



Published in final edited form as:

Cogn Dev. 2021 ; 59: . doi:10.1016/j.cogdev.2021.101052.

American Heterosexual Emerging Adults' Reasoning about the Fairness of Household Labor

Allegra J. Midgette,

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, Chapel Hill, NC, USA

Devon D'Andrea

St. Joseph's University, Department of Psychology, 226 Post Hall, 5600 City Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19131-1395

Abstract

This study investigated American heterosexual emerging adults' evaluations and reasoning about the fairness of their parents' gendered division of household labor, their future expectations of their own division, and in a third-party situation. A total of 161 American heterosexual (88.20% European American; 50.93% cisgender women), emerging adults ($M = 20.60$, $SD = 1.21$) participated in this study. The majority of participants evaluated their parents' and future expected division to be fair. On the other hand, participants were less likely to consider a hypothetical gendered division fair. Equality justification usage, as well as reported parental childcare division predicted differences in fairness evaluations. The present study highlights the importance of employing methods that can capture the complex and multi-faceted nature of fairness evaluations and reasoning about the gendered division of household labor.

Keywords

household labor distribution; childcare; gender; fairness evaluations; emerging adults; SDT

Over the past several decades, scholars around the world have been faced with the following quandary: almost universally women are doing the majority of their family's household labor (Greenstein, 2009; Jansen et al., 2016; Öun, 2013), and yet a good portion (44.6%-70%) of both women and men find this inequality fair (Braun et al., 2008; Lachance-Grzela et al., 2019; Mikula, 1998; Young et al., 2015). While no one factor has been found to explain this apparent paradox, scholars studying household labor inequality are in agreement that "people are in general very insensitive to an unequal sharing of the

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to the first author, Allegra J. Midgette, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 100 E. Franklin St, Suite 200, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. Phone: 510-493-3802, Fax: N/A, amidgett@email.unc.edu.

Publisher's Disclaimer: This is a PDF file of an unedited manuscript that has been accepted for publication. As a service to our customers we are providing this early version of the manuscript. The manuscript will undergo copyediting, typesetting, and review of the resulting proof before it is published in its final form. Please note that during the production process errors may be discovered which could affect the content, and all legal disclaimers that apply to the journal pertain.

Declaration of Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing or conflicting financial or personal interests.

household work” (Öun, 2013, p.413). Fairness evaluations have been linked with marital satisfaction (Brown, 2014), marital commitment (Tang & Curran, 2013), and psychological distress (Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999). However, the majority of previous research has assessed fairness evaluations through a single item (i.e., “Which of the following best applies to the sharing of household work between you and your spouse/partner?” Jansen et al., 2016, p. 6; Öun, 2013, p. 407). As a result individuals’ underlying reasoning for their fairness assessments has been rarely investigated. In the absence of information regarding how individuals come to evaluate issues of fairness, researchers are left without an account of the underlying factors that are employed to generate such judgments (Turiel et al., 2016). Moreover, many emerging adults (18-25 years of age) have grown up observing the gendered division of housework in their homes as children (Sabattini & Leaper, 2004) and have been shown to expect a gendered division in their future households (Askari et al., 2010; Erchull et al., 2010). While recent scholarship has turned to children and adolescents’ fairness evaluations of their family’s gendered division (Midgette, 2020a, 2020b), less is known about whether emerging adults consider the practice of the gendered distribution that they have grown up observing and expect to continue in their future families to be fair.

The present study took a first step in addressing this limitation by investigating how emerging adults evaluate and reason about the fairness of their parents’ distribution when they were growing up, the gendered division of labor in a third-party situation (assessed through a hypothetical division), and their future expectations of their own participation in household labor. We investigated college-attending emerging adults, since students in college are more likely to have delayed marriage and childbearing and to have transitioned away from living with their parents (Settersten, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Investigating emerging adults is particularly important since they have a unique ability to provide both retrospective reports of the gendered division of labor from having spent childhood and adolescence observing their families as well as their future-oriented plans about such a practice, as they are in the process of making plans for their future without having yet already begun their own families.

Moreover, the majority of the literature on fairness evaluations of the gendered division of household labor has been mainly limited to middle-aged married women’s fairness evaluations (Öun, 2013). How emerging adults, who have yet to start their own family divisions, evaluate the fairness of the gendered practice of housework has implications for understanding antecedents to fairness evaluations in cohabitating heterosexual couples often investigated in later adulthood. Taking such an approach can provide insights into whether emerging adults expect fairness (i.e., prior to creating their household do they think it will be fair) and therefore provide initial evidence for whether and why fairness expectations may change once within a relationship in later adulthood (i.e., it may be that fairness is not expected and therefore inequality may be uncontested). In addition, as emerging adulthood is a period of transition, capturing emerging adults’ fairness evaluations both of their past and their future, can produce insight into what factors they take into account when evaluating the fairness of household labor which may be distinct from what the literature has already found with children and adolescents and cohabitating parents, who are both evaluating their current households.

In addition, the present study allowed for an investigation into the possible connection between emerging adults' fairness evaluations of their parents' division, a gendered hypothetical third-party division, and their future expected division. Taking such an approach has potential implications for considering consistency and inconsistency in individuals' fairness evaluations across contexts, and provides important methodological considerations for scholars if individuals are more critical of hypothetical situations than their own lived experiences and expectations. For instance, much of prior moral developmental research on fairness evaluations of gender roles within the family has asked participants to evaluate hypothetical situations (e.g., Schuette & Killen, 2009; Sinno & Killen, 2009, 2011; Sinno et al., 2017), whereas research on adults' fairness evaluations has primarily asked about participants' evaluations of their family's current division (e.g., Greenstein, 2009; Öun, 2013). If fairness evaluations differ across situations (e.g., hypothetical versus actual family division), it may mean that future moral developmental research in this area would benefit from investigating evaluations of real-life situations to better capture individuals' moral cognition.

Theoretical Framework: Social Domain Theory

The study was informed by the prior research on fairness evaluations of the gendered division of housework, but also employed social domain theory (SDT; Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 2002) to identify considerations individuals employed in justifying their fairness evaluations. A basic premise of SDT is that an individual's fairness evaluation is best understood through investigating their underlying reasoning, which has been found to entail their taking into account moral concerns (i.e., issues of justice, equality, and welfare) with other competing conventional (i.e., issues of social norms and societal functioning), or personal (i.e., issues of personal preference) considerations (Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 1983, 2002). Prior SDT research has shown that individuals can employ multiple domains of reasoning when evaluating issues of gender, as it is a multifaceted issue (Horn & Sinno, 2014; Sinno & Killen, 2011). For instance, Gere and Helwig (2012) investigated emerging adults' reasoning about gender roles in the home, and found that some individuals supported an egalitarian division by employing moral reasoning (e.g., references to equality) whereas others relied on social conventional reasoning (e.g., references to how society is organized).

Adults' Fairness Evaluations of Household Labor Distribution

Research linking fairness evaluations to the actual division of housework has followed the three main explanatory frameworks for women's overall greater contribution to household labor: time-availability, relative resources, and gender ideology (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Braun et al., 2008; Coltrane, 2000; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). According to the time-availability approach, the spouse that spends less time in paid labor has more time and therefore would do more housework (Becker, 1974; Brines, 1993). The relative resource approach suggests that the spouse who brings in more resources to the relationship, including income, education, or a more prestigious occupation is able to negotiate a lower involvement in housework (Aassve et al., 2014; Brines, 1993; Davis & Greenstein, 2004; Greenstein, 2000). Finally, a gender ideology approach proposes that beliefs and attitudes about gender, such as a traditional ideology that considers men as responsible for

breadwinning and women as responsible for the domestic sphere, influences how couples decide to distribute their household labor (Davis & Greenstein, 2009; Greenstein, 2000).

