Values shift, equity and divorce in Western Germany and in the United States.

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Abstract

In principle, we should expect that an equitable division of paid and unpaid work should increase partnership stability because it represents balanced partner contributions to the relationship. And yet, we also observe intensified divorce propensities in tandem with the emergence of gender egalitarianism. Analyzing the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) for West Germany and the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) for the United States, we examine whether dual earner couples become more stable as gender egalitarian values become increasingly dominant.

Our analyses suggest that in both the Unites States and Western Germany, dual earner couples who adopt a gender symmetric division of work display greater stability in more recent marriage cohorts. Indeed, in the U.S. this couple arrangement has become the single most stable. Our findings provide an important empirical counterpoint to the gender construction perspective.

Keywords Equity, norms, couple arrangements, divorce.

1. Introduction

A substantial amount of research has shown that the rise of female employment – and thus the erosion of the conventional gender specialized family model – has been a major source of marital instability in developed countries. The cross-national correlation between female employment and divorce partly validates this prediction, suggesting that women's role change may explain the rise in marital instability (Kalmijn, 2007). At the individual level, however, the link is unclear (Özcan and Breen, 2012): the empirical evidence suggests that the effect of wives' employment on divorce varies both between and within countries (Liefbroer and Dourlejin, 2006; Wagner and Weiß, 2006; Cooke, 2006; Cooke et al, 2013).

Some studies, however, suggest that focusing solely on women's altered employment profile is inadequate unless we simultaneously take into account the domestic sphere and, in particular, the allocation of housework (Sayer and Bianchi, 2000; Schoen et al, 2002; Schoen et al., 2006). In fact, a number of studies highlight the impact of inequitable practices in the division of housework on marital conflict and dissolution (Scanzoni, 1978; Rogers, 2004; Cooke, 2004, 2007; Kluwer et al, 1997; Frisco and Williams, 2003; Cooke, 2007; Gershuny et al., 2005). There is consistent evidence that male participation in household tasks enhances couple stability (Cooke 2004, 2006; Sigle-Rushton 2010; Frisco and Williams, 2003; Wilkie et al., 2008; Kalmjin, 1999). Similarly, the perceived quality of the relationship decreases when the female partner is saddled with a disproportionate share of domestic chores (Frisco and Williams 2003, Wilkie, Feree and Ratcliff, 1998, Kalmijn 1999).

Studies which focus on men's relative dedication to housework usually adopt a linear assumption, i.e. that an increase in the male partner's contribution leads to a, proportionally speaking, reduced risk of divorce – when controlling for the female's level of paid work (or income). Cooke (2007) tests the effect of an equitable division of work by regressing marital stability on the share of housework that the husband does (including also a dummy for whether he contributes more or less than 50% of housework). But her study does not simultaneously take into account the relative contribution of both partners to paid work. Similarly, DeMaris (2010) examines how the

risk of couple disruption is associated with the partners' division of unpaid work, but he does not analyze how this association depends on their division of paid work. We should, however, expect that the partners' perception of fairness is premised on their allocation of both paid and unpaid work (Esping Andersen et al, 2013; Kalmijn and Monden, 2012). Indeed, traditional male breadwinner couples can display perfect equity even if the male's housework contribution is nil (Amato and Booth, 1995; Wilcox and Nock 2006).

Divorce studies only rarely explore the influence of social norms related to gender roles and practices. This is of course only possible in studies that compare across clearly different normative environments. To capture the salience of contrasting "gender cultures", we have selected two countries, West Germany and the US, that clearly differ in terms of the societal discourse on gender roles; additionally, within these countries we focus on two marriage cohorts characterized by a different degree of social approval of gender egalitarianism.

Our study can be seen as an extension of Cooke (2007). Like her, we compare couples in the United States and West Germany. Ours moves beyond hers in two respects. Firstly, we develop a more comprehensive equity measure by including information on the partners' paid and unpaid work simultaneously. Secondly, our study includes very recent marriage cohorts, and this allows us to better identify the extent to which progressively more gender egalitarian values influence the link between equity and divorce risks. There is evidence that the social acceptance of gender egalitarianism has gained momentum in both countries (Bianchi, Robinson and Milkie 2006, Schwartz et al 2010, Schober and Stahl 2014). We use data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) and the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), to examine trends among marriages formed from 1962 to 2008 (2009 in case of the US).

To anticipate our conclusions, we find that overall in Western Germany specialized couples continue to represent the most stable group. In the United States, in contrast, stability is greatest among dual earner couples who embrace an equitable division of work. In contrast to previous studies, in particular Cooke (2007), we find that marital stability among *equitable* dual earner couples has increased within the most recent

cohort in both countries. In Germany, this couple arrangement is now a rival to the traditional specialized partnership in terms of marital stability; in the U.S., it has become the single most stable arrangement.

In the following, we discuss theories on the link between partnership equity, employment and divorce. In the third section, we describe the data, variables and methods. In the fifth, we present our findings. Finally, we conclude.

2.1 Gender norms and partnership stability.

There is a wide agreement that equitable arrangements increase marital stability (Poortman, 2005; Wilcox and Nock, 2006). But this is likely to vary according to the prevailing normative principles that guide couples' division of paid and unpaid work (Cooke and Gash, 2010)[i]. The extent to which equity in partnerships will enhance marital stability is likely to depend on whether the adopted couple arrangement conforms to reigning societal norms (DeMaris and Longmore 1996).

During the decades after the World War II, the breadwinner-homemaker model dominated US and Western German family life; couples without financial strains typically adopted a gendered division of labor (Tilly and Scott, 1978). The beneficial consequences of this were, according to Becker (1981) and Parsons (1953), reduced marital dissolution.

A huge literature has demonstrated that the surge in female employment over the last decades of the 20th Century produced no corresponding increase in males' housework contribution (Bianchi et. al., 2000). Witness Hochchild's (1998) notion of the "stalled revolution". The gender construction perspective argued that women accept a 'double shift' arrangement so as to avoid couple conflicts (Berk 1985, Erickson 2005) and to counteract stigma (Tichenor 2005). In such a normative context, the adoption of inequitable couple arrangements could be interpreted as an insurance against divorce (Ruppanner, 2010). Where traditional gender norms prevail, it is especially after childbirth that women slide into traditional roles (Kaufmann 1998 ; Grunow et al 2013).

Hypotheses

Hyp1. As long as gender egalitarian values remain marginal, gender symmetric arrangements in dual earner couples are likely to be associated with couple instability. In this context, wives' display of traditional gender identities - via 'the double shift' or a return to specialization once women become mothers for example - will stabilize relationships.

Normative expectations regarding the role of women differ quite sharply between West Germany and the United States.[1] After childbirth, (Western) German women will normally curtail employment for several years after which they will, most likely, opt for part-time work or housewifery (Pfau-Effinger 2010). In contrast, American mothers tend to follow divergent labour market trajectories post-birth; they are likely to either continue working on a full-time, full-year basis, or to abandon employment (Drobnic 2001).

Germany and the US exhibit significant differences in terms of labour market and family policies. Since the 1980s, German policy has been biased towards a traditional division of labour, by the tax system (which levies a high marginal tax rate on the second earner), by the family benefit system (designed to promote care of children within the home) and by the shortage of child-care provision (Schober, 2013;Drobnic et. al, 1999; Hook, 2010;Pfau-Effinger 2012). The dualistic employment response among American mothers is, instead, very likely related to the absence of such policies (Blau and Kahn, 2013): in the US there exists no paid maternity leave. The US tax system encourages the labour supply of the most career oriented mothers (Gruber, 2011), and the large (low cost) service sector permits American couples to purchase market substitutes for domestic tasks (Heisig, 2011). Moreover public childcare services are scarce (Charles et.al, 2001).

[1] German female partners with one or two children account for 25% and 20% on average of couples' total paid hours, respectively, while in the United States this incidence is much higher, 35% and 33%.

We find similarly sharp contrasts as regards proper gender roles both in parenting and in the allocation of household tasks. This emerges from research related to the preferences regarding gender roles (Pampel 2000).

Hyp (1a): In line with the gender construction perspective, we expect that the adoption of traditional gender identities may yield a higher stability premium for gender-specialized couples in Germany, and for dual earner couples with female partner doing double shift in the United States.

