

Sex or sexuality? Analyzing the division of labor and travel in gay, lesbian, and straight households



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ABSTRACT

People make tradeoffs between paid and unpaid labor, and in straight households women typically do the lion's share of unpaid labor, including household-serving travel. Nearly all of the previous research on this topic is limited to married heterosexual households with children, a surprisingly small and shrinking portion of the population. Using pooled data from the 2003–12 American Time Use Surveys, we explore how household-serving labor and travel vary across household types in the U.S. We examine the paid and unpaid labor tradeoffs made by partnered same-sex couples with and without children, and find that their division of paid and unpaid labor, as well as household-serving travel such as chauffeuring children, occupies a statistical middle ground between straight men and women. This suggests that the gendered nature of paid and unpaid work and travel is muted in the absence of a two-sex household structure, though some gendered differences persist.

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1. Introduction

We have witnessed dramatic changes in attitudes towards women's roles in paid labor and the home over the past half century. Since the Women's Liberation movement in Europe and the U.S. in the 1960s, women have entered the paid labor market in record numbers. Women's labor force participation increased from 43% in 1970 to about 60% since the late 1990s, about six percentage points below men's long-term rate (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Over the intervening years, women's "cult of domesticity" (Kraditor, 1968) has given way to more paid daycare, single-parenthood, and men's increasing participation in housework and active parenting.

Despite women's increased participation in the paid labor force, studies continue to show that in nearly every household type, women typically perform the lion's share of household-serving activities, including household-serving travel such as chauffeuring children (Taylor et al., 2015). And while paid work by women is up dramatically since the 1960s, women tend to work much closer to home than men do (Crane and Takahashi, 2009). Many scholars have connected these two phenomena, suggesting that the disproportionate burden women face in maintaining the household (including child care, chauffeuring, cooking, and cleaning) limits

the amount of time available to commute to and work at a job, which may contribute to women's lower average wages overall.

The established literature on this topic has focused primarily on heterosexual couples and so-called nuclear families, both of which constitute a shrinking share of all households (Wilkes and Laverie, 2007). Most have examined—either implicitly or explicitly—the tradeoffs between men's and women's paid and unpaid labor. One lone exception is Rapino and Cooke (2011), who use same-sex couples as a control group to explore how gender roles restrict women's commute times and participation in the labor force.

In this paper, we expand on the current literature by broadening the kinds of households studied. We compare heterosexual couples to same-sex partnered households, which are a growing share of the U.S. population with rapid changes in public attitudes and laws regarding gay relationships, marriage, and adoption (Gates, 2006). Examining gay and lesbian households vis-à-vis straight households offers us a unique natural experiment on whether these gendered differences in paid and unpaid labor (including household-serving travel) exist "on their own," or mostly in the context of two-sex (heterosexual) couples.

To understand how gender roles and household-serving travel vary across household types in the U.S., we examine the paid and unpaid labor tradeoffs made by couples in heterosexual, gay, and lesbian households. In particular, we explore whether the gendered differences in patterns of household-serving labor and travel observed among heterosexual couples are present among same-sex couples as well. We explore how trends in employment,

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household labor, and travel vary in gay, lesbian, and straight households with and without children present. We focus our research on household-serving travel, which comprises a much larger share of overall personal travel compared to commuting. According to the 2009 National Household Travel Survey, household-related travel (such as grocery shopping, running errands, and transporting children to school and activities) accounted for 42% of all household trips in the United States, while only 16% of trips were to or from work (Santos et al., 2011). How the members of households organize their time and responsibilities, including household-serving travel, is key to understanding the evolving nature of family life.

In a nutshell, we find that gay and lesbian households occupy a statistical “middle ground” between the activity patterns of partnered straight men and women. Lesbians tend to structure their days similarly to straight women, but appear to share household and child-rearing burdens more equally than straight couples do. Gay men’s days tend to be more similar to those of straight men, though again we find evidence of more egalitarian responsibility-sharing. Further, children consistently affect women’s (straight and lesbian) activities and travel more strongly than they do for either straight or gay men. In sum, the gendered nature of daily activity patterns is more muted among gay and lesbian couples compared to straight couples.