The factors identified by the above explanatory approaches have been found to play a role in fairness evaluations. Women who work full-time, who earn higher income, who have a higher education, and who hold progressive gender ideologies are more likely to consider unequal sharing as unfair (Greenstein, 2009; Jansen et al., 2016; Kawamura & Brown, 2010). However, while these approaches do hold some explanatory power, women who work, have a higher paying job, or hold egalitarian gender ideologies are still more likely to engage in more housework than men (Aassve et al., 2014; Brines, 1993; Coltrane, 2000; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010), and may still find their unequal division fair (Tai & Baxter, 2018; Zuo & Bian, 2001). Therefore, scholars have also turned to studying how adults come to make sense of their household's labor division. According to the distributive justice approach, individuals' fairness judgments can also include justifications that involve evaluations of how appropriate or justifiable the cause for such an arrangement is perceived (Major, 1987; Thompson, 1991). For instance, time-availability, relative resources or gender ideology may be used by individuals to legitimize their fairness evaluations of their family's unequal division of labor (Braun et al., 2008). In a study with married and cohabitating women in 25 countries, Braun et al. (2008) found that gender ideology (measured as an attitude subscribing to traditional/non-traditional gender ideology) was a more important legitimizing principle than relative resource and time-availability. However, the justifications that individuals themselves used for their fairness evaluations were not investigated. On the other hand, based on analysis of in-depth interviews, Nordenmark & Nyman (2003) found that married Swedish couples' gender ideologies were employed to justify their fairness evaluations (e.g., unequal sharing was considered fair because the wife was a mother and the husband a breadwinner). In other words, prior scholarship has suggested that "a person's gender ideology will influence what outcomes are valued and what standards and references are used to judge outcomes" (Nordenmark & Nyman, 2003, p.184).

Emerging Adults' Perceptions and Fairness Evaluations of Gendered Practices in the Home

Although American emerging adults desire an egalitarian division in their future relationships, they do not expect it (Allison & Ralston, 2018; Askari et al., 2010; Dernberger & Pepin, 2019; Erchull et al., 2010; Fetterolf & Eagly, 2011). Specifically, emerging adults expect men to do less routine household tasks and childcare than women. For instance, in a study with American college students (84.3% European American), Erchull et al. (2010) found that emerging adult women expected to perform 67-68% of routine household and childcare tasks, yet men only expected themselves to perform 45-46% of the same tasks. Further, in another study with American emerging adults (79% European American), Askari et al. (2010) found that emerging adult men expected to perform 45% of routine household chores, while emerging adult women expected to perform 69% of routine household chores. Moreover, gender ideology has been found to potentially influence emerging adults' gendered expectations (Chen et al., 2009; Erchull et al., 2010; Sinno et al., 2014). For example, Chen et al. (2009) found that for both American and Chinese unmarried

undergraduate students (race/ethnicity not reported), their complementary gender ideologies of hostile sexist attitudes (e.g., belief in women's subordination) and benevolent sexist attitudes (e.g., belief in complementary traditional gender roles) predicted expectations regarding gender roles within their future marriages (e.g., women doing more housework) and future choice of partner (e.g., traditional provider husband), respectively. This is in keeping with the literature that suggests that ambivalent sexism, which is comprised of these two complementary gender ideologies, predicts and is supportive of gender inequality (i.e., U.N. gender equality measures; Glick & Fiske, 2001). In considering emerging adults' gendered expectations, Askari et al. (2010) suggested that in order to understand how future household labor participation becomes so gendered, future research should investigate emerging adults' fairness evaluations of their expectations.

While most of the literature has focused on adults' fairness evaluations of their own division (Davis & Greenstein, 2009; Jansen et al., 2016; Öun, 2013), recent scholarship taking a social domain approach has begun to investigate how children evaluate the fairness of their parents' division (Midgette, 2020a, 2020b). Like their adult counterparts, children and adolescents have been shown to be evenly divided on whether they considered their parents' division fair. For instance, Midgette (2020a) found that 50% of Korean and Chinese 9-18-year-olds evaluated their family's labor division as fair, while 47.7% evaluated their division as unfair. At the same time, only 6.1% of children perceived their parents' household labor to be equally divided. However, Midgette (2020a) did not investigate children's and adolescents' expectations for their future, and whether they considered such divisions fair.

Still, children's fairness evaluations of their parents' division of labor have been shown to be sensitive to how the household labor is divided. Midgette (2020a) found that Chinese and Korean children and adolescents growing up in households with divisions where the mother did more housework (68.7%) were more likely to judge their parents' division as unfair. Moreover, participants employed moral reasoning following both unfair and fair evaluations of their family's division. Participants who judged their own family's division as unfair were more likely to justify their evaluations based on principles of equality (e.g., "it's not 50-50"). On the other hand, participants who judged their family's division as fair were more likely to justify their evaluations based on principles of equity (e.g., "the parent with more time performs more housework") and participation (e.g., "everyone is doing something"). Whereas, research has yet to investigate emerging adults' fairness evaluations and moral reasoning about their parents' division of household labor, prior developmental distributive justice research has found that emerging adults employ both equality (e.g., it should be the same) and equity reasoning (e.g., it should go to who worked the hardest) when evaluating the fairness of who in a group of siblings should be rewarded for working on a lemonade stand (Thomson & Jones, 2005).

To our knowledge, research has not investigated emerging adults' fairness evaluations about their expected future gendered division of housework, but research has shown that emerging adults do perceive their parents' household labor to be gendered. For instance, Sabattini and Leaper (2004) found that in a sample of American undergraduate students (55% European American), only 35.1% reported having parents who had an egalitarian division of childcare, and only 24.5% reported having parents that shared housework equally. Moreover, they

found no differences in gender ideology between participants who grew up in an egalitarian versus traditional household, although women were on average more egalitarian in their gender attitudes than men. On the other hand, research with an ethnically diverse group of American 10-, 13-, and 19-year-olds found that those who had mothers who did more routine and less flexible childcare and chore tasks (e.g., bathing child and cooking), were more likely to believe mothers should take on more of the household labor (Sinno et al., 2014).

In addition, there is little known about how emerging adults reason about third party labor divisions in the family context. Even so, prior research taking a social domain theoretical approach has shown that when reasoning about gender roles in the family, American children tend to rely on stereotypes and societal expectations (Schuette & Killen, 2009), but in emerging adulthood, individuals have been found to be more egalitarian in their reasoning and attitudes (Gere & Helwig, 2012; Sinno, 2007). Across ages (10, 13, 19 years), Sinno (2007) found that participants rated scenarios in which the mother was the primary caretaker more positively than those in which the father was the primary caretaker. However, with age, participants were more likely to use moral reasoning when considering the parents' division (i.e., expecting that childcare should be evenly divided). Similarly, Sinno and Killen (2011) found that most 10- and 13-year-olds expected mothers to take on both duties of working and taking care of children ('second-shift parenting'), and that societal expectations reasoning was used to justify such an arrangement. However, with age, Sinno and Killen (2011) found that adolescents were more likely to employ moral reasoning when evaluating the second-shift parenting division between parents. Moreover, in a sample of 224 undergraduates (54.5% Asian Canadian, 45.6% European Canadian), Gere and Helwig (2012) found that emerging adult men generally held more traditional gender attitudes than emerging adult women, although both were overall high in their support of egalitarianism in the family context (i.e., agreed that housework, childcare, and decision making should be shared).

In summary, the scholarship has found that while emerging adults may hold egalitarian attitudes and employ egalitarian reasoning when considering the gendered division of labor, emerging adult women in particular, continue to expect a gendered division of labor in their futures, even more than men, and these expectations may be influenced by their gender ideology. Moreover, despite there being some scholarship investigating how emerging adults reason about labor divisions in the home, it remains unclear whether or not emerging adults find these divisions fair. Further, these studies asked participants to reason about hypothetical situations, but a recent study on children's and adolescents' fairness evaluations found that participants were more critical of a hypothetical division than of their own families' labor division (Midgette, 2020a), therefore there is a need to investigate fairness evaluations that go beyond hypothetical situations and consider personally observed and expected divisions of labor.

The Present Study

Our study investigated several questions related to emerging adults' fairness evaluations and reasoning about the gendered division of household labor:

The Role of Gender and Gender Attitudes:

First, in a preregistered hypothesis, based on prior literature that found that gender ideology is associated with fairness evaluations (Braun et al., 2008; Nordenmark & Nyman, 2003), we expected that emerging adults who reported their parents' division as unfair would be more likely to hold gender egalitarian attitudes (i.e., progressive gender ideology and low ambivalent sexist attitudes). Mirroring our registered hypothesis, we also exploratorily investigated whether fairness evaluations for expected division and hypothetical situations would be associated with gender attitudes (i.e., progressive gender ideology and low ambivalent sexist attitudes). We also examined possible gender differences in expecting and perceiving inequality in their parents' and their own future divisions and in fairness evaluations across situations. In keeping with the prior literature, we expected women to be less likely to expect an egalitarian division (Askari et al., 2010; Erchull et al., 2010), and for men to report that their parents' childcare division was more egalitarian than women (Sabattini & Leaper, 2004), whereas we did not expect gender differences in fairness evaluations, as initial research on fairness evaluations of across situations found no gender differences (Midgette, 2020a).

