The Comparative Political Economy of Working Time

by

James Conran

B.A. Arts, University College, Dublin
M.Sc. London School of Economics and Political Science

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE AT THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY SEPTEMBER 2017

© James Conran 2017. All rights reserved.

The author hereby grants to MIT permission to reproduce and to distribute publicly paper and electronic copies of this thesis document in whole or in part in any medium now known or hereafter created.

Signature redacted

Signature of Author: ____________________________

Department of Political Science
September 6, 2017

Certified by: ____________________________

Kathleen Thelen
Ford Professor of Political Science
Thesis Supervisor

Signature redacted

Accepted by: ____________________________

Ben Ross Schneider
Ford International Professor of Political Science
Chair, Graduate Program Committee

MAY 24 2018
LIBRARIES
ARCHIVES
DISCLAIMER NOTICE

Due to the condition of the original material, there are unavoidable flaws in this reproduction. We have made every effort possible to provide you with the best copy available.

Thank you.

The images contained in this document are of the best quality available.
The Comparative Political Economy of Working Time

by James Conran

Submitted to the Department of Political Science on September 6, 20017 in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

Abstract

The social organization of working time profoundly shapes the lives of workers, families and societies, and has historically been the subject of intense social and political contestation. Yet work time has been relatively rarely studied by political scientists. This dissertation seeks to correct this neglect by drawing attention to the important connections between work time and two much more widely studied phenomena: the growth of income inequality and the persistence of gender inequality. Using a mixed method approach, it first traces the historical development since the 19th Century of the work time regimes – the combination of work time regulations and practices – of three developed democracies: France, Germany and the United States. In three subsequent chapters, quantitative analyses of a range of surveys, in particular labor force surveys, demonstrate the ways that changes in these regimes have contributed to growing income inequality and persistent gender inequality, as well as shaping the politics of economic inequality. In particular I draw attention to a profound long term shift in the relationship between work time and social class – what I refer to as a “great reversal” – whereby individuals at the top of the social hierarchy today work longer hours than those with lower status, in contrast to the work time regime described more than a century ago by Thorstein Veblen, defined by the contrast between a high-status “leisure class” and a low-status “working class”. This shift has both compounded growing income inequality and helped legitimate and activate the self-interested opposition of the “working rich” to redistribution, by bolstering their sense of their own deservingness. While the “great reversal” and its consequences are shown to have occurred in each of the three cases studied, it happened earlier and went further in the United States than in Germany and, in particular, France. The study concludes that France’s more highly regulated work time regime has helped limit both the rise of income inequality and the level of gender inequality on the French labor market, relative to other countries.

Thesis Supervisor: Kathleen Thelen
Title: Ford Professor of Political Science
# Contents

Abstract 2

Acknowledgments 5

1 Introduction 7
   1.1 Time: the scarcest economic resource 7
   1.2 Cross-national and historical overview 9
   1.3 Existing approaches to work time 13
   1.4 A new perspective: the political economy of work time and inequality 22
   1.5 Cases and Data 24
   1.6 Structure of the dissertation 27

2 Origins and Evolution of Work Time Regimes in Three Countries 30
   2.1 United States 31
   2.2 Germany 49
   2.3 France 62
   2.4 Conclusion 77

3 Work Time and Class Inequality 79
   3.1 Work Time and the Predistribution of Income 79
   3.2 The increasingly unequal “predistribution” 81
   3.3 Work time and class inequality: the Great Reversal 90
   3.4 Regression-based analysis 96
   3.5 Conclusion 109

4 Work Time and Gender Inequality 110
   4.1 Explaining gender inequality and convergence 118
   4.2 Gender inequality in three countries 130
   4.3 Conclusion 159

5 Work time and Redistribution Preferences 162
   5.1 Theory and literature: the socio-cultural consequences of the labor market 164
5.2 Empirical analysis I: United States .................................. 172
5.3 Empirical analysis II: Germany ........................................ 187
5.4 Conclusion .................................................................. 199

6 Conclusion ....................................................................... 203
  6.1 Main contributions ...................................................... 203
  6.2 Further research: work time and the 1% ...................... 209
  6.3 Work Time in the 21st Century .................................... 214

A Appendix to Chapter 3 ....................................................... 220
B Appendix to Chapter 4 ....................................................... 226
C Appendix to Chapter 5 ....................................................... 229
  C.1 Survey Questions ....................................................... 229
  C.2 Additional Figures and Tables ..................................... 231
Acknowledgments

Most people who find themselves reading dissertations know from personal experience the long and winding road that leads from conception to completion. The road has been no less twisted with this one, and my own efforts would never have been adequate to travel it without the generous help and wise advice of others.

Above all I am thankful to my advisor Kathleen Thelen. Anyone who knows Kathy will know how lucky I have been to benefit from her intellectual guidance and personal encouragement. When I visited MIT as a mere prospective graduate student, Kathy promised me that Cambridge would offer an academic environment that was hard to beat. Her partnership with Peter Hall has ensured that this is more than true for any scholar of comparative political economy. Together, Kathy and Peter have not only helped make the completion of this project possible and shaped my outlook as a political scientist; above all they have been inspiring models as scholars, teachers and mentors. Complementing them as the final member of my committee, Devin Caughey likewise provided encouraging, constructive and insightful feedback; Devin also provides encouraging proof that technical proficiency need not come at the expense of intellectual breadth, depth and open-mindedness in newer generations of political scientists.

I am also grateful to a number of institutions for supporting me through this long scholarly journey. The MIT Department of Political Science gave me the generous opportunities, rich intellectual environment and rigorous training without which I would be an even more imperfect scholar than this dissertation’s flaws reveal. David Brady and colleagues at the Social Science Research Center in Berlin (WZB) and Bruno Palier at the Center for European Studies (CEE) at Sciences Po in Paris each allowed me to enjoy congenial and stimulating settings during my fieldwork, as did the Center for European Studies (CES) at Harvard when I was writing up the dissertation. The CES also provided essential financial support, as did the Embassy of France in the United States.

Of course grad students cannot live on advisers and institutions alone. My MIT comrades provided essential moral support and solidarity as well as substantive input along the way; among others too numerous to name, my friends Noel Anderson, Mark Bell, Jeremy Ferwerda, Tom O’Grady, Joseph Torigian, Andreas Wiedmann and in particular Alec Worsnop and (honorary MIT alumnus via Brandeis) Catherine
Worsnop have my heartfelt thanks. At Harvard, I was lucky to benefit from the advice and support of a formidable writing group: Volha Charnysh, Leslie Finger, Alex Hertel-Fernandez, Jeff Javed and, especially my office-mate in Cambridge and Berlin, Noam Gidron.

Finally, I am not eloquent enough to thank adequately my partner in all things, Yeling Tan. It is tempting to believe that I would have written this dissertation more quickly without her, but I must admit it is far more likely I would not have managed it at all. Either way, I am glad not to have tried. Her intelligence, calm and belief in me in those dark moments of dissertation-induced despair known to every PhD student, are only a small part of why I am so lucky to have her on my side.
1 Introduction

1.1 Time: the scarcest economic resource

Time is the ultimate finite resource for people and society, and traditional GDP measures do not reflect the quantity of individuals’ non-work time – indeed, an increase in leisure time will generally lower GDP, despite its positive contribution to [quality of life]

— Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission (2009), p. 212

Time is our scarcest resource. The share of that resource devoted to working – for how long, when, under what conditions and on whose terms – is of profound importance in the lives of workers, families and societies. Having more time for leisure and personal care is associated with a range of measures of well-being, including physical and mental health, low stress, productivity and subjective enjoyment of life (OECD 2011: 125). Time away from work is the condition for personal, family and community life, civic participation and indeed the reproduction of the capacity for further work. Equally, however, adequate access to paid work is an essential vector of prosperity and autonomy in our contemporary market economies.

Work time has also been a classic subject for political economy. For Karl Marx, the Factory Act of 1847, which prescribed a 10-hour working day for women and children mill-workers was nothing less than the first triumph of “the political economy of the working class” over “the blind rule of supply and demand” (Tucker 1978: 517). For Max Weber, the “spirit of capitalism”, originating in the Puritan asceticism of New England and transmuting into the secular “work ethic”, could ask for no purer
worldly distillation than in Benjamin Franklin’s 1748 *Advice to a Young Tradesman*: “Remember that time is money.” Franklin’s dictum is nowhere more true than in the labor market, which can arguably be defined as a transaction involving the exchange of the employer’s money for the employee’s time. The emergence of this simple but profound truth with the advent of industrialism was remarked upon by EP Thompson in his well-known 1967 article on “Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism”:

Those who are employed experience a distinction between their employer’s time and their “own” time. And the employer must use the time of his labour, and see it is not wasted: not the task but the value of time when reduced to money is dominant. Time is now currency: it is not passed but spent.

Work time has also frequently been, and continues to be, the object of the regulatory attentions – to varying degrees – of governments and the vigorous contestation of social and political actors. Accordingly the quantity, quality and distribution of work time are determined not only by broad economic forces such as technology or globalization; rather they are also shaped more or less directly by a wide range of policies and institutions.

The policies that most directly shape working time outcomes include overtime restrictions (e.g. maximum hours limits to protect the health of children, women, or of all workers, mandatory overtime pay premiums, job-protected rights to refuse overtime) and various kinds of rights to paid leave, most notably parental leaves, annual vacation time and public holidays. Collective bargaining institutions have both direct influence upon work hours – the extent and distribution of which are often directly regulated by collective agreements – and indirectly shape incentives through wage-setting. Strong unions can therefore compress the distribution of hours across workers, with egalitarian consequences, as Bjorklund and Freeman (2010: 28) note of the Swedish case:
Sweden's relatively egalitarian distribution of annual earnings was due as much to a narrow distribution of hours worked as to the more publicized narrow distribution of hourly earning.

Beyond this, indeed, the entire institutional underpinning of modern market economies – including notably welfare and taxation systems, public sector employment practices, macroeconomic policies and institutions, minimum wages and labor market regulations – profoundly shape (and are sometimes shaped by) the work-time regime.

Besides all this, work time is also, as this dissertation argues, an unacknowledged source of the much-discussed recent growth of economic inequality. Yet it has been largely neglected by the comparative political economy subfield that has yielded such rich insights into so many aspects of contemporary capitalism. Not the least of the aims of this dissertation is to correct this situation and thereby begin to “bring work time in” as a more central and systematic object of inquiry in the CPE tradition.

In the next section of this introductory chapter, I provide a brief overview of some of the cross-national and historical variation in work time arrangements, both in terms of broad national aggregates and differences within countries between social classes and men and women. I then review some of the existing social scientific approaches to work time. Following a brief introduction of the cases that I focus on in detail in the dissertation, and of the data I exploit in doing so, I conclude the introduction with a preview of the structure and arguments of the remaining chapters.

1.2 Cross-national and historical overview

This dissertation is written not much more than a decade short of the date by which, according to John Maynard Keynes' characteristically insouciant 1930 proph-
esy, the “economic problem” (i.e. scarcity) would be “solved” and the typical working week in the western world accordingly be reduced to 15 hours. Clearly, there is little evidence that productivity gains that could deliver such sweeping gains of leisure in the very immediate future are about to occur.

Viewed over the longue durée, it is true, large reductions of working time have been recorded over the past century or two, varying depending on the part of the world concerned (Hubermann and Minns 2007). Bosch and Lehndorf (2001: 214-5) note that “from the standpoint of the [19th] century, most full-time workers in the Western industrialized countries today work part-time.” Figure 1.1, which uses OECD data to show average annual hours worked per employee in a selection of developed democracies, suggests that even in the early post-1945 decades, Keynes’ prediction of a steep decline in work hours was still being borne out. Over the last three or four decades, however, this historic trend has broadly slowed – to a standstill, if not reverse movement, in some cases – across the OECD.

The simplest explanation of this would be the slowdown in productivity growth associated with the emergence of the post-Fordist service-based economy – in the long run, rising productivity is the key enabling condition that allows for the combination of reductions in work time and improved living standards. But the refusal of paid work to cede its central role should not obscure the profound changes that have occurred in the configuration of working time in recent decades. In particular, one of the most striking developments in work time patterns – and one of the central phenomena whose emergence and consequences this dissertation seeks to highlight – has been the very significant shift that has occurred in the gradient between work time on the one hand and social class on the other.

1 Albeit “assuming no important wars and no important increase in population,” a not insignificant qualification, as it would turn out, for an essay published in 1930 (Keynes 1930).
Figure 1.1:

**Annual hours per employee**

- USA
- Sweden
- UK
- Netherlands
- France
- Germany
Figure 1.2 illustrates the nature of these changes in the United States over more than three decades. It shows that for each of the three lowest-paid quintiles of American males, the average “usual” working week declined (by almost three hours for the lowest quintile) since 1979, while their higher paid counterparts increased their hours (by more than an hour and a half per week for the top fifth) in the same period.

The picture is a little more complicated for female workers, with all wage quintiles seeing increased working time. Nevertheless, as for men, the largest increases came for the best paid women, while the smallest increase came for the lowest paid. As a result of these changes, whereas in 1979, the top quintile of male earners worked 15% more hours in the year than the bottom quintile, by 2014 the gap had almost

---

2 Figure 1.2 was generated using the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) extracts of the Current Population Survey’s (CPS) outgoing rotation group and based on the CEPR’s recommended hourly wage variable rw (www.ceprdata.org).
doubled, reaching 28%; the gap between the highest- and lowest-paid female workers likewise increased from 25% to 34%. When calculated as hours actually worked over the entire year, thus taking into account periods not worked (for reasons other than unemployment, such as vacations), the top-bottom quintile gap expanded by about 100 hours among women and almost 200 hours among men, reaching an annual gap of about 450 hours (for each sex) in 2014. The increase in this gap over the period was thus equivalent to five full-time (40 hour) work weeks, and the total gap in 2014 amounted to more than 11 such weeks.

This can be seen as part of a longer-term process of outright reversal of the sign of the gradient between class and work time: a transition from a world – that of Keynes – where leisure and amateur pursuits were the distinguishing characteristics of the affluent, while workers toiled in factories and mines, to one – today’s – where the stereotypical representative of the “upper” class is more likely to be an investment banker or executive working around the clock, while the poor struggle between spells of non-employment and underemployment. This “great reversal” – one by no means limited to the United States, and which I explore in greater depth in Chapter 3 – represents the macro-context within which this dissertation’s arguments about the connection between work time and inequality should be seen.

1.3 Existing approaches to work time

1.3.1 Economic approaches

Basic neoclassical labor economics holds that workers’ choices between income and leisure will be shaped by two contradictory forces – the *income* effect and the *substitution* effect. The income effect means that at higher incomes, individuals will
choose to spend less time working, since the marginal utility of further income is declining. The substitution effect, however, has exactly the opposite implication. It implies that at higher wages workers should work more, because the opportunity cost of not working is greater. These conflicting forces generate the “backward-bending” labor supply curve, wherein substitution effects dominate (giving a positive relationship between the wage rate and hours worked) until the point when increases of the hourly wage rate increase the total wage enough for the income effect to dominate, causing the curve to “bend” into a negative relationship.

While increases of non-wage income, such as capital income or government transfers, are predicted to have a negative effect on labor supply in this simple framework (since they have an income but not a substitution effect), basic economic theory is therefore somewhat indeterminate in its assessment of the impact of productivity gains. Increased hourly productivity is clearly the basic enabling condition for reductions in the amount of time a society devotes to productive work (assuming no corresponding reduction of consumption). Casual empirical observation of a) dramatic declines in working time since the 19th Century as incomes have risen and b) the far shorter time devoted to paid work in the higher-income developed countries compared with the developing world are certainly consistent with the broad conclusion that the income effect comes to dominate at a sufficiently high level of productivity.

In any case, however, there is certainly no automatic translation of productivity gains into shorter hours – any more than there is into wages, as has been well noted in the context of the long stagnation of median incomes in recent decades (e.g. Levy and Temin 2007). As an explanation for work time outcomes, productivity resembles the “logic of industrialism” theory of welfare state expansion (Wilensky 1958) – and like that theory it has a broad face plausibility but suffers from a functionalist assumption of an automatic “unfolding” of socio-economic processes and offers limited insights
into more fine-grained variation such as that within the club of high-productivity rich democracies.

How, then, have economists sought to explain the cross-national variation of working time presented above? Several eminent figures have recently offered different answers. Prescott (2004), for example, finds that disincentives created by high taxes explains the entirety of the divergence between American and western European work habits.\(^3\)

Blanchard (2004), meanwhile, appeals to what might be interpreted as an essentially cultural argument, suggesting that (western) Europeans and Americans have systematically different preferences over the income-leisure trade-off. One might be tempted to support this hypothesis with reference to Weber’s above-mentioned "Protestant spirit". However, this theory is difficult to reconcile with the fact, noted by Alesina et al. (2005) and Bell and Freeman (2001) and also noted in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, that the work time divergence between the US and western Europe appears to have occurred since 1970, not before. Nor, unless low-paid Americans have developed a greater taste for leisure, does it explain the divergence of work time within the US across social class – this dissertation’s “great reversal.” Chapter 2 also highlights the utter centrality of campaigns for shorter hours to the history of the American labor movement until World War II (see e.g. Roediger and Foner 1989). If American culture, and a national preference for work and consumption over leisure has played a role, then the evidence of Chapter 2 suggests it is the culture of union- and government-sponsored private consumerism that was mostly constructed after the Second World War.

\(^3\)But see Alesina et al. (2005: 2), who note that Prescott’s finding implies “an elasticity of labor supply that is hard to reconcile with most standard estimates of labor supply elasticities. In the case of male labor supply, we are not aware of any within-country estimates of labor supply elasticities that are even in the same ball park...”.

15
The weakness of unions and of labor market regulations, indeed, is the explanation Alesina et al. (2005) themselves favor. Specifically they argue that greater collective bargaining coverage and stricter labor market regulations explain Europe’s lower work time compared to the US. Cross-nationally, collective bargaining coverage correlates as strongly with average annual work hours as do marginal tax rates (the two being themselves highly correlated) and has more plausibility as a mechanism, given labor economists’ findings (Heckman 1993) that labor supply is less responsive to tax incentives at the intensive margin (how many hours) than at the extensive one (whether to seek a job at all). Within the US, Alesina et al. show that average vacation weeks per worker is better predicted by state unionization rate than by state income tax. This argument takes us away from narrow economic theories and firmly into the domain of comparative political economy, and specifically power resources theory (see below).