2.2 The diffusion of new gender values

Although there is a wide agreement about the importance of gender role expectations regarding what is appropriate for men and women (Brines 1994; Pfau Effinger 2004; South and Spitze 2004), it is evident that gender egalitarianism has increased in both countries (Brooks and Bolzendahl 2004).

In West Germany, employment rates have risen sharply among wives and mothers. For the 1940 birth cohort the employment rate of German mother was about 20%, while for the 1970 cohort it nearly doubled – albeit heavily biased in favor of part-time working (Trappe, Pollman-Schult and Schmitt 2015).

In parallel, we observe a clear trend towards more gender egalitarian attitudes (Pampel 2011). The percentage that consider that a pre-school child is likely to suffer if the mother works has fallen from 69% in 1994 to 32% in 2012 (Schober and Stahl 2014). Furthermore, recent policy developments indicate a major expansion of formal childcare and greater support for shared parental care for children. In particular, from the mid-2000s reconciliation policies have sought to promote a more gender-balanced model of childcare (Schober and Schmitt 2013).

Attitudes toward gender egalitarianism became widespread in the United States since 1970s – much earlier than in West Germany. As Donnelly et.al (2015) show, white women born in the postwar decades were the pioneers of gender egalitarian attitudes

in the United States, and one observes a steady rise in subsequent cohorts. There is, however, some evidence that the trend is abating (Cotter, Hermsen and Vanneman 2011). In 1977, 68% believed that a pre-school child with a working mother suffers, while this declined to 35% in 2012 (Donnelly et al 2015). In general, gender egalitarian attitudes are shared by a majority of Americans today.

Given the rise of egalitarian values, the expectation of the women's caring priority loses its dominant normative status and, as a consequence, the stability premium associated with traditional couple arrangements should decline in both countries. Thus, changes in normative expectations imply a second hypothesis.

Hyp 2: As gender egalitarian norms spread, we should expect a decline in divorce risks among dual earner couples with an equitable division of unpaid work.

4. Data, methods and variables

4.1 Data and analytical sample.

The GSOEP began in 1984 with a representative sample (interviewed annually) of 12,290 individuals nested in 5921 households.[ii] We exclude Eastern Germany since it only entered into the GSOEP after 1990. The PSID started in 1968 with a nationally representative sample of 18,000 individuals residing in 5,000 family units[iii]. Interviews were collected on an annual basis until 1997 and biennially thereafter.

Both are representative panel surveys that provide information on marital history, weekly data on the partners' paid and unpaid work hours, as well as most standard socio-demographic characteristics. In order to obtain a comparable time frame, we analyse the years 1986-2010 for the PSID and the years 1986-2009 for the GSOEP. Compared to the GSOEP, the PSID has some limitations. Firstly, the head of household

responds on behalf of all household members, while the GSOEP conducts separate interviews with each member. Secondly, the PSID does not report information on parental childcare. Our comparisons focus therefore only on domestic work. [As we will explain below, in order to address the potential bias from the missing childcare measure, we control for the number of children as well as for the presence of a child younger than 3.[2] Thirdly, the GSOEP collects information about paid and unpaid work during the weekdays for all the years considered while during the week-end only for some years, while US data refers to an ordinary day.

We examine only couples in which both respondents are between age 18 and 55 so as to ensure that they fall within the employable ages. We exclude cohabiting couples for both theoretical and practical considerations. Firstly, in both countries the distribution of paid and unpaid work is different for cohabiting and married couples (Barg and Beblo, 2012; Bianchi et al., 2014). Secondly both in West Germany and in the United States the meaning of marriage and cohabitation differ markedly. In the U.S., cohabitation has become common but it tends to be short-lived and is clearly not an equivalent to marriage (Heuveline and Timberlake 2004). West Germany shows a low level of cohabitation (Dominguez-Folgueras 2013) and fertility is strongly associated with marriage (Le Goff 2002). Thirdly, on a practical note, we do not have retrospective data related to cohabitation spells and can therefore not construct comparable marital and cohabitation histories. [3]

We identify marital histories by combining retrospective and panel information. The start of each episode corresponds to the first year in which we observe the couple together. When the start of the partnership episode does not correspond to the actual first year of observation, we report the duration using the actual partnership starting date. Partnership episodes are right-censored at any of the following events: age 55, 20 years of partnership duration, or last available interview (due to separation or death). The dependent variable is coded 1 for years during which a separation occurs and zero

[2] Cooke (2004) demonstrates that the relative contribution to child care of German fathers does not alter significantly the risk of marital dissolution

[3] In order to prevent biases related to selection into cohabitation, we re-estimate our models pooling cohabiting couples with married couples (Appendix A2).

otherwise.

These restrictions produce a final sample of 7259 couples for the GSOEP and 8255 for the PSID (and an analytical sample of, respectively, 33376 and 53048 couple-years). We observe 473 episodes of marital dissolution (separations or divorces of married couples) in West Germany, and 1439 in the United States.

Explanatory variables

Our key explanatory variable is a typology of couple arrangement that simultaneously takes into account equitable practices and the division of paid work of both partners.

Our typology of couple arrangements considers two dimensions: the couple's adherence to equity, and the division of paid work. We first measure the relative share of paid work of the male partner (from 0% to 100%). In the PSID, from 1997 onwards, we use filler variables, whenever available, which measure the average number of weekly hours worked two years ago (t-2)[iv]. Secondly, we measure the relative amount of unpaid work of the male partner (again ranging from 0 to 100%). In the PSID, the housework hours are measured at the time of the survey by asking the main respondent how many weekly hours, on average, does each spouse dedicate to housework[v].

Following the approach in Esping-Andersen et al. (2013)[4], we identify equitable couples when the male share of domestic work corresponds symmetrically to the male share of paid work hours. Similarly to Nock (2001), we allow for a (+/-) .10 deviation from this condition.

[4] http://sp.oxfordjournals.org/content/8/2/152.short

We then combine the equity criterion with specific family patterns of partners' division of paid work, inspired by Lewis (2001, Table 1, pag 157)[5]. This produces five distinct couple arrangements (see Appendix A1 for details):

* *traditional couples* where the male share of paid work is more than 75%.

* *dual earner couples* where the male share of paid work is between 35% to 75%.

This model has three variants,

- *the gender egalitarian model* where both partners are employed and contribute equally to paid and unpaid work;
- *the undershooter model* where both partners are employed and where the female partner contributes relatively more to unpaid work;
- *the overshooter model* where both partners are employed and the male partner contributes relatively more to unpaid work;

* *female-dominant breadwinner family* where the female share of paid work exceeds 65%.[6]

We do not consider under-employed couples, i.e. where the sum of paid hours of both partners is less than 20 hours a week (a very small percentage of our sample).

Objective and subjective measures of equity.

Research on the influence of fairness on marital outcomes has largely favoured subjective measures. But here a problem arises because the respondent is asked to report a perception that is then used to explain another perception, such as marital happiness (Mirowsky, 1985). This can produce ambiguity as regards the link between the explanatory and the dependent variable. To illustrate, someone who is dissatisfied with the partnership may report a low level of satisfaction and a low level of perceived equity. But the link may be spurious and the causal role of either variable is unknown (Grote and Clark 2001, DeMaris, 2011). It is for this reason that we opt for an 'objective' measure of equity.

[5] http://sp.oxfordjournals.org/content/8/2/152.short

[6] As shown in Appendix A2 we conduct sensitivity checks for these thresholds

Control variables

We include the standard control variables used in divorce studies: whether it is a first marriage, the current year (linear and squared), the wife's age at the year of marriage (linear and squared), and the age difference between the partners (whether he is older less than or equal to 5 years, whether she is older, and whether he is older more than 5 years)[vi].

We include both partners' education level as categorical variables. For the United States, the categories correspond to: less than 12 years of education (less than high-school diploma), 12 years (high-school diploma), between 13 and 15 years (some college or a two-year college degree), and 16 years plus (four-year college degree or more). For West Germany, we include 3 categories corresponding to: ISCED 1 and 2, ISCED 3 and 4, and ISCED 5 and 6. Additionally, for the U. S. we also include a categorical variable for the race of the female respondent (white, black or other[vii]) since, historically, marital instability has been greater among black couples (Hoffman and Duncan 1995). For Western Germany we include a dummy that identifies whether the interviewed is Turkish, since they are a prevailing ethnic minority with a lower risk of divorce.