2. Previous research

Consistent findings over the past three decades reveal that women in heterosexual partnerships do the bulk of household work, even when controlling for variables such as household type, employment status, income, race, the timing of childbearing, and ideology (Coltrane and Ishii-Kuntz, 1992; Demo and Acock, 1993; Coltrane, 2000; Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard, 2010; Sayer and Fine, 2011). While some previous work has examined unmarried straight and single-parent households (Demo and Acock, 1993; Batalova and Cohen, 2002; Davis et al., 2007), very little previous work has considered gay or lesbian households, despite both their growing numbers and the obvious insights they offer on sex and gender roles.

2.1. Gender, paid labor, and housework

Women have entered the labor market at a rapid pace in recent decades, but most researchers have found that increasing time spent at work does not mean less unpaid labor at home for women. Indeed, studies of paid work and the household division of labor have generally found that gendered differences in paid labor have been converging much faster than those of unpaid household work, resulting in what some have called the “second shift” of household-serving work awaiting most women when they arrive home from a paid job (Hochschild and Machung, 1990).

Scholars have long debated why women tend to do more household labor than their male partners, in spite of rising female paid labor force participation (Lorber, 1994; Lindsey, 1997). Some have proffered economic arguments for gendered housework disparities – such as the partner with lower earnings potential (who is more often female) will tend to do more housework and devote less time to work for pay. Others, meanwhile, argue that gender socialization plays a dominant role, wherein women and men are socialized into particular *gender roles* – such as women bearing the primary responsibility for housework and child-rearing, roles that persist regardless of economic circumstances (Taylor et al., 2015).

Studying heterosexual households, Presser (1994) finds that women in two-earner households spend significantly more time than their male partners on the most intensive household labor

tasks. This time (and energy) burden has consequences for paid employment, as well. Hersch and Stratton (1997) find a strong negative correlation between the amount of housework done by women and their wages in paid labor.

Although the division of household labor has changed somewhat in recent decades, women still perform the lion’s share of it. Bianchi et al. (2012) find that while men’s share of housework roughly doubled between 1965 and 1989, it has since dropped by more than an hour per week, and women still do 1.6–1.7 times as much household labor as their male partners.

While heterosexual couples have been the focus of much of this literature, scholars examining same-sex couples generally find a more equal division of labor between partners (Kurdek, 2007). Kurdek (1993) finds that lesbian couples divide labor more equally than either heterosexual couples or gay male couples, leading some scholars to suggest a ‘lesbian egalitarian ethic’ (Carrington, 1998; Kurdek, 1993, 2007; Biblarz and Savci, 2010). Gender socialization likely plays a strong role (Kurdek, 1993), and Solomon et al. (2005) at least partially control for gender socialization variables by studying heterosexual couples alongside their coupled gay and lesbian siblings. Their findings confirm a more egalitarian division of labor in lesbian households. Downing and Goldberg (2011) speculate that, as gender roles may be fluid, same-sex couples may re-gender their division of labor at various life stages such as parenthood. As parents, for example, each partner may adopt a traditionally “masculine” or “feminine” role. One study suggests an economic rationale, finding that gay and lesbian individuals’ income strongly correlates to household labor such that those who earn more do less housework (Blumstein and Schwartz, 1983).

2.2. Gender & household-serving travel

The gendered division of labor extends to travel, as well. Research has consistently shown that in heterosexual households, women make more household-serving trips than men (Rosenbloom, 2006; Hanson and Johnston, 1985; Niemeier and Morita, 1996). Prevedouros and Schofer (1991) find that women make twice as many trips as men for errands, transporting others, and shopping. Taylor et al. (2015) find that women consistently make more child-serving and grocery shopping trips than men, almost regardless of circumstances: women who live alone make substantially more child-serving and grocery shopping trips than similarly situated men, and women who work more and earn more than their male partners still make substantially more household-serving trips. Men’s travel patterns are characterized by more work-related and recreational travel, while women’s trips are more likely to be for shopping, personal business, or escorting others (Hamilton and Jenkins, 1989; Wachs, 1987). These studies reveal clear gendered divisions in household-serving travel.