Alesina et al. present their argument as potentially “encompassing” that of Bell and Freeman (2001). The latter’s theory is that Americans work longer hours than Germans because of the different incentives created by different income distributions; where the income distribution is more compressed there is less incentive for workers to increase their labor supply. Bell and Freeman support this hypothesis by demonstrating a correlation between average work hours and wage inequality within occupations in both countries. Alesina et al. note (2005: 24) that unions are an important force driving such wage compression and caution, importantly, that to the degree that longer average hours imply higher variance of hours causality may work in the opposite direction from that posited by Bell and Freeman – long hours (and the absence of restrictions upon them) may themselves cause income inequality. Indeed, this suggestion is precisely the argument I develop in depth in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.
1.3.2 Sociological approaches

Bowles and Park (2005), too, link inequality to longer working hours with correlational evidence in a time-series cross-section analysis of ten developed economies. Theirs, however, is a distinctly more “sociological” argument, in contrast to Bell and Freeman’s incentive-effect story. Bowles and Park interpret their result as validating a formal model of what they call “Veblen-effects”, wherein individuals’ labor supply decisions are shaped by a process of “social emulation” of the consumption habits of the rich. Ironically enough, workers in high inequality countries choose work over leisure precisely because they want to join (or at least ape) the “leisure class” (Veblen 2009 [1899]). Bowles and Park suggest such a “social emulation” interpretation is in line with other research by Bell (1998) finding that hours worked by black workers in the US are more responsive to wage inequality among African Americans than to overall inequality. George (1997) theorizes in a more radically sociological vein, addressing the question of where work-leisure preferences come from. Rejecting the idea that the apparent stalling of the long process of work time reduction in the US is the result of workers lacking power to resist employers’ impositions; he argues instead for (but does not test empirically) the proposition that “the growing sophistication of advertising and marketing... has stimulated demand and led to voluntary decisions to work more... the overworked American is too often one in the grip of an unpreferred preference regarding work.” (George 1997: 33).

Veblen’s *Theory of the Leisure Class* is also the starting point for Gershuny (2005), the sociologist whose research on work time is the most pertinent to my own approach in this dissertation. Using time-use diaries for the UK that allow the measurement of leisure, Gershuny (2005: 23) has also found what he called “a reversal of the previously negative social advantage/leisure gradient”. While I focus on the other side of this
change – the reversal of the relationship between work time and social class – and its consequences for inequality and the politics of redistribution, Gershuny offers valuable insights into the cultural implications of this process and the accompanying transformation of “the social construction of the meaning of work” and of associated concepts like leisure and “busyness”. Thus, drawing on Bourdieu (1984), he notes that:

the substance of what passed for the leisure of the privileged class in the late nineteenth century and what constitutes the paid work of some members of the best-paid groups at the beginning of the 21st, are not markedly dissimilar ... Placed among the best paid occupations for women and men in European and North American societies of the early 21st century, are just those sports, politics, business, civil and NGO management, armed services, academic and arts activities that formed the unpaid vocations of the leisured Victorian gentleman (Gershuny 2005: 14)

1.3.3 Comparative political economy approaches

In seeking to explain the comparative political economy of working time, there are strong empirical and theoretical reasons to look first to the power resources approach associated with Korpi (1983), Stephens (1985) and Esping-Andersen (1990).

Empirically work time has repeatedly, but not invariably, been an important priority for labor unions and their political allies from the 19th Century Factory Acts to the European Union’s Working Time Directive. Theoretically work time reduction, can be seen as a form of decommodification more directly reflecting the concept’s roots in Marx and Polanyi’s insights into the nature of the labor market than Esping-Andersen’s own definition of the term as “the degree to which individuals, or families, can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of market participation” (Esping-Andersen 1990: 39). It is notable that in spite of its explicit theoretical roots in Marx and Polanyi’s respective accounts of the commodification of labor,
what is being decommodified in Esping-Andersen’s schema is not labor but rather the means of subsistence. This is not merely a definitional quibble; the social democratic welfare states whose decommodifying structure Esping-Andersen lauded have actually been marked by commodification of labor on a historically almost unprecedented scale, as measured by their elevated labor market participation rates. And full employment has, of course, been a central goal of social democratic parties and unions (Hibbs 1977; Korpi 2002).

From the perspective of the socialist values that Esping-Andersen and others in the “power resources” approach to welfare state research (Korpi 1983, Stephens 1979) saw social democrats as attempting to realize, however, true freedom ultimately required the abolition of wage-labor. For socialists, the employer-employee relationship was an inherently undemocratic, oppressive and exploitative one. As Przeworski (1985: 243-4) put it in his assessment of social democracy: “Socialism was not a movement for full employment but for the abolition of wage slavery ... it was not a movement for equality but for freedom.”

Despite these strong empirical and theoretical reasons to think work time and the power resources tradition should be well matched, relatively little research in this vein has appeared. Burgoon and Baxandall (2005) map working time outcomes onto Esping-Andersen’s liberal, social democratic and Christian Democratic “worlds”, based on two highly aggregated work time dimensions – aggregate annual hours worked per employee and per working age person.

More ambitious both conceptually and empirically has been the development by Robert Goodin and coauthors (Goodin et al. 2008; Goodin et al. 2004) of the concept of the “temporal welfare state”. In this work, Goodin assesses the degree to which citizens enjoy “temporal autonomy” as measured by the amount of “discretionary time” they enjoy. This variable is defined as “the time people have at their disposal
after taking into account what is strictly necessary" in terms of time devoted to paid labor, unpaid household labor and personal care (i.e. sleeping, eating, washing) (Rice, Goodin and Parpo 2006: 1). Rice, Goodin and Parpo (2006: 38) conclude that “the familiar welfare and gender regimes can indeed be replicated looking at things in terms of time rather than money... Moving from France to Sweden, you would gain around 9 extra hours of discretionary time per week – time to spend as you please. Think of it as having Monday off work each week.” This approach is empirically somewhat limited by its dependence on sparsely available time-use diaries, hence Rice et al.’s comparative study is force to rely mostly on early 1990s data, except for the US where it uses early 2000s data. It is also theoretically limited by its assumption that labor markets are perfectly flexible with regard to work time, i.e. that workers are in a position to choose the hours they work.

Globalization, deindustrialization and the growth in importance of the highly heterogenous services sector have been the most profound transformations of late 20th century economic life in the developed countries, and central themes for comparative political economy. What relevance do they have for working time? The most obvious connection arises from the fact that the growth of part-time work has been heavily concentrated in the services sector. It is also the case however that “long hours” are mainly associated with higher end professional services, and theoretical reasons for this have been proposed. Landers et al. (1996) argue that “inefficiently long hours” can result from the difficulty in measuring individual productivity in professional and managerial occupations. Taking law firms as their empirical setting, they argue that hours clocked in on the job are used as an observable signal of productivity when making the decision to promote associates to partner.

As for globalization, Burgoon and Raess (2009; 2011) draw on establishment surveys to examine the impact of a range of measures relating to FDI, trade and migration
on working time outcomes. Their broad conclusion is that the impact of globalization is significantly mediated by collective bargaining institutions. Thus in Germany, they find (2009) that while exposure to trade does increase standard weekly hours in firms without works councils, in those with such institutions trade increases only work time flexibility. This is consonant with the broader observation that recent such agreements—notably the French and German 35 hour weeks discussed in Chapter 2—have seen work time reduction traded off against working time (and broader) flexibility.

Bosch and Lehndorf (2001) emphasize the capacity of such deals to raise productivity and thus offset any negative effects on unit labor costs of reducing hours without cutting wages—an opinion Henry Ford did not need the help of labor unions to reach when he implemented his three-shift, eight-hour day in 1914 (Edsforth 1995; see also OECD 1998). However, Bosch and Lehndorf note somewhat ominously that such trade-offs do not necessarily work so well in services industries—a factory can intensify capital-use (thus production) by extending operating hours; a service-provider (e.g. retail unit) that opens for longer hours also intensifies capital-use (e.g. premises) but precisely because of the time-sensitivity of service provision—“inventory” cannot be warehoused and customers’ must often be physically or virtually co-located with providers—turnover is not necessarily increased.

In the conclusion to the dissertation, I address some of these challenges to traditional modes of organizing and regulating work time arising from rise of the services—and, in the 21st Century, digital—economy.

4 Though the threat of unionization was a factor in this decision as in the simultaneous doubling of pay to $5 a day.
1.4 A new perspective: the political economy of work time and inequality

The existing cross-disciplinary literature on working time provide important insights into many aspects of what is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon. And some scholars have connected work time with inequality – though economists have more often seen wage inequality (hence incentives) as driving long average hours (e.g. Bell and Freeman 2001; Kuhn and Luzano 2008), rather than the distribution of work time itself shaping economic inequality. Few scholars have made central the connection between changes in the social organization of work time and what has become perhaps the defining issue in the politics of the contemporary developed world: rising income inequality.

While economists have explained this latter development with factors such as technological change, the growth of winner-take-all labor markets and globalization, comparative political economists have pointed out that such generic economic forces cannot explain the dramatic cross-national variation in the scale of these trends. Instead, such scholars highlight the role of politics and institutions in mediating the impact of these undeniably powerful forces. Though sharing this view, my dissertation identifies an important causal factor in the rise of inequality that is also profoundly important in its own right and yet has been almost entirely neglected in the literature – the distribution and regulation of working time.

This scholarly neglect may reflect the fact that the politics of working time are themselves often a politics of neglect. Or rather, they as often as not belong to what Hacker (2004: 243) calls “subterranean political processes that shape ground-level policy effects”. This is certainly the case in the United States, where, I will argue,
working time changes in recent decades have been facilitated by a classic process of “institutional drift”. Where work time has laid claim to a more high-profile place in “high” politics, most notably in France, these kind of changes – and the growth of income inequality – have been more muted.

Using a mixed method approach, I trace the political and policy origins of cross-national and historical variation in work time regimes – the combination of work time regulations, collective bargaining outcomes and ground-level outcomes – and demonstrate the important ways that work time regimes are shaping both the nature of contemporary gender and class inequalities and the politics of those inequalities. Specifically, I show that the changes in the distribution of working time between higher- and lower-skilled workers has been a key contributor to growing income inequality particularly of market-based income (the so-called “pre-distribution”), while longer working time norms systematically stall progress towards gender equality in labor markets and family life alike, as female workers continue to shoulder the greater part of unpaid care work, placing them at a disadvantage in career development.

Work time regimes differ across nations in both their character and their evolution. In cases where working time has polarized primarily along class lines, as in the US, where an enormous gap has emerged in the hours worked by highly educated and lower educated workers, deepening income inequality results. When working time cleavages mainly occur along gender lines, as in Germany or the Netherlands (where class differences in working time are relatively small but the gender gap is enormous), earnings inequality is especially pronounced between men and women. To the degree that both class and gender differences in working time are constrained (as in the social democratic Nordic countries but also in France’s “conservative” welfare regime), economic inequality on both dimensions is correspondingly limited. These policies set the parameters under which the subterranean “micro-politics” of working time –
within firms and families – takes place. While no country has achieved an “optimal” egalitarian mix of these policies, my comparative analysis suggests that a range of policies – including tax systems, childcare subsidies, rights to family leave and paid vacation, anti-discrimination rules for part-time workers, overtime regulations – must be aligned in order to deliver both class and gender equality.

In the next section of this introductory chapter, I briefly present the cases I have chosen to examine in depth and the data I have used to do so.

1.5 Cases and Data

1.5.1 The cases

In the remainder of the dissertation I narrow my focus on three advanced economies: France, Germany and the United States. My starting assumption in cross-national research is causal heterogeneity and I therefore mainly rely on within-case evidence in exploring the relationship between work time and inequality, deploying both graphical and individual- and occupation-level quantitative analyses as well as, in Chapter 2, qualitative accounts of the emergence and historical trajectory of their work time regimes. With this approach, I demonstrate the important ways that work time shapes both the nature of contemporary class and gender inequalities and the politics of those inequalities.

I select these three cases primarily on grounds of substantive and theoretical importance – if I can “only” offer insight into a small number of cases then let them at least be ones of particular inherent interest. As three of the largest developed democracies, the US, France and Germany qualify by this criterion. In addition, these cases offer significant institutional and behavioral variation with regard to both work time
and their political economies more generally. In the varieties of capitalism tradition, the United States and Germany are the paradigmatic “liberal” and “coordinated” market economies respectively, whereas France falls somewhat between these stools as a “mixed market economy” (Hall and Soskice 2001); with regard to their characteristic modes of labor market regulation they are seen as paradigms of market-based (USA), collective bargaining-centered (Germany) and state-led systems.

With regard to work time specifically, the “overworked American” (Schor 1991) has received as much attention, scholarly or otherwise, as have the allegedly work-shy French. The American case is notable for the historic centrality of work time to the country’s early and mature labor movement (see Chapter 2) and for its outlier status among the developed democracies today in at least some work time dimensions: the average US private sector worker has 15 days of paid leave a year – half the statutory minimum (including public holidays) in Germany (Schmitt 2008). Yet, as noted above and elaborated upon in the following chapter, these transatlantic differences appear to be of relatively recent vintage, dating in particular to the period since the economic crises of the 1970s.

At the most aggregate level (as in Figure 1.1), Germany appears to have followed a similar work time path to France; but, as discussed in Chapter 4 especially, in Germany’s case the rapid decline in average annual hours has been driven by a far greater expansion of part-time work than in the French case. The French case is appealing in its own exceptionalism – here more than virtually any other developed democracy, work time regulation remained persistently at or near the forefront of national policy and politics over the decades. It therefore offers what is today a relatively rare instance of what a “high politics” of work time – and stricter regulatory constraints on work time – can look like.
1.5.2 A note on data

The kind of broad national averages shown in Figure 1.1, while sufficient motivation for a research puzzle – and the focus of much existing working time scholarship – are deeply inadequate. For one thing, widely used OECD or (as in Figure 2) Total Economy Database (TED) working time data are only loosely suitable for cross-national comparison of levels as opposed to trends. Secondly and more fundamentally, such aggregates conceal as much as they reveal in terms of the distribution of these average hours among full- and part-timers, men and women, rich and poor and so on. This is a major limitation on any research on work time that confines itself to such data, as does much of the existing cross-national research on the political economy of working time.

There are considerable challenges in measuring work time. No cross-national datasets with micro-level data are currently available. Annually administered surveys typically measure only actual or usual weekly hours, failing to capture variation in the number of weeks worked each year. Labor force surveys such as the US Current Population Survey (throughout the period covered by the data I make use of, starting in 1979), the German Mikrozensus (since 2005), and the French Enquête emploi (since 2003) are, in contrast, administered throughout the year; they are also much larger in terms of the number of observations, allowing for analysis of relatively small population subgroups, particularly detailed occupational categories. Accordingly I make particularly intensive use of such surveys – a relatively rarely deployed resource in cross-national research in comparative political economy – supplementing them where necessary by the use of both OECD data and other national surveys, especially those

---

5The OECD work hours data does not provide any microdata below the national average level, though it does offer some aggregate statistics for sub-populations defined by gender and age.

26
providing more directly political variables.\textsuperscript{6}

1.6 Structure of the dissertation

The organization of the remainder of the dissertation is as follows: In the next chapter, I trace the origins and evolution of the three countries' work time regimes in terms of legislative, collective bargaining and behavioral outcomes since the 19th century. This chapter demonstrates that labor campaigns for shorter hours and legislative measures to regulate work time were at least as prominent in the United States as in France or Germany until at least the end of the Second World War. In both Germany and United States, collective bargaining has been a more prominent means of regulating work time than the law, though legal force has sometimes been given to the achievements of collective bargaining, as in the case of statutory rights to paid vacation. In France the law has also tended to ratify and generalize pre-existing developments in the sphere of industrial relations, though when the left has been in power the state has sometimes sought to lead the way and encourage work time reductions. While there are undoubtedly strengths and weakness to both these modes of work time regulation, the German and, especially, American regime’s reliance on the continued power and coverage of organized labor has been exposed in the recent de-industrializing and de-unionizing decades.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I turn to the social consequences of the work time arrangements whose evolution are charted in Chapter 2, and in particular the implications for class and gender inequality respectively. Thus in Chapter 3, I highlight and

\textsuperscript{6}I use the Center for Economic and Policy Research’s (CEPR) extracts from the Outgoing Rotation Group of the CPS. Access to the Mikrozensus was granted by the German Federal Statistics Office. The Enquête emploi is available for years after 2002 from the website of Insee, the French statistical authority and for earlier years from the Centre Maurice Halbwachs.
explore the above-mentioned profound changes in the social organization of work time, involving a "great reversal" in the relationship between social class on the one hand and work time on the other. I argue that these changes have contributed to the much-discussed rise of economic inequality in the rich democracies over recent decades, focusing in particular on the role of work time in determining the pre-tax and -transfer "predistribution" of labor income.

In Chapter 4, then, I consider the impact of work time regimes on another pressing matter of contemporary concern, the persistence of gender inequalities in the labor market. Here, as I demonstrate, the role of work time in determining the contours and extent of such inequalities is even more fundamental than was the case for class inequalities. Chapters 3 and 4 both suggest that a relatively rigorous regime of work time regulation, such as that of France, can play a role (alongside other policies and institutions also present in the French case, such as legally guaranteed collective bargaining, a robust minimum wage and extensive childcare provision) in restraining earnings inequality along both of these key dimensions of class and gender.

In the last empirical chapter, Chapter 5, I turn to the political consequences of work time. In particular, I show based on analysis of several decades' worth of survey data from the United States and Germany, how work time patterns feed back into the contemporary politics of inequality by shaping attitudes towards redistribution. Specifically, I demonstrate that people's beliefs about the fairness or otherwise of the market distribution of income — and hence their attitudes towards possible redistribution — are significantly shaped by their work time, and that of their occupational peers. Where highly paid workers work long hours, they use their experience (and their observations of the work lives of those around them) as a heuristic in forming views about their own deservingness and that of "people like them".