The Role of Justifications:

We also investigated whether different justification types following fairness evaluations would be associated with differences in fairness evaluations. In particular, we expected that moral reasoning (i.e., equality) would be associated with finding a division unfair, whereas finding the division fair would be supported by both moral reasoning (i.e., equality and equity) and conventional reasoning (i.e., social organization and social role obligations; Gere & Helwig, 2012; Midgette, 2020a; Sinno & Killen, 2011). In addition, we examined whether in addition to justifications, emerging adults' reports of how the housework and childcare was divided in their childhood, whether their mother worked during their childhood, and how they expected the labor to be divided in their future could help explain differences in fairness evaluations.

Consistency & Inconsistency Across Situations:

Considering that prior research has found that children are more critical of a hypothetical gendered division than of their own family's division (Midgette, 2020a), we also preregistered the hypothesis that emerging adults who evaluated their parents' division as unfair would also be more likely to consider a hypothetical gendered division scenario unfair, and to expect equality in their own future divisions. We expected that if emerging adults were critical of their own family's division, they would also be critical of a hypothetical division. Moreover, we hypothesized that if they found their parents' past division unfair, they would want and expect equality in their future divisions (i.e., while yet to be investigated, it is possible that fairness evaluation of past experiences rather than gender ideology would help explain future expectations). Finally, we also examined whether fairness evaluations differed across situations.

Methods

The present study is part of a larger dataset that investigated emerging adults' expectations and reasoning about the gendered division of housework. The study (Study 2) was preregistered and is available at: https://osf.io/ad7ec/?view_only=0ca4ef29b1f34bdfa304dfe98a895d57.

Procedures.

Participants received a link to our Qualtrics survey either through the psychology departments' subject pool (SONA system) or were sent the link through convenience sampling. Participants completed several measures relevant to the present study's investigation, which are described below. We received Institutional Review Board approval from [university name], under the project titled "Reasoning and Life" (IRB Protocol # 1510757). Participants were recruited from the psychology department's subject pool from a college in Philadelphia, U.S. Data collection started January 2020. Participants were asked to fill out a series of measures online through a Qualtrics survey. Initially, we preregistered a stopping point of April 29th, 2020. However, in order to meet the minimum sample size we preregistered, data collection was extended for an additional month.

Sample.

A total of 210 participants completed the study's measures. However, inclusion criteria required participants to be unmarried, childless, heterosexual, emerging adults (18-25 years of age), and to have spent the majority of their childhood and adolescence living with two different-sex parents (i.e., at least 14 years). This inclusion criteria allowed for analysis of future expectations of a potentially gendered household division as well as analysis of emerging adults' evaluations and reasoning about their different-sex parents' division of labor. Our final sample size was 161.

Participants had a mean age of 20.60 years ($SD = 1.21$, $range = 18, 23$). All participants reported being cisgender, and 50.93% identified as women and 49.07% identified as men. The majority of our participants (88.20%) identified as European American. In addition, 3.73% of our participants identified as Latinx, 3.73% identified as African American, 3.73% identified as Asian American, and 0.62% preferred not to say. Most participants (60.87%) reported being single, while 39.13% reported that they were dating.

Our pre-registered power analysis based on the most complex pre-registered test for this study (study 2), a one-way ANOVA, suggested a sample of 170 for a power of .90. However, as a result of the exclusion criteria, and missing data for justification usage, we had 161 participants for most analyses (e.g., fairness evaluations, parental division type), 156 participants with complete parents' division and hypothetical justifications, and 153 participants with complete data for expected future division justification usage. As a result, a test of sensitivity through Webpower with a sample of 153, for a one-way ANOVA, with power of .86 and an alpha of .05, revealed our smallest effect size that could be detected to be an effect size of $f = .25$, a medium effect (Zhang & Yuan, 2018).

Measures

Demographics.—Participants were asked to provide demographic information, including age, gender, race and ethnicity, relationship status, and sexual orientation. Participants also provided information about their childhood, including if, during their childhood, their mother worked full-time, worked part-time, or stayed at home.

Gender Ideology.—Gender ideology was measured using an adaptation of a six-item scale created by Gere and Helwig (2012). The items in Gere and Helwig's (2012) scale were adapted from other well-known measures (e.g., Ashmore et al., 1995; Hardesty & Bokemeier, 1989). Participants viewed three statements indicating traditional gender roles, such as "The husband should have primary responsibility for support of the family" (Ashmore et al., 1995), and three statements displaying egalitarian labor division, such as "Care of children should be shared equally by both spouses" (Ashmore et al., 1995). For purposes of comparison, we adjusted the item referring to the traditional homemaker role to "The wife should have primary responsibility for support of the family," to match the item on the traditional breadwinner role: "The husband should have primary support of the family" (Ashmore et al., 1995). Participants gave ratings of agreement for each item on a 7-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, such that higher scores meant a more egalitarian ideology. All ratings were recoded so that a higher score indicated more support for gender egalitarianism. An average total score was calculated across items. The Cronbach's alpha for the current study was $\alpha = .62$.

Ambivalent Sexist Attitudes.—The Ambivalent Sexism Index (ASI) was administered to measure sexist attitudes (Glick & Fiske, 1996). The ASI contains two subscales: the hostile sexism subscale (e.g., "When women lose fairly, they claim discrimination") and the benevolent sexism subscale (e.g., "Men should sacrifice to provide for women"). The scale is composed of 22 items (each subscale comprising 11 items). Participants gave ratings of agreement for each statement on a 6-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree). An average score was calculated for each subscale and across subscales for each individual, where higher scores indicated more ambivalent sexist attitudes. The ASI has been shown to be highly reliable and has been widely utilized. In the present study, Cronbach's alphas were calculated as $\alpha = .84$ for hostile sexism, $\alpha = .79$ for benevolent sexism, and $\alpha = .86$ across subscales.

Parents' Division of Household Labor.—Participant report of parents' division of labor was captured following a measure developed by Sabbatini and Leaper (2004). Participants completed a questionnaire estimating the amount of household labor and childcare each parent performed when the participant was growing up. Each of the four items in the questionnaire related to one of four areas: cleaning, cooking, basic childcare during childhood, and basic childcare during adolescence. Participants responded to each question by indicating who completed the task: (1) "completely mother," (2) "mostly mother," (3) "both mother and father equally," (4) "mostly father," or (5) "completely father." Total scores were calculated for the division of routine housework, such that cleaning items and cooking items were combined and averaged, and the division of childcare during childhood and adolescence were combined and averaged. For the present purposes of our

study, three groupings were created: 1) “traditional” (mother did most or all, scores 1-2.5), 2) egalitarian division (parents both shared equally, scores 2.6-3.4), and 3) “non-traditional” (father was reported as doing most or all, scores 3.5-5).

In addition to their estimation of each parent’s household labor and childcare participation, participants were asked to indicate how fair they thought their parents’ division of labor in the home was, either on a 5-point Likert Scale from “completely unfair” scored as 1 to “completely fair” scored as 5 or by indicating “other” and providing an open-ended response. A final fairness score was created where completely or mostly fair were scored as “fair,” mostly or completely unfair were scored as “unfair,” and neither fair nor unfair was scored as “neither.” No participant indicated other.

Expected Future Labor Division.—Expected future labor participation was examined using the Chore List created by Askari et al. (2010). Participants were prompted to provide the percentage of participation they expected to do for a list of 14 items involving routine housework (e.g., cleaning the house) and childcare tasks (e.g., caring for them when they are sick), assuming their partner would perform the remaining. A housework participation and childcare participation score was calculated for each participant by averaging household chores tasks and childcare tasks. In the present study, Cronbach’s alphas for expected future household chores and childcare participation were calculated to be $\alpha = .84$ and $\alpha = .91$, respectively. Cronbach’s alpha across household and childcare tasks was $\alpha = .92$. Each expected division (housework and childcare) was recoded as a dichotomous variable, with percentages between 40-60 classified as a broadly egalitarian division (Askari et al., 2010; Ferree, 1991), and divisions with percentages less than 40% or greater than 60% classified as an unequal division. In order to capture their fairness evaluation of their expected future labor division, participants were asked to indicate whether they considered their expected future labor division to be fair (i.e., “yes”, “no” or “maybe”).

Hypothetical Gendered Division.—To capture fairness evaluations regarding a third party division, and to potentially replicate prior findings, participants were presented with a gendered hypothetical division developed by Midgette (2020a). The hypothetical scenario depicted an unequal gendered division of labor where the two heterosexual parents were both teachers and came home at the same time, but the mother did significantly more household tasks (e.g., making dinner, doing the dishes) than the father (who played with their 8-year-old son after dinner). After reading the hypothetical scenario, participants were asked whether the situation was fair or unfair (e.g., “fair,” “not fair,” “neither fair or unfair”) and asked to justify their fairness evaluation.