Despite extensive research on how heterosexual households divide household-serving travel, very little research has explicitly compared these divisions in same-sex households. One exception is Smart and Klein (2013), who examine non-work travel, and find that gay male couples living in gay neighborhoods make considerably shorter trips than their straight neighbors do, though this analysis does not examine trip frequency or the within-household division of trips.

2.3. Gender & the commute

Research on gender and travel has long found that women make shorter commute (journey-to-work) trips in both distance and time compared to men (Crane and Takahashi, 2009; Crane, 2007; Hanson and Pratt, 1995; Hanson and Johnston, 1985; Madden, 1981). Scholars disagree on the factors causing these travel patterns, with arguments including the lower wages typically paid

to women (Madden, 1981), the spatial dispersal of female-dominated industries (Hanson and Johnston, 1985), and women's low marginal income gains relative to added commute distance (Rutherford and Wekerle, 1988).

To our knowledge, only two studies have examined the commute patterns of gay and lesbian households. Rapino and Cooke (2011) use same-sex couples as a control group to explore how gender roles restrict women's commute times and participation in the labor force. This study finds that gender roles matter; married heterosexual women have considerably shorter commutes than do partnered lesbians, controlling for a number of other variables. Smart and Klein (2013) examine gay and lesbian households' commute patterns and find that gay men and lesbians work closer to home than their heterosexual counterparts, particularly when living in LGBT neighborhoods. However, neither of these studies examine trade-offs between household-serving labor, travel, and paid labor.

2.4. The impact of children on division of labor and travel

Children affect the amount and division of household labor and travel behavior. In heterosexual households, women make nearly twice as many trips chauffeuring children as men do (Prevedouros and Schofer, 1991; Taylor et al., 2015). These findings hold even in dual-earner households (Ehrenberg et al., 2001; He, 2013; Taylor et al., 2015), and despite a higher proportion of fathers working flexible hours compared to mothers (He, 2013; He and Giuliano, 2015). A potential explanation for mothers' higher chauffeuring rate is that women work closer to both home and a child's school—a common chauffeuring destination—compared to fathers (He and Giuliano, 2015). However, these findings are not universal; when parents consciously eschew traditional gendered parenting roles, household serving-labor may be more equally divided (Coltrane and Adams, 2001).

Gay and, particularly, lesbian parents (the focus of most research on same-sex parenting) appear to share household labor more equally than do straight parents, on average (Kurdek, 1993). The 'lesbian egalitarian ethic' may play a role in parenting, with lesbian parents tending to divide labor more equally than do straight couples (Goldberg and Perry-Jenkins, 2007; Moore, 2008; Patterson, 1995). While biological mothers in lesbian households typically bear more of the child-rearing responsibility, lesbian couples tend to rearrange labor burdens in order to maintain a balance of household labor (Goldberg and Perry-Jenkins, 2007; Patterson, 1995). In a recent review paper, Biblarz and Stacey (2010) note a dearth of studies on gay male parenting and the division of child-serving labor. Other articles examining household division of labor among gay and lesbian households omit the influence of children altogether (Kurdek, 2007).

There is little consensus as to how children affect parents' commute durations in heterosexual partnered households, and we find no previous research on same-sex parents' commutes. Fagnani (1987) finds that women's commute times and distances decline as the number of household children increases. A number of other studies support this finding that children in the household—particularly younger children—result in shorter commute times for women (Ericksen, 1977; Singell and Lillydahl, 1986). Yet others have found that women with children have longer commutes (White, 1986), and still others find that the children do not affect women's commute times at all (Hanson and Johnston, 1985; Turner and Niemeier, 1997).

3. Data and research approach

This article fills a gap in the literature by comparing the time-use patterns of gay, straight, and lesbian coupled households,

focusing on the trade-offs between paid and unpaid labor. We pool all ten years of the 2003–12 American Time Use Survey (ATUS), a nationally-representative activity diary survey in which respondents detail their activities for each minute of a single survey day. The ATUS respondents are a subsample of the Current Population Survey (CPS), a labor-focused survey jointly conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The CPS provides detail on household composition, employment, earnings, and other household attributes.

