor markets: Racial, ethnic, and gender differences. *American Sociological Review*, *66*(4), 520–541.

McCall, L. (2005). The complexity of intersectionality. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *30*(3), 1771–1800.

McCarthy, J. (2017, May 15). *US support for gay marriage edges to new high*. Retrieved from http://www.gallup.com/poll/210566/support-gay-marriage-edges-new-high.aspx

Mereish, E. H., O'Cleirigh, C., & Bradford, J. B. (2014). Interrelationships between LGBT-based victimization, suicide, and substance use problems in a diverse sample of sexual and gender minorities. *Psychology, Health & Medicine, 19*(1), 1–13.

Moen, P. (Ed.). (2003). *It's about time: Couples and careers*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Moen, P., Kelly, E., & Huang, Q. (2008). Work, family and life-course fit: Does control over work time matter? *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *73*(3), 414–425.

Moen, P., & Yu, Y. (2000). Effective work/life strategies: Working couples, work conditions, gender, and life quality. *Social Problems*, *47*(3), 291–326.

National Center for Health Statistics. (2017, March 17). *FastStats: Marriage and divorce*. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/marriage-divorce.htm

Oakley, A. (1975). *The sociology of housework.* New York, NY: Pantheon.

Offer, S., & Schneider, B. (2011). Revisiting the gender gap in time-use patterns. *American Sociological Review, 76*(6), 809–833. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122411425170

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Offer, S., & Schneider, B. (2011). Revisiting the gender gap in time-use patterns: Multitasking and well-being among mothers and fathers in dual-earner families. *American Sociological Review*, *76*(6), 809–833.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2015). *OECD family database*. Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/social/family/database.htm

Pager, D., & Shepherd, H. (2008). The sociology of discrimination: Racial discrimination in employment, housing, credit, and consumer markets. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *34*, 181–209.

Parreñas, R. S. (2012). The reproductive labour of migrant workers. *Global Networks, 12*(2), 269–275.

Patterson, C. J., Sutfin, E. L., & Fulcher, M. (2004). Division of labour among lesbian and heterosexual parenting couples: Correlates of specialized versus shared patterns. *Journal of Adult Development, 11*(3), 179–189.

Pedulla, D. S., & Thébaud, S. (2015). Can we finish the revolution? Gender, work–family ideals, and institutional constraint. *American Sociological Review, 80*, 116–169.

Peplau, L. A., & Fingerhut, A. W. (2007). The close relationships of lesbians and gay men. *Annual Review of Psychology, 58*, 405–424.

Perlesz, A., Power, J., Brown, R., McNair, R., Schofield, M., Pitts, M., . . . Bickerdike, A. (2010). Organising work and home in same-sex parented families: findings from the work love play study. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, *31*(4), 374–391.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Perry-Jenkins, M., Newkirk, K., & Ghunney, A. K. (2013). Family work through time and space: An ecological perspective. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, *5*(2), 105–123.

Perry-Jenkins, M., & Wadsworth, S. M. (2017a). Capturing complexities in work and family theory and research. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, *9*(2), 253–256.

Perry-Jenkins, M., & Wadsworth, S. M. (2017b). Work and family research and theory: Review and analysis from an ecological perspective. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, *9*(2), 219–237.

Pettit, B., Hook, J. L., & Hagan, J. (2009). *Gendered tradeoffs.* New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Powell, B., Bolzendahl, C., Geist, C., & Steelman, L. C. (2010). *Counted out: Same-sex relations and Americans' definitions of family*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Pyke, K. D. (1994). Women's employment as a gift or burden? Marital power across marriage, divorce, and remarriage. *Gender & Society*, *8*(1), 73–91.

Reisner, S. L., Greytak, E. A., Parsons, J. T., & Ybarra, M. L. (2015). Gender minority social stress in adolescences: Disparities in adolescent bullying and substance use by gender identity. *Journal of Sex Research, 52*(3), 243–256.

Robinson, J. P., & Milkie, M. A. (1998). Back to the basics: Trends in and role determinants of women's attitudes toward housework. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 60*(1), 205–218.

