

Gender Ideology: Components, Predictors, and Consequences

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to review research on the construction of gender ideology and its consequences. The article begins with a summary of research focused on measuring gender ideology—individuals' levels of support for a division of paid work and family responsibilities that is based on the belief in gendered separate spheres. We describe the ways this concept has been operationalized in widely available data sources and provide a categorization schema for the items used to measure gender ideology. We also review the research predicting gender ideology, focusing on social and demographic characteristics while concurrently examining studies using cross-sectional, trend, and panel data. Finally, this article summarizes research focused on the consequences of gender ideology, both in families and family-related behaviors and in other areas of social life where beliefs about gender are relevant, such as the workplace. We conclude with implications for future research for measurement tools, predictors of gender ideology, and consequences of ideology in individuals' lives.

The U.S. labor force changed markedly from the 1960s to the mid-1970s. In 1965, 44.7% of mothers with children under age 18 reported being employed in the previous year. However, by 1975, 56.1% of mothers with children in the home reported being employed (e.g., Bianchi et al. 2006). Public opinion polls captured national worries about the changing division of paid work and family responsibilities, especially among mothers of young children. The first national surveys measuring worries about families moving away from a traditional division of paid and unpaid work, with men as breadwinners and women as homemakers, were conducted in the mid-1960s (Cherlin & Walters 1981, Mason et al. 1976). The attitudes captured by these surveys, what we term gender ideology, represent individuals' levels of support for a division of paid work and family responsibilities that is based on this notion of separate spheres. Not surprisingly, these early surveys show some hesitation regarding women's paid employment and engagement with the public sphere, especially when they had young children at home. A slim majority of women in 1964 felt that women who worked could have a warm relationship with their children, whereas almost 70% of women held this attitude in the early 1970s (Mason et al. 1976).

By the mid-1990s, the U.S. labor force reflected mothers' continued full- and part-time employment. For example, in 1995, 75.1% of mothers with children under age 18 reported being employed the previous year (Bianchi et al. 2006). On average, Americans had become more comfortable with the idea of women, particularly mothers, working at least part time when their children are young and were much more comfortable with men sharing household responsibilities (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004).

The purpose of this article is to place the above findings into context. By reviewing research on the contemporary construction of gender ideology and its consequences on individuals' decision making and lived experiences, this article provides insight into the ways gender ideology has influenced and will continue to influence American behavior. This review moves

beyond focusing solely on predictors of gender ideology or on one specific consequence. Rather, it presents an examination of the consequences of gender ideology in a variety of areas where beliefs about gender matter (e.g., the family and the workplace). In addition, we review research on factors that have led to changes in individual-level gender ideologies over time. We begin with a discussion of issues regarding measurement of gender ideology. Next we review the research in which gender ideology is predicted, incorporating a historical component by focusing concurrently on research with trend and panel data. Finally, we summarize research on the consequences of gender ideology. We conclude by discussing fruitful avenues for future research on the measurement and consequences of gender ideology.

Whereas numerous researchers examine the influence of gender ideology on family- and work-related behaviors in other countries (Batalova & Cohen 2002, Fuwa 2004, Kulik 2002), this review focuses primarily on research on the United States. Given the significant political and economic changes around the globe since the 1960s, we could not adequately address the construction and influence of gender ideologies because of the breadth of historical and contextual factors that would need to be considered. Therefore, although we refer to some work conducted in other countries, the majority of research reviewed here is based on U.S. samples.

MEASUREMENT OF GENDER IDEOLOGY

Researchers use a variety of phrases to describe individuals' levels of support for a division of paid work and family responsibilities that is based on the notion of separate spheres, including gender ideology, gender role attitudes, attitudes about gender, gender-related attitudes, gender egalitarianism, and others. The use of a particular phrase may be partly due to the authors' beliefs about conceptual distinctions or due to a journal's preferences (*Journal of Marriage and Family* discourages authors from using

the language of gender roles, for example). In large part, the research literature reflects the influence that that language of roles has had on the discipline, even though there has been a substantial critique of this language with regard to gender (see, for example, Stacey & Thorne 1985). A quick examination of articles published from 2000 to 2008 (as abstracted in *Sociological Abstracts*) yields 168 articles that discuss in some manner individuals' levels of support for a division of paid work and family responsibilities that is based on the notion of separate spheres: 75 of those use the language of gender role attitudes, 53 use the language of gender ideology, 24 use gender attitudes or gender-related attitudes, and the remainder are almost equally split among beliefs about gender, attitudes about gender, and gender egalitarianism.

We use the term gender ideology to represent the underlying concept of an individual's level of support for a division of paid work and family responsibilities that is based on the notion of separate spheres. Many nationally representative surveys, both cross-sectional and longitudinal, include items measuring gender ideology. In particular, the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth—1979 Cohort (Center for Human Resource Research 2006b) and its Child/Young Adult Supplement (Center for Human Resource Research 2006a), the General Social Survey (JA Davis et al. 2007) and its international counterpart, the International Social Survey Program (Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung 2004), the National Study of Families and Households (Sweet et al. 1988), the Marital Instability over the Life Course study (Booth et al. 2003), the Intergenerational Panel Study of Parents and Children (Thornton et al. 2002), the National Study of the Changing Workforce (Bond et al. 1998), the World Values Survey (European Values Study Foundation and World Values Survey Association 2006), and the High School and Beyond study (U.S. Department of Education 2001) all include at least two items specifically to measure gender ideology.