Drawing inspiration from the work of EP Thompson, the theory pursued in this
chapter emphasizes the importance of understanding what I refer to as the “moral economy of the working rich.” Just as hunger alone was not a sufficient explanation for hunger riots in 18th Century England, it is essential for us to gain a better understanding of the conditions under which the affluent come to legitimize and therefore activate their self-interested reasons for opposition to redistribution. Chapter 5 argues – and presents evidence – that the increasingly long work time experienced in the upper reaches of the socio-economic status hierarchy is one part of an answer to this vital question.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I conclude this dissertation by briefly summarizing its contribution – primarily “bringing working time in” to the comparative political economy literature and offering a new perspective on the problem of growing income inequality and the persistence of gender inequality – and drawing out some possible political and policy implications. I also consider the relevance of my arguments in the face of the explosion of inequality at the very top of the distribution – the famous “1%” and above – and offer some speculative reflections on the transformations of work and work time that appear to already be underway in the age of digitalization. Do contemporary technological developments promise, as some fear (or hope) an age of technologically-induced obsolescence for workers? Or, perhaps, the dissolution of the very distinction between “work” and “non-work” that underlies this dissertation? Will it strengthen the ability of employers to exercise control over workers’ time or liberate workers from such control? While acknowledging the challenges of the coming new world of work time, I also draw attention to the emergence of new regulatory and legislative approaches that are responding to these challenges.
This chapter provides some historical perspective on the origins and evolution of the work time regimes of France, Germany and the United States. In terms of both legislative and regulatory frameworks and behavioral outcomes, the three regimes had much in common in earlier periods, yet evolved in quite different directions over the course of the decades that followed, and particularly in the decades since the economic crisis that struck the advanced capitalist world in the 1970s. It is in part through their different responses to such major crises, economic and political, that the work time regimes of the three countries have emerged. Without neglecting significant developments that took more incremental form, I therefore pay particular attention to these inflection points in this chapter.

In doing so, I occasionally make some use of the analytical framework deployed by Peter Gourevitch's (1986) classic comparative historical analysis of the political determinants of policy responses to economic crisis. In it, Gourevitch identifies a menu of five broad “policy packages” that were chosen or seriously considered in at least some of his country-crisis cases: market liberalism, central planning, protectionism, Keynesian demand stimulus and mercantilism (1986: 35–54). In tracing the historical emergence of work time regimes, however, this chapter finds in several of these cases, a qualitatively distinct sixth approach was not only very much on the agenda, but
at least partially implemented: work-redistribution via labor supply restriction. The use of this additional policy strategy not only shaped national responses to the crises Gourevitch examines; it also thereby durably shaped the very different work time regimes that emerged in each country.

2.1 United States

2.1.1 19th Century to First World War

In the United States as in other industrializing nations, shorter work time was arguably the major demand of collectively organized workers for most of the nineteenth century. The first federal regulation of working time came in the form of a 1840 executive order limiting hours for manual employees of the federal government to ten hours per day; New Hampshire was (in 1847) the first of seven states to legislate (with limited practical effect) the ten-hour day in the 1840s and 1850s (Negrey 2012: 38). The first federal legislation for an 8-hour day – again for manual federal workers – followed in 1868.

Surely the most storied day in US labor’s shorter hours movement’s history, though, came on May 4th, 1886 in Chicago. On or around May 1st – chosen because it was in much of the country the date on which annual labor contracts were renewed – hundreds of thousands of workers across America’s major cities participated in coordinated strikes and demonstrations for the eight-hour day. Demonstrations spilled into the days that followed, with bloody consequences in Haymarket Square, where a bomb (allegedly thrown by an anarchist) killed one policeman. When the police responded by firing upon the demonstration – which included many immigrant workers as well as anarchist activists – dozens of protesters were wounded, some
fatally, and seven more policemen died in the gunfire. Four more protesters were executed following highly controversial investigations and trials. Following Haymarket – and another incident in Milwaukee the following day which led to the deaths of nine protesters at the hands of National Guard troops – the eight-hours campaign lost much of its momentum, with previously sympathetic middle class reformers in particular distancing themselves from the movement (Negrey 2012: 42-44).

However, work time reduction, and specifically the eight-hour day, remained a high collective bargaining priority for labor, as reflected in the 1888 decision of the recently-formed American Federation of Labor (AFL) to renew the campaign with a national day of action set for May 1st 1890. It was in solidarity with this decision that the socialist Second International, in its inaugural congress on the 100th anniversary of the storming of the Bastille in 1889, institutionalized May 1st as an international day of worker demonstration for the eight hour work day. Thus did “May Day” later come to be recognized as a public holiday in honor of labor around the world – but not, ironically, in the United States itself.

For Samuel Gompers, the AFL’s founding president and one of the central figures of American labor history, “the shorter workday [was] one of the primary, fundamental demands of organized labor” (Gompers 1915, quoted in Monthly Labor Review 1956). Work time reduction was a means of limiting what Marx (an influence on Gompers despite his hostility to socialist politics) called “the realm of necessity” and expanding that of freedom; freedom was, in Gompers’ words “synonymous with the hours of leisure”. Gompers’ goal, however, was not the same as the utopian vision of the “abolition of labor” sometimes sketched by Marx; instead he sought to inscribe the goal of reduced hours in a vision that was entirely compatible with the American ideal of the worker-consumer. The rest and leisure time afforded by a lighter work burden would allow workers to elevate their cultural and intellectual standards, to
develop new tastes and desires:

The individual who works 8 hours or less does not each day exhaust his energy. He has time for recuperation and something more. His mind is more alert and active. He is capable of more vigorous and more effective work. He goes to and from work at a time when well-dressed people are on the streets. He really has time and opportunity for making comparisons and forming desires. He has longer time (sic) to stay at home, sees other homes better furnished, and consequently wants a better home for himself. He wants books, pictures, friends, entertainment. In short, he becomes a human being with intellectual desires and cravings. This change makes him a more valuable worker. Because his standard of living has changed, he demands higher wages. Men and women will not continue indefinitely to work for wages that force them to live below their concepts of what constitutes standards of living (Gompers 1915, quoted in Monthly Labor Review 1956).

A variety of arguments have always been offered in favor of work time reduction - Gompers' above-quoted claims about improved possibilities for self-realization and cultivation (as well as improved productivity) have been recurrent ones; so too has the civic republican idea that less time devoted to work would expand time for citizens' engagement in the public square; and that workers' wages would be increased and health improved. But perhaps the most frequent framing of work time reduction has been the one centered on the redistribution of work between the under- and overemployed, in the recurrent context of technologically induced unemployment. Paradoxically, the idea of work time reduction as a means of work-sharing has therefore been most prominent in times of mass-unemployment – precisely the context where labor unions are normally\(^1\) in the weakest position to enforce their demands through collective bargaining.

\(^1\)That is, absent either a favorable turn in the political environment or a sudden growth in the militancy of rank-and-file workers – or both, as would occur in the US in the 1930s and France in 1936 alone.
Typically of the multilayered motives and arguments of the shorter hours movement, therefore, Gompers at times also appealed to this argument, noting in his 1887 presidential address to the AFL the “distress caused by the displacement of labor by machinery” and concluding that “so long as there is one man who seeks employment and cannot obtain it, the hours of work are too long” (Gompers 1887: 9).

The slogan “Eight hours for work, eight hours for rest, eight hours for what we will” became a rallying cry for labor, one that neatly combined the more radical and more conservative impulses behind the goal: on the one hand, “eight hours for work” (as opposed to the prevalent 10) implied no challenge to the basic contours of the wage-labor relation that formed the basis of the industrialized society, and “eight hours of rest” fitted Gompers’ framing of the question around the need for labor to reproduce its energies, the better to deploy them in their work; on the other hand, “eight hours for what we will” spoke to a more radical desire for freedom and autonomy on the part of workers.

The hours issue was also, however, a strategically useful demand to prioritize because of its capacity (compared, e.g., to wage demands) to unite workers across occupational and other hierarchies. As Gompers noted in 1889, “eight hours a day is the cry which can unite all forces”; it was, indeed, “perhaps the only one upon which [the “toiling masses”] can be rallied and aroused from their present lethargy” (Fine 1953: 442-3; Hunnicut 2013: 71, 89).

This view of work time as an issue with the potential to overcome – or at least temporarily set aside – divisions within the working class is one that has recurred again and again in very different settings through the history of the labor movement. Thus, for example, Thelen (1991: 161–2) notes that the high-profile campaign –

---

3The eight hour day had already been demanded in the 1878 constitution of the AFL’s forerunner, the Knights of Labor (Cornfield 1987: 11).
running from the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s – of the German metalworkers union for a 35 hour week was seen as a way of sharing “a shrinking volume of work ... in order to counteract a strong trend ... toward divisions within the working class between the employed and the unemployed.”

Even leaving aside the divisions between employed and unemployed, there are some features of work time as a demand that may have lent itself to mobilization within industrial workplaces. Since workers in, e.g., a factory needed to be both physically co-located and temporally synchronized – more simply put, they needed to be in the same place at the same time – it made sense to demand that they should all work 10 hours a day, instead of 12, or eight instead of 10 and so on. Of course, that wages should be “higher” was also something all workers could agree on, but whether increases should be uniform (in absolute terms? Or in percentage?) and whether and how differential pay-levels ought to reflect different tasks, skills and seniority – these were potentially highly divisive questions.

The eight-hours movement reached a breakthrough of sorts during the First World War – a period of rapid expansion and temporarily elevated political power for the US labor movement, with membership more than doubling from 1914 to 1920 (Goldfield and Bronsen 2013: 233). In order to appease unions in the context of a tight labor supply, the War Labor Board imposed the eight-hour day on government contractors, thereby accelerating a pre-existing shift in some industries from two twelve hour shifts to three eight hour ones. In addition, the Adamson Act passed in 1916 represented the Federal government’s first regulation of hours in the private sector, setting an

---

3 See below however for the limitations of this strategy.

4 The most celebrated case being Henry Ford’s 1914 introduction of the eight-hour, five-dollar day, motivated by a combination of Ford’s proto-Keynesian belief that mass-production capitalism depended on mass-consuming workers, his intuitive grasp of efficiency wage theory avant la lettre (employee turnover and absenteeism fell precipitously) and a pre-emptive strike against the threat of union organizers (Negrey 2012: 48).
8-hour day for the railway industry (with overtime due for time beyond this limit).

2.1.2 Great Depression and Second World War

With the dramatic collapse of the economy – and of work hours with it – in the Great Depression, the idea of worksharing as a job-creation policy returned to prominence. Thus did the AFL, at its 1932 conference, break with its traditional skepticism towards statutory (as opposed to collectively bargained) hours regulation (Fine 1953: 443–4), advocating legislation imposing a 30-hour work week. Indeed, both Democratic and Republican platforms advocated for hours legislation in the 1932 election. And in April 1933, the Senate actually comfortably (53 votes to 30) passed a bill, introduced by Alabama Democrat (and later Supreme Court Justice) Hugo Black, imposing a 30-hour weekly maximum – what, more than 80 years later, would still be an extraordinarily radical measure in any developed economy. Convinced by virulent business opposition that this measure was too extreme, however, the Roosevelt administration helped to kill this legislation in the House. Nevertheless, it pressured the administration to provide an alternative to pacify labor and its allies. This alternative was the National Industrial Recovery Act – which had its own non-compulsory work-sharing aspirations, albeit in less coercive a form than the 30-hours bill would have represented.

Already in November 1929, immediately following the Great Crash, President Herbert Hoover had embarked on a policy of promoting work-sharing, albeit relying mainly on the “soft” instruments of exhortation of, and coordination with, business. Under Roosevelt, these exhortatory efforts were greatly intensified by a “massive public relations campaign”, with the National Recovery Administration deploying 1.5 million volunteers to rally support for a seemingly successful campaign of moral pres-
sure on firms to sign “Presidential Re-employment Agreements”, binding themselves to a minimum wage of 40 cents and a maximum week of 35 hours (Neumann, Taylor, and Fishback 2013: 133-4; Taylor 2011).

More direct policy steps were also taken towards the same goal. Public works programs, for example, deliberately restricting hours worked by each beneficiary in order to increase their number, while legislation imposed the 40 hour standard on federal contractors and a range of other legislation regulating the hours of specific categories of worker was passed (Negrey 2012: 55). All in all, these policies seem to have been effective, in so far as the negative shock to labor demand operated to a unique degree (compared to other downturns from the 1920s to the present “Great Recession”) through the “intensive margin” (i.e. reducing workers’ hours) rather than the “extensive” one (i.e. lay-offs or dismissals) (Neumann, Taylor, and Fishback 2013).

Bernanke (1986) proposes firms’ desire to retain (especially skilled) workers as an explanation for this use of the intensive margin, but does not address the puzzle as to why this factor should be especially prevalent in the 1930s as against previous or subsequent recessions when such work-sharing policies were not pursued.

When the NIRA was struck down as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1935, the Roosevelt administration sought a replacement mechanism to weigh upon hours and wages, and the 1936 Democratic platform therefore promised action on a minimum wage and maximum hours – and to seek, if necessary, a constitutional amendment to make such action possible should the Supreme Court intervene again (Douglas and Hackman 1938: 442). The urgency for such action was underlined when the economy dipped back into a deep recession in mid-1937.

In 1938, therefore, Roosevelt signed into law the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which introduced not only the federal minimum wage, but also a 40-hour “standard week”, meaning that employers would have to pay covered workers at time and a half
for every hour of overtime. To be sure, the intent behind both major aspects of this legislation – minimum wage and overtime pay – had a “Keynesian” aspect, boosting workers’ purchasing power. The overtime regulation, however, was also clearly animated by a quite different economic idea – that of work-sharing. Roosevelt had in 1937 complained of a rise (from very low levels) in work hours in the previous two years, which he claimed “tends toward stepping up production without an equivalent stepping up of employment” (Costa 1998: 3). Whereas Keynesianism aimed to restore full employment by boosting aggregate demand, the work-sharing approach aimed to eliminate the un- and underemployment of some by reducing the “overemployment” of others. The FLSA remains to this day the main federal legislation regulating work time.

2.1.3 Postwar: Keynesianism and Consumerism

In France and Germany, as will be shown below, the return of economic crisis in the 1970s spurred a reconsideration of the idea of work time reduction – both in the form of early retirement and of a reduced work week – as a solution to mass unemployment. In the US, however, no such return of work time constraints as a crisis policy emerged. A 35-hour amendment to the FLSA proposed by Michigan Democrat John Conyers never got beyond committee hearings in the House, with limited support even from the AFL-CIO (Foner and Roediger 1989: 274). Instead, following an initially broadly Keynesian fiscal and especially monetary response, the US responded to the challenges of the 1970s with a turn to market liberalism, inaugurated by the Carter administration’s deregulatory campaign, supplemented by a brief but harsh spell of “monetarism” under Paul Volker’s watch at the Federal Reserve and ratified
by the 1980 election of Ronald Reagan.\footnote{Fittingly enough, a 4-day, 32-hour week was one of the main demands of PATCO, the air traffic controllers union that took on – and was devastated by – Reagan in one of the clearest signs of the new order in 1981 (Shostak 1987: 165).}

What was the cause of this apparent loss of salience of the work time question – once so central both as a remedy for unemployment and as a path to more free time – for US policymakers and unions alike? And what consequences have followed for American work time practices and regulation?

Ironically enough given his own expectations of declining work time, the “turn” away from working time reduction as a policy and collective bargaining priority (at least regarding the working week) can be laid at least in part at the door of the triumph of a version of Keynes’s own ideas in postwar US policymaking. While attempts to institutionalize a much more activist (e.g. via public works) full-employment policy failed in the immediate aftermath of the war (Weir 1993) and US unemployment remained significantly higher than in western Europe until the 1970s, the much feared return of mass unemployment due to demobilization did not materialize. Moreover, the intellectual and practical-policy assumption that economic downturns would be met with a countercyclical response – whether through monetary policy at the Federal Reserve, discretionary fiscal policy or the New Deal’s legacy of social insurance-based “automatic stabilizers” – still represented a dramatic paradigm shift in economic policymaking considered against the standard of pre-Depression orthodoxies. Rising consumption, secured mainly through a combination of economic growth and collective bargaining, with a modest supplement of corrective social legislation inherited from the New Deal, was at the heart of this post-New Deal liberalism.

Labor leaders such as the UAW’s Walter Reuther, perhaps the country’s most powerful postwar unionist, fully subscribed to this creed – though not all of his mem-
bers were as satisfied with this settlement. Thus Reuther “diverted, then co-opted, and ultimately splintered and undermined” postwar efforts by rank and file activists seeking to re-assert the 1930s demand for a 30-hour week (Asher and Edsforth 1995: 172). Estimates from a range of economists (reported by Hunnicut [2013: 112]) are suggestive of this loss of priority for work time reduction on the part of the US labor movement: they find that the share of productivity gains that have accrued to workers in the form of reduced work time (as opposed to increased wages) declined from about 50% in the 1850–1920 period, to a still substantial 40% between 1920 and 1940 to a mere 11% from 1940 to 1960.6

Even advocates of work time reduction within the labor movement were hampered by their own divisions over whether a shortened work week or early retirement should be prioritized — it was the latter issue (together with paid vacation) that won out when the UAW finally began to press such matters again after 1963, leading to successful strikes at Ford in 1969 and GM in 1970 (Asher and Edsforth 1995: 172–77). Even then, there was no push for legislation: the focus was on Detroit, not DC, or even Lansing. More generally, American unions did successfully bargain not just higher wages but also more vacation time and better pension terms than those enjoyed in non-union workplaces (Green and Potepan 1988). But as the golden era of New Deal liberalism went into eclipse and the unions began their vertiginous decline, there was no legacy of federal or state restrictions on overtime (neither a legal maximum working week nor a job-protected right to refuse compulsory overtime7), and neither

6 In the more recent period of growing inequality, of course, neither work time reductions nor wage increases have accrued to workers on a scale even close to matching productivity gains, as labor’s share of GDP has declined.

7 Golden and Wiens-Tuers (2005) report that more than a fifth of American full-time employees worked at least some mandatory overtime in 2002.
the federal government nor a single state mandated any right to paid vacation.\footnote{In the European Union, by contrast, a minimum of four weeks of paid vacation is required for all member-states, while six weeks is the legal or conventional norm in many, including France and Germany.} Needless to say this did not change in the post-1970s era of militant market liberalism. Foner and Roediger (1989: 266) note that while the reduction in work time in the decade following 1945 appears modest in terms of prior history, it was nevertheless “substantial by comparison to the stasis and retreat of the post-1956 years”.

It is possible to see the divergence of the American work time regime from those of western Europe over recent decades as a “societal choice”, made one way or another. To illustrate, France’s national income per capita (in purchasing power parity terms) is about 25\% lower (though more equally distributed) than that of the US, but French GDP and American GDP per hour worked are about equivalent – the majority of the GDP gap is accounted for by the fact that the French work less, and the majority of this gap in aggregate work hours is in turn accounted for by a combination of earlier retirement, longer vacations and a shorter work week (see Krugman 2005). The French (or those who govern them) have thus in some sense “chosen” a less-work, lower-consumption “equilibrium”, whereas the US opted for a long-hours, high-consumption alternative.