Justifications.—Following prior SDT research on individuals’ evaluations and reasoning about gender roles (Gere & Helwig, 2012; Midgette, 2020a; Sinno & Killen, 2011; Sinno et al., 2014), to capture underlying reasoning, participants were instructed to answer an open-ended question (“Why do you consider the division fair/unfair?”) to justify why they considered each situation (parental, hypothetical, and future division) fair or unfair. Justifications were coded following Midgette’s (2020a) coding scheme (See Table 1). Coder reliability was established based on 20% of the data for each situation (parental, hypothetical, and future division) by two independent coders. Cohen’s kappa was calculated

to be: $\kappa = .85$ for parent division, $\kappa = .91$ for hypothetical division, and $\kappa = .81$ for expected future division. Only the top three most frequent justifications used per situation were analyzed (See Table 2).

Results

Overall, the majority of participants (74.53%) reported growing up observing their parents enacting a traditional division of routine housework tasks (i.e., mother did most tasks), but less than half (44.10%) reported a traditional division of childcare tasks. The majority (70.81%) evaluated their parents' overall division of labor in the home as fair. On the other hand, a little over half of participants (54%) expected a future egalitarian division (completing 40-60% of the housework) of childcare and routine housework tasks (broadly defined; See Table 3). Moreover, the majority (66.46%) evaluated their overall future expected division as fair. Whereas most participants evaluated their parental and future expected division of labor as fair, less than a quarter of participants (24.22%) evaluated a hypothetical traditional division of routine housework tasks as fair (See Table 3 for summary of all descriptive statistics).

The Role of Gender and Gender Attitudes in Fairness Evaluations

Analytical Approach.—To address our first set of hypotheses and investigate whether those who evaluated these situations as unfair would also hold more egalitarian gender attitudes, we ran one-way ANOVAs on gender ideology and ambivalent sexism, with fairness evaluation (x3) as the independent variable for each situation (parental division, future division, hypothetical division). Our delineation of the fairness variable was slightly modified from the pre-registered report (split at median), considering that a portion of participants reported the division to be neither fair nor unfair, and “neither” is conceptually distinct from finding the situation fair or unfair (Midgette, 2020b). To address our hypotheses investigating gender differences in perceiving and expecting a gendered division and fairness evaluations across situations, we ran a series of multinomial and binomial logistic regressions with gender as the predictor.

Parent Division.—Our analysis revealed significant main effect of parent division fairness evaluation on ambivalent sexism, $F(2, 158) = 4.79, p < .009, \eta_p^2 = .05$, but not on gender ideology. Post hoc Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) tests, which was the test available in Stata, but identical to the pre-registered Tukey-Kramer test in this case, revealed that those who considered their parents' division unfair ($M = 1.81$) held significantly lower scores in ambivalent sexist attitudes than those who considered the division fair ($M = 2.20, p < .01$), or neither fair nor unfair ($M = 2.36, p < .02$). Further one-way analysis of each ambivalent sexism subscale as the dependent variable revealed that hostile sexism, and not benevolent sexism, was significantly associated with differences in fairness evaluations, $F(2, 158) = 7.40, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .08$. Posthoc Tukey's HSD analysis revealed that those who considered their parents' division unfair scored significantly lower in hostile sexism ($M = 1.34$), than did those who considered the division fair ($M = 1.94, p < .001$), or neither fair or unfair ($M = 2.09, p < .005$).

The same analysis for the other two situations found that neither gender ideology nor ambivalent sexism was significantly associated with fairness evaluations of a future expected or hypothetical division.

Gender Differences.—As expected, our analysis revealed that report of parents' childcare division type significantly differed by participant gender, LR $\chi^2(2, 161) = 6.99, p < .03$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .02$. Unexpectedly, however, women had lower odds of reporting a non-traditional parental childcare division rather than an egalitarian division compared to men (OR = .23, $p < .03$, 95% CI [.06, .88]). As also hypothesized, gender differences were also found in expecting a future egalitarian division of routine housework, LR $\chi^2(1, N = 161) = 9.78, p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .04$, and egalitarian division of childcare, LR $\chi^2(1, N=161) = 20.98, p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .09$. Women had significantly lower odds of expecting an egalitarian division of routine housework, OR = .36, $p < .002$, 95% CI [.29, .69], or an egalitarian division of childcare, OR = .22, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.11, .43], than men.

In addition, as expected, no gender differences were found in parent division and hypothetical division fairness evaluations using multinomial logistic regression (See Tables 4 & 6 Model 1). The Wald χ^2 for each model presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6, tests the difference in R^2 s between the fitted model and the intercept only model. Unexpectedly, gender differences were found in future expected division fairness evaluations (See Table 5 Model 1). Women had higher odds of evaluating their future division as unfair rather than fair, and maybe fair rather than fair, compared to men.

The Role of Justifications in Fairness Evaluations

Analytical Approach.—To test our second set of hypotheses on whether justification usage was associated with differences in fairness evaluation we ran multinomial logistic regressions on fairness evaluation (x3) by the top three most frequent justifications used for each situation (See Table 2). These analyses were followed up by a final model of fairness evaluation for each situation by factors that have been shown to be predictive in the initial analysis (e.g., gender, gender attitudes, justification use), in addition to how the routine housework and childcare was or is expected to be divided, and whether mother worked during participants' childhood (See Tables 4, 5, & 6 for what was included in each final model).

Parent Division.—Initial analysis into parent division fairness evaluation as predicted by justification use revealed that, those employing *equality justifications* had significantly higher odds of evaluating their parents' division as unfair rather than fair. No other differences were found (See Table 4 Model 2). The final model of possible factors that may predict fairness evaluation revealed that those employing *equality justifications* and reporting a traditional parent childcare division rather than an egalitarian one, had significantly higher odds of evaluating their parents' division as unfair rather than fair (See Table 4 Model 3). Employing *equality justifications* was also associated with higher odds of considering ones parents' division fair rather than neither fair nor unfair.

Future Expected Division.—Initial analysis into future expected division fairness evaluation as predicted by justification use revealed no significant differences (See Table 5 Model 2). The final model of possible factors that may predict fairness evaluation revealed that women had significantly higher odds of evaluating their future expected division as unfair rather than fair, compared to men (See Table 5 Model 3). Moreover, those that reported expecting a broadly defined egalitarian division of routine housework compared to those that did not, had significantly lower odds of evaluating their future expected division as maybe fair rather than fair.

Hypothetical Division.—Initial analysis into hypothetical division fairness evaluation as predicted by justification use revealed that, those employing *equality justifications* had significantly higher odds of evaluating their future expected division as unfair rather than fair (See Table 6 Model 2). In addition, those employing *participation justifications* and *perspectivism justifications* also had significantly higher odds of evaluating their future expected division as unfair rather than fair. The final model found that the same pattern held true: *equality, participation, and perspectivism justification* use resulted in higher odds of finding the hypothetical division unfair rather than fair (See Table 6 Model 3).

Consistency & Inconsistency in Fairness Evaluations Across Situations

Analytical Approach.—To test our third set of hypotheses, we ran two analyses. One, to test our second pre-registered hypothesis that emerging adults who considered their parents' division unfair would be more likely to evaluate the gendered hypothetical scenario unfair, and to expect equality in their future division, we ran two separate logistic regressions with fairness evaluation of family division as the predictor. While we registered a one-way ANOVA analytical plan, considering that our fairness evaluations and egalitarian division type across situations were dichotomous or categorical (3 categories) we slightly modified our analysis to conform with the nature of our outcome variables. Our analysis revealed that contrary to our expectations, fairness evaluations in one situation did not predict fairness evaluation in another, nor expectations for future divisions.

To investigate whether participants were more or less critical of certain situations, we ran a repeated-measures multinomial logistic regression on fairness evaluations by the three situations (See Table 3 for fairness evaluations per situation). The model was significant, Wald $\chi^2(4, 483) = 79.24, p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .10$. Participants had lower odds of saying not fair than fair in evaluating their parents' division, OR = .12, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.07, .22], and expected future household labor division, OR = .08, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.04, .16], than a hypothetical gendered division. Similarly, for the hypothetical gendered division participants had lower odds of evaluating the division as fair rather than neither fair or unfair, compared to their evaluations of their parents' division, OR = .14, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.07, .27], and their expected future household labor division, OR = .28, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.16, .50].