Table 1 lists these surveys and items, noting items that are used in multiple questionnaires.

These items can be generally organized into six categories: primacy of the breadwinner role, belief in gendered separate spheres, working women and relationship quality, motherhood and the feminine self, household utility, and acceptance of male privilege. That the research on this concept still relies on the language of roles can be seen from the items used to measure these beliefs: Three of the six categories are clearly connected to the roles that women and men are expected to inhabit in married and procreative heterosexual relationships (primacy of the breadwinner role, working women and relationship quality, and motherhood and the feminine self).

Although these attitudes or beliefs are social psychological concepts, there is little overlap with the measures of beliefs about gender roles typically published in social psychological outlets (Spence & Helmreich 1978, Swim et al. 1995). This could be because the sociological literature is trying to tap beliefs about relationships between women and men rather than prescribed roles that individuals inhabit. As such, the measures, while fitting largely under the domains wrought with the connotation of roles, are attempts at measuring beliefs about relationships.

Many population-based survey designs interested in gender ideology use measures, like those in **Table 1**, that have been shown to be valid and reliable. However, some researchers are working to improve measurement strategies and are constructing new methods of measuring gender ideology. For example, Baber & Tucker (2006) and Valentine (2001) constructed questionnaires tapping different components of gender ideology. Baber & Tucker examined the multiple and diverse social roles women and men inhabit with an attempt to divorce those roles from gendered labels. Valentine developed a set of items measuring the aversion to women who work. Both questionnaires yield acceptable reliability and validity among undergraduates, suggesting further testing is needed before those measures are used more broadly.

The majority of research on gender ideology has asked respondents to report whether they

Table 1 Items used to measure gender ideology

Item	Instrument(s) ^a
Primacy of breadwinner role	
Both the man and woman should contribute to the household income.	ISSP
A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family.	ISSP
The husband should earn higher pay than the wife.	MIOLC
If jobs are scarce, the wife shouldn't work.	MIOLC
Even if the wife works, the husband should be the main breadwinner.	MIOLC
When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women.	WVS
If a woman earns more money than her husband, it's almost certain to cause problems.	WVS
Belief in gendered separate spheres	
It is much better for everyone concerned if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and family.	GSS, HS&B, IPSPC, NLSY79&C-YA, NSFH, NSCW
There is some work that is men's and some that is women's, and they should not be doing each other's.	IPSPC
A woman's place is in the home, not in the office or shop.	NLSY79&C-YA
A wife who carries out her full family responsibilities doesn't have time for outside employment.	NLSY79&C-YA
Working women and relationship quality	
A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.	GSS, ISSP, MIOLC, NSCW
A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.	GSS, ISSP, NSFH
All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job.	ISSP
A husband shouldn't worry if his wife is gone overnight in connection with her job.	MIOLC
The employment of wives leads to more juvenile delinquency.	NLSY79&C-YA
Wife/motherhood and the feminine self	
Women are much happier if they stay at home and take care of their children.	HS&B, IPSPC, NLSY79&C-YA
A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children.	ISSP
Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.	ISSP
Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person.	ISSP
A wife's most important task is caring for her children.	MIOLC
A working wife feels more useful than one who doesn't hold a job.	NLSY79&C-YA
In a successful marriage, the partners must have the freedom to do what they want individually.	NSFH
Do you think that a woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled?	WVS
Household utility	
A wife should not expect her husband to help around the house after he comes home from a hard day's work.	IPSPC
If a wife works full-time, the husband should help with homework.	MIOLC
Men should share the work around the house with women, such as doing dishes, cleaning, and so forth.	NLSY79&C-YA
Employment of both parents is necessary to keep up with the high cost of living.	NLSY79&C-YA
If a husband and wife both work full time, they should share household tasks equally.	NSFH

(Continued)

Table 1 (Continued)

Item	Instrument(s) ^a
Acceptance of male privilege	
It is more important for a wife to help her husband's career than to have one herself.	GSS; IPSPC
Parents should encourage as much independence in their daughters as in their sons.	NSFH
A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl.	WVS
If you were to have only one child, would you rather have it be a boy or a girl?	WVS
On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do.	WVS

^aInstrument abbreviations: GSS, General Social Survey; HS&B, High School and Beyond; IPSPC, Intergenerational Panel Study of Parents and Children; ISSP, International Social Survey Program; MIOLC, Marital Instability over the Life Course; NLSY79&C-YA, National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1979 Cohort and Child/Young Adult Sample; NSCW, National Study of the Changing Workforce; NSFH, National Study of Families and Households; WVS, World Values Survey.

agree or disagree with a series of statements about women's and men's responsibilities relevant to the separate spheres framework. However, not all research has used this method. Hochschild & Machung's (1989) groundbreaking work categorizing individuals as traditional, transitional, or egalitarian was based on interviews and participant observation rather than answers to closed-ended questions. Through these interviews, Hochschild determined that individuals had ideologies "on top" and "underneath"; they could hold specific beliefs about women's employment and men's domestic responsibilities (on top ideologies), but their own lived experiences could reflect a potentially different reality of shared work (underneath ideologies). Kroska (2000) questioned whether gender ideology should be considered a belief system or an identity; she reports measuring gender-ideological identity by determining the extent to which respondents reported their similarity (and their partner's similarity) to characters within five same-sex vignettes on outlook toward women, ideals, and life commitments. The vignettes and corresponding questions seem to provide a method of measuring characteristics associated with gender ideology, as the measures have high construct validity.