This form of American “exceptionalism” only began to clearly emerge in the 1970s and later, but its institutional origins were emerging in the 1950s and 1960s. This was the period of JK Galbraith’s (1998 [1958]: 191) concerns about the coexistence of “private opulence and public squalor” – concerns which AFL–CIO leaders sought to marginalize when they feared they would encourage prioritization of public goods over private consumption in the new Kennedy administration’s plans for fiscal stimulus in the early 1960s (Steigerwald 2010: 442).
In their unyielding commitment to the priority of “purchasing power”, union leaders were, in a sense, only confirming their active citizenship in what Lisabeth Cohen (2004: 237) has called the “consumer republic” that emerged after World War II, a polity that:

promised a socially progressive end of social equality without requiring politically progressive means of redistributing existing wealth. Rather, it was argued, an ever-growing economy built around the twin dynamics of increased productivity and mass purchasing power would expand the overall pie without reducing the size of any of the portions.

Trumbull (2012: 16) highlights the role of consumer credit (“a distinctly American form of social policy”) in the postwar construction of this consumption-centered model, and notes the complicity of labor unions – in the US but not in France – in its emergence. One reason for the American unions’ positive stance was their reliance on store credit to fund strike actions; but consumer credit was also seen positively because of the access to “middle-class” consumption it offered. In France by contrast, unions opposed the growth of consumer credit precisely because they feared its deradicalizing effects; not only might indebted workers be reluctant to strike for fear of losing their jobs – they would also be more willing to accept overtime (Trumbull 2012: 24–5). That this was less of a concern for US labor is not surprising given its enthusiastic subscription to Cohen’s “consumer republic”.  

In the late 1940s and 1950s, as noted above, Reuther had successfully fought off activists in Ford Local 600 – the UAW’s largest local with 60,000 members – campaigning for a 30-hour week without loss of pay. His 1949 argument in so doing fits perfectly with the spirit of this “republic”:

9 Even by 2010, French households were still less heavily indebted than American households had been in 1950 (Trumbull 2012: 10)
Our basic fight is to get the purchasing power to buy the things we make. Not to make less things, but to make more things and to get more money to buy the more things we make ... We don’t want more leisure. We want more goods, and when we have enough goods, then we will fight for more leisure (Cutler 2004: 37).10

As Cohen (2003: 153) notes, this consumerist postwar order “reward[ed] workers for displaying the middle-class consciousness of aspiring consumers over the working-class consciousness celebrated by a militant labor movement during the 1930s and World War II.” Labor also implicitly endorsed the “gender prescriptions” of this arrangement, namely the restoration of the unchallenged primacy of the male breadwinner, a primacy that had been weakened by both the mass unemployment of the Depression and the more-than-full employment of the war. The defensive tone of a United Steelworkers statement from 1945 is telling: “The American standard of living is based upon the earnings of the main breadwinner, it rejects the concept that other members of the family have to work in order to provide the family with the necessary living essentials” (Cohen 2003: 154). If men had to toil long overtime hours so that their wives worked no (paid) hours at all, this was apparently a price worth paying for both citizenship in Cohen’s “consumer republic” and the restoration of male economic primacy.

While the primacy of purchasing power over all other goals, reflected in the prioritization in collective bargaining of “cost of living allowances” (COLAs) and productivity-based “annual improvement factors” (AIFs) crowded out other demands (Indergaard and Cushion 1987: 206–10), this was also an era of significant concern about persistently high unemployment, widely linked to industrial automation (Steigerwald 2010). Work time reduction was taken seriously enough – and notably

10 In the same remarks Reuther also suggested that Communists among the local militants were seeking to “sabotage the American economy [and] weaken the position of America....”
promoted by AFL-CIO president (and Reuther’s rival) George Meany (Cutler 2004: 3-4) – as a means of addressing such technological unemployment that in his last state of the union address in January 1963 President Kennedy wielded it as a looming threat to marshal congressional support for his preferred alternative: Keynesian stimulus via tax cuts. Higher economic growth was the only way, Kennedy argued, to put “an end to the growing pressures for such restrictive measures as the 35-hour week”, which would bring higher labor costs, inflation and would “undercut our efforts to compete with other nations” (Kennedy 1963). In the week of the President’s death, indeed, bills reducing the FLSA’s standard work week from 40 to 35 or even 32 hours were proposed; and the prospect remained prominent enough to again warrant public rejection (in identical terms) by his successor, Lyndon Johnson, in his first state of the union two months later. Johnson, however, added the proviso that while a 35-hour week would “merely share instead of creating employment”, he was “equally opposed to the 45- or 50-hour week in those industries where consistently excessive use of overtime causes increased unemployment” and was therefore open to increasing the overtime premium in such industries from the 50% set by the FLSA in 1938 (Johnson 1964) – a proposal that never went any further, in contrast to so many of Johnson’s ambitious domestic policies.

2.1.4 Institutional Drift of the FLSA

If at this postwar juncture, marked by peak union power and, at least in the Kennedy–Johnson years, a window of opportunity for social legislation, there was a “path not taken” – one involving a stronger institutionalization of work time regula-

---

11 The president’s argument closely echoed that of his economic adviser Paul Samuelson, who warned that unless a suitably Keynesian policy was adopted “an increasing and more successful agitation for a shorter work week” would result (Hunnicut 2013: 155).
tion, or indeed of collective bargaining more generally – then, it was missed because both labor and its political allies had different priorities which could both be advanced by the basic framework of “Keynesian welfare liberalism”. One result is that the FLSA, and in particular its 40-hour overtime threshold, remains the primary – virtually the only – significant piece of legislation regulating work time in the United States, almost 80 years after its passage. Even this limited regulatory framework, furthermore, has been subject to a classic process of “institutional drift” affecting the law’s coverage and impact, especially since the 1970s.

At the FLSA’s inception in 1938, a range of sectors, including agriculture, domestic work, retail, laundry, hotel and restaurant work, food processing and government employment were explicitly excluded from the Act’s provisions. In addition, there was a broad white collar exemption for “executive, administrative and professional” employees. As a consequence, only 39% of male and just 14% of female employees were initially covered under the law (Milkman 2013). Subsequently, mainly between 1961 and 1974, the sectoral exemptions were gradually lifted or attenuated by legislation.

What was never removed from the law, however, was the so-called “white collar exemption”. Originally justified by the Roosevelt administration on the grounds that “the executive’s work cannot be shared” (Bernstein and Eisenbrey 2014: 4), the Department of Labor (DoL) has considerable scope in interpreting this restriction. The regulations have since the 1940s stipulated three “tests” that must be passed for an otherwise covered employee to be exempted by her employer: they must a) be paid on a salaried rather than hourly basis, b) be paid above some minimum salary, set by DoL and c) be engaged mainly in work of a managerial, knowledge- or creativity-based nature, or involving discretion and independent judgment (GAO 1999: 45-9). Clearly the application of the last of these itself involves quite a bit of discretionary
Surprisingly (and perhaps partly as a result of the weakening force of the minimum wage, eroded by inflation), the share of the workforce passing the first “salary basis” test has actually decreased over the decades since the seventies, as hourly-paid workers have actually slightly increased their share of the workforce, representing about 60% of the employed since the mid-1990s.

As for the least ambiguous test, the “salary level”, its evolution followed a very similar path to that of the minimum wage itself: the minimum salary a white collar worker had to earn in order to potentially qualify as exempt was increased by DoL on six occasions between 1942 and 1975. In 1981 the DoL attempted another update, but a new regime was in place - a presidential order from the newly elected Reagan stopped any revisions in their tracks. No further adjustments were made until 2004, nearly 30 years after the previous increase, at which point the salary test had been rendered virtually irrelevant by inflation. This process of institutional “drift” is well illustrated by Figure 2.1 (reproduced from a 1999 GAO report), which shows the dramatic divergence of the actual salary threshold (or “upset test”) and the counter-factual inflation-adjusted one. The Bush administration almost trebled this threshold to $455 per week ($23,660 p.a.) – also, however, controversially altering the other tests in ways making it easier to get an exemption, with a disputed net effect on FLSA coverage, Democrats and unions predicting millions of workers would lose rights to overtime pay while the DoL claimed exemptions would decline.¹³

In 2016 President Obama, having repeatedly advocated – with little effect on the Republican Congress – a large increase in the minimum wage, instructed the DoL to

¹²Until 2004, if the employee earned above a second, higher salary threshold, the DoL applied this test on the nature of the work far less rigorously.

¹³In an early legal test of these new rules (named Marx vs. Friendly’s Ice Cream Corp) the New Jersey Appellate Court ruled that managers of branches of chain restaurants and stores “are not entitled to overtime pay even if they spent most of their time cooking, cleaning, dispensing drinks and serving customers” (Werner et al. 2007: 13)
revise the regulations governing exemptions, with the aim of expanding the legal coverage of minimum wage and overtime pay. But these plans, which would have doubled the salary threshold to $913 per week, were suspended by a federal court even before the Trump administration had a chance to reverse them (Shear and Greenhouse 2014; NPR 2016).\(^4\) The Obama White House estimated that whereas 65% of salaried workers earned less than the exemption threshold in 1975 (and hence were covered by FLSA even if performing white-collar duties), today only 12% do (White House 2014). In 1999, the GAO (1999: 8) estimated that 20-27% of full-time employees were in principle exempt from the FLSA (an increase of about 3% since 1983). In addition, patchy enforcement means that violations of the minimum wage and over-

\(^4\)Some states, including New York and California, have raised this exemption threshold above the federal level in their own statutes.
time provisions are seemingly routine, providing the largest source of employment law cases (Bernhardt 2009). The sheer ambiguity of the rules – other than the salary threshold – as to who does and does not qualify for overtime protections, moreover, mean that this is a "right" that is very difficult for individual workers to assert, short of legal action.

In short, in the absence of any federal- or state-mandated paid leave, and with the FLSA subject to such broad exemptions, a large swathe of white collar America operates with essentially no legal restrictions on working time. Given the paucity of collective bargaining, at least outside (and increasingly inside) the public sector, and the deep erosion by inflation of the minimum wage even for those workers covered by the FLSA, the American working time regime has developed, despite the formal persistence of the legislative legacy of the New Deal, into a thoroughly market-oriented one. This is in stark contrast to France and Germany, where, as is shown in the next sections, work time outcomes result to a significant degree from broadly negotiated processes, whether through legislation or collective bargaining. One consequence of this regulatory vacuum is what has aptly been called a "no-vacation nation" (Ray and Schmitt 2007) marked by substantially longer average work time – over the course of the week, year and/or life-cycle than is seen in other rich democracies (outside of Japan). But it has also been a key permissive condition for the "great reversal" in the relationship between class and work time described elsewhere in this dissertation.

15 The minimum wage places a limit on the degree to which "straight time" pay can be adjusted downward so as to nullify the real impact of overtime premiums.
2.2 Germany

2.2.1 19th Century to Weimar

In Germany as elsewhere, the earliest legislative attempts to reduce work time in the industrial age were targeted at women and children; the first notable child protection law in Prussia (1839) banned mine and factory work for children under 9 years and limited 9–16 year olds to 10 hours per day, six days per week (Schneider 1984: 79). In Imperial Germany, labor unions' successes in winning shorter hours were associated with upswings of the business cycle, which empowered workers' bargaining position, e.g. the 10-hour day won by bricklayers in the early 1870s. In 1890, the German unions, like others, heeded the call of the Second International to follow the American example and turn May 1st into a strike and demonstration for shorter hours, with about 100,000 workers taking part – though, perhaps characteristically, in Germany the 8-hour day demanded elsewhere was moderated by the unions to a call for a 9-hour day (DGB 2017).

In the political sphere, meanwhile, the Social Democrats (SPD) campaigned for the immediate introduction of the 8-hour day but were more cautious in their legislative proposals in the Reichstag, calling for a gradual transition (Schneider 1984: 80–1) – again, a characteristic stance in this period for a party that combined rhetorical and theoretical radicalism with an incrementalist and pragmatic approach to everyday politics and policy. Nevertheless, the labor movement's struggles, often involving strikes and lockouts, together with, to a lesser degree, public pressure from sympathetic Christian and liberal, as well as socialist, publicists and some legislative measures, had helped reduce average work time for production workers to about ten hours a day on the eve of the First World War (Schneider 1984: 82), by which point
the SPD had made its first calls for legislation guaranteeing paid vacation for workers.

Following the November revolution at the end of the First World War, and in line with the Stinnes–Legien union–employer agreement (which also gave legal recognition to the unions’ collective bargaining role and introduced works councils in firms), legislation for the 8-hour day was passed by the parliament of the new-born, ill-fated Weimar Republic. In December 1923, however, with the eclipse of the unions’ temporary position of strength at the end of the war (partly undermined by the 1921–23 hyperinflation) and the SPD’s departure from the ruling coalition, exceptions to 8-hours day were allowed subject to official approval and/or collective agreement. As a result, average work time in industry increased to 50.4 hours per week in 1924, having previously been within the 48-hour legal limit. In the following years prior to the Great Depression, the unions managed to bring the average down again through a series of industrial conflicts, leaving about 60% of full-time workers enjoying the 8-hour day in 1928, up from about 40% in 1924. The unions were assisted in this by new legislation passed in 1927 requiring a 25% premium for overtime hours worked – defined as hours beyond an 8-hour day. Overtime beyond 10 hours in a day also required official approval (Schneider 1984: 84–5).

The German unions also made paid vacation time – a rarity before the war – a priority in the Weimar period, and with substantial success: by 1925 the vast majority of collective agreements contained provisions for some such leave, usually three to four days per year for the most recently hired industrial workers, with more senior workers enjoying up to 12 to 14 days off. White collar employees typically were entitled to 2-3 weeks of such leave (Schneider 1984: 85). By this reckoning German workers may have gained more vacation rights by 1925 than are enjoyed by the average private sector worker in the contemporary United States (Ray and Schmitt 2007: 4).

During the Great Depression, which hit Germany so disastrously, Mason (1995:
notes large employers' "frequent attempts" to retain their skilled workforce by cutting labor costs through shorter hours rather than lay-offs – a foreshadowing of the state-subsidized Kurzarbeit program that prevented mass lay-offs in German manufacturing during the Great Recession that struck in 2008–9. By October 1930 the main trade union confederation (Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, AGDB) was calling for a statutory 40-hour week as the only available means to escape mass unemployment – a demand echoed in 1931 by a resolution of the Reichstag. But Reichschancellor Heinrich Brüning, by then ruling through executive fiats in the absence of a functional parliamentary majority, instead issued a little-used decree allowing the government to introduce the 40-hour maximum in individual sectors. The collapse of the economy in any event continued to drive work time down, and in 1932 the AGDB belatedly shifted its advocacy towards a more Keynesian stimulus-based solution to the crisis, though still incorporating a 40-hour week (Schneider 1984: 86).

2.2.2 Work Time under Nazi rule

While the Weimar Republic was beset by any number of challenges to its legitimacy and hence stability, it was undoubtedly the economic catastrophe of the Great Depression that permitted the rise to power – from pre-1929 relative obscurity – of the National Socialists. Yet the Nazis seem to have been remarkably non-committal on, indeed outright uninterested in economic policy prior to (and even in the early months following) Hitler’s appointment as Chancellor in January 1933, given that it was this unprecedented crisis of capitalism that brought them to power. In part this was a reflection of internal divisions between those Nazis who were ideologically hostile to capitalism and conservatives and others closer to big business; in part a policy of strategic ambiguity designed to avoid alienating any potential constituency;
and in part a reflection of Hitler's personal ignorance of, and indifference towards, matters of economic policy (Silverman 1998: 48–68).\(^{16}\)

Nevertheless, in the first 18 months of Hitler's rule the official unemployment declined by 60% – "National Socialism's greatest claim to legitimacy" as Silverman (1998: vii) notes. What was the key to this success? One obvious constraint faced elsewhere that the Nazis almost immediately swept away was, of course, the need to contend with independent organized labor, or indeed any meaningful political opposition. In terms of economic policy, however, Gourevitch (1986: 147) describes Nazi Germany as "the first country to try demand stimulus and make it work". While rearmament played the most important part in this from the end of 1936 (when Hitler charged Hermann Göring with implementing a Four Year Plan to this end), it cannot account for this early legitimizing success in reducing unemployment given that military expenditure remained low prior to that year (Silverman 1998: 2). While part of this labor market recovery can be attributed to a "natural" (albeit very partial) upturn in the business cycle that was already visible in the second half of 1932, Silverman (1998: 245) estimates that about 25% of the reduction in unemployment was likely due to the direct job creation programs – such as the *Arbeitsdienst* and the famous *Autobahnen* – whose expansion was the closest the Nazis ever came to a coherent Depression-fighting policy.

Did the Nazis, then, entirely reject the work-sharing paradigm that was seen in both the United States and France as part of the solution to the mass unemployment of the Depression? Not quite; while they may not have attempted work time reductions of this type, they did undertake other means of reducing the labor supply with a view to winning the fight against unemployment. Specifically, they deployed

\(^{16}\)C.f. Hitler's 1936 declaration: "As regards economic questions, our theory is very simple. We have no theory at all" (Garraty 1973: 917)
both propaganda and financial incentives in order to reduce female employment, seen as both a violation of the role assigned to women and a gratuitous displacement of unemployed male breadwinners. These views motivated Hitler's labor minister Franz Seldte, though they were part of a suspicion towards "double-earners" (Doppelverdiener) that was widespread beyond National Socialist circles (Silverman 1998: 203) – and that would indeed long outlive the Hitler regime, flourishing in the Federal Republic after 1945. Seldte sought to give shape to this vision of the world by incentivizing working women to either leave the workforce or at least to confine themselves to traditionally female occupations such as domestic service. The specific policy instrument chosen to achieve this goal was an interest-free "marriage loan" awarded to (the husbands of) women who left jobs in industry on becoming married (Silverman 1998: 202–4).

Although this attempted suppression of the female labor supply had some initial success in achieving its goal, tightening labor markets and the imperatives of rearmament ultimately frustrated this ideological project. In 1937 the scheme was amended so that loans were no longer conditioned on newly-wedded women leaving their jobs, though they would not be interest-free for women who retained their positions. By 1939 there were 3.4 million more economically active women than there had been when the Nazis came to power in 1933 (Silverman 1998: 206–7). During the war female employment grew further, as might be expected – but only by a rather modest 5%, partly restrained by the reliance on the alternative of forced labor sourced in conquered territories to the west and, especially, east (Kendzia 2010: 3). (After the war, the growth of female participation in economic life would again be slowed by the authorities actively importing foreign labor, this time in the more benign form of Gastarbeiter.)

As for work time regulations, nominally the regulatory framework of 1927 – an
overtime bonus of 25% starting from the ninth hour in the day, with time beyond ten hours requiring official permission – initially remained the law of the land, but the regulation of wages and hours was handed over to government-appointed “labor trustees” (Treußänden der Arbeite), supplanting the previous role of labor unions and employer associations. These “trustees” permitted widespread exemptions from the 8-hour day as labor shortages began to bite (Carsten 1995: 85). Nevertheless, the 8-hour day was given legal standing by the work time directive (Arbeitzeitverordnung) of 1938.