Discussion

As they develop, many heterosexual emerging adults grow up observing and expecting a gendered division of labor (Askari et al., 2010; Erchull et al., 2010; Sabbatini & Leaper,

2004). The gendered division as a practice has been found to be associated with women's rates of depression (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2007), women's involvement in the labor force (Christnacht & Sullivan, 2020), and women's career aspirations (Drinkwater et al., 2008). The present study investigated American heterosexual emerging adults' evaluations of the fairness of the gendered division of household labor in both their past families, expected future families, and in another's family (third-party). This study found that although the majority of participants reported growing up in a household with a gendered division of routine chores, and about half expected an unequal division of routine chores and childcare in the future, participants were more likely to be critical of a hypothetical gendered division of routine chores than of their expected future division, or their parents' past division. Moreover, highlighting the importance of parents' division, and the role of moral reasoning in fairness evaluations, emerging adults' fairness evaluations were associated with equality (i.e., expecting an equal division), participation (i.e., expecting involvement in labor regardless of amount), and perspectivism (i.e., expecting a family member to take into account the needs or wishes of another) justification type usages, and their parents' past division of childcare labor. The study's findings suggest the importance of employing methods that allow for investigating underlying reasoning following fairness evaluations, as well as the value of investigating possible developmental continuities and discontinuities in fairness evaluations.

Parental Division

Contrary to recent research that has investigated children's fairness evaluations of their parents' division (Midgette, 2020a, 2020b), the current study found that the majority of emerging adults evaluated their parents' division as fair. This was despite the fact that the majority also reported that their parents had a traditional division of routine housework. This is in keeping with Öun's (2013) statement that individuals are relatively insensitive to inequality when it comes to housework. On the other hand, living in a household with a traditional division of childcare was positively predictive of emerging adults' finding their family's division unfair. It may be that as childcare is a form of labor that directly relates to emerging adults' experiences and relationship with their parents it may be given more significance and participants may place greater weight on how it is divided when making their fairness judgments. Moreover, contrary to past research (Sabattini & Leaper, 2004), men were more likely to report that their fathers did more childcare than their mothers, whereas women were more likely to report that the childcare was evenly divided between both parents. This difference in our findings may be due to the fact that in this study we distinguished between an egalitarian division (equal sharing) and a non-traditional division (father did most or all). Or may be due to the fact that some research suggests that fathers tend to spend more time with their sons (e.g., Raley & Bianchi, 2006). Future research should investigate both the accuracy of emerging adults' retrospective reports of parental division of labor tasks (e.g., collect parent report), as well as whether time spent with each parent is associated with fairness evaluations and or acceptance of inequality in other tasks (e.g., routine housework versus childcare).

Further, while attitudes regarding gender roles in the family did not predict fairness evaluations, holding lower hostile sexist attitudes towards women was associated with

finding one's parents' division unfair. This finding is in partial support of prior research suggesting that gender ideology is associated with fairness evaluations (Braun et al., 2008; Nordenmark & Nyman, 2003). As hostile sexist attitudes towards women includes negative stereotypes about women, rejection of feminist ideology, and viewing women with careers negatively (Glick et al., 2000), our findings suggest that it may be that holding attitudes that are supportive of women as capable and able to succeed in their own careers, rather than direct expectations of gender role sharing in the home, may be more predictive of finding a gendered division at home unfair.

Moreover, equality reasoning (e.g., concerns for a 50-50 split of housework) was significantly predictive of finding one's parents' division unfair. This is in keeping with recent scholarship (Midgette, 2020a), that egalitarian justification usage is associated with finding inequality unfair. Considering that fairness evaluations are associated with justification usage, future research should also consider what may cause differences in using egalitarian reasoning versus other forms of reasoning in evaluating the fairness of one's family's division. In addition, most participants did not provide justifications suggested by prior research, such as time-availability, relative resources, or gender ideology (Braun et al., 2008; Major, 1978; Thompson, 1991). It may be that these types of justification may occur later in development, such as individuals who have already been cohabitating for a few years. Future research should consider investigating developmental changes in fairness evaluation justification use across the lifespan. Such an investigation may provide insight into the factors that may be influencing reasoning that accepts or rejects inequality within the home. Moreover, in terms of methodology, future research should consider in addition to employing an open-ended format, allowing participants to respond to statements that employ the justifications suggested by the literature (e.g., time-availability), to investigate whether they consider such frameworks as legitimate reasons for a gendered division of labor.

Expected Division

In the present study, heeding Askari et al.'s (2010) call to investigate emerging adults' fairness evaluations of their future expected household labor division, we found that the majority of participants evaluated their expected future division as fair. Interestingly, only participant gender and whether the expected division was broadly egalitarian or not, was associated with fairness evaluations. Women were significantly more likely to consider their expected future division unfair. On the other hand, those who expected an egalitarian division were more likely to consider their future division fair. These findings are in keeping with prior scholarship that found that emerging adult women expect to perform more housework than emerging adult men (Askari et al., 2010; Erchull et al., 2010), and that the proportion of inequality in household labor participation is the greatest predictor of fairness evaluations (Coltrane, 2000; Öun, 2013).

On the other hand, neither reasoning nor gender attitudes were significantly predictive in explaining fairness evaluations about expectations for how the household labor would be divided in the future. It may be the case that there are other factors, such as optimism (Peters et al., 2010) or certainty that this imagined future will indeed occur (Askari et al., 2010), that are influencing how individuals are making sense of their future expectations that were not

measured in the present study. However, the present study contributes to the scholarship by providing evidence that emerging adult women not only expect to do more housework and childcare in the future (Askari et al., 2010; Erchull et al., 2010), but also consider this unfair. Future research is needed to understand what factors may explain the paradox of expecting inequality despite finding it unfair. In other words, future research is needed to understand what leads emerging adults to expect an unequal and unfair future, rather than making plans to challenge the norms and expectations that are evaluated as unfair.

Hypothetical Division

Emerging adult participants were almost evenly divided in their fairness evaluations regarding a third-party hypothetical gendered division of labor. This finding is contrary to prior research using the same measure with a younger Chinese and Korean sample (Midgette, 2020a), which found that the majority of participants found the division unfair. It may be that in addition to reflecting possible cultural differences, with age, participants are more accepting of inequality and more likely to consider inequality in the gendered division of housework fair. This may be potentially as a result of emerging adults' greater understanding of relational constraints (Midgette, 2020b) and/or institutional constraints. Future research should investigate developing notions regarding relational and larger systemic considerations influence fairness evaluations across development. Furthermore, future research should investigate potential cross-cultural differences in fairness evaluations. Studying fairness evaluations cross-nationally is particularly important, since prior research has shown that country level factors may influence both the level of inequality within the home (Fuwa, 2004) as well as influence fairness evaluations (Greenstein, 2009).

In addition, as expected and found previously (Midgette, 2020a), moral reasoning, particularly equality reasoning (e.g., concerns with a 50-50 split), participation reasoning (e.g., expecting both partners to do something), and perspectivism reasoning (e.g. helping the other person to account for their needs and wishes), were all associated with perceiving the hypothetical gendered division as unfair. In other words, reasoning that held some expectation that the partner show consideration for, or engage in some household labor, was associated with finding the gendered division in a third party situation unfair. However, the present study did not reveal any associations with justification usage that was supportive of perceiving the division as neither fair nor unfair, or fair. Considering that a little over half of participants did not evaluate the division to be unfair, future research should investigate what reasoning is supportive of finding the gendered division of household labor fair or neither fair nor unfair.

Furthermore, the fact that across situations a portion of participants said the situation was neither fair nor unfair, is in keeping with recent research that found that several Chinese and Korean participants evaluated their family's division to be neither an issue of fair or unfair, but rather one of reasonableness (Midgette, 2020b). Underlying such an evaluation was the justification that rather than fairness, what mattered was family members' acceptance or emotional satisfaction with the division. In addition to investigating fairness justification usage, future research should investigate factors that contribute to rejecting fairness as method for evaluating household labor division within the family.

Across Situations

Across situations, participants were less likely to find their own expected future division and their parents' division unfair as compared to a hypothetical gendered division of labor. This finding is in concert with prior scholarship that found that children tended to be less critical of their own parents' division than of a hypothetical gendered division (Midgette, 2020a). The inconsistency in both fairness evaluations, and the factors that influenced fairness evaluations across situations, suggest the importance of investigating situation-specific and contextualized moral judgment and reasoning (Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 2002). Future research should investigate the factors that contribute to these differences in evaluating and reasoning about the gendered division of household labor across situations. It may be that the relational nature of the gendered division of labor and resulting relational considerations (e.g., Lachance-Grzela et al., 2019), where emerging adults are asked to evaluate their parents as well as their future relationships, that may be influencing their fairness evaluations across hypothetical versus lived situations. This finding also has important implications for research methods that are aimed at considering individuals' fairness evaluation about social issues. Future moral developmental research should consider going beyond hypothetical or experimental situations to investigating fairness evaluations about daily-lived experiences.