GENDER IDEOLOGY CONSTRUCTION

Given the collection of data in large-scale data sets as described above, sociologists have been able to examine not only changes in gender ide-

ology over time but also whether there have been changes in the predictors of gender ideology in the United States over time. Data sets such as the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1979, have allowed researchers to move beyond trend studies and examine changes in ideology and influences on ideology over the life course of individuals. Here we review research on the construction of gender ideology, incorporating findings from cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, while focusing on social and demographic predictors of ideology.

Cultural Shifts: Period and Cohort Changes

Period effects on gender ideology are shown through changes in individual predictors over time. Several researchers using trend data to study changes in gender ideology in the United States have found period effects, although the impetus for change continues to be unclear (Brewster & Padavic 2000, Carter & Borch 2005, Ciabattari 2001). What is clear is that period effects have influenced men's slower pace of gender ideology change since the 1970s (Ciabattari 2001). The influence of context on gender ideology differs based on period (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Carter & Borch 2005, Powers et al. 2003). Living in bigger cities led to more egalitarian attitudes in the 1970s and 1980s but not in the 1990s. Living in a border state declined in influence from the 1970s to the 1990s, but the gap between the South and non-South existed in the 1990s even

when individual demographic characteristics were controlled. However, region became less of an influence on ideologies in the 1990s than in earlier decades due largely to increasing regional similarity in other characteristics such as employment and education (Powers et al. 2003). Bolzendahl & Myers noted that while later periods show few differences in the specific influences on gender ideologies, both women and men became more egalitarian in the 1990s than in previous periods.

Cohort effects on gender ideology are the result of more egalitarian cohorts aging into the adult population and replacing the older traditional cohorts. This leads to population-level shifts in attitudes. Brewster & Padavic (2000) found that cohort succession was more important in attitude change than were changes in individual characteristics. More recent cohorts show larger differences between men and women and a smaller effect of education on attitudes. Compared to men born in the pre-baby boom era, men born later are less traditional (Ciabattari 2001). Brooks & Bolzendahl (2004) also found substantial cohort effects in their analysis of beliefs about gender from the mid-1980s to the 1990s (over 55% of change in attitudes was due to cohort differences), although ideological learning seemed to mediate much of the cohort effect. Changes in social-structural factors such as labor force participation and marital status played only a small role in attitude change; approximately one-third of the cohort effects and one-half of the period effects were mediated by changes in rights-based ideology.

Social and Demographic Background Characteristics

Bolzendahl & Myers (2004) argued that individual "attitudes toward feminist issues," including the concept of gender ideology, are a function of interest-based or exposure-based explanations. Interest-based explanations rely on the interest structures of individuals, that is, personal goals. When people's interests benefit from gender equality, they are likely to

hold more egalitarian gender beliefs. As there is abundant evidence that most people's interests, regardless of gender, would benefit from gender equality (Barnett & Rivers 2004), why would someone not hold egalitarian gender beliefs? One answer is that the interest structures of women and men are culturally expected to be different based upon the hegemonic gender beliefs reifying the notion of polarized gender differences (Ridgeway & Correll 2004) and that this expectation becomes real in its consequences (Barnett & Rivers 2004). This explains why women have more egalitarian gender ideologies than do men, as men are less likely to believe, based on cultural explanations, that gender equality will benefit them.

Exposure-based explanations argue that exposure to ideas and situations that are consonant with egalitarian ideals will lead to the development of more egalitarian beliefs (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004). This exposure may be in the form of socialization, education, or personal experience. These explanations are inherently about change over time; exposure to egalitarian ideals or situations encourages the subsequent development of egalitarian ideologies. Conversely, exposure to situations encouraging individuals to believe that egalitarianism is not in their best interest would lead to less egalitarian beliefs. Alternatively, individuals could become less egalitarian to reduce cognitive dissonance in interactions where gender egalitarianism is expected but gender inequality is historically the norm (e.g., in marriages and parenting).

Whereas exposure to gender egalitarianism may come in the form of socialization, and personal interests relative to gender egalitarianism may develop through socialization, social and demographic characteristics may also influence gender ideology formation. For example, Bolzendahl & Myers (2004) argued that because women have more of a vested interest in increased egalitarianism, men are expected to be less egalitarian than women. Both longitudinal trend studies (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Brooks & Bolzendahl 2004, Thornton & Young-DeMarco 2001) and

panel studies (Cunningham et al. 2005, Fan & Marini 2000) noted that men are less gender egalitarian than are women. Young men in particular are hesitant to challenge the cultural standard of the mother role and the expectation of negative child outcomes due to maternal employment (Jorgenson & Tanner 1983, Mason & Lu 1988, Thornton et al. 1983). Perhaps this hesitation is because in general, men benefit from women's unequal performance of family and household tasks.

One key factor in socialization is the intergenerational transmission of ideology. Mothers play a key role in socialization, and as a result much of the previous research has focused on maternal influence. Maternal education and employment are both representative of mothers' increased exposure to egalitarian beliefs and practices (Banaszak & Plutzer 1993, Ciabattari 2001, Liao & Cai 1995, Rhodebeck 1996, Tallichet & Willits 1986). Mothers' own ideologies are expected to change in response to increased exposure to gender egalitarianism. Further, mothers act as role models during socialization. Maternal education and labor force participation provide children with exposure to a more gender egalitarian method of household organization. Not only are increased maternal employment and education associated with egalitarianism in children (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Ciabattari 2001, Fan & Marini 2000, Harris & Firestone 1998), but more egalitarian mothers tend to have less gender-role stereotyped children (Bliss 1988, Myers & Booth 2002, Thornton et al. 1983). Myers & Booth (2002) noted that having both mothers and fathers who are gender egalitarian significantly increases the likelihood that boys will also be forerunners in gender egalitarianism (this relationship does not exist for girls).