Finally we construct two marriage cohorts that represent a proxy for value changes within each country. We distinguish between couples married before 1986 and after (or during) 1986. Since we control for marital duration, we avoid a misinterpretation of the empirical findings due to compositional characteristics of the marriage cohorts (Wagner, Schmid and Weiß 2015).

Tables 1 and 2 present descriptive statistics for the main variables included in the models for, respectively, West Germany and the United States.

INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE
INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

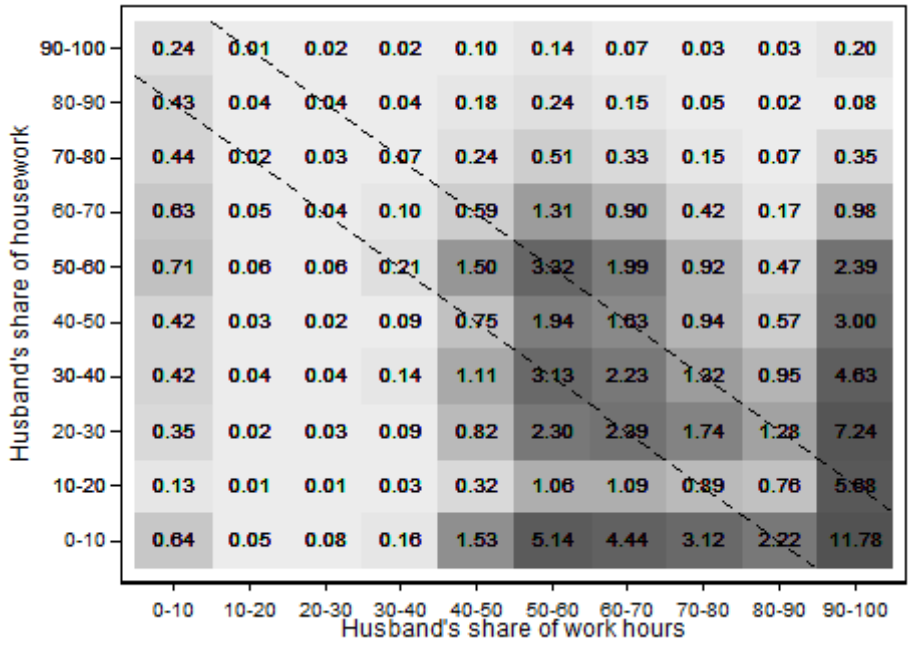
4.2 Descriptive statistics and methodology

We first present the relative distribution of couple-years according to the couples' combined shares of domestic and paid hours, and how dual earner couples cluster around the 'equity space' (Figures 2 and 3), comparing the two marriage cohorts. These are heat maps which graphically illustrate the husband's relative participation in paid and unpaid work. Each cell represents the percentage of couples in terms of how they divide paid and unpaid work.

To summarize change across the marriage cohorts, we show in Table 3 the characteristics of couples married in the two periods. We observe that equity for dual earner couples increased. In the older cohort, only about of couples where both members work were equitable. By 1986-2009 marriage cohort, this percentage has risen to…

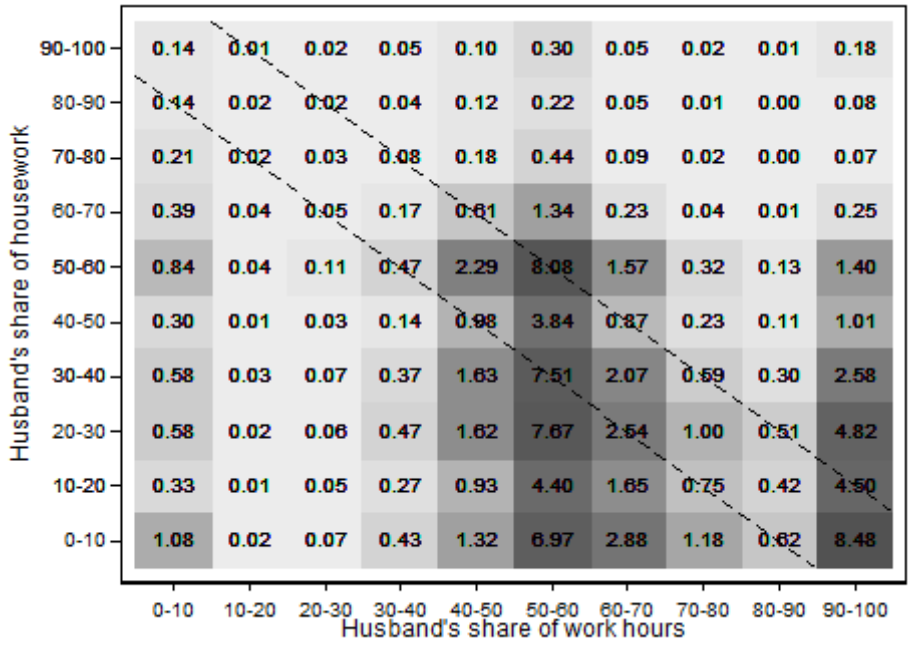
In Figure 2 and 3, we report two maps for Western Germany and two for the United States, the first refers to the marriage cohort pre-1986 and the second 1986-2009. We can observe sharp differences… the bottom right corner cell shows that 11.78% of German couple-years represent a division of paid and housework hours where the husband accounts for 90-100% of paid work and 0-10% of housework. The colour of the cell indicates the degree of density (the darker it is the greater is the density).

The contribution of women's employment and earnings to household income inequality: a cross-country analysis



We observe that couples in both countries tend to concentrate in the right half of the quadrant: i.e. female dominance in the labour market is uncommon in both countries. When, however, we hone in on the details we see noticeable differences. Firstly, German wives participate relatively less in the labour market than their US counterparts. Indeed we observe that a larger share of German couples concentrate in the bottom right corner – where the husband is either the sole or main earner: in 36.3% of cases, the husband's share of paid work is over ninety per cent, and in another 31.3% of cases, his share is between sixty and ninety per cent. In the U.S, the distribution of couple-years is biased towards either dual-earners or male sole earners. The share of husbands accounting for 40-60 percent of all paid work is 43.9%; for husbands whose share is 90 percent plus, it is 23.4%.

Figure 3 – The distribution of couple-years according to the combined shares of housework and paid hours. The United States



When we examine the diagonal it is evident that traditional arrangements are quite dominant among equitable couples in West Germany; in the United States, the bias is in favour of the dual-earner arrangement.

We estimate two sets of models. Model 1 tests the pure association between couple arrangements and divorce (Hypothesis 1). Model 2 tests whether equity has a different effect on divorce risks within dual-earner couples (Hypothesis 2). In each case, we first present a naked model (a) which includes only our main variables of interest (as well as partnership duration). In a second model (b) we include the control variables summarized in Tables 1 and 2.

5. Empirical results

Gender identities and couple arrangements.

Tables 3 and 4 for, respectively, West Germany and the United States summarize our main results regarding the test of the first hypothesis – whether the display of traditional gender identities help to stabilize marital partnership (Hypothesis 1). We first present results for the null model (model 1), which includes only the marital

duration and the variable that identifies couple arrangements – here the reference category is the equitable dual earners model. In the full models we include the control variables (without and with controls for number of children and whether in a family a child under three is present – Model 2 and 3) . All the results are presented as odds ratios.

TABLE 3 and 4 ABOUT HERE

The results for Western Germany are clear; the adoption of a traditional family model compared to the adoption of dual earners equitable practices diminishes the relative risk of divorce by about 30% - these results are pretty much the same both in naked model and in the full models. This means that in Western Germany couples that embrace traditional gender identities inside and outside the domestic sphere gain a stability premium.

For the United States, specialization has the similar relative impact on marital dissolution but its coefficient is not significant – both in the naked and in the full models. Moreover, we observe that overall the double shift model (under-shooter dual earner couples) significantly increases the hazard of divorce in the United States compared to equitable dual earners couples.

For ease of interpretation, we present the results obtained in the Models 2 and 3 in Figure 3. As the model is non-linear, we prefer to estimate predictive margins of our explanatory variable. In Figure 3, we present the predictive margins based on the full model with endogenous variables) for each couple arrangement for West Germany and the United States - Model 3 in Table 3 for West Germany and Table 4 for the United States.