Limitations

Despite providing initial evidence of emerging adults' fairness evaluations and reasoning about the gendered division of housework, the present study had limitations. The study's sample was limited to primarily European American heterosexual cisgender emerging adults growing up with two-different sex parents attending college in the Northeast of the US. Future research should investigate fairness evaluations across ages, sexual orientations, gender identities, family structures, racial and ethnic groups within the US, as well as cross-cultural and class differences, as all of these factors have been shown to influence the division of household labor (Coltrane, 2000; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). Moreover, participants' fairness evaluations of a third-party gendered division of household labor was assessed through one vignette. Considering that in the current study we found that childcare inequality was given more weight in evaluating the fairness of one's family's division of labor, future studies should consider employing vignettes that include a variety of division types (i.e., father does more), but also that separate out childcare and household labor involvement. In addition, the study was limited by only collecting data at one-time point through an online survey, and therefore unable to capture in-depth reasoning, whether reasoning changed through counter-probes (Schuette & Killen, 2009), developmental change, as well as whether fairness evaluation of future expectations are maintained once emerging adults do begin to cohabitate and divide housework and childcare in the future. Moreover, the study investigated primarily routine tasks, and did not include a list of non-routine tasks. Future research should investigate fairness reasoning longitudinally, as well as employ mixed methods, such as through observations, surveys, and interviews, and include routine and non-routine tasks in order to see if one is given more weight than the other in deciding how to evaluate the family's overall division.

Conclusion

The present study revealed that the majority of emerging heterosexual adults evaluated the gendered division of labor in their own past and future families to be fair. Emerging adult women not only were more likely to expect inequality in their future (Askari et al., 2010; Erchull et al., 2010), but were also more likely to find their expected future division unfair. In addition, egalitarian reasoning was associated with finding one's parents' division and a third-party division of labor unfair. Future research should consider developing interventions that may successfully encourage egalitarian reasoning earlier in development (e.g., having egalitarian messages shared within the family; Gutierrez et al., 2019) or organizing school-based classroom discussions (Nucci et al., 2015). Moreover, the findings revealed inconsistencies in fairness evaluations across situations, as well as the importance of reasoning and parents' prior division of labor in informing fairness evaluation. Future research should consider whether relational considerations (e.g., relationship with each parent, time spent with parent, relational aspirations) can help explain differences in fairness evaluations both within situations (e.g., parental division) and across situations (e.g., hypothetical versus expected). The present study highlights the importance of employing methods that can capture the complex and multi-faceted nature of fairness evaluation and reasoning about the gendered division of household labor.

Acknowledgements.

We would like to thank the college students that participated in this study. We greatly appreciate Drs. Clare Conry-Murray and Jennifer Coffman for revising earlier versions of this manuscript. We also would like to thank our undergraduate research assistants Ann McConnon and Morgan Bower for their help coding. This study was supported in part by a postdoctoral fellowship provided by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (T32-HD007376) through the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to the first author.

References

- Aassve A, Fuochi G, & Mencarini L (2014). Desperate Housework Relative Resources, Time Availability, Economic Dependency, and Gender Ideology Across Europe. *Journal of Family Issues*, 35(8), 1000–1022. 10.1177/0192513X14522248
- Allison R, & Ralston M (2018). Gender, anticipated family formation, and graduate school expectations among undergraduates. *Sociological Forum*, 33(1), 95–117. 10.1111/soef.12400
- Ashmore RD, Del Boca FK & Bilder SM Construction and validation of the Gender Attitude Inventory, a structured inventory to assess multiple dimensions of gender attitudes. *Sex Roles*, 32 (11-12), 753–785 (1995). 10.1007/BF01560188
- Askari SF, Liss M, Erchull MJ, Staebell SE, & Axelson SJ (2010). Men Want Equality, But Women Don't Expect It: Young Adults' Expectations for Participation in Household and Child Care Chores. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 34(2), 243–252. 10.1111/j.1471-6402.2010.01565.x
- Becker GS (1974). A theory of marriage. In *Economics of the family: Marriage, children, and human capital* (pp. 299–351). University of Chicago Press.
- Bianchi SM, & Milkie MA (2010). Work and family research in the first decade of the 21st century. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(3), 705–725. 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00726.x
- Braun M, Lewin- Epstein N, Stier H, & Baumgärtner MK (2008). Perceived equity in the gendered division of household labor. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70(5), 1145–1156. 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2008.00556.x
- Brines J (1993). The exchange value of housework. *Rationality and Society*, 5, 302–340. 10.1177/1043463193005003003

- Brose SJ, Conry-Murray C & Turiel T (2013) Adolescents' Reasoning About Parental Gender Roles. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 174 (2), 207–224. 10.1080/00221325.2012.662541 [PubMed: 23534197]
- Brown M (2014). Benevolent sexism, perceived fairness, decision-making, and marital satisfaction: Covert power influences. Dissertation. Retrieved from http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=antioch1387296162
- Carrieo R, & Todesco L (2016). Housework Division and Perceived Fairness: The Importance of Comparison Referents. *Sociological Research Online*, 21(1), 1–16. 10.5153/sro.3871
- Chen Z, Fiske ST, & Lee TL (2009). Ambivalent sexism and power-related gender-role ideology in marriage. *Sex roles*, 60(11-12), 765–778. 10.1007/s11199-009-9585-9 [PubMed: 24058258]
- Christnacht C, Sullivan B (2020, 5 8). About two-thirds of the 23.5 million working women with children under 18 worked full-time in 2018. United States Census Bureau. Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2020/05/the-choicesworking-mothers-make.html>
- Coltrane S (2000). Research on household labor: Modeling and measuring the social embeddedness of routine family work. *Journal of Marriage and family*, 62(4), 1208–1233. 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.01208.x
- Davis SN, & Greenstein TN (2004). Cross-national variations in the division of household labor. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66(5), 1260–1271. 10.1111/j.00222445.2004.00091.x
- Davis SN, & Greenstein TN (2009). Gender ideology: Components, predictors, and consequences. *Annual review of Sociology*, 35, 87–105. 10.1146/annurevsoc-070308-115920
- Dernberger B, & Pepin JR (2019). Economic Precarity and the Gender Revolution: Young Adults' Division of Labor in Their Future Families. *SocArXiv*, 8, 22. 10.15195/v7.a2
- Drinkwater J, Tully MP, & Dornan T (2008). The effect of gender on medical students' aspirations: a qualitative study. *Medical education*, 42(4), 420–426. 10.1111/j.1365-2923.2008.03031.x [PubMed: 18338995]
- Erchull MJ, Liss M, Axelson SJ, Staebell SE, & Askari SF (2010). Well... she wants it more: Perceptions of social norms about desires for marriage and children and anticipated chore participation. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 34(2), 253–260. 10.1111/j.1471-6402.2010.01566.x
- Freee MM (1991). The gender division of labor in two-earner marriages: Dimensions of variability and change. *Journal of family Issues*, 12, 158–180. 10.1177/019251391012002002
- Fetterolf JC, & Eagly AH (2011). Do Young Women Expect Gender Equality in Their Future Lives? An Answer From a Possible Selves Experiment. *Sex Roles*, 65(1), 83–93. 10.1007/s11199-011-9981-9
- Fuwa M (2004). Macro-level gender inequality and the division of household labor in 22 countries. *American sociological review*, 69(6), 751–767.
- Gere J, & Helwig CC (2012). Young adults' attitudes and reasoning about gender roles in the family context. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 36(3), 301–313. 10.1177/0361684312444272
- Glick P, & Fiske ST (1996). The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory: Differentiating hostile and benevolent sexism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(3), 491–512. 10.1037/0022-3514.70.3.49
- Glick P, Fiske ST, Mladinic A, Saiz JL, Abrams D, Masser B, ... & Annetje B (2000). Beyond prejudice as simple antipathy: hostile and benevolent sexism across cultures. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 79(5), 763. 10.1037/0022-3514.79.5.763 [PubMed: 11079240]
- Glick P, & Fiske ST (2001). An ambivalent alliance: Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality. *American psychologist*, 56(2), 109.
- Greenstein TN (2000). Economic dependence, gender, and the division of labor in the home: A replication and extension. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(2), 322–335. 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00322.x
- Greenstein TN (2009). National context, family satisfaction, and fairness in the division of household labor. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71(4), 1039–1051. doi: 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2009.00651.x
- Gutierrez BC, Halim MLD, & Leaper C (2019). Variations in recalled familial messages about gender in relation to emerging adults' gender, ethnic background, and current gender attitudes. *Journal of Family Studies*, 1–34. 10.1177/0743558412447871