Fathers' gender ideologies seem to be independently influential in the socialization process. Fathers are likely to set expectations for their children and model how to divide family responsibilities in a manner similar to mothers. However, the lion's share of childrearing continues to be performed by mothers. Furthermore, compared to mothers, fathers have been

shown to engage in more sex-typed treatment of their children and to be more involved with their sons than their daughters, giving fathers more opportunities to model traditional attitudes and behaviors for their sons (Bulanda 2004; McHale et al. 2003, 2004). Researchers who have examined fathers' and mothers' gender ideologies together have found that mothers and daughters tend to be more egalitarian than sons and fathers within the same families (Burt & Scott 2002, Kulik 2002), that nontraditional fathers are more involved in parenting than traditional ones, regardless of maternal gender ideology (Bulanda 2004), and that in terms of beliefs about marital roles fathers' attitudes—but not mothers'—are significantly related to their children's attitudes.

In sum, parental ideologies are positively associated with child gender ideologies, such that more gender egalitarian parents are likely to have more gender egalitarian children. This intergenerational transmission of beliefs occurs through direct interaction, modeling, and the construction of the child's home environment (Sutfin et al. 2008). Sutfin et al. found that parents with more traditional gender ideologies organized their home environments in ways that reinforced sex stereotypes that in turn independently encourage the development of traditional gender ideologies among children. However, regardless of socialization, the saliency of family-of-origin effects on attitude formation seems to recede during adolescence as the influence of adolescents' peers and their own life experiences becomes stronger (Davis 2007).

Racial and ethnic differences in gender ideology have roots in historical racial and ethnic differences in labor force participation and access to education. African Americans are expected to be more gender egalitarian than whites because African American women have a higher rate of labor force participation (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2005) and African Americans have a higher commitment to egalitarianism in general (Harris & Firestone 1998). Among those studies that find racial and ethnic differences in gender ideologies, African American women are more egalitarian than white women

(Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Fan & Marini 2000, Kane 2000). While some research argues that there is little difference in gender ideologies among men (Kane 2000), Ciabattari (2001) found that African American men were less traditional than white men on attitudes toward employed mothers. These relationships are complicated by social class, however. Recent upwardly mobile middle-class African Americans may be more traditional than African Americans with a middle-class background, as a way of distancing themselves from stereotypes about black families (Hill 2002). African American women who have recently achieved middle-class status see living out the separate spheres model and being a homemaker as a privilege. Lower-class African American mothers tend to hold traditional beliefs while modeling egalitarian behavior. Some evidence also suggests that Hispanics are less egalitarian than are non-Hispanic whites (Fan & Marini 2000, Kane 2000), especially regarding attitudes toward separate spheres (Ciabattari 2001, Kane 2000).

Although the relationship between aspects of religion and beliefs about gender is complex (Denton 2004), increased levels of religious practice are expected to reinforce traditional viewpoints and reduce support for gender egalitarianism (Hertel & Hughes 1987, Peek et al. 1991). Further, specific tenets within religious doctrines often focus on gender relations and women's and men's relative responsibilities for childrearing. As such, religions are expected to differ in their teachings about gender relations and thus lead to different ideologies among their followers. Findings generally indicate that Conservative Protestants are the least supportive of gender egalitarianism, and Jews are the most supportive, with Catholics and mainline Protestants somewhere in between (Baker et al. 2009, Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Ciabattari 2001; but see Fan & Marini 2000, Greeley 1989, Hoffmann & Miller 1997, Moore & Vanneman 2003). Religious affiliation and personal religious beliefs influence gender ideology by constructing narratives regarding the appropriateness of power-sharing in heterosex-

ual marriages, though this process is moderated by social class. Middle- and upper-class Conservative Protestants tend to be more egalitarian than lower-class Conservative Protestants, likely as a way to reduce cognitive dissonance (Bartkowski 2001). The narratives surrounding appropriate gendered responsibilities, such as men as the heads of households, are altered to explain the pragmatic egalitarianism that may exist in daily life. Women's employment continues to be problematic because of the possibility of child neglect, but men's participation in childrearing is seen as an example of their headship in the family (Gallagher 2003).

Context also shapes an individual's gender ideologies; living in a state with a higher proportion of fundamentalists is negatively associated with holding egalitarian gender beliefs (Moore & Vanneman 2003). Research performed in Louisiana comparing covenant and standard marriages found that couples in covenant marriages hold more traditional gender ideologies than do those in standard marriages (Baker et al. 2009). Covenant couples see their marriage choice as an outward expression of their gender ideologies, intentionally using their relationships to perform a patriarchal model of gender within marriage.

Education provides exposure to egalitarian ideas and counters acceptance of gender myths and stereotypes (Cassidy & Warren 1996, Davis & Robinson 1991, Rhodebeck 1996). Trend and panel studies have shown that increased education is associated with increased gender egalitarianism (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Brewster & Padavic 2000, Brooks & Bolzendahl 2004, Ciabattari 2001, Corrigan & Konrad 2007, Cunningham 2005, Fan & Marini 2000, Moore & Vanneman 2003, Tallichet & Willits 1986). Bryant (2003) reported that both women and men become less traditional after four years of college, and the college experiences that lead to this change are similar for women and men.