Figure 3. The effect of equity on the risk of divorce for couple arrangements in West Germany and in the United States

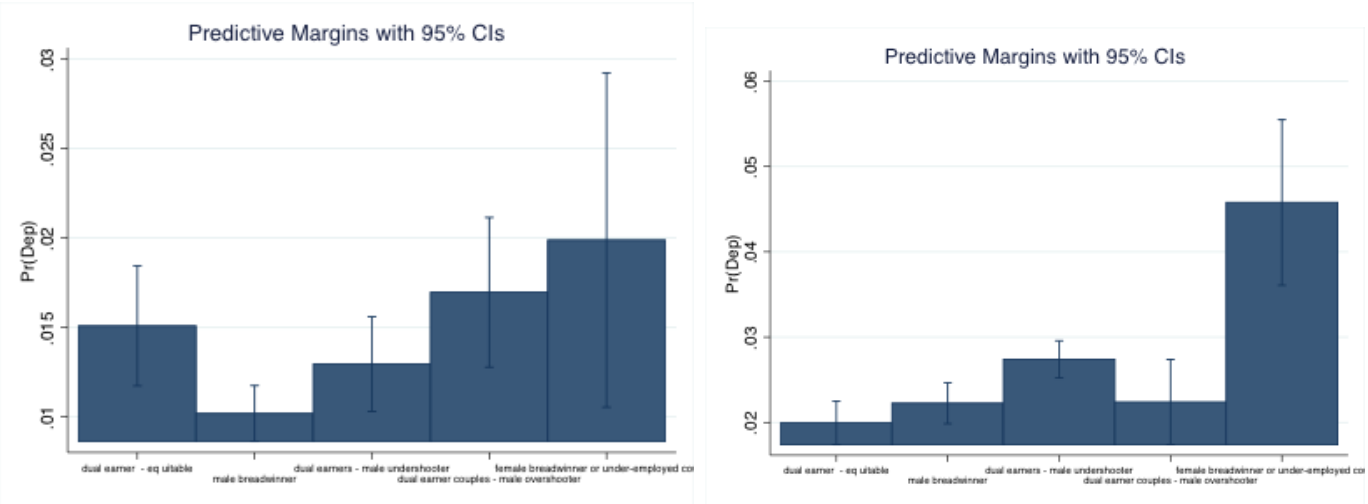


Figure 3 suggests that in West Germany, where the traditional homemaker/breadwinner model remains strong (at least when small children are present), divorce risks are significantly lower when the husband is the main earner. It is clear from the figure that traditional model is the most stable partnership in West Germany. Moreover we can observe that the result associated with under-shooter dual earner couple goes in the same direction, even if the related coefficient is not significant. We can conclude that, as predicted by the gender construction perspective (Hypothesis 1a), the adoption of traditional marital gender role in the domestic sphere by women (regardless their participation to the labour market) exerts a negative impact on marital dissolution and this is especially the case for couples where man is the main breadwinner.

In contrast, in the U.S the embrace of gender identities in the domestic sphere does not exercise a clear stabilizing effect (Hypothesis 1a). US traditional couples do not benefit from a lower risk of separation compared to equitable dual earners couples. We can note also that dual earner couples where women do the double shift have higher risk of separation than dual earner couples where paid and unpaid work are divided equally.

In both countries the embracing of a female breadwinner model increases the risk of divorce, and this is especially the case for the United States.

Additional test show that these results are not driven by the imposition of thresholds of paid work that we implement to define couple arrangements (see Appendix tables A3).

Taken together, these results only partly support the "gender construction perspective" thesis. That is, the adoption of gender identities, through the adoption of traditional

division of paid and unpaid work or through the double shift, does not represent a universal insurance against marital dissolution.

Values shift and couple arrangements: changing risk of marital dissolution.

In the second part of our empirical analysis, we study trends in the association between couple arrangements and relative hazard of divorce across. These trends are estimated using logistic models with the same covariates used for previous results, but with the introduction of an interaction term between couple arrangements and marriage cohorts (see Table 5 and Table 6). Results are presented as odds ratios.

TABLE 5 and 6 ABOUT HERE

Our findings suggest that equitable dual earner couples have once been more likely to dissolve compared with couples with husband as main breadwinner, but that this association has declined in Western Germany and even reversed in the United States.

Figure 4 shows more in detailed these results.
Here we reported the predictive margins of our explanatory variable when all the control variables are included (exogenous and endogenous) for the older and the younger marriage cohort.
The results indicate that in Western Germany dual earners couples embracing an equitable practices formed between the ’60 and the beginning of the ’80 were more likely than couples with men as main breadwinner to dissolve (the hazard was 60% higher). As predicted by value shift perspective, traditional couples were no longer significantly less likely to divorce for the second marriage cohort. In other words, being in a traditional union is not even more a strong guarantee against marital separation for couples formed after 1986 in West Germany. Consistently with this result, we can observe from figure 4 that also the adoption of double shift for women is not even more a safe strategy against marital dissolution. Under-shooter dual earners couples were once more protected against separation (the risk of dissolution was about 50% lower for them compared to equitable dual earner couples) but not even more. Accordingly,

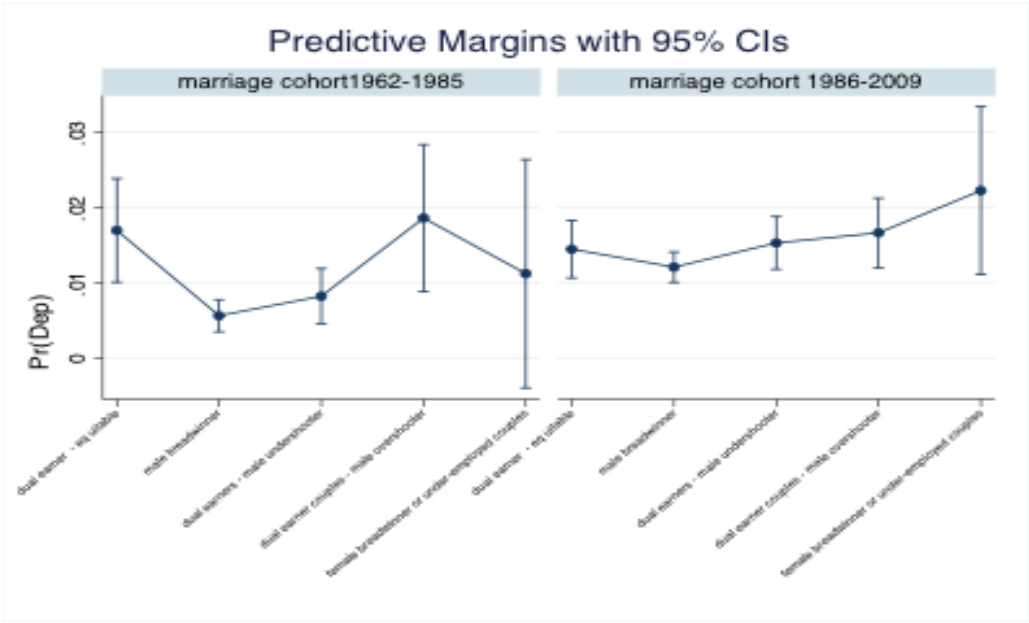
declines in divorce for equitable dual earner couples contrasts with the gender construction perspective since there is not evidence that the adoption of gendered practices in the division of paid and unpaid work exerts a negative impact on the risk of divorce in Western Germany.