The ATUS does not specifically ask respondents to identify their sexuality. Instead, we rely on an approach used widely in studies of gay and lesbian populations: we identify households where two individuals are the same sex and where they state that they are each other's married or unmarried partner (distinct from roommates). Unmarried partnerships include marriage-like legal arrangements, but also boyfriends and girlfriends who have not entered into any legal partnership with one another. This method identified 168 women in lesbian partnerships, 133 men in gay male partnerships, and 50,599 men and women in straight partnerships. Gay and lesbian partnered households¹ thus represent 0.57% of our partnered household sample. Our sample closely corresponds to Smith and Gates' (2001) finding that gay and lesbian partnered households comprise 0.59% of partnered American households in the 2000 U.S. Census.² Our dataset may exclude a significant number of gay men and lesbians who deliberately misidentify their spouse or partner as a roommate out of confidentiality concerns, though recent research suggests that this is becoming less common (Gates, 2010). Nevertheless, by examining only *partnered* (married or otherwise) gay and lesbian couples, our sample is likely somewhat skewed; Black et al. (2007) use the General Social Survey and find some differences between partnered and single gay men and lesbians (for instance, partnered gays and lesbians are somewhat more racially diverse), though the differences are quite small.

While the richness and granularity of the data's activity diary provides a unique and powerful lens for our study, the dataset also has limitations. Although the behaviors we examine are surely affected by the location of surveyed households, the dataset provides little spatial detail, and we cannot control for geographic factors in our analysis. Geography is likely important; gay and lesbian coupled households are more likely to live in central cities with higher residential and job densities compared to coupled straight households (Aldrich, 2004), and higher densities and increased proximity may help explain differences in travel behaviors between gay and straight couples (Smart and Klein, 2013). Thus, we urge some caution in interpreting the results of our analysis, as we cannot control for the effects of the built environment, public transit service, and other factors tied to geography. Nevertheless, the ATUS provides a unique opportunity to examine the tradeoffs that couples make between paid labor, household-serving labor, and household-serving travel.

Further, while we would ideally examine the activity diaries of all members of a household, the ATUS only provides activity data for one respondent. However, the dataset provides a wealth of other non-activity data on all other members of the household. We use these variables to categorize households in several ways, principally by delineating same-sex and different-sex couples, single- and dual-earner households, and families with and without children.

¹ We use the terms "partnered gay" and "partnered lesbian" throughout this paper to refer to male and female same-sex partnered households, though we acknowledge that this shorthand approach likely mischaracterizes some ATUS respondents who may self-identify differently, for example as bisexual or queer.

² Both our sample and the national sample likely reflect serious undercounting of gay and lesbian households. Undercounting may occur because of fears of discrimination, vaguely-worded survey questions, and by excluding non-partnered individuals. For more on this, see Smith and Gates (2001).

We focus on tradeoffs among household-serving activities, paid labor, and travel for the pooled period of 2003–2012, the years for which survey data are available. Because we are interested in how household arrangements influence paid labor, we restrict our analysis to working-age (ages 18–65) individuals living in married or unmarried partnerships. Singles are excluded from the analysis. We further restrict our analysis to households where the respondent works full-time in order to examine tradeoffs between paid and unpaid labor; further analysis is required to examine the tradeoffs between the decision to join the labor force and time spent on unpaid household-serving labor and in each of these household types. Finally, though we expect there may be strong racial and class-based differences in our observed trends by race and class, our sample of gay and lesbians households is regrettably too small to examine these differences.

Our analytical approach is straightforward. We compare the number of minutes spent on household-serving labor, paid labor-related activities, travel, and other activities for partnered straight, gay, and lesbian households. Because we expect life circumstances (such as the presence of children and employment characteristics) to influence the amount of time people spend in paid labor and caring for children and the home, we perform a series of sub-analyses. We examine time use differences within subsets of these populations, for instance among couples—straight, gay, or lesbian—with children under 18 living at home. We draw conclusions based on the observed differences in time spent doing these various activities.

4. Findings

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics for our sample population. Men (both straight and gay) are more likely to work full-time than are women (straight or lesbian); straight women are the least likely to work full-time (49%) and the most likely to work part-

time (19%). Straight couples are considerably more likely to have children than are gay and lesbian households. Only 12% of partnered gay households reported having a child at home, compared with over 28% of partnered lesbian households and over 50% of partnered straight households. Gay and lesbian households reported higher median incomes than straight households. The characteristics of the gay and lesbian households in the ATUS closely match those reported in the 2000 Census (Black et al., 2007), though in the ATUS sample, more same-sex households have children (12% in the ATUS versus 10% in the Census for gay men, and 28% versus 22% for women). Though our overall sample sizes are sufficiently large, some of our subsamples (for instance, gay men with children) are quite small; we alert the reader of these small sample sizes ($n < 30$) throughout the paper.