Labor force participation also provides exposure to new ideas and people. For young women in particular, labor force participation increases confidence and expectations for financial independence and provides additional

role models for negotiating family and work roles (Klein 1984). Labor force participation seems related to young men's interests as well, as Gerson (1993) and Coltrane (1996) both noted that men who experience blocked opportunities in the labor force are likely to become more gender egalitarian as they change their definitions of success. Being in the labor force does seem to be related to holding more gender egalitarian beliefs among women, depending on the age at which the relationship is measured (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Corrigan & Konrad 2007, Cunningham et al. 2005, Fan & Marini 2000, Harris & Firestone 1998, Moore & Vanneman 2003, Tallichet & Willits 1986), with no corresponding effect for men. However, men whose wives work less than full time have more traditional gender beliefs than men whose wives work full time (Ciabattari 2001).

Marriage is a highly gendered institution. Men who enter coresidential unions (either marriages or cohabitations) behave in more traditional ways than they did when living as a single person (Gupta 1999). Fan & Marini (2000) found that entering marriage typically led to young women becoming less egalitarian, whereas men in their early twenties who married became slightly more egalitarian. Moore & Vanneman (2003) found that individuals who were divorced or separated were more egalitarian than were currently married individuals, whereas Cunningham and colleagues (2005) found no effect of relationship status change (either to cohabitation or marriage) on gender attitudes.

Previous research has also used the number of children to identify traditional family circumstances (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Plutzer 1991), as married couples with several children are considered the most traditional family arrangement and are expected to be less gender egalitarian. However, there is little evidence to suggest that the birth of children has the same traditionalizing effect across the life course and for both women and men (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Ciabattari 2001, Corrigan & Konrad 2007, Cunningham et al. 2005, Fan & Marini 2000, Tallichet & Willits 1986).

In sum, the literature provides evidence for Bolzendahl & Myers' argument that gender ideologies are a function of interest-based and exposure-based explanations. Among interest-based explanations, individuals' social location vis-à-vis social inequality seems to influence their gender ideology. Women and men hold different gender ideologies, with women slightly more egalitarian than men. There is some evidence for racial and ethnic differences in gender ideologies, although the differences seem to be more a function of the intersections of sex and social class with race than race and ethnicity per se. Exposure-based explanations include the influence of parental ideologies, socialization (including modeled behavior by parents), religion, educational attainment, employment, and entrance into the traditionally gendered relationships of marriage and parenthood. The literature also shows the complex nature of gender ideology construction over time, both as a person matures and gains life experience and as historical time passes. Influential life experiences, personal characteristics, and social contextual factors waxed and waned in their import for gender ideology construction throughout the late twentieth century, and evidence suggests these changes will continue into the twenty-first century as well.

CONSEQUENCES OF GENDER IDEOLOGY

This section summarizes research on the consequences of gender ideology. Focusing first on families, we review research examining the effects of gender ideology on relationship formation and dissolution, including on cohabitation and marriage, on fertility and birth timing, and on the processes within relationships and families such as the division of household labor and perceptions of its fairness. We next review the literature on the effects of gender ideology on workplace and educational outcomes such as labor force participation, occupational choice, educational expectations, and educational attainment. We conclude by offering some suggestions for further theoretical refinement of

the concept of gender ideology and possible arenas for future empirical investigation.

Gender ideology has very real effects on family processes. A review of the literature for the past 20 years or so reveals research on the effects of gender ideology in six general categories of outcomes: child care; division of household labor (including the perception of the fairness of the division of household labor and its inequalities); union stability and conflict; relationship quality; wife abuse; and work, earnings, and occupations. Within each of these areas we can further distinguish whether gender ideology has a direct effect on the outcome or whether gender ideology moderates the effect of some other factor.

Fertility and Relationship Transitions

Stewart (2003) found that traditional ideology leads to lower age at first motherhood regardless of relationship status. Egalitarian gender ideology positively affects months of independent living, delays marriage (but not cohabitation), and delays timing of first marital birth (Cunningham et al. 2005). Couples planning their wedding tend to divide the wedding planning labor according to their gender ideologies, even when they do not intend to do so (Humble et al. 2008). Couples in which both partners espouse traditional gender ideologies tend to conform to traditionally gendered expectations in the division of labor around wedding planning, whereas couples with egalitarian gender ideologies tend to negotiate gender in the wedding planning in nonstereotypical ways.

Child Care

A number of studies (Aldous et al. 1998, Appelbaum et al. 2000, Bulanda 2004, Deutsch 1999, Gaunt 2006, Ishii-Kuntz et al. 2004) have found that father's gender ideology (but not usually mother's gender ideology) is associated with paternal involvement with child care, whereas other studies (e.g., Marsiglio 1991) have found mixed evidence. In general, those studies observing an effect found that less tra-

ditional fathers tend to spend more time in child care and related activities. In-depth interviews reveal egalitarian men's definitions of success as reflecting their beliefs; these men note that their relationships with their children are better markers of success than their financial contribution to the household or their business acumen (Coltrane 1998, Gerson 1993, Hochschild & Machung 1989). Wada & Beagan (2006) argued that men experience greater challenges in translating their egalitarian beliefs (when constructed) into behavior owing to the gendered expectations of workplaces, especially among highly demanding professions like medicine. Even when men change their definition of success to include a balance of work and family, they encounter structural constraints that inhibit the enacting of their beliefs. Indeed, although sharing child care is associated with holding egalitarian gender ideologies, holding these beliefs is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for equal parenting (Deutsch 1999).