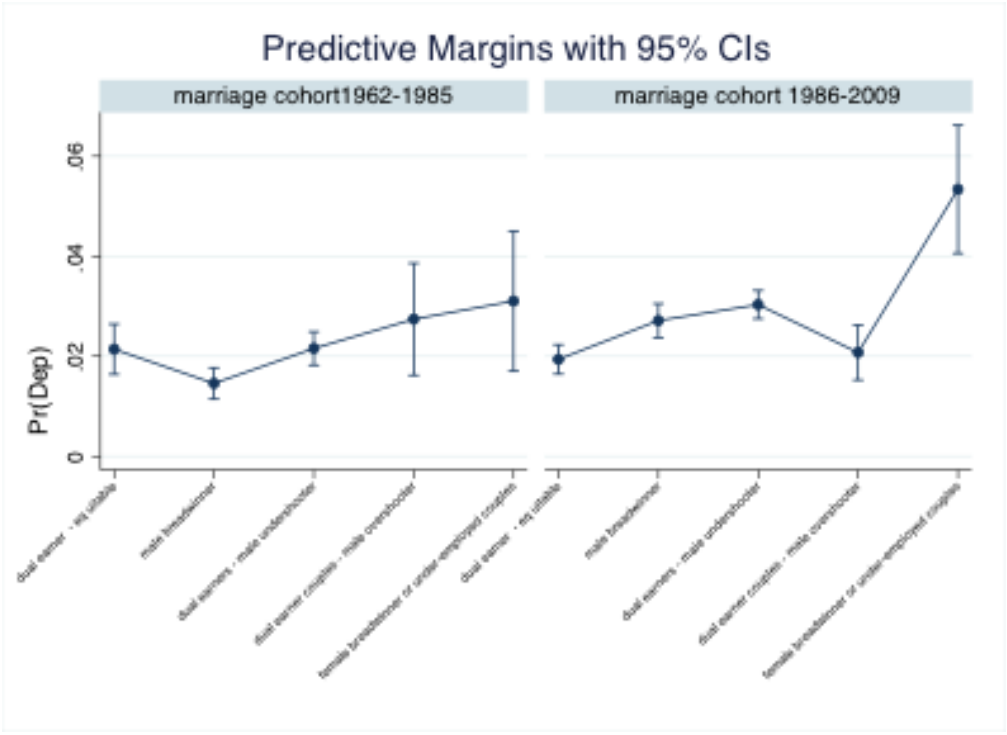
These results portrait a similar evolutionary scenario for the United States - even with some distinctions. Figure 4 suggests that the hazard of dissolution appeared the lowest for traditional couples composing the first marriage cohort. In particular, their risk of dissolution was 30% lower than the one associated to equitable dual earner couples. They were less likely to dissolve than under-shooter dual earners couples too.

As predicted by the value shift hypothesis, the risk of dissolution is no longer significantly lower for traditional couples belonging to the second marriage cohort: the hazard of dissolution for traditional couples marrying between the '60s and the beginning of the '80s is significantly higher than those for equitable dual earner couples. Moreover under-shooter dual earner couples were likely to divorce as equitable dual earner couples but they have lost ground. The hazard of dissolution for this group of couples was similar to the one of the reference category and now it is about 50% higher. In contrast with the gender construction perspective, we observe that in the United States equitable dual earner couples have become less likely than other couples to divorce.

Moreover, we can observe that female dual earner couples have become more likely in both countries than other couples to divorce. Although it is not the main focus of our article, these results contribute to the recent branch of the literature on the consequences of female breadwinner couples on divorce risks by showing that this specific couple arrangement explicitly increases marital dissolution for the younger marriage cohort.

Fig 4: – The effect of marriage cohort on the risk of divorce for different couple's paid work arrangements in West Germany and in the United States





7. Conclusions

Our study tries to brought new theoretical and empirical insights to the study of the relationship between the adoption of a specific couple division of paid and unpaid work and marital stability. It has proved fruitful on at least three dimensions. First of all it recognizes the presence of qualitatively different behavioral logics that are driven by rival normative orders. Secondly it points out the importance of dominant social rules to explain changes in family life. Thirdly it partly improves the understanding of changes in the acceptance of gender egalitarian attitudes, family practices and recent trend in marital stability.

We focus on two countries, Western Germany and the United States that stands out for their high female labor market participation. This choice is particularly fruitful for our purposes because we are able to compare two countries that, even if have in common an increasing support for gender symmetric arrangements, are placed at different stages of the social adherence to these practices.

Considering the first hypothesis, that the display of traditional gender identities can help stabilize relationships, we find that, overall, traditional couples are more stable than equitable dual earner couples in Western Germany, but this is not the case for the United States. Contrary to the predictions, there traditional couples have a similar stability premium than equitable dual earner couples while women doing double shift have a higher propensity to divorce.

Considering the second hypothesis, that equity has increasingly contributed to greater conjugal stability within dual-earner partnerships, we observe that the stability premium related to the women's adherence to traditional behavior in the domestic sphere has declined in both countries and that equitable dual earner couples increased their advantage in the United States. In other words, the adoption of traditional division of paid and unpaid work was once the best insurance against divorce in Western Germany and in the United States but this is not longer the case. Couples marrying between the 60s and the beginning of the 80s composed by a male breadwinner and a under-employed wife (that we compose what we call a traditional couple) were more protected against the risk of divorce than traditional couples formed after. Another key finding is that, for the fist marriage cohort considered, dual earners couples sharing symmetrically the paid and the unpaid work were more likely to divorce than couples with husband as main breadwinner. Nowadays, in Western Germany as well as in the United states equitable dual earner couples are not more likely to divorce than the

traditional couples; in particular, in the United States, these couples now appear as the most stable. This suggests that gender egalitarianism exerts a strong pull in favor of marital stability in the United States while it is still rather embryonic as a partnership stabilizer in Western Germany.

In this sense, our findings support only partly the gender construction perspective: the adoptions of traditional practices of the division of work do not remain the strongest source of couple stability neither in Western Germany or in the United States.

We find at least three reasons why our conclusions may differ from previous studies. First, since the stabilizing effect of equity practices among dual earner couples is more recent, the use of data that cover marital histories up to 2009-2010 allow us to identify new trends in couples' behavior. Second, we are able to identify new effects since we focus on distinct couple arrangements treating equity as a "non linear" status. Three, we consider couples nested in marriage cohorts and this allow us to observe important changes in the relationship between couple arrangements adoption and marital instability. This choice better fits with a value shift perspective that emphasizes a constant flux away from rigid gender specialization and an increasing support toward more egalitarian partnerships (Oppenheimer 1997, Schwartz and Han 2014, Esping Andersen and Billari 2015, Arpino et al 2015).

In this study we have performed a large number of robustness and sensitivity checks that should help ensure that our results are valid. However these results must be interpreted as an attempt to identify the effect of the social change in gender quality in the home on marital stability. A more advanced way to test these hypotheses in future work would be to examine whether values shift are driven by specific social categories (e.g. educational classes) that constitute the vanguard both in the United States and in Western Germany of diffusion of these new patterns.

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TABLES

Table 1 – Descriptive statistics for West Germany

	West Germany			
	Mean	*S.D.*	*Min.*	*Max.*
Time-varying variables				
Logarithmic of duration	2.30	0.81	0.00	3.26
Equity	0.34	0.47	0.00	1.00
Paid work categories				
95-100%	0.35	0.48	0.00	1.00
60-95%	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00
40-60%	0.26	0.44	0.00	1.00
0-40%	0.06	0.24	0.00	1.00
Year (0 = 1986)	9.98	7.52	0.00	23.00
Year squared	156.13	151.81	0.00	529.00
Wife's variables				
Age at marriage	26.66	8.78	16.00	63.00
First marriage	0.98	0.13	0.00	1.00
Education				
Low (ISCED 1-2)	0.22	0.42	0.00	1.00
Medium (ISCED 3-4)	0.57	0.50	0.00	1.00
High (ISCED 5-6)	0.21	0.41	0.00	1.00
Husband's variables				
Education				
Low (ISCED 1-2)	0.16	0.37	0.00	1.00
Medium (ISCED 3-4)	0.52	0.50	0.00	1.00
High (ISCED 5-6)	0.32	0.46	0.00	1.00
Couple's variables				
Age difference				
Same age	0.60	0.49	0.00	1.00
Wife is younger	0.14	0.35	0.00	1.00
Husband is older	0.26	0.44	0.00	1.00
Couples-years	49461			

Table 2 – Descriptive statistics for the United States

	United States			
	Mean	*S.D.*	*Min.*	*Max.*
Time-varying variables				
Logarithmic of duration	2.19	0.76	0.00	3.22
Equity	0.34	0.47	0.00	1.00
Paid work categories				
95-100%	0.23	0.42	0.00	1.00
60-95%	0.19	0.39	0.00	1.00
40-60%	0.50	0.50	0.00	1.00
0-40%	0.08	0.27	0.00	1.00
Year (0 = 1986)	7.54	7.53	0.00	24.00
Year squared	113.51	160.67	0.00	576.00
Wife's variables				
Age at marriage	26.84	8.02	13.00	64.00
Age at marriage squared	784.51	522.25	169.00	4096.00
Race				
White	0.68	0.47	0.00	1.00
Black	0.22	0.41	0.00	1.00
Other	0.10	0.31	0.00	1.00
First marriage	0.74	0.44	0.00	1.00
Education				
Less than high school	0.12	0.32	0.00	1.00
High-School	0.36	0.48	0.00	1.00
Some College	0.28	0.45	0.00	1.00
College	0.25	0.43	0.00	1.00
Husband's variables				
Education				
Less than high school	0.15	0.36	0.00	1.00
High-School	0.38	0.48	0.00	1.00
Some College	0.23	0.42	0.00	1.00
College	0.24	0.43	0.00	1.00
Couple's variables				
Age difference				
Same age	0.59	0.49	0.00	1.00
Wife is younger	0.22	0.41	0.00	1.00
Husband is older	0.19	0.39	0.00	1.00
Couples-years	66402			