4.1. Household-serving labor

Household-serving labor includes a wide range of tasks required to maintain a household. Although in most of our analysis we consider household-serving labor as a composite of all these activities, we first briefly explore the time spent doing various activities that make up the broad category “household-serving labor.” We grouped these activities into four types of household-serving activities: (1) household cleaning and maintenance, such as laundry; (2) care for household members and pets, including child-care; (3) food-related activities, such as grocery shopping and food preparation; and (4) financial, civic, or religious activities (see Table 2).

On average, full-time employed straight women do more household-serving labor than their straight male, gay, and lesbian counterparts. This difference remains even when we compare households with and without children separately. Straight women spend more time cleaning than do all others in our study, and spend, on average, 54 min per day caring for household members and pets. This is more time than straight men (42 min) and les-

Table 1
Characteristics of straight, gay, and lesbian households.

	Men			Women			
	Straight	Gay	Sig.	Straight	Lesbian	Sig.	Sig.
% Employed	86%	90%	n.s.	68%	87%	***	***
% Employed Full-Time	80%	82%	n.s.	49%	71%	***	***
% Employed Part-Time	6%	7%	n.s.	19%	16%	n.s.	n.s.
% With 1+ Children	55%	12% ^a	***	53%	28%	***	***
Median Household Income	\$67,500	\$87,500	***	\$67,500	\$87,500	***	***
Mean Household Income	\$82,899	\$87,500	***	\$81,895	\$81,236	n.s.	n.s.
N (partnerships)	23,556	133		27,043	168		

Italic value indicates subsets of the % employed figure, e.g. 80 + 6 = 86.

Significant at 0.10 (*), 0.05 (**), 0.01 (***); Not Significant (n.s.).

Source: ATUS 2003–2012; CPS 2003–2012.

^a $n < 30$.

Table 2
Mean minutes spent on types of household serving labor by partnered household type on the survey day for respondents employed full-time.

	Men			Women		
	Straight	Gay	Sig.	Straight	Lesbian	Sig.
Household Cleaning & Maintenance	53	48	n.s.	67	51	*
Care for Household Members & Pets	42	27	*	54	37	**
Food Related Activities	35	55	**	69	44	***
Household-Serving Travel	37	29	**	42	34	*
Financial, Civic, and Religious Activities	11	8	n.s.	14	15	n.s.

Significant at 0.10 (*), 0.05 (**), 0.01 (***); Not Significant (n.s.).

Source: ATUS 2003–2012; CPS 2003–2012.

bians (37 min), and twice as much time as gay men (27 min). When we examine households with children separately, we find that gay men, lesbians, and straight women all spend about the same amount of time (85–89 min) caring for children and pets, but straight men spend considerably less time doing so (65 min). In an analysis not presented here, we inspected the distributions of household-serving labor among gay and lesbian households to determine whether there is evidence of bimodality, which might suggest that within same-sex couples, one partner may take on a more domestic role, while the other acts as “breadwinner.” We found no evidence of this among same sex couples, though the sample size of same-sex couples prevents us from conducting statistical tests to confirm this.

Household-serving travel includes all trips made for household-serving purposes. Members of same-sex households travel considerably less for household-serving purposes than do their straight counterparts of the same sex. For all household types, the least time-consuming activities include financial, civic, and religious activities and services.

Because the rate of child-rearing differs substantially across household types, we examine families with children separately from those without children. Fig. 1 shows that for all household types, having children increases the time spent doing household-serving activities. However, women (straight and lesbian) see a considerable increase (roughly 37%) in household labor, while men’s increase is smaller. Regardless of the presence of children, straight women do more household labor than members of all other groups, while straight men do the least. The differences between lesbians and straight women are statistically significant, while those between straight men and gay men are not. These relationships reflect the significant disparities in household-serving labor between straight men and women. When children are present in the household, straight women do a remarkable hour and a half more household-serving labor *per day* than straight men, on average.