Division of Household Labor

Even a cursory review of the literature over the past 20 years or so turns up dozens of studies that have examined the effects of gender ideology on the division of household labor and related issues such as perceptions of fairness. Nearly all these studies find that the division of household labor in heterosexual couples—usually operationalized as the proportion of housework performed by the woman—is related to the woman's gender ideology, the man's gender ideology, or both. Further, some research suggests that there is an interaction between the ideologies of the woman and the man. Finally, gender ideology seems to moderate the effects of some factors on the division of household labor.

Hochschild & Machung (1989) argued that gender ideologies, behavior, and emotional responses to beliefs and the lived reality of paid and unpaid labor lead to an individual's gender strategy; the interplay of partners' gender strategies leads to the couple's division of household labor. Subsequent analyses of

quantitative data have found support for the relationship between gender ideologies and the division of household labor. Most of these studies found that men with less traditional gender ideologies do a greater share of the household labor. These findings are confirmed in samples from Taiwan (Hu & Kamo 2007), Germany (Lavee & Katz 2002), Israel (Lavee & Katz 2002, Lewin-Epstein et al. 2006), China (Pimentel 2006), Canada (Brayfield 1992, Gazso-Windle & McMullin 2003), Sweden (Nordenmark & Nyman 2003), Great Britain (Baxter 1992, Kan 2008), and the United States (Bianchi et al. 2000; Coltrane & Ishii-Kuntz 1992; Cunningham 2005; Greenstein 1996a,b; Hochschild & Machung 1989), as well as in a number of cross-national studies (Batalova & Cohen 2002, SN Davis et al. 2007, Fuwa 2004, Nordenmark 2004, Yodanis 2005). As Kroska (2004, p. 921) noted in a summary of many of these studies, “husbands’ gender ideology may be a stronger determinant of housework divisions than the wives’ gender ideology.”

There is evidence that gender ideology is associated with perceptions of fairness in the division of household labor. Several studies (DeMaris & Longmore 1996, Greenstein 1996a, Nordenmark & Nyman 2003) indicated that traditional women are less likely than non-traditional or egalitarian women to perceive that inequalities in the division of household labor are unfair. Greenstein (1996a) found that for married women gender ideology interacts with proportion of housework performed to affect perceptions of fairness: Traditional women are relatively unlikely to perceive inequalities in the division of household labor as unjust, whereas the perceptions of nontraditional women are associated with the extent of the inequality.

Finally, Greenstein (1996a) found that the gender ideologies of women and their husbands interact to affect the amount of housework performed by the husband. The amount of housework performed by husbands is highly associated with the husband’s gender ideology for men with nontraditional wives, whereas the

husband’s gender ideology is not associated with the housework contributions of men married to traditional women.

Union Stability and Conflict

At least two studies (Greenstein 1995, Hohmann-Marriott 2006) found that the woman’s gender ideology was unrelated to union stability, whereas others (Davis & Greenstein 2004, Kalmijn et al. 2004) found that traditional women were at somewhat lower risk of marital instability. Sayer & Bianchi (2000) found that women married to egalitarian men were at less risk of marital instability, but that wives’ gender ideology was not related to marital instability.

More important, though, seems to be the moderating effect of gender ideology on union stability. Greenstein (1995), for example, found that the effect of wives’ employment on marital stability was moderated by the wives’ gender ideology: Number of hours worked per week was negatively related to marital stability for nontraditional women, but not for traditional women. Davis & Greenstein (2004) observed that the effects of age at first marriage on likelihood of divorce were moderated by gender ideology (age at first marriage had a strong effect for traditional women, but no effect for non-traditional women). Hohmann-Marriott (2006) noted no effects of gender ideology but did observe effects of similarity of ideologies between husbands and wives on the stability of both marital and nonmarital unions. Sayer & Bianchi (2000) did not find an interaction between wives’ economic dependence and marital stability, however.

Relationship Quality

A number of studies have found that gender ideology is related to self-reports of relationship quality. Amato & Booth (1995) and Mickelson et al. (2006), for example, found that nontraditional wives tended to report lower levels of marital quality, whereas nontraditional men tended to report higher levels. Wilcox & Nock

(2006) found that wives' gender ideology was related to three indicators of marital quality (nontraditional women reported poorer relationship quality) but that husbands' ideology was not. Marshall (2008) noted effects of gender ideology on intimacy in dating relationships. Two studies (Blair 1993, Xu & Lai 2004), however, found no direct effects of gender ideology on marital quality.

Again, some of the most interesting effects on relationship quality are moderated by gender ideology. In a study of American married couples, Greenstein (1996a) found that the effects of perceptions of inequity on reported marital quality were much stronger for nontraditional wives than for traditional wives. Lavee & Katz (2002) noted similar findings with a sample of Israeli couples.

Tichenor's (2005) research provides a possible mechanism for understanding the influence of gender ideology on relationship quality, at least for men. In her research on couples in which women out-earn their husbands, Tichenor noted that men with egalitarian ideologies do not see their identities as men being threatened by their wives' breadwinning status. They reframe their work in the relationship as masculine, regardless of whether it is traditionally masculine or not. As such, these egalitarian men are more comfortable with their relationships than are similarly situated traditional men.