Even this diminished enforcement of the 8-hour legal norm was abandoned immediately on the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, with a decree doing away with bonuses for overtime, Sunday, night and holiday work, canceling all leave and public holidays and generally authorizing work beyond 8-hours. However, a resulting wave of absenteeism and other forms of “work-unfaithfulness” (Arbeitsuntreue) forced an almost immediate reversal of some of these measures, and a more gradual U-turn on the remainder, with only the generalized permission to work up to ten hours – now with overtime pay however – still applicable a year later (Carsten 1995: 129; Herbert 1989: 346; Mason 1966: 139–141).17 In 1944, as part of an accelerated mobilization of the economy in the service of “total war” (organized by newly-appointed Reich Plenipotentiary for Total War Joseph Goebbels), general restrictions on work time were again lifted18 and all leave forbidden; and throughout the war very long hours were demanded from workers in the armaments and other military-related industries.

17 With the tightening of the labor market in 1936, absenteeism had already emerged as a form of implicit de facto resistance by workers to the new, union-free economic order – and the long hours and (in theory, though not necessarily in practice) frozen wages that went with it. Then too, the Nazi authorities responded with appeasement, namely the announcement in 1937 of five new public holidays by the overseer of the recently introduced Four Year Plan, Göring (Mason 1966: 32–3).

18 Indeed a minimum male work week of 60 hours was decreed at this point, though the disruptions of the war meant actual average work time if anything declined in this late stage of the war (Kendzia 2010: 4).
But Carsten reports that from 1941 to 1944 average work hours for men were about 51 hours – not much beyond the “normal” pre-war 48-hour week – while female hours actually declined somewhat (1995: 149–50, 171).

2.2.3 Postwar: Reconstitution and Economic Miracle

The 8-hour day, first decreed in the revolutionary aftermath of the First World War in 1918 and reformulated as a 48-hour week by a Nazi ordinance in 1938, was restored in western Germany by ordinance of the occupying Allied Control Council at the beginning of 1946. This ordinance was only formally replaced by the Federal Republic’s own legislation in 1994 (partly spurred by the European Union’s 1993 Working Time Directive), when the Arbeitszeitgesetz provided for a maximum 8-hour day (hence 48-hour week), although up to 10 hours may be worked in a day provided that the 8-hour limit is observed on average over any six month period of time. Overtime premiums are set by collective bargaining. This remains the primary statutory framework for work time in Germany today. Characteristically of the German political economy, regulatory responsibility for work time has mostly been delegated to collective bargaining.

As the political and economic order of the new Federal Republic consolidated – and took on the distinctive, (but considerably less radical than many in the labor movement had hoped) shape of west German capitalism with its works councils and co-determination – the unions again turned their focus to the two traditional priorities: higher wages and, in particular, shorter hours. The latter demand was (as noted above in the US case) seen as having the capacity to unite otherwise divided unions (Göbel 1988: 18, 22, 26).

From the late 1950s, moreover, tight labor markets allowed unions to successfully
bargain both. The labor supply was tight – despite the absorption of refugees from East Germany and beyond – in part because German women were if anything becoming less likely to take jobs during the 1957–1966 Wirtschaftswunder years. This, in turn, was partly due to a “baby boom”, encouraged by the newly acquired economic security, that reached its peak in the mid-1960s, though the underlying ambitions of young women (as reflected in their educational choices) were beginning to change (Kendzia 2010, 13–4).

The German unions’ 1955–56 campaign for a five-day, 40-hour week (the demand famously symbolized by a May–day poster featuring a child and the slogan Samstags gehört Vati mir – “On Saturday, daddy belongs to me”) has to this day not seen this goal translated into legislation, although the Christian Democratic-led government did make a gesture towards this social demand (and its family-oriented framing) by restricting store-opening hours in the evenings and at weekends. The 40-hour demand did moreover meet with success in the industrial relations sphere, notably in the pattern-setting metalwork sector, where a 1958 agreement secured its gradual introduction (to be finally achieved in 1967).19 More generally, average male hours declined by more than four hours per week (from 48.3 to 44 hours) between 1957 and 1973 (Kendzia 2010: 14, 18, 21), at which point 69% of workers were covered by 40-hours agreements; five years later, in 1978, this was the case for almost 93% (Schneider 1984: 88). Accordingly, whereas in the 1973 Mikrozensus 51% of men and 33% of women reported that their typical work week was greater than 40 hours, by 1978 such longer hours were less than half as common (25% and 16% respectively).20

19 By which time the printing sector had already introduced the 40-hour norm two years beforehand.

20 Author’s calculations. The share reporting exactly 40 hours went from 40% of men and 27% of women in 1973, to 70% and 47% respectively five years later. All figures refer to employees (excluding apprentices and family members) aged 20 to 64.
Figure 2.2: “On Saturdays, daddy belongs to me”: DGB Mayday Poster, 1956
Indeed the comparison with France, where the 40-hour week had been nominally restored to legislative force at the Liberation (see next section), shows that, at least in Germany during this period, collective bargaining could be even more effective than statutory instruments in bringing about a reduction of working hours. In France in 1973, more than three quarters of male employees had a usual working week of greater than 40 hours, compared to just over half in the Federal Republic.\footnote{Counting employees aged 20–64; author’s calculation based on each country’s respective labor force survey.}

In contrast to reductions in the working day and week, legislation was forthcoming, in 1963, to secure rights to (three weeks per year of) paid vacation – and here Germany was (and remains) far more similar to the French than to the American case. Just as in France, such legislation was used to ratify and universalize prior developments in collective bargaining, which had already secured an average of about two weeks’ paid leave in the early 1950s and a third one by 1960. The legal right to three weeks was in turn quickly surpassed by collective bargaining realities, with an average of almost 5 weeks achieved by 1975 (Schneider 1984: 88).

2.2.4 1970s to Today: The Rise and Fall of the 35-Hour Week Campaign

The demand for a 35-hour week – presented as a work-sharing measure designed to tackle rapidly rising unemployment – first emerged in 1977 at IG Metall’s annual conference in Düsseldorf. What was initially a campaign targeting only the steel sector expanded to a broader demand for the whole metallurgy sector by 1983. Unlike campaigns for shorter work weeks and longer vacations during the booming 1950s and 1960s, however, the unhospitable economic conditions of the period ensured a far
more intransigent response from the employers in the 1980s. Together with a hostile
government (Christian Democratic Chancellor Helmut Kohl denounced the union’s
campaign as “stupid and silly”) and the skepticism of many rank-and-file members as
to whether solidarity with the unemployed warranted wage moderation (in exchange
for shorter hours) for the employed, the 35-hour campaign proved a long and uphill
struggle for the union, with the initial strike action in 1984 turning out to be the

Ultimately, however, via a series of three bargaining rounds in 1984, 1987 and
1990, IG Metall did prevail, with the employers agreeing to the phased introduction
of a 35-hour week in 1995. The price paid for this, however was twofold. Firstly, the
prioritization of work time reductions (and ultimately the preservation of jobs) meant
wage demands had to be substantially moderated. Secondly, the unions were forced
to concede some ground to employer demands for increased flexibility both over time
and between individual workers. Over time, the hours worked by all workers could
vary (again without triggering overtime pay) so long as their contractual hours were
observed on average over any period of six months. Between individuals, it was agreed
that up to 18% of the employees in any plant (in practice, typically the more skilled,
often white collar ones) could individually agree to work a 40-hour week (without

Both these concessions themselves implied a third form of increased flexibility
– one allowing increased variation in arrangements between different plants covered
by a single sectoral agreement. But the second one, Thelen (1991: 174) notes, rep-
resented a break with “a fundamental principle of collective bargaining, namely to
secure uniform regulations covering all workers”, particularly because it left the ex-
ercise of this option to be decided not by plant–level works councils, but by bilateral
agreements between employers and individual employees. As a consequence of these
kinds of developments in collective bargaining, led by the metallurgy sector, Haipeter and Lehndorf (2005: 141) declare, “Germany today has some of the more flexible working-time arrangements in the European Union.”

However, because the German 35-hour campaign took place exclusively via collective bargaining with no legislative framework (unlike in France, as will be explored in the next section), the spread and maintenance of any gains were dependent on the declining fortunes of the collective bargaining process and of the union movement in particular. The consequences of this are illustrated in Figure 2.3, which shows the share of west German employees working 35–39 hours per week (left-hand panel) and the share working 40 hours or longer (right-hand panel).22 Side by side the two panels of the figure tell the story of the rise and fall of the campaign to bring the working week down below 40 hours.

At the outset of IG Metall’s campaign in 1984, the work week of 40 hours or more was virtually universal for west German men – 95% worked 40 hours or more.23 As the campaign for shorter hours proceeded, this share steadily declined to a low point of 61% in 1993. Likewise, the share of men working shorter full-time hours (at least 35 hours but less than 40) rapidly grew from less than 5% for men and women alike in 1984, peaking in the early 1990s at 36% for men and 31% for women. Thus it can be seen that the 35-hour campaign in the metal sector was having some significant pattern-setting effect. This process went into clear and dramatic reversal at this point however – reflecting in part the steady erosion of collective bargaining coverage over this period, and thereby revealing the vulnerability to retrenchment of concessions won at the bargaining table but not backed up by any statutory underpinning.

22Calculated based on employees aged 20–64 using the German Socio–Economic Panel.
23Of these, 57% worked 40 hours exactly, 38% more.
Figure 2.3:

Share of west Germans working 35-39 hours

Share of west Germans working 40 hours or more
2.3 France

Of the three countries examined in this chapter, France is the one where the goal of reducing the working week has retained the most prominent place on the agenda of organized labor and the broader political left through the new age of globalized and increasingly postindustrial capitalism that emerged since the 1970s. This continued prominence is best exemplified by the 35-hour week that was legislated in 1998 by the “plural left” coalition of Socialists, Greens and Communists presided over by Lionel Jospin which surprisingly came to power in June 1997. This law, its implementation and subsequent attempts to roll it back (without, however, altogether repealing it) by conservative – and more recently Socialist – governments, have remained one of the most contentious and high profile subjects of contention and controversy in French politics and policy to this day. I will therefore pay particular attention to it later in this section on the history of work time conflicts in France.

One reason that the introduction of the 35-hour week represented an attractive flagship reform for the Jospin government was that it presented an obvious sense of symbolic continuity with the more radical moments in the checkered history of Socialist government in France. This was all the more valuable a symbolic asset for it being perhaps the government’s only major initiative to do so, its overall approach being a mix between social democratic reformism and Maastricht-associated austerity (Clift 2002; Levy 2001).24 The 35-hour week, however, clearly recalled the 1936 introduction of the 40-hour week by Léon Blum’s Popular Front government as well as its reduction to 39 hours under President François Mitterand, who had come to power in 1981 under vague promises of rupture with capitalism.

---

24 One Socialist Party operative dubbed this approach a “fourth way” between old-fashioned social democracy and the Blair-Schröeder “Third Way” (Budgen 2002: 34).
2.3.1 Industrialization to First World War

In France as elsewhere, the earliest laws seeking to limit the long hours associated with industrialization sought to protect women and children. Thus in 1841 legislation prescribed a maximum work day of 8 hours for children aged 8–12, and 12 hours for those aged up to 16 years; in 1892, night work for women was made illegal (Bessis and Remillon 2010: 6). The revolutionary upheaval of February 1848 did bring with it a more radical, because universal, measure for a maximum 10 hour day (11 hours outside of the Parisian region) – but this decree did not survive the triumph of conservative forces in elections held only a few months later (Jarrige and Reynaud 2011). Following legislation prescribing a ten-hour day in 1900, the last significant breakthrough in work time regulation prior to the First World War came in 1906 with the (weakly enforced) prohibition of Sunday work.

Cross (1984: 196) notes that in the period prior to the Great War “Strikes over hour questions clearly took a backseat to wage-related work stoppages,”, with only about 15% of strikes in the 1899–1913 period including hours demands, compared to 63% involving wages. But this was only the prelude to a huge upswing in 8-hours activism during, and in the revolutionary wake of, the war. Thus in December 1918 the top demand in the “Minimum Programme” of the main union confederation (Confédération générale du travail, CGT) was the eight hour day – which had already been established by revolutions in Russia (where it had been one of the chief demands of the February Revolution) and Germany. In April 1919, both the National Assembly and Senate unanimously granted this demand – at least for industrial workers, as railway, agricultural and domestic workers were excluded (Beck 1998: 24).

Even leaving these substantial exemptions aside, this show of parliamentary unanimity should not be mistaken for a real or durable social consensus – as so often with
work time laws, application and enforcement would be at least half the battle. The law was not binding in any industry until the government issued an industry-specific decree, and this usually only happened after union-management talks had taken place to the satisfaction of Ministry of Labor inspectors; even after decrees were issued, the latter were also empowered to permit extended overtime and were often happy to do so (Cross 1984: 200, 205). As a result, “only where unions were relatively powerful were eight-hour decrees rapidly promulgated” (so that only about half the non-farm workforce were covered by eight hour-decrees by October 1922) and where they were weak “the laws were ignored” (Cross 1984: 202).

Nevertheless, the law was constraining enough on employers to motivate a vigorous (but ultimately unsuccessful) effort by them and their political allies to repeal the law, or at least to significantly increase the amount of overtime permitted under its provisions, in 1921–2. By then the revolutionary threat that had seemed so close at the end of the war had largely passed – as one employers’ advocate put it “[t]he eight-hour day was made in 1919 to prevent the final catastrophe of Bolshevism” (paraphrased by Cross 1984: 205) and the ten-hour norm could now be safely restored. As a result of both these political battles in Paris and on-the-ground battles over implementation, Cross (1984: 203–4) notes that the eight hour day, though seemingly achieved in 1919, “remained throughout the 1920s the highest priority for the CGT, and somewhat less so for the communist-offshoot, the CGTU.”

2.3.2 Depression and War: From Popular Front to Vichy

Of the advanced economies of the time, France was among the latest to feel the full effects of the Great Depression – but also one of the slowest to recover, in part because it stuck more stubbornly to the Gold Standard – and the deflationary fiscal
policy that implied – than others. As a result, in 1936, the year the Popular Front alliance between Socialists, Communists and the centrist Radicals came to power, industrial production was still 22% lower than its 1929 level (Mouré and Palaccio 1991: 132).

Between the Popular Front’s election victory on May 3rd and Léon Blum’s installation as the head of a coalition government in the first week of June, France was struck by an extraordinary wave of spontaneous strikes and factory occupations. Employers were forced into tripartite negotiations that quickly issued in a package of radical labor reforms (the “Matignon Accords”). The most notable elements of this package for this study’s purpose were a 40-hour working week and rights to two weeks of paid vacation – though the agreement also entailed employer recognition of unions and presaged an extraordinary surge in membership of the CGT confederation, which multiplied eight- to ten-fold in the months immediately following the agreement (Rossiter 1987: 683).

This strengthened position of the union movement both nationally and in workplaces helped ensure the legal framework provided by the 40-hour legislation would actually have a more significant impact on workers’ actual workweeks than with previous and future hours regulations. This legal framework was also in some respects more constraining – and thus effective – than other such laws. Defending the 1936 law in the Senate, Blum explicitly noted the patchy coverage of previous laws (such as the 8-hours law of 1919 or the 1906 law decreeing Sunday as a non-working day) and their undermining through weak restraints on overtime hours – the 40-hours law would therefore limit such exemptions (Asselin 1974: 686).25 Overtime was permitted by the law, up to an annual limit that varied for each industry as stipulated in imple-

25 Though implementing decrees did not take effect for some industries for up to a year (Cohen–Setton et al 2016: 19).
menting decrees – typically this upper limit was 75 hours – but use of such overtime was limited, in part on account of union opposition (Asselin 1974: 688).

With the fall of the *Front Populaire* in the spring of 1938, Blum’s replacement, the Radical Edouard Daladier, set about dismantling the 40-hour week (though not the universally accepted two weeks of paid vacation), proclaiming the need to “put France back to work”.

26 In November, citing the need for “economic mobilization” before the looming threat of war, Daladier’s government *de facto* (though not *de jure*) abolished the 40-hour week by decree, allowing unlimited overtime and limiting bonus pay for overtime hours to 10% at most. With the support of employers, the Daladier government was able to face down a failed attempt at a general strike by the CGT (Asselin 1974: 691–3; Bessis and Remillon 2010: 7).

Under Marshal Pétain’s collaborationist wartime regime, it is perhaps less surprising that the Daladier government’s neutering of the 40-hour week was maintained than the fact that the 1940 law was still not formally repealed. 27 Similarly unsurprising was the decision of the postwar coalition of Socialists, Communists and left-leaning Christian Democrats (the *Mouvement républicain populaire*) to at least symbolically restore the 40-hour legal norm in 1946.

### 2.3.3 After the Liberation: Work Time in the *Trentes Glo- rieuses*

However, in the early years following the Liberation 1944, work time reduction took a back seat to the “battle for production” and the imperatives of economic re-

---

26 The exact phrase (*il faut remettre la France au travail*) would be (presumably unconsciously) reprised by Jospin’s conservative successor in 2002.

27 Also of note, it is Vichy, and not the Popular Front, to whom French workers owe the inauguration of May 1st as a public holiday – just as it was the National Socialists were the first to take this measure in Germany.
construction. The unions remained united in moderation, even as the Communists effectively took control of the largest union, the CGT; indeed the CGT and other unions to some degree took over from the employers in encouraging and enforcing work discipline, denouncing lateness and absenteeism, renouncing strikes – and enthusiastically encouraging overtime work. All of this changed, however, with the outbreak of the Cold War in 1947 (marked in France by the expulsion of Communist ministers from the government – a precondition for the receipt of Marshall Aid); the CGT followed the line of the Communist Party (Parti communiste français, PCF) and class struggle was the order of the day again. The number of workdays lost to strikes went from 386,000 in 1946 (the lowest total in the entire 1913–62 period) to 22.7 million in 1947 (the second highest) (Le Crom 2007: 13–4).

Another reason, besides the understandable desire to maximize material recovery from the war and the years of depression that preceded it, for the limited impact on actual work time of the nominal restoration of the 40-hour legal norm, resided in significant differences in the nature of the 40-hour law of 1946 and its 1936 predecessor. Specifically, whereas the 1936 law was an attempt to impose a strong legal norm (albeit with some limited scope for overtime), the 1946 “restoration” merely set a threshold (similar to the FLSA’s 40-hour legal norm in the USA) after which a minimum bonus rate for overtime must be paid;²⁸ up to 20 hours of overtime per week were authorized (Bessis and Remillon 2010: 6).