When children are present in the household, partnered gay and lesbian respondents may occupy a statistical middle ground, spending fewer minutes than straight women, but more minutes than partnered straight men on daily household labor. In order to explore this further, we examined the proportion of respondents in each household type who spent given amounts of time on the survey day on household-serving labor. In households without children, 27% of lesbians and gay men did less than 1 h of household work on the survey day; this lies roughly between straight women (18%) and straight men (33%). When children are present, we see a similar pattern for lesbians—13% did less than 1 h of

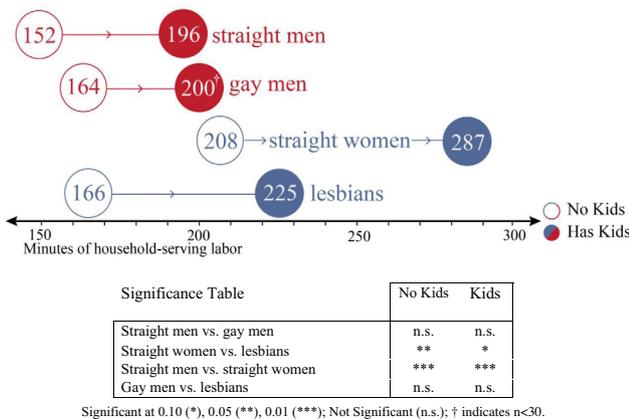


Fig. 1. How the presence of children affects the minutes per day spent on household-serving activities.

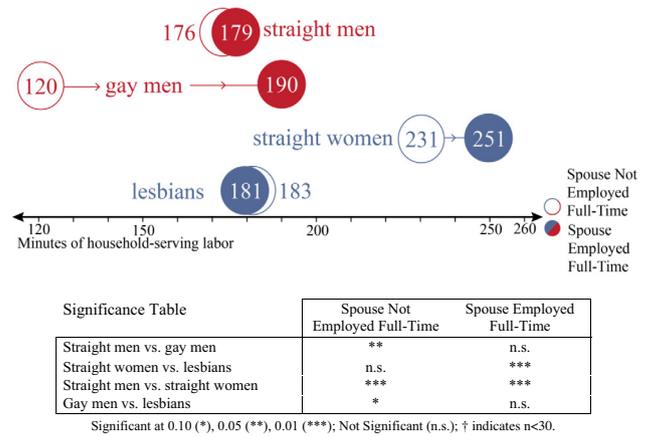


Fig. 2. How spousal employment affects the minutes per day spent on household-serving labor in households.

household work on the survey day; this rate again lies roughly at the midpoint between straight women (7%) and straight men (21%). The sample size for gay men with children is too small (n = 14) to be conclusive.

The employment status of one’s partner likewise affects the average time spent on household-serving labor for full-time employed individuals in our sample. We test this hypothesis by comparing respondents whose spouses are not employed full-time (employed part-time, unemployed, or not in the labor force) with those whose spouses are employed full-time. We find that, with the exception of lesbians, full-time employed respondents report doing more household labor when their partner is also employed full-time (see Fig. 2). Notably, straight men whose spouses are employed full-time do only 3 min more of household serving labor compared to straight men whose spouses are not employed full-time (176 and 179 min respectively). Straight women, on the other hand, spend on average 20 min more on household serving labor when their spouses are also employed full-time compared to those whose spouses are not employed full-time (231 and 251 min respectively). In both spousal employment scenarios, straight women do significantly more (roughly 32% more) household serving labor than do lesbians, who spend about the same amount of time (about 182 min) on household serving labor regardless of spousal employment.

While straight women add another 20 min of household-serving labor when their partner is employed full-time, lesbians work about the same amount regardless of their spouse’s employment status. Gay male households exhibit a stronger tradeoff between household-serving labor and paid labor; when their partners are employed full-time, gay men add over an hour (+70 min) of household-serving labor to their day. Not surprisingly, men in partnered straight households add the fewest (+3) minutes to daily household-serving tasks when their spouse is employed-full time rather than employed part-time, unemployed, or not in the labor force. These findings suggest that gender norms in straight households result in a less equal division of household-serving labor regardless of the partners’ participation in the paid labor market.