Wife Abuse

In a meta-analytic review of research on wife assault, Sugarman & Frankel (1996) found relatively few associations of gender ideology either with the likelihood of a given husband assaulting his wife or with the wife being a victim of assault by her husband. In fact, some of the observed associations were contrary to predictions. For example, maritally violent husbands were underrepresented in the "traditional male gender" ideology group, and traditional women were less likely to be victims of assault.

One explanation of these counterintuitive findings is suggested by the findings by Atkinson et al. (2005), who observed that the

husband's gender ideology moderates the relationship between the wife's share of household earnings and her likelihood of being a victim of assault. Specifically, their study found that the wife's share of household earnings is positively related to the likelihood of wife abuse, but only for women married to husbands with a traditional gender ideology. There was no statistically significant effect of the wife's share of income for women married to egalitarian or transitional men. Perhaps for some traditional men, having their breadwinner status challenged becomes more than they can handle.

This explanation is consistent with interview data from young men who were violent toward their dating partners (Totten 2003). Traditional beliefs about gendered relations became the justification for relationship violence, as the boys argued that girls needed to learn their place in the world with regard to relationships with men. Violence was seen as a mechanism through which they could ensure that their girlfriends would engage in stereotypical behaviors and not threaten their manhood (i.e., get a job making more money or making them feel or look stupid in public).

Work, Earnings, and Education

A variety of studies have examined the relationship of gender ideology to human capital-related issues of work, earnings, and education. For example, Davis & Pearce (2007) examined the effects of gender ideology on the educational attainment expectations of adolescents. They found that girls and boys holding more nontraditional or egalitarian ideologies were more likely to aspire to a postsecondary degree and that the effect was stronger for girls. Studying mothers' earnings over a 10-year period, Christie-Mizell and colleagues (2007) noted that mothers with a traditional gender ideology tended to have lower earnings (the effect was stronger for whites than for African Americans). Gender ideology influences paid work hours, months of full-time employment, and hourly earnings for women, but not for men (Corrigall & Konrad 2007, Cunningham

et al. 2005). Corrigan & Konrad suggested this means that women but not men use gender ideology as part of their rational planning for combining work and family lives. Christie-Mizell (2006) found that traditional attitudes reduce earnings for African American men, African American women, and white women, with white women experiencing the greatest reduction in wages due to traditional ideologies. Stickney & Konrad (2007), using data from 28 countries, found that among married individuals, egalitarian beliefs had a stronger positive influence on earnings for both women and men working more hours, whereas on average, egalitarian women had higher earnings than traditional women. In a three-wave study of married men, Zuo (2004, p. 827) concluded that “men of a lower breadwinner status relative to that of their wives are more likely to embrace egalitarian ideology” and that egalitarian men “are more likely to engage in a more equal sharing of the provider role.” Although a decline in men’s breadwinning status is likely to promote more egalitarian attitudes among men, perhaps owing to changing definitions of success, men’s ideologies cannot de-identify breadwinning as a male responsibility without a commensurate structural shift in workplace organization (Zuo 2004).

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research on gender ideology can be informed by each of the three sections of this article. First, much more can be done both to extend and to refine the measurement of gender ideology. Rather than continuing to create new measurement strategies with closed-ended questions, research should implement the current measures broadly into panel studies allowing a better understanding of how ideology changes over the life course of individuals (and how differing kinds of measures may capture ideology differently at different parts of the life course). In addition, more work can be done to extend the measurement of gender ideology

using alternative types of measurement strategies [like Kroska’s (2000) work with vignettes] or the construction of open-ended questions that provide context to individual responses. A critical eye also needs to be cast upon how qualitative researchers capture the subjective nature of self-identifications relevant to gender ideology, paying particular attention to the comparability of such work across researchers and studies.

Second, as suggested above, more longitudinal studies need to include measures of gender ideology in both their closed-ended survey questions and open-ended interview questions. Research is unequivocal in that attitudes toward gender relations change not only as individuals age but also as life is experienced and as the world around us changes. To date, relatively few large-scale panel studies have included repeated measures of gender ideology. Even such well-designed studies as the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1979 (Center for Human Resource Research 2006b) do not usually include measures of ideology at each wave of the panel, making it difficult for researchers to study changes in individuals’ ideologies over time.

Understanding how gender ideology is constructed (in a social sense) can help researchers understand the choices boys and girls make regarding education and careers, how young adults choose partners and make decisions about fertility, and how individuals negotiate their family lives. Given the important social implications of all these individual decisions, more data on how gender ideology is constructed, and data from nationally representative samples (for example, including more Hispanic and Asian respondents), are necessary.

Another issue in the construction of gender ideology is the relatively atheoretical approach taken by most scholars. For example, much of this literature has argued that factors such as social class and education undoubtedly affect one’s gender ideology, but the linkages and mechanisms involved are not always clear. A thorough understanding of the conceptual or theoretical

processes by which such factors affect gender ideology is essential.