The combination of the 1946 law’s facilitation of overtime in service of the goal of “growing production” and the effective consensus among workers and their representatives that reconstruction – and the emergence of the consumer-society – were the priority may have left France with effective work hours that were similar to the 1920s

²⁸ The first eight hours of overtime had to be paid at a rate 25% higher than “straight time”; beyond this the premium was 50% (Asselin 1974: 701).
(and longer than other western European countries – and the US) in the first decade or two after the Liberation (Asselin 1974: 702; Eymard-Duvernay 1977: 5). But even in this period, the ideal of expanding the “realm of freedom” was never entirely absent from the labor movement’s (or its political allies) imagination. This is testified to by the continued expansion of paid vacation (congés payés) through collective bargaining and legislation alike – the latter method typically generalizing leave rights already won by some via the former approach. Thus when, in 1955, the nationalized auto-company Renault agreed to grant all workers employed for at least one year with at least 18 workdays (3 weeks) of paid leave, and up to 24 days (4 weeks), depending on seniority, a pattern was set for other collective agreements. But in addition, the newly elected government, headed by Socialist Guy Mollet, rendered this third week of vacation (beyond the two that had been guaranteed since 1936) a statutory right for all workers (Meyer et al. 1990: 108).

Eymard-Duverney (1977: 5) notes that the reduction of weekly hours actually began again, following this long postwar stagnation, starting in 1968, and attributes the “impulse” for this to the Grenelle Accords – the tripartite agreement that sought to bring an end to the mass strikes of May that year. Those extraordinary événements undoubtedly gave new life to the more idealistic impulses historically present in the shorter hours movement (the desire for more time “for what we will”, as opposed to the theory that shorter hours could help reduce mass unemployment). But the “impulse” for work time reduction, whether in the form of a shorter workweek or longer vacations, seems to have already been revived before then. Thus, while it was only in 1969 that a right to a fourth week of paid vacation was legislated,29 this again reflected not only a pattern-setting collective agreement at Renault (agreed as

29This legislation had in fact been passed by the National Assembly in May 1968 before the student demonstrations, the intercession of which delayed ratification in the Senate (Le Monde 2006).
far back as December 1962), but its comprehensive diffusion to other companies and industries, such that only about 1.5 million workers were still excluded by the time the legislation arrived (Meyer et al. 1990: 109). As regards the working week, the ceiling on permitted overtime, set at 20 hours per week since 1946, was lowered (to 14 hours) for the first time in 1966; then to 10 hours in 1972 and only 8 hours (on average over a 12 week period) in 1975 (Eymard-Duverney 1977: 4).

Notably all of these developments other than the third week of statutory vacation rights passed in 1956 took place under de Gaulle (1958–69) or the center–right presidents (Pompidou and Giscard d’Estaing) who succeeded him in the 1970s. Indeed the additional weeks of paid leave were approved unanimously in the National Assembly – reflecting in part their pre-existing reality in the collective bargaining landscape, in part their huge popularity. They also all took place during the trentes glorieuses – the “30 glorious years” of postwar economic growth. But the next major developments in the evolution of France’s work time regime took place in a radically different political and economic context – marked by rising unemployment and high inflation in the wake of the second oil crisis, and by the return to government of the left for the first time since 1958.

2.3.4 Rupture and Reverse: the Mitterand Experiment

When François Mitterand was elected as the first left–wing president of the Fifth Republic in 1981, his government – in which several Communist ministers joined his own Socialist Party – embarked with gusto upon two of Gourevitch’s strategies for combating economic crisis: demand stimulus and, via widespread nationalizations, central planning. Both of these approaches, however, were quickly dropped, in 1982, in a dramatic U–turn from expansion to austerity following a balance of payments
crisis induced by the combination of a unilateral attempt at Keynesian reflation and membership of the fixed currency European Monetary System. As with the previous major economic crisis faced by a left-wing French coalition, however, labor supply reduction also played a major role in the Mitterand administration’s policy agenda, not only in the form of work time reduction – with (as noted above) an ambitious promise of a move to a 35-hour week by 1985 as well as a fifth week of statutory paid vacation rights – but also in the form of the lowering of the retirement age from 65 to 60 (i.e. work–time reduction over the course of the life–cycle).

The extra week of leave and the first, one-hour installment of the reduction in the working week were introduced by ordinance in January 1982 – but like the rest of the government’s initial economic plan, the 35-hour plan was abandoned later that year. Nevertheless, these work time measures proved more durable as both social reforms and symbolic achievements than did the subsequently-reversed nationalizations (let alone the demand stimulus). Thus when Jospin’s plural left government came to power in 1997 it took up the 35-hour project that had stalled at 39 hours under Mitterand.

2.3.5 The Plural Left and the 35-Hour Week

In terms of Gourevitch’s (1986) five “policy packages” for dealing with economic crisis, market liberalism clearly played a role in this government’s approach to the unemployment crisis facing the French economy on its arrival in power. Unlike Mitterand, who came to power promising a “rupture” with capitalism, Jospin’s philosophy was summarized by his favored refrain: “Yes to the market economy, No to the market society” (L’Express 1999). This vision clearly ruled out Gourevitch’s second policy, central planning – the “plural left” government if anything continued its conservative
predecessor’s privatization programme, further undoing the remaining legacy of Mitterand’s nationalizations. But the market alone was clearly not an adequate tool, ideologically, politically or economically. Protectionism, mercantilism and – as Mitterand’s unhappy experiment with “Keynesianism in one country” had shown (Larkin 1997: 361-5) and the Maastricht Treaty’s fiscal provisions confirmed – demand stimulus were all ruled out on any serious scale by France’s EU membership. Again, therefore, the addition of a sixth approach of labor supply restriction, and specifically work time reduction, helps us understand political-economic responses to economic crises: reducing unemployment (which had risen to more than 10% by 1997) by redistributing the burden of work was the primary (though, again typically of the history of campaigns for work time reduction, not exclusive) goal of the 35-hour policy.

The 35-Hour Laws

Besides the hope that it would bring down unemployment, the 35-hour week undoubtedly also represented an important symbol of political voluntarism and social progress for a left-wing government seeking to rehabilitate the possibilities of politics in an age of what Habermas (2000, 61) refers to as “the forced cheerfulness of a ‘self-dismantling’ neoliberal politics.” It was, indeed, as Trumbull (2001) put it, “the kind of illiberal government intervention that globalisation is supposed to have rendered virtually impossible today”. And, accordingly, its introduction was vigorously contested by employer organizations and conservative politicians alike. Indeed the moderate leader of the employers’ lobby (Conseil National du Patronat Français, CNPF) resigned in protest at Jospin’s announcement that the government would introduce legislation despite the (predictable) failure of the “social partners” to reach agreement, suggesting that someone with a “killer instinct” was needed for the battle ahead (Hayden 2006: 509). Reflecting this new militant spirit, the CNPF re-christened itself as
the *Mouvement des Entreprises Françaises* (Medef). Among center-right politicians, reference to the 35-hour week as a “straitjacket”, and an economic disaster in general, has become *de rigueur*.

Yet this should not be taken to mean that the right was totally unsympathetic to the idea of work time reduction as a means of combating rising unemployment in the 1990s. Like other conservative politicians at the time, Jospin’s adversary, and incumbent president, Jacques Chirac acknowledged a shorter working week as an admirable goal, but not, he insisted, one to be imposed through legislation. Only firm-by-firm negotiations could produce the arrangements appropriate to each particular situation. Indeed, in 1996, the conservative parliamentary majority had even introduced tax incentives for firms reducing work time and increasing employment (both by 10%), a scheme that had seen 280,000 employees move to a 35-hour week by the time of the 1997 election (Dufau 2008: 16–7).

Nevertheless, the 35-hour week legislation passed in 1998, while not as “authoritarian” or uniform an imposition as portrayed by the right, was a qualitatively more radical endeavor than such cautious experiments. The core of the measure was the reduction of the “legal” work week from 39 hours to 35 – this meant not a lower maximum work week (which remained at 48 hours30), but rather a lower threshold for overtime pay. Thus the 36th hour worked in a particular week was to be paid at 125% of the hourly rate paid for the first 35 hours.31 The new legal work week was to apply starting in 2000 for firms with more than 20 employees, with smaller firms spared until 2002; in both cases the minimum overtime bonus would only be 10% for

---

30Though the maximum average permitted over any 12-week period was reduced from 46 to 44 hours.

31150% from the 45th hour. Employees remained entitled to “compensatory rest” (*repos compensateur*), typically equivalent to 20% of the overtime worked beyond this level but varying according to the size of the firm, for all overtime beyond 41 hours.
the first year of application, before rising to 25%. Importantly, the law maintained the pre-existing annual overtime limit of 130 hours per worker, again after a transition period of two years during which it would be set at a higher level.

As well as the stick of overtime pay (and the binding 130 hour annual ceiling on overtime), the 1998 law (henceforth referred to as Aubry I, after the Minister for Labor, Martine Aubry), offered the carrot of state aid (in the form of reduced employers’ social security payroll contributions, more generous for lower-paid employees) for employers agreeing to reduce work time by 10% (typically from 39 to 35 hours) and expand employment by 6%. (The difference between the two figures was due to expected gains in hourly productivity). Aubry I set the framework for negotiations between representatives of workers and employers at firm- and sector-level. A second law (Aubry II), to be proposed approximately twelve months later, would then regulate the matters left unsettled by its predecessor in light of the agreements concluded in the meantime.

The second Aubry law, passed in January 2000, contained critical changes in the policy, mostly intended to placate business objections. Firstly, it removed any obligation upon firms to create new jobs in order to benefit from tax breaks. Now such aid was conditional only on firms registering a collective agreement stipulating a standard working week of 35 hours (or lower). Even this was diluted by the removal of any obligation to calculate the old and new working times on a constant basis in order to qualify for tax breaks – under Aubry II it was possible to deduct break times and other periods previously counted as “work” from the new total and still benefit. Additionally, in specifying a new annualized legal working time of 1600 hours (equivalent to 45.7 thirty-five hour weeks), Aubry II encouraged the widespread “modulation” of work schedules over the course of the year, a previously little-used scheme introduced by Mitterand’s 1982 work time decree. Whereas in 1994 only
about 6% of workers were employed at firms implementing a modulation agreement, the figure jumped to 20% in 1999 (Askenazy et al. 2004: 162). Modulation allowed employers to set work schedules well above 35 hours during periods of high demand without paying overtime premiums, provided the annual total of 1600 hours was not surpassed. 32

Rollback and Resilience of the 35-Hour Week

Despite continual rhetorical condemnation from the right, increasingly unenthusiastic defenses from the center-left, and countless declarations of the “end of the 35 hours”, there is still no sign of the legal working week being changed from 35 hours almost twenty years after the first Aubry law was passed – ten of them with right-wing governments. This is not for want of repeated amendments aimed at loosening the alleged “straitjacket” of the law, starting with the return of the right to power in 2002, continuing with the election of a slightly harder right in the form of President Nicolas Sarkozy in 2007, and going even further with the recent unpopular labor-market reforms of Socialist President François Hollande. The central pattern of all these attempts at retrenchment is that they have sought to allow derogations from provisions of the law by way of sectoral and/or firm-level collective agreements, while nevertheless shying away from simply repealing the original law and restoring the status quo ante of a 39-hour legal norm.

It is not hard to work out why when one considers that doing so would essentially amount to telling workers to work longer hours for less money (or at least a lower hourly rate). 33 It has thus been more attractive for politicians seeking to undermine

32 Modulation is strictly speaking only one species of annualisation – the calculation of overtime on an annual basis. A similar effect could be achieved by increasing annual leave and maintaining a standard work week above 35 hours.

33 In order to escape this dilemma, Sarkozy’s administration exempted overtime earnings from
the 35-hour week to essentially delegate implementation to ground-level actors. These retrenchment efforts have thus been perfect illustrations of Hacker’s (2004: 244) classic insight that:

actors who wish to change popular and embedded institutions in political environments that militate against authoritative reform may find it prudent not to attack such institutions directly. Instead, they may seek to shift those institutions’ ground-level operation, prevent their adaptation to shifting external circumstances, or build new institutions on top of them.

But as Figure 2.4 suggests, these reforms had limited success in altering “the subterranean political processes that shape ground-level policy effects” (Hacker 2004: 243). Figure 2.4 shows the evolution of the share of male and female French employees (aged 20–64) whose usual work week was 35 hours. The two dashed vertical lines mark the years in which the two Aubry laws were passed, 1998 and 2000. It is clear that the legislation did bring about a dramatic increase in the prevalence of the 35-hour week, from less than 5% for both sexes to more than 40% of men and about a third of women in 2002.3 After this point, unfortunately, a major redesign in the French labor force survey affects responses to the question about usual hours such that direct comparisons between 2002 and 2003 are difficult to make – this is represented in the figure by a break in the time series at this point. Nevertheless, the overall pattern of a big jump in the prevalence – though far from a universal application – of the 35-hour week in the 1998 to 2002 period, followed by incremental decline in the 2002–2012 period, is clear enough. Moreover, these patterns match the broad political and social insurance taxes, a reform that one study found merely caused firms and employees to collude in declaring “fictive” overtime without increasing hours actually worked (Cahuc and Carcillo 2014). This measure was reversed immediately following Hollande’s election victory in 2012.

34Among full-time workers (those whose usual hours are at least 30 hours), the 35-hour week is actually more common among women than men.
policy evolution of the period, with the introduction of the 35-hour laws under the Socialist–led government followed, from 2002, by continual, but more marginal and indirect attempts by conservative governments to undo this reform.

The relative resilience of this law may, moreover, be if anything underestimated by Figure 2.4. This is because of the widespread introduction of annualized (or at least "modulated" over some period longer than a week) work time calculations – the 1600 hour year (later increased to 1607), rather than the 35-hour week. In 2012, 13% of employees were affected by such arrangements. Some of these workers may “usually” work more than 35 hours but are compensated for this by working shorter weeks in part of the year, or very often by taking more days off altogether. In addition, for another group of employees, managerial staff (cadres, representing about 10% of all employees in 2012), the 35-hour legislation was designed to apply differently, namely
so that their work time is measured not in hours but in days worked. Instead of a 35-hour week or a 1607 hour year, such employees are therefore subject to a 218 day year\textsuperscript{35}; as with the hourly limits, days worked beyond this number must be paid an overtime bonus. In this way, French work time law has developed an innovative alternative to the broad exemptions of white collar employees described above in the United States.

2.4 Conclusion

While we think of the world’s economies and to some degree societies as having been brought closer together than ever before over recent decades by the various processes covered by the term “globalization”, this chapter on the history of work time regimes in three countries has shown that in some respects there was a greater transnational synchronicity in the past. In the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, for example, the international workers’ movement gave a real transnational element to developments in the politics and policy of work time, as shown for example in the huge strikes and demonstrations for a shorter work day in 1890. In all three countries (and elsewhere) an upsurge in labor campaigns for shorter hours – and in some cases corresponding legislative action – in the late 1880s, during and/or immediately after the First World War and during the Great Depression (more so in France and the United States than in Germany). When the next international crisis came with the oil crises and the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system in the 1970s, however, a greater divergence in response was apparent, with France and Germany turning again to work time restriction – albeit in very different ways and with very different results.

\textsuperscript{35}This is equivalent to 43.6 5 day weeks, implying an additional 3.4 weeks of leave beyond the universal entitlement of 5 weeks’ vacation.
– while the USA went down a very different path defined by a renewed faith in market liberalism.

The next chapters of this dissertation will explore some of the social and political implications of the work time regimes that have emerged today in these three countries.
3 Work Time and Class Inequality

While the previous chapter explored the often conflict-ridden evolution of work time regimes—in terms of legislation, collective bargaining and outcomes—in France, Germany and the United States over the *longue durée*, this chapter takes a closer empirical look at work time developments over the past three or four decades. In what follows I demonstrate that significant changes in the social organization of work time have contributed to the much-discussed rise of inequality in the developed democracies over recent decades. In particular, I highlight the role of work time as a factor determining the market distribution (prior to taxes and transfers) of income—or what Hacker (2011) calls the “predistribution”—and thus shaping contemporary inequalities along both class and (as I will demonstrate in the next chapter) gender lines.

3.1 Work Time and the Predistribution of Income

The welfare state, constructed in a spirit of relative consensus across the Western world, albeit at different paces and in varying depth, from the end of the Second World War to the 1970s, has been under pressure in recent decades. While part of its burdens have lain in increased ideological and political challenges to its perceived legitimacy and effectiveness, a more direct difficulty has been the increase in the levels of market-generated inequality that the welfare state’s redistributive programs
seek to correct. To the degree that it is the tool of a redistributive politics working "against" market inequalities (e.g. Esping-Andersen 1985), the welfare state has been swimming against a stronger current in recent decades (Kenworthy and Pontusson 2005). Thus even a social democratic government such as that in the UK in the Blair-Brown years, which enjoyed 13 years of uninterrupted (and relatively unconstrained) power and introduced some quite significant redistributive programs, could no more than restrain the effects of growing market inequality (Kenworthy 2008).

This situation has led advocates of redistribution to turn their attention to the ways in which the welfare state can – and does – shape inequality not through conventional tax-and-transfer redistribution but through shaping this “pre-distribution” of market income (Hacker 2011). These include both the “social investment welfare state” agenda (Morel et al. 2011), which promotes “human capital”-oriented programs (e.g. worker training and retraining, education, early childhood development) and more directly regulatory measures such as laws concerning collective bargaining, corporate governance (including executive compensation), discriminatory practices or employer mandates (e.g. to provide health insurance or pensions to employees – or indeed to pay a minimum wage) (Hall 2015: 258).

Hacker (2011: 35–6) argues for the contemporary urgency of addressing the pre-distribution not only because increasing market inequality burdens the welfare state with an ever steeper uphill task, but also because of the dilemmas this presents for the politics of tax-and-transfer redistribution:

...excessive reliance on redistribution fosters backlash, making taxes more salient and feeding into the conservative critique that government simply meddles with “natural” market rewards. Further, it is because societies in which market inequality is high are, ironically, ones where creating com-

---

1 Indeed, the concept was taken up – albeit with limited popular success – by Blair and Brown’s successor as Labour Party leader Ed Miliband in 2012.
mon support for government action is often most difficult. The regulation of markets to limit extremes and give the middle class more voice is hardly easy... But it is both more popular and more effective than after-the-fact mopping up.