Note: + p<0.10 * p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 3 – Couple arrangements, cohort effect and divorce risks in Western Germany

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
duration	0.891**	0.973	0.959
	(0.0464)	(0.0703)	(0.0713)
Ref: equitable dual earner couples			
traditional couples	0.674***	0.731*	0.731*
	(0.0941)	(0.122)	(0.125)
undershooter couples	0.853	0.826	0.824
	(0.133)	(0.132)	(0.131)
overshooter couples	1.133	1.121	1.128
	(0.195)	(0.196)	(0.199)
female dominant	1.317	1.400	1.397
	(0.357)	(0.420)	(0.420)
2nd cohort		1.690***	1.746***
		(0.297)	(0.317)
hours of paid work		1.003	1.003
		(0.00304)	(0.00306)
hours of unpaid work		0.998	0.998
		(0.00334)	(0.00359)
year		1.046	1.045
		(0.0336)	(0.0336)
year2		0.998*	0.998*
		(0.00120)	(0.00120)
already married		0.488***	0.497***
		(0.127)	(0.131)
age		0.975**	0.974***
		(0.00989)	(0.00996)
german		0.715***	0.713***
		(0.0695)	(0.0694)
partners' age difference 1		1.535***	1.540***
		(0.219)	(0.220)
partners' age difference 2		1.147	1.145
		(0.135)	(0.135)
2.educ3		0.903	0.908
		(0.118)	(0.119)
3.educ3		0.979	0.985
		(0.166)	(0.167)
2.educ3_hus		0.925	0.926

		(0.131)	(0.131)
3.educ3_hus		0.633***	0.632***
		(0.110)	(0.110)
nchild3			0.902
			(0.130)
nchildm			1.050
			(0.0653)
Constant	0.0193***	0.0375***	0.0375***
	(0.00288)	(0.0207)	(0.0207)
Observations	33,014	33,014	33,014

Table 4 – Couple arrangements, cohort effect and divorce risks in the United States

dep	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
duration	0.800***	0.810***	0.780***
	(0.0274)	(0.0385)	(0.0375)
Ref: equitable dual earner couples			
traditional couples	1.153	1.152	1.126
	(0.102)	(0.132)	(0.130)
undershooter couples	1.403***	1.230***	1.218**
	(0.110)	(0.0980)	(0.0972)
overshooter couples	1.100	1.058	1.057
	(0.148)	(0.143)	(0.143)
female dominant	2.390***	2.112***	2.102***
	(0.316)	(0.336)	(0.334)
2nd cohort		1.188*	1.204*
		(0.120)	(0.123)
hours of paid work		1.001	1.001
		(0.00203)	(0.00202)
hours of unpaid work		0.991***	0.990***
		(0.00199)	(0.00206)
year		1.075***	1.074***
		(0.0179)	(0.0179)
year squared		0.997***	0.997***
		(0.000626)	(0.000627)
already married		0.620***	0.646***
		(0.0508)	(0.0535)
age		0.946***	0.949***
		(0.00615)	(0.00633)
race		1.156***	1.131***
		(0.0494)	(0.0491)
partners' age difference 1		1.216***	1.214***
		(0.0899)	(0.0897)
partners' age difference 2		1.162**	1.166**
		(0.0888)	(0.0889)
1.educ4		1.182	1.199
		(0.142)	(0.145)
2.educ4		1.319**	1.337**
		(0.168)	(0.171)
3.educ4		0.974	0.997
		(0.140)	(0.144)
1.educ4_hus		0.901	0.909
		(0.0851)	(0.0859)
2.educ4_hus		0.767**	0.775**

		(0.0818)	(0.0827)
3.educ4_hus		0.439***	0.445***
		(0.0556)	(0.0565)
nchild3			1.001
			(0.0664)
nchildm			1.103***
			(0.0289)
Constant	0.0311***	0.127***	0.109***
	(0.00274)	(0.0419)	(0.0363)
Observations	52,461	52,461	52,461

Note: * p<0.10 ** p<0.05 *** p<0.01

Table 5 – Couple arrangements, cohort effect and divorce risks in Western Germany

	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
duration	0.980	0.963	0.963
	(0.0709)	(0.0719)	(0.0719)
Ref: equitable dual earner couples			
traditional couples	0.365***	0.361***	0.361***
	(0.111)	(0.109)	(0.109)
undershooter couples	0.458**	0.458**	0.458**
	(0.144)	(0.144)	(0.144)
overshooter couples	1.113	1.118	1.118
	(0.385)	(0.387)	(0.387)
female dominant	0.722	0.712	0.712
	(0.535)	(0.529)	(0.529)
2nd cohort	0.982	1.012	1.012
	(0.274)	(0.285)	(0.285)
traditional couples #2nd cohort	2.443***	2.486***	2.486***
	(0.816)	(0.832)	(0.832)
undershooter couples #2nd cohort	2.168**	2.163**	2.163**
	(0.789)	(0.787)	(0.787)
overshooter couples #2nd cohort	1.059	1.064	1.064
	(0.424)	(0.426)	(0.426)
female dominant#2nd cohort	2.311	2.342	2.342
	(1.824)	(1.851)	(1.851)
hours of paid work	1.003	1.003	1.003
	(0.00305)	(0.00306)	(0.00306)
hours of unpaid work	0.998	0.997	0.997
	(0.00336)	(0.00360)	(0.00360)
year	1.039	1.037	1.037
	(0.0334)	(0.0334)	(0.0334)
year2	0.998*	0.998	0.998
	(0.00120)	(0.00120)	(0.00120)
already married	0.494***	0.504***	0.504***
	(0.129)	(0.132)	(0.132)
age	0.975**	0.975**	0.975**
	(0.00985)	(0.00992)	(0.00992)
german	0.700***	0.698***	0.698***
	(0.0703)	(0.0702)	(0.0702)
partners' age difference 1	1.523***	1.529***	1.529***
	(0.218)	(0.219)	(0.219)
partners' age difference 2	1.153	1.150	1.150
	(0.136)	(0.136)	(0.136)
2.educ3	0.897	0.903	0.903
	(0.117)	(0.119)	(0.119)
3.educ3	0.971	0.979	0.979
	(0.164)	(0.166)	(0.166)
2.educ3_hus	0.923	0.923	0.923
	(0.131)	(0.131)	(0.131)
3.educ3_hus	0.634***	0.633***	0.633***

	(0.110)	(0.110)	(0.110)
nchild3		0.888	0.888
		(0.128)	(0.128)
nchildm		1.057	1.057
		(0.0664)	(0.0664)
Constant	0.0571***	0.0574***	0.0574***
	(0.0325)	(0.0329)	(0.0329)
Observations	33,014	33,014	33,014

Table 6– Couple arrangements, cohort effect and divorce risks in the United States

	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
duration	0.851***	0.805***	0.774***
	(0.0330)	(0.0383)	(0.0374)
Ref: equitable dual earner couples			
traditional couples	0.692**	0.702**	0.688**
	(0.123)	(0.126)	(0.123)
undershooter couples	0.988	0.876	0.870
	(0.144)	(0.129)	(0.128)
overshooter couples	1.287	1.224	1.219
	(0.317)	(0.304)	(0.302)
female dominant	1.438	1.250	1.261
	(0.400)	(0.351)	(0.355)
2nd cohort	0.771*	0.778	0.790
	(0.116)	(0.130)	(0.133)
traditional couples #2nd cohort	2.131***	1.986***	1.984***
	(0.418)	(0.390)	(0.389)
undershooter couples #2nd cohort	1.581***	1.580***	1.576***
	(0.274)	(0.275)	(0.275)
overshooter couples #2nd cohort	0.811	0.828	0.832
	(0.238)	(0.245)	(0.246)
female dominant#2nd cohort	1.966**	2.056**	2.020**
	(0.602)	(0.635)	(0.627)
hours of paid work	0.999	1.001	1.001
	(0.00202)	(0.00202)	(0.00202)
hours of unpaid work	0.993***	0.991***	0.989***
	(0.00198)	(0.00199)	(0.00207)
year		1.074***	1.073***
		(0.0179)	(0.0179)
year squared		0.997***	0.997***
		(0.000627)	(0.000627)
already married		0.623***	0.648***
		(0.0509)	(0.0537)
age		0.946***	0.949***
		(0.00614)	(0.00633)
race		1.153***	1.129***
		(0.0494)	(0.0491)
partners' age difference 1		1.214***	1.213***
		(0.0899)	(0.0896)
partners' age difference 2		1.161**	1.165**
		(0.0887)	(0.0888)
1.educ4		1.178	1.194
		(0.142)	(0.144)
2.educ4		1.306**	1.326**
		(0.166)	(0.169)
3.educ4		0.969	0.993
		(0.139)	(0.143)
1.educ4_hus		0.901	0.908
		(0.0852)	(0.0859)