4.2. Household-serving travel

Household-serving trips fulfill many household needs and include all travel related to personal care, household activities, caring for household members, grocery shopping, eating and drinking, religious activities, and miscellaneous household services such as lawn and garden services and medical services.

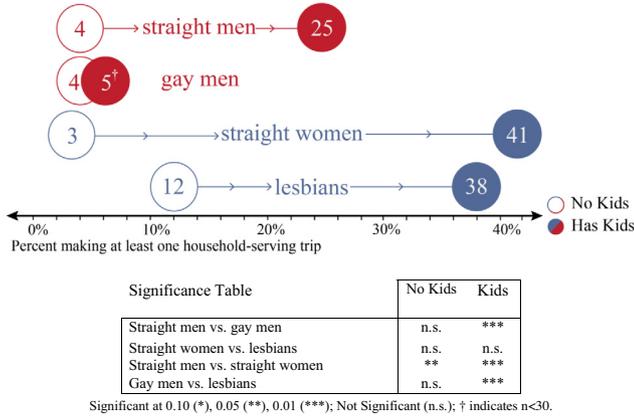


Fig. 3. How the presence of children affects the percentage of people making at least one household-serving trip.

With the exception of lesbians, there is very little difference in a person's likelihood to make a household-serving trip when children are not present in the home. Household-serving travel when children are not present is relatively rare; only childless lesbian household members have even a 1-in-10 likelihood of making a household-serving trip on a given day. Fig. 3 shows that having children greatly increases the likelihood that an individual will make a household-serving trip on a given day, though women see a much greater increase than men do. While the prevalence of these trips increases sixfold for straight men (from 4 to 25%), it increases 13-fold for straight women. We find little increase in the prevalence of household-serving travel for gay men, though again we note the small size (n = 14) of this sub-sample.

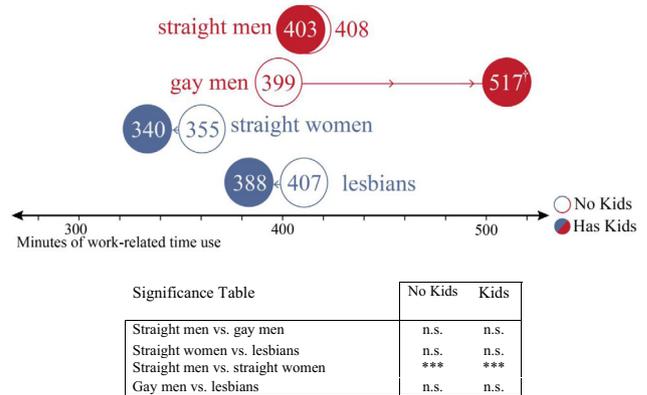
One sub-set of household-serving travel is the so-called chauffeuring trip, in which an adult household member accompanies a child to a destination or picks him or her up from an activity and escorts him/her to home or another activity. When children are present, women—straight or lesbian—are considerably more likely (39 and 35% respectively) to undertake a chauffeuring trip on a given day than are men—straight or gay (23 and 5% respectively).

4.3. The journey to work

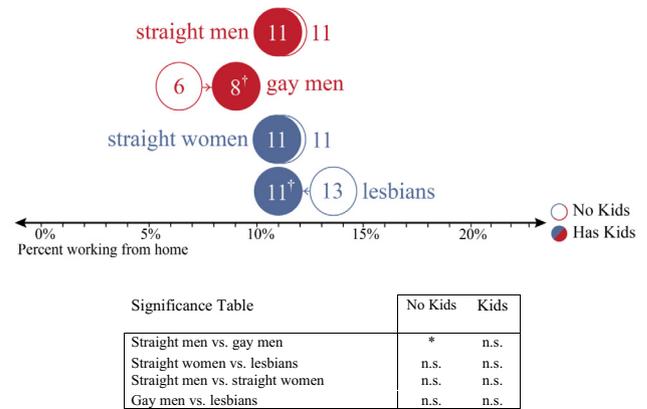
Time spent on household-serving activities and household-serving travel is time that one cannot spend on other activities, such as working and commuting to and from work. In this section, we explore whether those who spend large portions of their day serving the household spend less time commuting on average. Fig. 4 details work and commute patterns by household type and presence of children in our sample. Straight men's and lesbians' time spent working changes little when children are present in the household, while straight women work less when a child is present in the home. Gay men's time spent in work-related activities increases somewhat, though again we note the small sample size of gay men with children in the ATUS. In both scenarios—with and without children in the home—men (gay and straight) spend more time engaged in paid labor-related activities than straight women. Lesbians, on the other hand, work about as much as straight men and more than gay men when no children are present; however, lesbians with children spend far fewer minutes working per day compared to either straight or gay men with children.