In this chapter I analyze the role of work time as a core factor shaping the “predistribution” of income. Specifically, I argue that changes in the distribution of working time – amounting to what I call a “great reversal” in the relationship between work time and social class – have been a key mechanism through which the distribution of market income has become more unequal in recent decades.

In the next section I briefly summarize the growth of earnings inequality before, in the following section, illustrating graphically this “great reversal” for the three countries I focus on in this dissertation: France, Germany and the United States. I then present a series of quantitative analyses as evidence that this shift has been an important mechanism through which the growth of economic (specifically, earnings) inequality has occurred, including regression decomposition techniques that seek to assess the relative magnitude of the contribution of work time to explaining such inequality.

3.2 The increasingly unequal “predistribution”

3.2.1 United States

In order to explore the changing relationship between work time and inequality on the US labor market, I make use of the Center for Economic and Policy Research’s (CEPR) extracts of the “outgoing rotation group” (ORG)² of the US labor force
survey, the Current Population Survey (CPS).

My analysis of this dataset broadly confirms what is already known about the growth of income inequality in the United States over recent decades, with the GINI coefficient for earnings increasing by 18% between 1979 and 2012, and the same statistic for hourly wages increasing even more, by 22%. Given that the CPS is subject to top-coding of high incomes, and Piketty and Saez’s (2001) findings based on tax records, this can be taken as if anything an underestimate of the true growth in this measure of earnings inequality.

One widely-used measure of inequality with the advantage of not being for the most part subject to top-coding is the “P9010” ratio of the 90th percentile to the 10th percentile. Another advantage of this measure is that it avoids the “oversensitivity” of the GINI to the middle of the distribution and, conversely, allows for capturing at least some part of the lop-sided growth of inequality at the top the distribution. I define this measure here as the ratio of the mean earnings of the “P90” – the one percent of the distribution (or percentile) whose earnings are higher than 89% of the sample, but lower than 10% – to the same measure for the “P10” (the 10th percentile, who make more than only 9% of earners and less than 90%).

The left-hand panel of Figure 3.1 shows the evolution of this measure of earnings inequality over the 1979 to 2012 period. This ratio increased by fully 47%, from 4.64 in 1979 to 6.84 in 2012. The right-hand panel disaggregates this measure into two component parts measuring inequality in the top and bottom halves of the earnings distribution, respectively: the P9050 and the P5010 ratios. While inequality was persistently higher in the bottom half, the increase over this period was almost identical.

---

3I use the CEPR’s favored inflation-adjusted hourly wage variable (rw) for all longitudinal analyses of hourly wages in the US.

4Though see Burkhauser et al.’s (2009) caveats on this.
in both the upper and the lower part of the earnings distribution, with the P9050 increasing 22%, and the P5010 increasing by 21%.

3.2.2 Germany

For Germany, in this chapter I use the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP), an individual panel survey that has measured a wide range of social, economic and political items since 1984. While in other parts of the dissertation I deploy the German labor force survey (Mikrozensus), the GSOEP is better placed to serve my purposes in this chapter, mainly because it measures the particular income concept I focus on, that of gross earnings. While the GSOEP is far smaller than labor force surveys like the CPS in terms of number of respondents, it remains very large compared to most social surveys, with more than 10,000 participants per year on average.

Germany has also seen a significant increases in the inequality of the “predistri-
bution” of income and specifically the distribution of gross labor market income, the measure I focus on here—though as Fratzscher (2016) notes, in Germany (unlike the US) the growth of pre-tax and -transfer income inequality has to a substantial degree been counteracted by a growth in redistributive “effort”, so that inequality of net income has increased far less.

In fact, Figure 3.2 shows that the P9010 ratio in Germany grew far more explosively than in the US over the period (1984 – 2012). The Federal Republic started from a significantly lower initial level of inequality in the mid-1980s and remained substantially more equal than the US through the early years following reunification. Then, however, the German P9010 ratio rocketed, almost exactly doubling (from 4.59 to 9.14) in just eight years from 1997 to 2005. As a result, by 2012, the P9010 ratio was almost 45% larger in Germany than in the US. In concrete terms, mean monthly earnings within Germany’s 90th percentile (i.e. the one percent of workers whose earnings were greater than 89% of the employed population, and exceeded by only 10%) was 4,858 euros (nominal) in 2012, almost ten times the average in the 10th percentile of only 490 euros.

Breaking down these P9010 ratios by gender offers further crucial insight into the source of this higher German earnings inequality. As Figures 3.3 and 3.4 reveal, earnings inequality among men was much smaller in Germany than in the US in the mid-1980s—scarcely more than half as big in fact—and remained substantially smaller in 2012 despite more than doubling over the period, from 2.38 in 1984 to 5.16 in 2012. This was the case since American male inequality represented a moving target, itself increasing by 79% from 1979 (or by 40% since 1984, the starting point for the German data).

5 The dashed vertical line marks 1991, the first year in which residents of the former German Democratic Republic – East Germany – were included in the GSOEP.
Figure 3.2: Earnings inequality: Germany
Among women, however, while the level of inequality was very similar in the two countries in the mid-1980s, and in the early 1990s intra-female inequality was significantly lower in Germany, from 1995 the P9010 ratio among Germany women increased very rapidly, far outstripping even the US – where this measure was unprecedentedly high by the end of the period. Thus in 2012 the highest paid (90th percentile) German women earned more than nine times as much as their low-paid (10th percentile) counterparts, whereas in the USA this ratio was less than seven-to-one.

The much greater overall P9010 ratio in Germany is therefore produced entirely by two factors: firstly, the greater inequality among German women, as just discussed; secondly the far greater gender gap (not shown in these figures) in average earnings in Germany. This latter phenomenon – and the crucial role of work time in explaining it – will be examined at length in the next chapter.
Figure 3.4: Earnings inequality by gender: Germany
3.2.3 France

Unfortunately, the *Enquête emploi* microdata does not allow me to directly measure pre-tax earnings and therefore compare the “predistribution” of this outcome with Germany and the US. However OECD aggregate data, while not ideal, do confirm that France has seen a smaller increase in such inequality than its peer nations. This is demonstrated in Figure 3.5, which shows that France was the only one of 12 countries examined by Autor (2014, from which the figure is reproduced) to see no increase (indeed a small decrease) since 1980 in the P9010 earnings ratio among male full-time workers. Restricting the sample to full-time (and in this case male) workers is a widespread, though unsatisfactory, practice in the treatment of inequality statistics; while there is often a rationale for analyzing subpopulations (as I do in this chapter by presenting separate figures for male and female inequality), e.g. in order to better isolate compositional changes in the workforce (such as an increase in female and/or part-time workers) from behavioral changes, the rise of part-time work is arguably itself an important part of the rise of earnings inequality. Nevertheless, while Figure 3.5 may overstate the case, it serves as suggestive evidence that the French “predistribution” has in fact seen at least a more restrained increase in inequality than elsewhere.

This is also confirmed by Piketty et al.’s (2016) latest work on income distributions, which finds that, in stark contrast to the United States, the pre-tax and -transfer income of the bottom half of the distribution in France increased by about the same as did average national income per capita (i.e. 32%) since 1980 even though France’s 1% did also increase its income share, mainly due to non-labor income. They note the extraordinary result of this divergence in the trajectories of the two countries’ predistributions: “The bottom half makes more in France than in the United
States today, even though average income per adult is 35 percent lower in France (partly due to differences in standard working hours in the two countries)” (Piketty et al. 2016: 32).

In the remainder of this chapter I bring in work time, presenting evidence of its role in driving the very significant increases in earnings inequality this section has demonstrated – but also in helping to constrain the rise of inequality in France.
3.3 Work time and class inequality: the Great Reversal

What factors have driven this rise of earnings inequality? Unsurprisingly for such a consequential and controversial phenomenon, a wide range of causes have been proposed in a vast and cross-disciplinary literature (pertaining to earnings inequality and economic inequality in general). Among the most prominent explanatory candidates are: globalization, and especially the effects of trade with low-wage developing countries (Autor et al. 2016); "skill-biased technological change" (SBTC), which is held to have increased the premium to skills and the returns to education (Acemoglu 2002); the growing importance of “winner-take-all” labor (and other) markets where small differences of skill (or luck) yield greatly disproportionate returns (Frank and Cook 2010); the growth of finance as a sector and its influence on the rest of the economy, e.g. through the spread of “shareholder value”, (Krippner 2011); the intensified political mobilization of business interest groups against regulation and redistribution (Hacker and Pierson 2010) and, relatedly, the decline of organized labor (Western and Rosenfield 2011).6

The central thesis of this chapter is that working time is a mostly neglected factor in the inequality story. To argue this is not to argue against the importance of any, much less all, of the just-mentioned “rival” theories. As Kenworthy (2017: 8) concludes (in regard to the candidates to explain the growth of high incomes), much research into the growth of inequality “focus[es] on one or another hypothesized cause and frequently conclude[s] that it is indeed the key contributor” whereas in truth the

6Piketty’s (2014) argument about the tendency of the rate of return on capital to outstrip the growth of the economy as a whole is not directly relevant to labor market inequality.
rise of such inequality since the 1970s is “a product of multiple developments...no one or two or even three of which look to have been dominant or decisive.” It is in this spirit that I propose that changes in the organization of working time are not “the” driver of but rather one – under-acknowledged – factor in the growth of income inequality in recent decades.

Indeed, not only do I happily accept that work time is only part of the story of rising inequality in recent decades; the role in the story that I envisage for work time is precisely that of a mechanism intervening between these other factors and economic inequality. Thus, if (a version of) the technology story is true, then one of the key drivers of inequality is an exogenous shift in demand towards high-skilled labor and away from either domestic low- or middle-skilled workers (depending on the version of the SBTC thesis). In general one would expect such a shift in relative demand to produce two responses: one in the relative prices of higher- and lower-skilled labor (in hourly wages in other words); and another in their relative supply – in other words in the number of hours worked. It is entirely possible that this is the ultimate cause of the “great reversal” in the relationship between work time and social class that I describe below. But even if some such force indeed creates the pressures that result in this reversal, work time is still (with hourly wages) one of the essential channels through which technological change produces greater class inequality. And, crucially, there is nothing inevitable or automatic in this transmission mechanism, since a range of other forces also influence work time outcomes, most importantly from a political science point of view – and as demonstrated in Chapter 2 – the eminently political ones of collective bargaining strategies, work time regulations and other policies, and ultimately therefore electoral politics.

While the process I call the Great Reversal can be thought of as having begun many decades ago, in practice constraints of data for now allow me to illustrate only
the part of the process beginning in the late 1970s or early 1980s, depending on the country concerned. It should also not be surprising that the timing and rhythm of this process vary by country, with some “further along” the path than others. This is the case for the United States, among the three countries I examine, as illustrated by Figure 3.6, which shows the evolution of the average usual weekly hours worked by the top and bottom fifths of the hourly wage distribution. Thus Figure 3.6 reveals that in the US it was already the case in 1979 that the best-paid workers worked longer hours than those at the bottom of the hourly wage distribution – very marginally more for men, but significantly more (five and a half hours) for women.

Nevertheless, the two graphs in Figure 3.6 also show that while the “reversal” had effectively already occurred by 1979, the decades since have been marked by a continued divergence – especially dramatic among men – along these lines. By 2012,
therefore, the weekly work time gap between the top and bottom fifths had expanded from less than half an hour for men to eight hours by 2010.7

Figure 3.7 shows the equivalent measures for the 1984 to 2012 period in Germany. Here, in stark contrast to the USA, the “crossover point” of the Great Reversal – the point where the top quintile of the hourly wage distribution began to work longer hours than the bottom quintile – occurs during the period illustrated in the figure, specifically in 2002 for men and and women alike. At the beginning of the illustrated period, in the mid-1980s, the lowest-paid fifth of German men worked more than 10 hours per week more than their high-paid compatriots; for women the gap was

7One might note that there is a clear cyclical effect in the steep drop of hours worked by the low-paid in response to the Great Recession that began in 2008 – but then there was also a cyclical component to the decline in this group's hours in the early 1980s and early 2000s, in neither of which cases did low-paid workers’ hours substantially recover in the subsequent business cycle upturn.
more than 8 hours. By the end of the time series in 2012, the higher paid group of men worked 3.6 hours, their female equivalents almost 5 hours, more than those at the other end of the wage hierarchy. Moreover, this reversal among women is all the more striking for the fact that it occurred in a period that was punctuated by German reunification in 1990, an event that (as visible in the spike in hours among low-earning women in 1991) involved the incorporation of an East German female work-force that was far more accustomed to working full-time jobs than its western equivalent.

Figure 3.8, finally, completes this illustration of the Great Reversal by showing this process for the third country I look at, France. These graphs are made a little more difficult to read by the fact that a major redesign of the French labor force survey (Enquête emploi) that took place in 2003 introduces some discontinuities (represented by a break in the lines) in measured usual weekly work time. Nevertheless, looking at the trends in the two periods (1982 – 2002 and 2003 to 2012) a number of observations can be made.

First of all, as in Germany and unlike in the United States, the reversal in the relationship between work time and class – as proxied by the hourly wage distribution – had not yet occurred at the beginning of the period. Secondly, France saw the same steep decline in hours worked by the lowest-paid men and women, but in stark contrast to both the US and Germany, in the period before 2003 – and particularly in the 1998–2002 period during which the 35-hour week law was being introduced and implemented via collective bargaining – the hours of the highest paid were also declining (more clearly for men than women), albeit at a slower rate. As a result, among men the hours gap between the two groups had been eliminated, but not reversed, by 2002. Among women the reversal first occurred in 1992 – the sharp fall in the hours of low-paid women from then until 1997 coincides with a period of
Figure 3.8: The “Great Reversal”: France
rapidly growing part-time work in France, a trend which stabilized and even slightly reversed as the 35-hour week was introduced (see next Chapter).

From 2003 until 2012, however, Figure 3.8 resembles the American and German Figures much more straightforwardly, with a clear divergence between the top and bottom of the wage distribution and the consolidation of France’s Great Reversal. Still, in 2012 the size of the work time gap between the top and bottom quintiles in France was relatively restrained – 1.4 hours per week for women and 2.5 hours for men. This made France’s work time gap was substantially smaller than those in Germany (4.9 hours and 3.6 hours per week for women and men respectively) and represents a stark contrast to the United States, where the gap was 8.4 hours for women and almost 8 hours for men. It seems more than likely that this relative restraint in the growth of a class-based work time gap is one part of the reason France appears to have also prevented increases in earnings inequality comparable to many other developed countries.

In the next section I move beyond these broad historical and cross-national changes in the relationship between work time and class inequality. Instead I deploy a range of regression-based analyses of the American and German datasets to confirm and further explore the role of these changes in promoting earnings inequality in those two countries.

3.4 Regression-based analysis

One simple preliminary way of assessing the contribution of working time to income inequality is to regress real weekly earnings on just two variables, hours worked
and hourly wages. Naturally, both hourly wages earned and hours worked are themselves subject to a range of determinants, but they can be seen as the mechanisms through which both individual characteristics (age, education, sex, race etc.) and, as suggested above, larger forces such as technological change exercise their influence on earnings.

As shown in Table 3.1, this simple descriptive model accounts for about 96% of the observed variance of logged earnings in 2012 ($R^2 = .964$); similar amounts of variation are accounted for when the sample is split into men and women and when the exercise is repeated for 1979. Because all the variables in this simple model are logged, the coefficients can be interpreted as elasticities. The results for the first column therefore indicate that a 10% increase in an individual’s hourly wage was associated with a 9.35% increase in their total earnings, while an equivalent increase in hours worked produced a 9.5% increase. Thus the elasticity for both these variables was, as one would expect, close to (though below) one.

---

8Income is adjusted for inflation using the CPI-U-RS index. As above, the hourly wage measure used is the CEPR’s rw variable, which calculates the base rate (i.e. not counting overtime premia, tips or commissions) hourly wage. All variables are logged.
3.4.1 Decomposing variance

In order to estimate the relative importance of the two variables – wages and hours – in determining variance in earnings, it is then possible to decompose this "explained" variance into two parts – one component attributable to differences in hourly wages, another attributable to differences in work time. The decomposition procedure (originally suggested by Lindemann et al [1980] and implemented using the relaimpo package in R; see Grömping [2007]) attributes relative importance to variables based on the additional variance accounted for (i.e. the increase in $R^2$ produced) when they are added to a model. Because this "value added" is sensitive to the ordering of variables included (i.e. the more variables are already included in a model, the less additional variance will be accounted for by added variables), the average of all possible orderings of the procedure are taken as the estimate of relative importance.

USA

Table 3.2 gives the results of this "accounting exercise" for the US. It shows that, in 2012, about 65% of earnings inequality was due to inequality of hourly wages, with 31% accounted for by hours worked. These proportions were virtually identical in 1979. Of course, given that we know that inequality of both total earnings (as shown earlier in this chapter) and hourly wages grew very substantially over this period\(^9\) this must be interpreted as showing that the changes in work time described in the previous section allowed the hours variable to "keep up" with this phenomenon of hourly wage inequality in terms of accounting for growing variance in earnings.

Table 3.2: Decomposing variance explained: USA

|                      | 2012 |          | 1979 |          |          |          |
|----------------------|------|----------|------|----------|----------|
|                      | All  | Men      | Women| All      | Men      | Women    |
| Total variance       | .96  | .96      | .96  | .96      | .95      | .94      |
| explained (R^2)      |      |          |      |          |          |          |
| Contribution of      | .31  | .26      | .35  | .32      | .19      | .43      |
| hours                |      |          |      |          |          |          |
| Contribution of      | .65  | .71      | .61  | .64      | .76      | .51      |
| hourly wages         |      |          |      |          |          |          |

One further noteworthy result in Table 3.2 is that work time accounts for a larger portion of earnings variance among women than among men, but that this difference has shrunk significantly since 1979, when 43% of female earnings variance was attributable to hours as opposed to only 19% of male variance. This makes sense in the light of the patterns revealed in Figure 3.6 above: in that figure it was shown that in 1979 men at the top and bottom of the hourly wage distribution worked similar hours, while among women the high-paid already worked significantly longer hours by 2012 the work time gap between the top and bottom of the labor market was similar for men and women, though still somewhat larger among the latter.

**Germany**

Table 3.3 presents results of the same descriptive exercise as that reported for the US in Table 3.2 above: decomposing the variance explained by a simple two-variable model of log earnings, with a view to parsing out the relative importance of hours worked and hourly wages in accounting for earnings variance in contemporary Germany and three decades ago.
Table 3.3: Decomposing variance explained: Germany

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>1984</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total variance</td>
<td>.985</td>
<td>.992</td>
<td>.995</td>
<td>.985</td>
<td>.985</td>
<td>.978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explained (R^2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hours</td>
<td>.415</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.195</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hourly wages</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For men, the results in Table 3.3 are remarkably similar to those of American men in Table 3.2: in both cases work time gained significantly in relative importance over the past three decades, but hourly wages remained responsible for the lion’s share (70% in Germany, 71% in the US) of earnings variance. It should be remembered, though, that, as shown above, male earnings inequality is significantly lower in Germany than in the US — hence work time accounted for an equivalent share of a more modest phenomenon.