2.educ4_hus		0.771**	0.778**
		(0.0822)	(0.0831)
3.educ4_hus		0.440***	0.446***
		(0.0557)	(0.0566)
nchild3			0.996
			(0.0662)
nchildm			1.103***
			(0.0289)
Constant	0.0424***	0.175***	0.150***
	(0.0100)	(0.0599)	(0.0521)
Observations	52,461	52,461	52,461

Values shift, equity and divorce in Western Germany and in the United States.

DATA SOURCE DETAIL

Technical Appendix

A1. Work hours and hours of housework – United States

Work hours

In the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), we use the following question to measure the average weekly hours of paid work for each spouse.

[For the survey year 1986]
"On the average, how many hours a week did you work on your main job(s) in 1985?"
"On the average, how many hours a week did she [your wife] work on her main job(s) in 1985?

The information is provided by the head of the household, who is for a large majority of households the male respondent. Work hours are collected for the previous year and not the year of the survey. After the switch to biennial interviews, the PSID collected work hours for the previous year as well as the year before the last in some selected years: 1999, 2001, 2009 and 2011. Between the years 2003-2007, the work hours at t-2 were collected for small sub-sample of respondents called OFUMs (other family unit members) but they represent a very small percentage of our total sample.

Housework hours

We use the following question to measure the average weekly hours of housework for each spouse.

[For the survey year 1986]
"About how much time do you (HEAD) spend on housework in an average week? I mean time spent cooking, cleaning, and doing other work around the house?"

“About how much time does your (Wife/"WIFE") spend on housework in an average week? I mean time spent cooking, cleaning, and doing other work around the house.”

Again, the information is provided by the head of the household for both spouses. Differently from the work hours, the information on housework is collected at the time of the survey.

Combining work and housework hours

In Table A1, we summarize in which years the work and housework hours variables are available. In order to construct our equity measure, we need to observe work and housework hours both partners in the same year. After the biennial switch, given the pattern of data collection, we had to do some imputations to carry out our analysis. For the years 1998, 2000, 2008 and 2010, we used the work and housework hours measured at t-1. We proceed with list wise deletion for the years from 2001 to 2006.

Robustness checks

Table A1 – Availability of the work hours and housework hours variables in the PSID by year

Years	Work hours	Housework
1986-1997	yes	yes
1998	yes	no
1999	yes	yes
2000	yes	no
2001	no	yes
2002	yes	no
2003	no	yes
2004	yes	no
2005	no	yes
2006	yes	no
2007	yes	yes
2008	yes	no
2009	yes	yes
2010	yes	no

A2. Work hours and hours of housework – Western Germany

Work hours

In the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP), we use the following question to measure the average weekly hours of paid work for each spouse.

[For the survey year 1986]
“And how much on average does your actual working week amount to, with possible overtime?”
[For the survey year 2002]

“And how many hours do your actual working-hours consist of including possible over-time?”

or,
in case of missing value,
“How many hours per week is your agreed working week without overtime?”

The information is provided by each spouse.

Housework hours

We use the following question to measure the average weekly hours of housework for each spouse.

[For the survey year 1986]
“What does your normal day look like at present? How many hours per day do you spend on the following activities? Please enter this separately for the average workday and for Sunday. Household and shopping”

[For the survey year 1997]

“How many hours per day do you spend on the following activities? Housework (washing, cooking, cleaning) … on a typical weekday, on a typical Saturday and on a typical Sunday”

[for the survey year 2006]
“What does a typical weekday look like for you? How many hours per day do you spend on the following activities? Housework (washing, cooking, cleaning) - ”

Again, the information is provided by both spouses.

Combining work and housework hours

In Table A1, we summarize in which years the work and housework hours for weekdays and for week-end days are available. In order to construct our equity measure, we need to take into consideration working days and week-end for both partners.

Table A2 – Availability of the work hours and housework hours variables in the PSID by year

	week days	Sunday and or Suturday
1986	yes	Sunday
1987	yes	Sunday
1988	yes	Sunday
1989	yes	Sunday
1990	yes	Sunday

1991	yes	no week end
1992	yes	Sunday
1993	yes	Saturday & Sunday
1994	yes	no week end
1995	yes	Saturday & Sunday
1996	yes	No week-end
1997	yes	Saturday & Sunday
1998	yes	No week-end
1999	yes	Saturday & Sunday
2000	yes	No week-end
2001	yes	Saturday & Sunday
2002	yes	No week-end
2003	yes	Saturday & Sunday
2004	yes	No week-end
2005	yes	Saturday & Sunday
2006	yes	No week-end
2007	yes	Saturday & Sunday
2008	yes	No week-end
2009	yes	Saturday & Sunday

Robustness checks.

Consistency of typology of couple arrangements

Detailed definition of typology of couple arrangements used in the text.

Here a more detailed description on the characteristics of

* *Traditional couple* when male and female partners have differentiated roles (sole or dominant breadwinner) and where the husband is the main labour market participant; here the male share of paid work is more than 75%. Other conditions that we impose (not reported in the main text) are the following. We allow for couples where female partner works 20 hours a week at maximum and male partner works at least 30 hours.

* *dual earners couple model* includes dual earners couples where both members are engaged into the labour market; the male share of paid work is between 35% to 75%. Another condition (not reported in the text) that we impose is the following. We allow for couples where both female partner and male partner work 10 hours a week at minimum.

We delete couples where the sum of the paid hours of both partners is lower than 15.
Moreover we do not consider couples that do not meet our criteria.

Changing couple arrangements typology: sensitivity checks

As a first test of consistency of our results, we define the five couple arrangements changing the threshold of male's share of paid work.

Table A3 and A4 contains estimations as in Table 3 and 4 but, for the sake of robustness in the estimations, we use a different typology of couple arrangements. As a consequence, our explanatory variable is here recoded.

* *Traditional couple* when male and female partners have differentiated roles (sole or dominant breadwinner) and where the husband is the main labour market participant; here the male share of paid work is more than *80*% (Model 1) or more than 70% (Model 2). Other conditions that we impose are the following. We allow for couples where female partner works 20 hours a week at maximum and male partner works 30 hours at minimum.

* *Dual earners couple model* includes dual earners couples where both members are engaged into the labour market;[7] the male share of paid work is between 35% to 80% (Model 1), 35% to 70% (Model 2), 35% to 70% (Model 3), 35% to 60% (Model 4). Another condition that we impose is the following. We allow for couples where both female partner and male partner work 10 hours a week at minimum.

* *Female breadwinner model* where female earner contributes dominantly or uniquely to couple's total paid work; the female share of paid work is up to 60% (model 3) or up to 70% (model 4)

As we can observe, results are quite consistent across models. Each model that does not contain the interaction term shows that traditional couples in Western Germany have a stability premium while in the United States they have similar odds to equitable dual earner couples. Once the interaction term is added to the model, we observe that differences among equitable dual earner couples and traditional couples declined in Western Germany; in the United States divorce propensities among equitable dual earner couples and the other couple arrangements grew with equitable dual earner couples gaining the highest stability premium.

This is consistent with the main results reported in the article.