Ruppanner, L. (2009). Conflict and housework: Does country context matter? *European Sociological Review*, *26*(5), 557–570.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Ruppanner, L., & Treas, J. (2014). Working weekends: Changing European time regimes and gender inequality in household labor. *Journal of Family Issues*, *36*(13), 1782–1809.

Sayer, L. C. (2005). Gender, time and inequality: Trends in women's and men's paid work, unpaid work and free time. *Social Forces, 84*(1), 285–303.

Sayer, L. C., & Fine, L. (2011). Racial-ethnic differences in US married women's and men's housework. *Social Indicators Research*, *101*(2), 259–265.

Schneider, D. (2011). Market earnings and household work: New tests of gender performance theory. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 73*(4), 845–860.

Shelton, B. A. (1992). *Women, men, and time: Gender differences in paid work, housework, and leisure*. New York, NY: Greenwood.

Shelton, B. A., & John, D. (1993). Does marital status make a difference? Housework among married and cohabiting men and women. *Journal of Family Issues, 14*(3), 401–420.

Shields, S. A. (2008). Gender: An intersectionality perspective. *Sex Roles*, *59*(5), 301–311.

South, S. J., & Spitze, G. (1994). Housework in marital and nonmarital households. *American Sociological Review, 59*(3), 327–347.

Southerton, D., & Tomlinson, M. (2005). "Pressed for time"—The differential impacts of a "time squeeze." *Sociological Review*, *53*(2), 215–239.

Spitze, G., & South, S. J. (1985). Women's employment, time expenditure, and divorce. *Journal of Family Issues, 6*(3), 307–329.

Sullivan, O. (1997). The division of housework among "remarried" couples. *Journal of Family Issues*, *18*(2), 205–223.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Sullivan, O. (2011). An end to gender display through the performance of housework? A review and reassessment of the quantitative literature using insights from the qualitative literature. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, *3*(1), 1–13.

Sullivan, O. (2013). What do we learn about gender by analyzing housework separately from child care? Some considerations from time-use evidence. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, *5*(2), 72–84.

Sullivan, O., & Gershuny, J. (2013). Domestic outsourcing and multitasking: How much do they really contribute? *Social Science Research*, *42*(5), 1311–1324.

Sullivan, O., & Gershuny, J. (2016). Change in spousal human capital and housework: A longitudinal analysis. *European Sociological Review*, *32*(6), 864–880.

Sullivan, O., Gershuny, J., & Robinson, J. (2015). *The continuing "gender revolution" in housework and care: Evidence from long-term time-use trends*. Retrieved from https://contemporaryfamilies.org/continuing-gender-revolution-brief-report/

Szinovacz, M. E. (2000). Changes in housework after retirement: A panel analysis. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *62*(1), 78–92.

Thébaud, S. (2010). Masculinity, bargaining, and breadwinning understanding men's housework in the cultural context of paid work. *Gender & Society, 24*(3), 330–354.

Tornello, S. L., Sonnenberg, B. N., & Patterson, C. J. (2015). Division of labor among gay fathers: Associations with parent, couple, and child adjustment. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, 2*(4), 365–375.

Treas, J., & De Ruijter, E. (2008). Earnings and expenditures on household services in married and cohabiting unions. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *70*(3), 796–805.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

Treas, J., & Lui, J. (2013). Studying housework across nations. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, *5*(2), 135–149.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *America's family and living arrangements: Family groups, Table FG3*. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/hhes/families/data/cps2015FG.html

Van de Rijt, A., & Macy, M. W. (2006). Power and dependence in intimate exchange. *Social Forces*, *84*(3), 1455–1470.

Voydanoff, P. (2014). *Work, family, and community: Exploring interconnections*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.

West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender and Society, 1*(2), 125–151.

Westbrook, L., & Saperstein, A. (2015). New categories are not enough: Rethinking the measurement of sex and gender in social surveys. *Gender & Society*, *29*(4), 534–560.

Yavorsky, J. E., Kamp Dush, C. M., & Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J. (2015). The production of inequality: The gender division of labor across the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77(3), 662–679.

Author Manuscript

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.