- Hardesty C, & Bokemeier J (1989). Finding Time and Making Do: Distribution of Household Labor in Nonmetropolitan Marriages. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 51(1), 253–267. doi: 10.2307/352385
- Horn S, & Sinno S (2014) Gender, sexual orientation, and discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation. Killen M, Smetana JG (Eds.), *Handbook of moral development*, Psychology Press, New York, NY.
- Jansen L, Weber T, Kraaykamp G, & Verbakel E (2016). Perceived fairness of the division of household labor: A comparative study in 29 countries. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 57, 53–68. doi:10.1177/0020715216642267
- Kawamura S, & Brown SL (2010). Mattering and wives' perceived fairness of the division of household labor. *Social Science Research*, 39, 976–986. 10.5964/ijpr.v6i2.98
- Lachance-Grzela M, & Bouchard G (2010). Why do women do the lion's share of housework? A decade of research. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, 63(11-12), 767–780. 10.1007/s11199-010-9797-z
- Lachance-Grzela M, McGee S & Ross-Plourde M (2019). Division of family labour and perceived unfairness among mothers: the role of mattering to family members, *Journal of Family Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/13229400.2018.1564350
- Major B (1987). Gender, justice, and the psychology of entitlement. In Shaver P, & Hendrick C (Eds.), *Sex and gender* (pp. 124–148). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Midgette A (2020a). Chinese and South Korean children's moral reasoning regarding the fairness of a gendered household labor distribution. *Developmental Psychology*, 56(1), 91–102. 10.1037/dev0000854 [PubMed: 31670557]
- Midgette A (2020b). Chinese and South Korean families' conceptualizations of a fair household labor distribution. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82(4), 1358–1377. 10.1111/jomf.12673 [PubMed: 33456071]
- Mikula G (1998). Division of household labor and perceived justice: A growing field of research. *Social Justice Research*, 11(3), 215–241. 10.1023/A:1023282615718
- Nucci L, Creane MW, & Powers DW (2015). Integrating moral and social development within middle school social studies: A social cognitive domain approach. *Journal of Moral Education*, 44(4), 479–496. 10.1080/03057240.2015.1087391
- Öun I (2013). Is it fair to share? Perceptions of fairness in the division of housework among couples in 22 countries. *Social justice research*, 26(4), 400–421. 10.1007/S112110130195-x
- Oshio T, Nozaki K, & Kobayashi M (2013). Division of household labor and marital satisfaction in China, Japan, and Korea. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 34(2), 211–223. doi: 10.1007/s10834-012-9321-4
- Perry- Jenkins M, Goldberg AE, Pierce CP, & Sayer AG (2007). Shift work, role overload, and the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 69(1), 123–138. [PubMed: 20216932]
- Raley S, & Bianchi S (2006). Sons, daughters, and family processes: Does gender of children matter?. *Annu. Rev. Sociol*, 32, 401–421. 10.1146/annurev.soc.32.061604.123106
- Sabattini L, & Leaper C (2004). The relation between mothers' and fathers' parenting styles and their division of labor in the home: Young adults' retrospective reports. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, 50(3–4), 217–225. 10.1023/B:SERS.0000015553.82390.f7
- Schuette C, & Killen M (2009). Children's evaluations of gender-stereotypic household activities in the family context. *Early Education and Development*, 20(4), 693–712. 10.1080/10409280802206908
- Settersten R (2012). *Early adulthood in a family context* (Vol. 2, pp. 3–26). New York: Springer, 10.1007/978-1-4614-1436-0_1
- Sinno SM (2007). Age related changes in social reasoning regarding parental domestic roles. Doctoral dissertation. Retrieved from <https://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/handle/1903/6936/umi-umd4436.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Sinno SM and Killen M (2011), Social reasoning about 'second- shift' parenting. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 29: 313–329. 10.1111/j.2044-835X.2010.02021.x

- Sinno SM, Schuette C, & Killen M (2014). Developmental social cognition about gender roles in the family and societal context. Leman Patrick J.& Tenenbaum Harriet R. (Eds).In *Gender and Development*, 133–154.
- Sinno SM, Schuette CT, & Hellriegel C (2017). The impact of family and community on children's understanding of parental role negotiation. *Journal of Family Issues*, 38, 435–456. 10.1177/0192513X15573867
- Smetana JG, Jambon M & Ball C (2014). The Social Domain Approach to Children's Moral and Social Judgments. In Killen M & Smetana J (Eds.), *Handbook of moral development*, 2nd Edition. New York:Taylor & Francis.
- Tai TO, & Baxter J (2018). Perceptions of Fairness and Housework Disagreement: A Comparative Analysis. *Journal of Family Issues*, 39(8), 2461–2485. 10.1177/0192513X18758346
- Tang CY, & Curran MA (2013). Marital Commitment and Perceptions of Fairness in Household Chores. *Journal of Family Issues*, 34(12), 1598–1622. 10.1177/0192513X12463185
- Thomson NR, & Jones EF (2005). Children's, adolescents', and young adults' reward allocations to hypothetical siblings and fairness judgments: Effects of actor gender, character type, and allocation pattern. *The journal of Psychology*, 139(4), 349–368. [PubMed: 16097274]
- Thompson L (1991). Family work women's sense of fairness. *Journal of Family Issues*, 12(2), 181–196. 10.1177/019251391012002003
- Turiel E, Chung E, & Carr JA (2016). Struggles for equal rights and social justice as unrepresented and represented in psychological research. In *Advances in child development and behavior* (Vol. 50, pp. 1–29). JAI. [PubMed: 26956068]
- Turiel E (1983). *The Development of Social Knowledge: Morality and Convention*. Cambridge University Press.
- Turiel E (2002). *The Culture of Morality: Social Development, Context, and Conflict*. Cambridge University Press.
- U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey. Retrieved July 13, 2020, from <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=Educational+Attainment+by+Marital+Status+and+Marital+History>
- Voydanoff P, & Donnelly B (1999). The Intersection of Time in Activities and Perceived Unfairness in Relation to Psychological Distress and Marital Quality. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 61(3), 739–751. 10.2307/353574
- Young M, Wallace JE, & Polachek AJ (2015). Gender differences in perceived domestic task equity: A study of professionals. *Journal of Family Issues*, 36(13), 1751–1781. 10.1177/0192513X13508403
- Zhang Z, & Yuan K-H (2018). *Practical Statistical Power Analysis Using Webpower and R* (Eds). Granger, IN: ISDSA Press.
- Zuo JP, & Bian Y (2001). Gendered Resources, Division of Housework, and Perceived Fairness—A Case in Urban China. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63, 1122–1133. 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2001.01122.x

Highlights

- Most emerging adults report growing up with a gendered division at home
- Most emerging adults find their parents' gendered division fair
- Reasoning is associated with fairness perceptions
- Equality justification usage predicted finding the division unfair
- Individuals were more critical of hypothetical than real-life divisions

Table 1

Adapted Version of Midgette's (2020a) Coding Scheme on Justifications for Fairness Evaluations of the Gendered Division of Household Labor

Domain	Justification Type
Moral	<p>Equity: Reference to expecting differences in involvement due to differences in family members' situation, needs, or capacity (e.g., time-availability). Example: "I am assuming that I will be the one with the career and full time job, so I will be at work most of the day and perhaps will not be able to contribute to the chores as much."</p> <p>Equality: Reference to expecting same amount of involvement, sharing or turn taking (or having the principle violated). Example: "They split the chores pretty evenly and both worked the same full-time job." Or "My mother did more of the chores."</p> <p>Participation: Reference to expecting each member to participate and do (some) housework (although amount doesn't matter). Example: "Both of my parents put in work around the house..."</p> <p>Perspectivism: Reference to the need for a family member to take into account the needs and wishes of another when deciding their involvement. Example: "The husband should help out his wife during the week and should ask her for help without assuming she should always do everything."</p>
Conventional	<p>Contractual: Reference to the expectation that a division it is up to the family to decide and/or based on mutual agreement. Example: "As long as this decision is reached between the husband and wide, I think this is fair."</p>
Personal	<p>Choice: Reference to the situation being due to the individual's preference and/or desire. Example: "My mom wanted to do the work." Or "I think it is a person to person situation. The wife may like doing this stuff and waiting for the husband can leave messes."</p>

Note. This table presents only a portion of the coding scheme. Presented justifications are those that were the most frequently used by this sample's participants. For full coding scheme refer to Midgette (2020a). Examples presented are from this study's participants.