With the exception of partnered straight men, whose commutes do not appear to be affected by the presence of kids, children in the household slightly decreases the time spent commuting to work. Children have no effect on the proportion of straight men and women working from home, and only slight positive and slight

(a) Children's effects on minutes of work-related time by sex and sexuality



(b) Children's effects on the percentage of respondents working from home by sex and sexuality



(c) Children's effects on minutes spent commuting by sex and sexuality

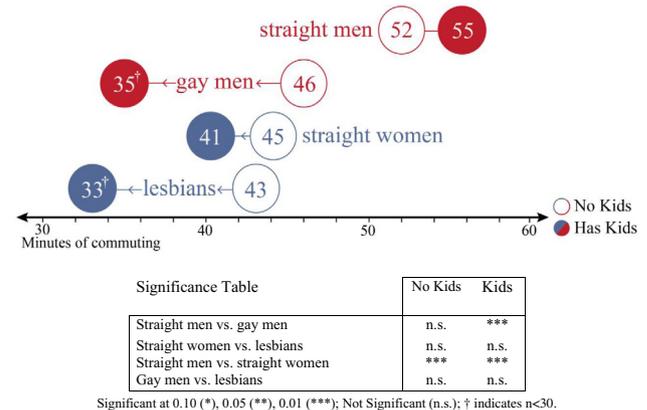


Fig. 4. How the presence of children affects minutes of work-related time, working from home, and commuting.

depressing effects on gay men and lesbians working from home respectively. Fig. 4 includes mean commute durations for people who worked and commuted at least 1 min on the survey day, are employed full-time, and are between the ages of 18 and 65. Straight women's commute durations shrink by nearly 10% when children are present in the home, while straight men with children see a slight increase in commute durations, to nearly an hour per day. Median commute times (not shown here) vary less than mean commute times, though the patterns are the same.

5. Discussion

When it comes to the division of household-serving labor, travel, and paid labor, it is clear that sex matters. But so too does the interplay of sexes within a household; gay and lesbian households appear to occupy a statistical middle ground between straight men and straight women's activity patterns.

Despite widely reported changes in attitudes about women's roles in society, and dramatic increases in female labor force participation over the last half century, this analysis shows a clear gendered division of labor in straight households. In straight households, women continue to do a substantial majority of household labor and household-serving travel, on average. While straight men are more likely to be employed (86%) than their female partners (68%), straight women employed full-time do an average of over 1 h (a difference of 38%) more household-serving labor and related travel than their full-time employed male partners per day.

For same-sex couples, our analysis suggests a more equitable division of household-serving labor. While we are unable to separate out the exact tradeoffs made in gay and lesbian households, the results are suggestive: gay men and lesbians spend more time on household serving labor than straight men, and less than straight women. These results hold when we examine households with and without children separately, and we find no evidence that gay men and lesbians divide paid and unpaid labor and travel by adopting traditional "masculine" and "feminine" roles. This suggests that traditional gender roles strongly structure straight households' activity/travel patterns in the U.S. in the 2000s, but in same-sex households these forces are more muted and may divide household serving labor and travel more equally.

However, the presence of children affects the household-serving work and travel of women (straight or lesbian) more than men (straight or gay). Both straight and lesbian women are about twice as likely to make a household-serving trip as straight or gay men when children are present. These data collectively suggest that deeply embedded gender roles persist regardless of sexuality; gay and lesbian households are more egalitarian largely because men are more likely to behave like other men, and women like other women. Put another way, it's sex more than sexuality that largely defines the division of household-serving labor and related travel.

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