Table A3: Equity, couple arrangements and divorce in Western Germany and in the United States, robustness checks

	Western Germany							
	Model 1	Model 1	Model 2	Model 2	Model 3	Model 3	Model 4	Model 4
traditional couples	0.721*	0.415***	0.817	0.428***	0.817	0.428***	0.729*	0.362***
	(0.122)	(0.126)	(0.144)	(0.132)	(0.144)	(0.132)	(0.124)	(0.109)
undershooter couples	0.822	0.478**	0.820	0.516**	0.820	0.516**	0.825	0.459**
	(0.130)	(0.150)	(0.136)	(0.168)	(0.136)	(0.168)	(0.132)	(0.144)
overshooter couples	1.241	1.092	1.069	1.371	1.069	1.371	1.126	1.116
	(0.207)	(0.379)	(0.205)	(0.491)	(0.205)	(0.491)	(0.198)	(0.387)
female dominant	1.422	0.764	1.507	0.821	1.507	0.821	1.314	0.712
	(0.424)	(0.566)	(0.460)	(0.614)	(0.460)	(0.614)	(0.404)	(0.529)
2nd cohort	1.734***	1.087	1.739***	1.094	1.739***	1.094	1.740***	1.015
	(0.315)	(0.304)	(0.317)	(0.326)	(0.317)	(0.326)	(0.317)	(0.286)
traditional couples #2nd cohort		2.044**		2.298**		2.298**		2.467***
		(0.684)		(0.779)		(0.779)		(0.825)
undershooter couples #2nd cohort		2.033**		1.835		1.835		2.159**
		(0.736)		(0.690)		(0.690)		(0.786)
overshooter couples #2nd cohort		1.223		0.754		0.754		1.063
		(0.483)		(0.317)		(0.317)		(0.425)
female dominant#2nd cohort		2.179		2.146		2.146		2.183

	United States							
	Model 1	Model 1	Model 2	Model 2	Model 3	Model 3	Model 4	Model 4
traditional couples	1.163	0.706*	1.071	0.660**	1.126	0.688**	1.126	0.688**
	(0.135)	(0.127)	(0.124)	(0.119)	(0.130)	(0.123)	(0.130)	(0.123)
undershooter couples	1.204**	0.864	1.219**	0.880	1.218**	0.870	1.218**	0.870
	(0.0956)	(0.127)	(0.0983)	(0.132)	(0.0972)	(0.128)	(0.0972)	(0.128)
overshooter couples	1.052	1.236	1.012	1.101	1.057	1.219	1.057	1.219
	(0.140)	(0.301)	(0.141)	(0.289)	(0.143)	(0.302)	(0.143)	(0.302)
female dominant	2.145***	1.291	2.023***	1.208	2.102***	1.260	2.102***	1.260
	(0.339)	(0.363)	(0.326)	(0.344)	(0.334)	(0.355)	(0.334)	(0.355)
2nd cohort	1.202*	0.794	1.205*	0.789	1.203*	0.790	1.203*	0.790
	(0.123)	(0.132)	(0.123)	(0.135)	(0.123)	(0.133)	(0.123)	(0.133)
traditional couples #2nd cohort		2.001***		1.950***		1.984***		1.984***
		(0.393)		(0.382)		(0.389)		(0.389)
undershooter couples #2nd cohort		1.567***		1.550**		1.576***		1.576***
		(0.272)		(0.274)		(0.275)		(0.275)

overshooter couples #2nd cohort	0.810	0.901	0.832	0.832
	(0.236)	(0.279)	(0.246)	(0.246)
female dominant#2nd cohort	2.009**	2.023**	2.020**	2.020**
	(0.622)	(0.630)	(0.627)	(0.627)

Fixed effects model

The association between couple arrangements and divorce may be affected by potential bias due to omission of explanatory factors that can be correlated with the adoption of a specific couple arrangement. This bias is here addressed by fixed effects estimation model that helps c controlling for unobserved characteristics.

In model 7 and 9 we control for exogenous variables while Model 8 and 10 we control for exogenous and endogenous variables.

We obtain significant effects associated with being in a traditional couple arrangement in Western Germany; similar results to the ones reported in the main text are obtained when the interaction term is added. This indicates that unobserved individual specific effects do not explain (solely) the divorce variance. Similar conclusions are valid also for the United States.

Table A5: Equity couple arrangements and divorce in Western Germany and in the United States, results from fixed effects model.

	Western Germany			
	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
traditional couples	0.528***	0.464***	0.196***	0.198***
	(0.128)	(0.115)	(0.113)	(0.117)
undershooter couples	0.962	1.033	0.498	0.545
	(0.195)	(0.214)	(0.228)	(0.252)
overshooter couples	1.076	0.971	1.039	0.985
	(0.233)	(0.215)	(0.458)	(0.441)
female dominant	1.082	1.138	0.614	0.685
	(0.465)	(0.505)	(0.536)	(0.603)
2nd cohort			0.935	1.699
			(1.533)	(2.993)
traditional couples #2nd cohort			3.339**	2.815
			(2.043)	(1.779)
undershooter couples #2nd cohort			2.349*	2.285
			(1.199)	(1.182)
overshooter couples #2nd cohort			1.095	1.023
			(0.554)	(0.527)

female dominant#2nd cohort			2.189	2.023
			(2.093)	(1.948)
Observations	2,182	2,182	2,182	2,182
	United States			
	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
traditional couples	0.749	0.744	0.415***	0.502**
	(0.136)	(0.149)	(0.126)	(0.167)
undershooter couples	0.962	0.899	0.692*	0.671*
	(0.109)	(0.107)	(0.141)	(0.145)
overshooter couples	1.015	0.990	1.440	1.175
	(0.173)	(0.182)	(0.451)	(0.385)
female dominant	1.255	1.121	0.803	0.722
	(0.341)	(0.330)	(0.398)	(0.376)
2nd cohort			0.666	0.695
			(0.000)	(0.000)
traditional couples #2nd cohort			2.233**	1.711
			(0.742)	(0.624)
undershooter couples #2nd cohort			1.595*	1.516
			(0.391)	(0.392)
overshooter couples #2nd cohort			0.628	0.781
			(0.235)	(0.309)
female dominant#2nd cohort			1.815	1.808
			(0.984)	(1.038)
Observations	6,441	6,441	6,441	6,441

Other sesnsitivity test

Censoring after 15 years follow up.

The association between couple arrangements and marital dissolution may vary across marital duration. If this is the case we may represent just a time specific association between couple arrangements and divorce. For the sake of generalizability of our results, we consider just the first 15 years of marital history (at maximum).

Model 5 and 6 in Table A4 report results that are very similar to the ones obtained consider the first 20 years of marital history, for both countries. Because of the lower numerosity of the sample, results do not get the same level of significance as in the model reported in the main text. This is especially the case of traditional couples in Western Germany.

Table A4: Equity, couple arrangements and divorce in Western Germany and in the United States, robustness checks

	Wester Germany		United States	
	Model 5	Model 6	Model 5	Model 6
traditional couples	0.757	0.320***	0.495*	0.187*
	(0.138)	(0.115)	(0.181)	(0.189)
undershooter couples	0.867	0.515*	1.252***	0.839
	(0.150)	(0.188)	(0.106)	(0.146)
overshooter couples	1.114	0.886	1.057	1.283
	(0.212)	(0.387)	(0.150)	(0.362)
female dominant	1.261	1.623	2.274***	1.375
	(0.431)	(0.569)	(0.385)	(0.438)
2nd cohort	1.512*	0.797	1.030	0.722*
	(0.325)	(0.259)	(0.133)	(0.139)
traditional couples #2nd cohort		2.871***		3.351
		(1.107)		(3.622)
undershooter couples #2nd cohort		1.927		1.667***
		(0.801)		(0.330)
overshooter couples #2nd cohort		1.380		0.784
		(0.668)		(0.256)
female dominant#2nd cohort		1		1.909*
		(0)		(0.647)
Observations	26,784	26,683	33,421	33,421

[i] Scholars have pointed out that also institutional settings, such as maternal leave, working schedules and labor market institutions may modify stability premium associated with equitable couple arrangements.

[ii] We exclude the first two waves because of changes in the definition of key variables.

[iii] In 2000 the GSOEP added a major new refresher sample that significantly increased the sample size (Wagner, 2009).

[iv] In the Technical Appendix, we explain how we use the filler variables to construct the relative measure of paid work.

[v] In the Technical Appendix, we explain how we handle missing information in the off-years after 1997.

[vi] For robustness, we included variables on the number of children in the household and whether any child under the age of 3 are present in the household. Our results remained unchanged but are available upon request.

[vii] 'others' regroup American Indian and Alaska natives, Asian and Pacific Islanders, Latin descents, and 'others'