Table 2

Top 3 Justifications Used Across Situations by Fairness Evaluation (Mean Proportional Use)

Justification	Fair	Not Fair	Neither Fair or Unfair	Overall
Parent Division				
Equality	.43(.45)	.78(.32)	.21(.37)	.46(.45)
Equity	.19(.34)	.14(.32)	.33(.33)	.19(.34)
Participation	.13(.29)	.06(.16)	.15(.33)	.12(.28)
Expected Division				
	Fair	Not Fair	Maybe	
Equality	.41(.47)	.55(.51)	.30(.46)	.40(.47)
Participation	.12(.32)	.00	.05(.20)	.09(.28)
Contractual	.07(.25)	.05(.23)	.04(.19)	.06(.23)
Gendered Hypothetical				
	Fair	Not Fair	Neither Fair or Unfair	
Equality	.31(.44)	.49(.45)	.17(.35)	.36(.44)
Participation	.38(.19)	.23(.36)	.28(.39)	.23(.36)
Perspectivism	.04(.13)	.12(.30)	.05(.21)	.08(.25)

Note. Standard deviation is in parenthesis.

Table 3

Summary Statistics of Main Variables of Interest Overall (Percentages & Means) by Participant Gender

	Women (N = 82)	Men (N = 79)	Total (N = 161)
Parent Division ⁺			
Traditional Housework	74.39%	74.68%	74.53%
Egalitarian Housework	18.29%	18.99%	18.63%
Non-traditional Housework	7.32%	6.33%	6.83%
Traditional Childcare ⁺	47.56%	39.24%	44.10%
Egalitarian Childcare	48.78%	45.57%	46.58%
Non-traditional Childcare	3.66%	15.19%	9.32%
<i>Fairness Evaluation</i>			
Fair	67.07%	74.68%	70.81%
Not Fair	20.73%	13.92%	17.39%
Neither	12.20%	11.39%	11.80%
Expected Future Division			
Egalitarian Childcare [@]	36.59%	72.15%	54.04%
Egalitarian Housework	42.68%	67.09%	54.66%
<i>Fairness Evaluation</i>			
Fair	53.66%*	79.75%	66.46%
Not Fair	19.51%	2.53%	11.18%
Maybe	26.83%*	17.72%	22.36%
Hypothetical Division			
Fair	23.17%	25.32%	24.22%
Not Fair	52.44%	41.77%	47.20%
Neither	24.39%	32.91%	28.57%
Gender Attitudes			
Ambivalent Sexism [^]	1.93(.71)	2.39(.60)	2.51(.69)
Hostile Sexism	1.57(.83)	2.14(.70)	1.85(.82)
Gender Ideology	5.81(.90)	5.41 (1.00)	5.61 (.97)

⁺ Note. Division types for both housework (routine) and childcare are the following: traditional refers to a division where mother/ woman does the majority of the tasks; non-traditional refers to a division where the father/ man does the majority of the tasks; and egalitarian means a shared division.

[@] egalitarian refers to a broadly egalitarian division (40-60% of the childcare or housework).

* indicates tested significant gender differences.

[^] Higher scores indicate greater ambivalent sexism and hostile sexism, while higher scores in gender ideology indicates greater gender egalitarianism.

Table 4

Multinomial Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors Predicting Fairness Evaluation of Parental Division of Labor

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	⁺ Not Fair/ Fair	Neither/ Fair	Not Fair/ Fair	Neither / Fair	Not Fair/ Fair	Neither / Fair
Gender (Women=1)	1.65	1.19				
<i>Justifications</i>						
Equity			5.64	1.55		
Equality			21.03 ** (2.20-200.56) [^]	.33	12.55 *** (3.17-49.71)	.20 * (.04-.86)
Participation			4.15	.99		
Hostile Sexism					.59	1.12
<i>Parental Housework</i> ~						
Traditional					.49	.40
Non-Traditional					.42	.29
<i>Parental Childcare</i> ~						
Traditional					10.16 *** (2.68-38.39)	.59
Non-Traditional					3.39	3.65
<i>Mother's Work Status</i> @						
Part time					.99	1.81
Stay at Home					1.18	2.57
Constant	.18	.15	.02	.21	.05	.30
Model Fit	$\chi^2(2) = 1.43$		$\chi^2(6) = 23.54$ ***		$\chi^2(16) = 53.50$ ***	
Wald χ^2						
N	161		156		156	
R ²	.005		.09		.21	

Note. Findings are in Odd Ratios for ease of interpretation. Asterisks indicate varying levels of statistical significance,

 $p < .001$

**
 $p < .01$

*
 $p < .05$

⁺Fair served as the reference for comparison.

[^]Refers to 95% Confidence Interval for significant Odds Ratios.

~Reference for the division types for both housework and childcare is an egalitarian division.

@Referent for mother's work status is full-time work.

Table 5

Multinomial Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors Predicting Fairness Evaluation of Expected Future Division of Labor

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	⁺ Not Fair/ Fair	May be/ Fair	Not Fair/ Fair	May be/ Fair	Not Fair/ Fair	May be/ Fair
Gender (Women=1)	11.45** (2.50-52.35) [^]	2.25* (1.03-4.87)			8.35** (1.70, 40.96)	1.51
<i>Justifications</i>						
1.Equality			1.29	.45		
2.Participation			.00	.26		
3.Contractual			.68	.33		
<i>Expected Egalitarian Division ~</i>						
Childcare					.60	.52
Housework					.29 (<i>p</i> = .06) (.08, 1.05)	.25** (.10, .63)
<i>Mother's Work Status @</i>						
Part time					1.13	1.55
Stay at Home					1.74	1.66
Constant	.03	.22	.18	.53	.07	.54
Model Fit	$\chi^2(2)=17.52$ ***		$\chi^2(6)=10.49$		$\chi^2(10)=39.61$ ***	
Wald χ^2						
N	161		153		161	
R ²	.06		.03		.14	

Note. Findings are in Odd Ratios for ease of interpretation. Asterisks indicate varying levels of statistical significance,

p < .001

**
p < .01

*
p < .05

⁺ Fair served as the reference for comparison.

[^] Refers to 95% Confidence Interval for significant Odds Ratios.

[~] Reference for the division types for both housework and childcare is an egalitarian division rather than a non-egalitarian division.

[@] Referent for mother's work status is full-time work.

Table 6

Multinomial Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors Predicting Fairness Evaluation of Hypothetical Division of Labor

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	⁺ Not Fair/ Fair	Neither/ Fair	Not Fair/ Fair	Neither / Fair	Not Fair/ Fair	Neither / Fair
Gender (Women=1)	1.37	.80				
<i>Justifications</i>						
1.Equality			6.07 ^{***} (2.03, 18.14) [^]	.43	7.10 ^{***} (2.20-22.85)	.38
2.Participation			4.94 [*] (1.28, 19.06)	1.52	5.62 ^{**} (1.38-22.88)	2.02
3.Perspectivism			14.57 [*] (1.68, 125.26)	1.38	18.04 ^{**} (1.93-168.60)	1.34
<i>Parental Housework</i> [~]						
Traditional					.28 (<i>p</i> = .06) (.07-1.08)	.28 (<i>p</i> = .07) (.07-1.13)
Non-Traditional					.24	1.58
<i>Parental Childcare</i> [~]						
Traditional					1.51	.69
Non-Traditional					1.70	.16
<i>Mother's Work Status</i> [@]						
Part time					1.44	2.47
Stay at Home					1.25	2.59
Constant	1.65	1.3	.53	1.22	.93	2.37
Model Fit	χ^2 (2)= 2.07		χ^2 (6)= 29.56 ^{***}		χ^2 (18)= 44.98 ^{***}	
Wald χ^2						
N	161		156		156	
R ²	.00		.09		.13	

Note. Findings are in Odd Ratios for ease of interpretation. Asterisks indicate varying levels of statistical significance.

^{***}
p < .001

^{**}
p < .01

^{*}
p < .05

⁺ Fair served as the reference for comparison.

[^] Refers to 95% Confidence Interval for significant Odds Ratios.

[~] Reference for the division types for both housework and childcare is an egalitarian division.

[@] Referent for mother's work status is full-time work.