Review of the consequences of gender ideology finds two general ways in which gender ideology affects outcomes. First, some outcomes—for example, the timing of first birth—seem to be directly affected by one's gender ideology; egalitarian women tend to delay first birth longer than traditional women. Other outcomes—say, the likelihood of a married woman perceiving an unequal division of household labor as unfair or unjust—seem to involve gender ideology as a moderating factor. Greenstein (1995), for example, found that the effects of a wife's employment on marital stability were moderated by gender ideology; the wife's employment hours affected marital stability for egalitarian women but not for traditional women. Future research employing gender ideology as a predictor must be alert to both kinds of effects.

Finally, one of the common threads running through this literature is that gender ideology often functions as a lens through which many social processes and events are viewed, interpreted, and acted upon. Given the powerful organizing characteristics of gender in contemporary societies, it is no surprise that gender ideology is a primary lens through which both women and men view the world. Decisions we make in our lives are often guided by the way in which we believe the relationships between women and men should be. One will view one's place in an intimate relationship, role as a parent, occupational choice, and many other issues very differently based on whether one holds traditional, transitional, or nontraditional beliefs. Thus, research should explicitly take into consideration the influence of gender ideology as one of the potential explanatory mechanisms for gendered behaviors.

SUMMARY POINTS

1. Gender ideology has been measured using many different individual items that can be organized into six categories: primacy of the breadwinner role, belief in gendered separate spheres, working women and relationship quality, motherhood and the feminine self, household utility, and acceptance of male privilege.
2. Although social and demographic characteristics based on vested interests and exposures to egalitarianism continue to contribute to the extent to which an individual holds an egalitarian gender ideology, the influence of those characteristics seems to be waning, owing largely to cohort replacement. However, women continue to be more likely to hold egalitarian gender ideologies than men.
3. Gender ideology acts as a lens through which individuals view their social world and upon which they make decisions. Many family-related behaviors, such as fertility timing, relationship timing, quality, dissolution, and childrearing are influenced by gender ideology. In addition, gender ideology influences the decisions adolescents and young adults make regarding education and employment as well as the returns on investments young adults make in their human capital.

FUTURE ISSUES

1. Does the type of measure used to capture gender ideology provide different responses at different points in the life course? How is the reliability of measures influenced by individual-level change in respondents? Are certain measures better at different points in the life course than others?

2. How will our understanding of gender ideology change once more panel data incorporating truly representative samples of the U.S. population become available?

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The authors are not aware of any biases that might be perceived as affecting the objectivity of this review.

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Contents

Frontispiece
Herbert J. Gans xiv

Prefatory Chapters

Working in Six Research Areas: A Multi-Field Sociological Career
Herbert J. Gans 1

Theory and Methods

Ethnicity, Race, and Nationalism
Rogers Brubaker 21

Interdisciplinarity: A Critical Assessment
Jerry A. Jacobs and Scott Frickel 43

Nonparametric Methods for Modeling Nonlinearity
in Regression Analysis
Robert Andersen 67

Gender Ideology: Components, Predictors, and Consequences
Shannon N. Davis and Theodore N. Greenstein 87

Genetics and Social Inquiry
Jeremy Freese and Sara Shostak 107

Social Processes

Race Mixture: Boundary Crossing in Comparative Perspective
Edward E. Telles and Christina A. Sue 129

The Sociology of Emotional Labor
Amy S. Wharton 147

Societal Responses to Terrorist Attacks
Seymour Spilerman and Guy Stecklov 167

Intergenerational Family Relations in Adulthood: Patterns, Variations,
and Implications in the Contemporary United States
Teresa Toguchi Swartz 191

Institutions and Culture

- Sociology of Sex Work
Ronald Weitzer 213
- The Sociology of War and the Military
Meyer Kestnbaum 235
- Socioeconomic Attainments of Asian Americans
Arthur Sakamoto, Kimberly A. Goyette, and ChangHwan Kim 255
- Men, Masculinity, and Manhood Acts
Douglas Schrock and Michael Schwalbe 277

Formal Organizations

- American Trade Unions and Data Limitations: A New Agenda
for Labor Studies
Caleb Southworth and Judith Stepan-Norris 297
- Outsourcing and the Changing Nature of Work
Alison Davis-Blake and Joseph P. Broschak 321
- Taming Prometheus: Talk About Safety and Culture
Susan S. Silbey 341

Political and Economic Sociology

- Paradoxes of China's Economic Boom
Martin King Whyte 371
- Political Sociology and Social Movements
Andrew G. Walder 393

Differentiation and Stratification

- New Directions in Life Course Research
Karl Ulrich Mayer 413
- Is America Fragmenting?
Claude S. Fischer and Greggor Mattson 435
- Switching Social Contexts: The Effects of Housing Mobility and
School Choice Programs on Youth Outcomes
Stefanie DeLuca and Elizabeth Dayton 457
- Income Inequality and Social Dysfunction
Richard G. Wilkinson and Kate E. Pickett 493
- Educational Assortative Marriage in Comparative Perspective
Hans-Peter Blossfeld 513

Individual and Society

Nonhumans in Social Interaction <i>Karen A. Cerulo</i>	531
-----------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Demography

Social Class Differentials in Health and Mortality: Patterns and Explanations in Comparative Perspective <i>Irma T. Elo</i>	553
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Policy

The Impacts of Wal-Mart: The Rise and Consequences of the World's Dominant Retailer <i>Gary Gereffi and Michelle Christian</i>	573
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Indexes

Cumulative Index of Contributing Authors, Volumes 26–35	593
Cumulative Index of Chapter Titles, Volumes 26–35	597

Errata

An online log of corrections to *Annual Review of Sociology* articles may be found at
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