German women, by contrast, had significantly higher earnings inequality (as measured by the P9010 ratio) than their American counterparts. And whereas work time has actually declined in importance — relative to the impact of variance in hourly wages — in explaining earnings variance among American women, it has increased in importance among German women, accounting for a portion roughly equal to that of hourly wages in 2012. As the next chapter will elaborate on, both the high levels of inequality among German women and the high earnings gap between them and German men are closely linked to work time — and specifically to the prevalence of part-time work with especially short hours and low pay (“Minijobs”).
3.4.2 Wage regressions with covariates

USA

Table 3.4 shows the results of a further set models regressing logged earnings on logged hours in selected years at the beginning (1979) and end (2011) of the historical period I focus on. But this time, instead of testing the impact of working time alongside that of hourly wages, the models in Table 3.4 include a battery of standard covariates measuring sex, education, race, and broad sector (agriculture, manufacturing, the public sector. In addition, columns (2) and (4) show the results from models containing a full set of dummies for occupation, measured using using the international ISCO-88 classification at the three-digit level.\(^\text{10}\)

To make the rest of the table more easily interpretable, I have converted all coefficients (and standard errors) other than that for the work hours variable from log points by exponentiating them and subtracting one. The remaining coefficients can thus be understood in terms of proportional changes; for example, the female coefficient in column (1) implies that women earned 16.6% less than men, even after controlling for all the other variables included in that model, whereas the “college or more” coefficient means that individuals with that level of education earned more than double (110.7% more to be precise) than those with less than a high school diploma (the omitted education category).

Before interpreting the results for work time, some other noteworthy results in this table include the decline in the female wage penalty (examined in depth in the next chapter); but also the increase in the wage penalty paid by African-American

\(\text{10Over the whole 1979–2011 period, there are 125 ISCO–88 categories in the sample; in Table 3.4, once occupations that do not appear in that year (or for which covariates are missing) are excluded, 105 occupation dummies are included for the 2011 models, 98 for those for 1979.}\)
Table 3.4: Log earnings model with covariates: USA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011 (1)</th>
<th>2011 (2)</th>
<th>1979 (3)</th>
<th>1979 (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ln hours</td>
<td>1.141***</td>
<td>1.064***</td>
<td>1.006***</td>
<td>0.951***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-0.166***</td>
<td>-0.139***</td>
<td>-0.321***</td>
<td>-0.282***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed: high school</td>
<td>0.265***</td>
<td>0.196***</td>
<td>0.196***</td>
<td>0.127***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed: some college</td>
<td>0.438***</td>
<td>0.272***</td>
<td>0.301***</td>
<td>0.177***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed: college or more</td>
<td>1.107***</td>
<td>0.669***</td>
<td>0.558***</td>
<td>0.340***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race: Black</td>
<td>-0.123***</td>
<td>-0.082***</td>
<td>-0.095***</td>
<td>-0.049***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race: Hispanic</td>
<td>-0.096***</td>
<td>-0.059***</td>
<td>-0.077***</td>
<td>-0.046***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race: Other</td>
<td>-0.036***</td>
<td>-0.021***</td>
<td>-0.038***</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>0.032***</td>
<td>0.058***</td>
<td>0.045***</td>
<td>0.050***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agric.</td>
<td>-0.176***</td>
<td>-0.109***</td>
<td>-0.306***</td>
<td>-0.117***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.014)</td>
<td>(0.013)</td>
<td>(0.011)</td>
<td>(0.014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufac.</td>
<td>0.102***</td>
<td>0.096***</td>
<td>0.114***</td>
<td>0.104***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>-0.226</td>
<td>-0.580**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.189)</td>
<td>(0.150)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occupation dummies?  No | Yes | No | Yes
Observations         | 126,907 | 126,901 | 150,311 | 150,311
R²                    | 0.590   | 0.637   | 0.581   | 0.693
Adjusted R²           | 0.590   | 0.637   | 0.580   | 0.629
Residual Std. Error   | 0.485 (df = 126891) | 0.456 (df = 126780) | 0.427 (df = 150295) | 0.402 (df = 150197)

All coefficients other than ln hours exponentiated (see text). Age quartic not shown. Robust standard errors clustered by household (and occ. in models 2 and 4) in parentheses.

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
workers and the emergence of a Hispanic penalty even when occupation dummies are included, suggesting a within-occupation penalty of about 2.1%); and a substantial increase in the coefficients of the education dummies. Regarding the latter result, there was an especially dramatic increase in the earnings premium associated with a college degree or higher. This increase in the “returns”\textsuperscript{11} to education is especially striking for the models that include occupation dummies: the within-occupation advantage of the college-educated compared to those with less than a high school degree (controlling for age, sex, race, sector and hours worked) increased from 34\% in 1979 to 67\% in 2011. This highly-educated group’s earnings advantage also increased dramatically when compared to those with high school diplomas only, and those with some college experience (but no degree), whether one compares the coefficients for within-occupation differences only (columns 2 and 4), or those from models without occupation dummies (columns 1 and 3).

As for work time, since both the dependent variable and the usual hours variable are logged, this coefficient can again be interpreted as an elasticity, i.e. as the percentage increase in earnings associated with a 1\% percentage increase in hours. Thus, the table shows (columns 1 and 3) that the elasticity of earnings in hours increased between 1979 and 2011, from almost exactly one in 1979 to 1.14 in 2011, so that a 10\% increase in hours in 2011 is predicted to increase earnings by 11.4\%. Although within-occupation elasticities (columns 2 and 4) are somewhat lower, the same trend is apparent, with the “return” to work time increasing from 1979, when it was slightly less than proportional (a 10\% increase in hours yielding only a 9.5\% increase in earnings) to 2011, when it was slightly more than proportional (a 10\% increase in work

\textsuperscript{11}Though the term encourages a causal interpretation that may or may not be warranted. Over the 1979-2011 period, the proportion of the sample – restricted to 24-64 year old employees – with less than a high school diploma declined from more than 19\% to about 6\%, while those with college degrees or higher went from 20\% to 35\% of the workforce.
time offering a 10.6% boost in earnings).

One intuitive way of interpreting this finding is as an increase over recent decades in the “returns” to work time, so that individuals really did face greater monetary rewards for long hours in 2011 than in 1979. This would be consistent with the literatures referred to above on the growth of “winner–take–all” (or “tournament”) labor markets (Lazear and Rosen 1981; Frank and Cook 2010). The fact that the coefficient for work hours increased even within (relatively narrowly defined) occupations (indeed the increase was larger) also provides some support for this interpretation. However it is also possible that this change in coefficient simply reflects the growing correlation of hourly wages and hours worked – in other words the “great reversal” demonstrated in this chapter.

3.4.3 Counterfactual analysis

Another way to assess the impact of work time upon earnings inequality is to consider what contemporary inequality would look like if the distribution of work time by social class had remained static over the past several decades. One method of estimating this is to use the same model of logged earnings presented in Table 3.4 above to estimate counterfactual earnings at different points of the distribution under the “no change in work time since 1979” counterfactual.

I first estimate the basic model from column (1) in Table 3.4 for every year from 1979 to 2012. Then, I use both the regression coefficients and the residuals from these models to estimate counterfactual earnings in the 10th and 90th percentiles of the earnings distribution under the scenario where all covariates other than (the log of) usual work hours remained at their observed means (for each respective percentile in each year) and all coefficients other than that for work hours are as estimated in these
models, but “1979” values are assigned to the work time variable and coefficient.

Figure 3.9 shows the results of this exercise. It shows that in every year other than 1988-89 (when there was a brief spike in mean hours worked in the 10th percentile of the earnings distribution), inequality as measured by the P9010 earnings ratio would have been lower than actually observed, had there been no changes in the values of and “returns to” work time.

**Germany**

Columns (2) and (4) in Table 3.5 show the results of a similar log wage model to that presented for the US in Table 3.4, this time applied to the GSOEP data. Non-work time results of note include, as in the US, a very significant decline in the size of the negative female coefficient as well as significant increase in “returns” to education.
- though a much smaller one (to the degree that the measures are comparable) than in the US, both in terms of levels and the change over time.

But easily the most striking change in the coefficients over time is that for the logged weekly hours variable, which more than doubled from 0.46 log points in 1984 to 0.997 in 2012. This huge increase in the partial correlation of hours with earnings is consistent with the transformation of what was at the start of the period a strongly negative simple correlation with hourly wages, into a modestly positive one at its end (see Figure 3.10 – in other words, with the “great reversal” described in this chapter.

In the context of these large changes in the relationship between work time and earnings in Germany, then, it is little surprise that the counterfactual estimates represented in the graphs in Figure 3.11 show very significant differences – dramatic ones among women – between the observed growth of earnings inequality and the estimated counterfactual trends had both the work time variable and its coefficient remained as they were in 1984. Among men, the P9010 ratio would, according to
Table 3.5: Log earnings models: Germany 2012 and 1984

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable:</th>
<th>Logged earnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ln hourly wage</td>
<td>1.046***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ln hours</td>
<td>0.995***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-0.188***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed: voc. (mid.)</td>
<td>0.122***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed: voc. + Abitur</td>
<td>0.343***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.026)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed: voc. (higher)</td>
<td>0.366***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.026)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>0.625***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm experience</td>
<td>0.015***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>0.082***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector: secondary</td>
<td>0.393***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.062)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector: tertiary</td>
<td>0.287***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.062)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen</td>
<td>0.040*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>1.347***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.014)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Observations        | 8,881           | 8,356             | 4,928             | 4,507             |
| R²                  | 0.988           | 0.666             | 0.965             | 0.533             |
| Adjusted R²         | 0.988           | 0.665             | 0.965             | 0.531             |
| Residual Std. Error | 0.092 (df = 8878)| 0.476 (df = 8340) | 0.112 (df = 4925) | 0.396 (df = 4491) |

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Coefficients for age (as a quartic) not shown. Robust standard errors in parentheses.
these results, have still increased, but by substantially less than in fact took place; notably, all of the divergence between the observed and counterfactual trends occurs from the year 2000 onwards. Among women, it is estimated that the P9010 would have declines in a similar manner to that actually observed until the early 1990s. From the mid-1990s however, observed inequality among women exploded, whereas the decline would have continued had German women’s work time remained similarly distributed and rewarded. By 2012, in the counterfactual scenario, levels of inequality as measured by the P9010 earnings ratio would have been about the same for men and women. As already suggested, and as elaborated on in the next chapter, the rapid growth of part-time work from the mid-1990s played a central role in ensuring this scenario did not in fact play out.
3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the relationship between changes in the social organization of work time and the widely remarked upon rise of economic inequality seen in the developed world over recent decades. It presented evidence of a "great reversal" in the relationship between work time and social class: where once the top end of the socio-economic status hierarchy was stereotypically associated — and associated themselves — with leisure (Veblen 2009 [1899]), while the lower classes toiled long hours for low pay in factories and mines, roles have today reversed when it comes to work time. It was argued that this development has contributed to the rise of inequality, especially that of the labor market "predistribution". In this process, work time can be thought of primarily as an intervening variable, causally downstream of the macro-forces, such as technological change and globalization, that are likely themselves the causes of the work time-class reversal. But as the previous chapter has shown, work time has been, and remains, the frequent object of political and industrial conflict, and thus also of government regulation. There is therefore nothing inevitable about the changes in the social organization described in this chapter, nor in its consequences for economic inequality. The first condition for political and regulatory responses to this phenomenon, however, is greater awareness of the existence and nature of the trend itself.
4 | Work Time and Gender Inequality

The great majority of married women must be regarded as occupied on work which is vital though unpaid, without which their husbands could not do their paid work and without which the nation could not continue.

– the Beveridge Report (1942)

Lord Beveridge’s above-quoted remark, in the founding document of the postwar British “welfare state”, can be credited with paying due respect to the worth and dignity (not to mention the economic indispensability) of female unpaid domestic labor; but it also encapsulates the assumptions and expectations of a bygone era with respect to the social and economic role of women. The dramatic expansion of female labor market participation represents perhaps the most profound social transformation experienced in the advanced capitalist world (and beyond) in the past half-century; the implications of this development are felt in the economic, the political, the cultural and familial spheres alike.

In fact, as Beveridge acknowledged perhaps more forthrightly than many scholars examining his policy legacy have done, women’s work was always an essential complement to the sustainability of the full (male) employment “Keynesian Welfare State” of the halcyon days of post-war welfare capitalism. Indeed, precisely this historic dependence on women’s unpaid domestic labor (and the corresponding male “bread-winner”) threatens the fitness for purpose of existing policies and institutions in light
of these changes in labor market participation. As Thelen (2012), points out, 'it is not at all clear that the interests of these new constituencies [of the "postindustrial" economy, especially working women] are always well served by the arrangements that were so important in the era of manufacturing dominance.” The growing participation of women in the labor market has posed the question of how societies adjust the provision of the care work previously provided by unpaid female labor. Simultaneously, changes in normative views of gender roles in society – and in women’s personal aspirations and ambitions – have been radical enough to problematize the previously accepted economic dependence of women, especially mothers, upon their husbands, but not so revolutionary as to free working mothers from a disproportionate share of unpaid domestic labor.

Fittingly, just as “family” (or, as they have increasingly come to be called, “work-family reconciliation”) policies - especially parental leaves and childcare provision - have in recent decades represented a case of welfare state expansion in an age of supposed retrenchment (Morgan 2013), so too has their study become a valuable growth sector for comparative political economy research, much of it at the intersection of working time and inequality which is the central theme of this dissertation.

In the previous chapter, I showed that changes in the organization of work time have played an important role in shaping contemporary class inequality, and in particular in the growth of income inequality over recent decades. In this chapter I will show that work time practices and regulations are an even more fundamental shaper of a second key dimension of contemporary economic inequalities – gender inequality. However, as other scholars have shown, it cannot be assumed that different dimensions of inequality are affected in the same way by any particular policy, welfare regime or “variety of capitalism” (Orloff 1993). Thus, factors that promote class inequality in the United States – such as its general skills regime – can be a
force for less gender equality, just as Germany’s specific skills system – seen within the varieties of capitalism perspective as underpinning its relatively generous social insurance regime (Estevez-Abe et al. 2001) – creates barriers for female careers.

Similarly, this chapter shows that while (as seen in the previous chapter) Germany’s work time regime is a force for relative equality among male breadwinners - certainly compared to that of the US, where the class-based skew of the distribution of work time compounds income inequality - it is the key driver of gender-based inequality on the German labor market. However, while work time plays a less fundamental role in underpinning gender inequality in the US than it does in Germany, the combination of a lack of regulatory constraints on work time among high-skill workers and the virtual absence of supportive parental leave or childcare policies still leaves American women in a highly disadvantageous position compared to their male compatriots.

Of the three countries, then, it is France that appears to deliver the closest to a level playing field for its female workers. Indeed, numerous studies looking at multiple dimensions of gender equality tend to find France ranking near the top of the club of the rich democracies – typically immediately behind the usual Nordic suspects. To take just one summary illustration of this, Figure 4.1 shows the Economist’s “glass-ceiling index”, which seeks to identify “the best and worst places to be a working woman” by constructing a weighted average of ten indicators, including childcare costs, educational attainment, political representation and a range of labor market variables. Ignoring the post-communist members of the OECD, France comes in fifth - behind Iceland, Sweden, Norway and Finland and immediately ahead of Denmark. (Germany and the US are found side by side, lagging well behind the OECD average.

Zooming in on the three countries of central concern in this dissertation, Table 4.1 shows the gap in earnings and in hourly wages between men and women and between
fathers and mothers, in France, Germany and the USA in 2011.\textsuperscript{1} While the mean French earnings gap is only moderately smaller than that in the US, the difference between the two countries is much more significant when the gap in male and female median earnings is used. This is because the French gap in earnings is significantly smaller – at 17.6% – than the mean gap (a pattern that will be better understood when I examine the distribution of the gender gap by class later in the chapter). The advantage of French women compared to both Americans and especially Germans is even clearer from the statistics comparing mothers and fathers, especially (again) when comparing the median working mother to the median working father – in France this gap is 22.2%, compared to 38.3% in the US and 51.1% in Germany, so that the median working German mother makes less than half her male comparator.

Looking at hourly wages (calculated by dividing individuals’ earnings by their declared usual work hours), France again has the lowest mean and median gender

\textsuperscript{1}The gaps are calculated as the difference in earnings (or hourly wage) as a share of male earnings (or wage). Thus a mean earnings gap of 25% would imply the average earnings of women are 75% those of men.
Table 4.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Mean (median) gender gap in earnings (men v women)</th>
<th>Mothers v fathers (men v women)</th>
<th>Mean (median) gender gap in hourly wage (men v women)</th>
<th>Mothers v fathers (men v women)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>25.6 (25)</td>
<td>35.2 (38.3)</td>
<td>18.1 (18.7)</td>
<td>24.5 (28.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>23 (17.6)</td>
<td>28.1 (22.2)</td>
<td>12.5 (10)</td>
<td>14 (12.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>37.1 (34.3)</td>
<td>51.1 (50.8)</td>
<td>12.7 (13.8)</td>
<td>15.1 (18.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Labor force surveys, employees aged 20-64.

gaps among both parents and employees generally. However, two other points are more striking in this part of Table 4.1. Firstly, the simple fact that hourly wage gaps are generally far smaller than total earnings gaps - this is already a clear indicator that working time is a fundamental determinant of gender disparities in the labor market today in all countries. Secondly, this difference is most dramatic in Germany, where the gender gap in hourly wages is actually substantially smaller than in the United States - an indicator that, as this chapter will elaborate upon, the gender gap in working time itself is the most important immediate shaper of the economic dependence of German women.

At first sight, France’s relatively strong performance in terms of gender equality might surprise. While overwhelmingly secular and straddling northern and southern Europe, it is in some sense a Catholic and a Mediterranean nation, characteristics not usually associated with high levels of gender equality. In Esping-Andersen’s (1990) seminal schema, moreover, it is considered, a “conservative” welfare regime, a type classically characterized by a greater dependence on the male breadwinner model than other welfare regimes (see e.g. Palier 2010).

Politically, however, France has long been distinguished from other such conservative welfare regimes by the absence of a strong Christian Democratic party. And
in policy terms, France stands out for having a long-standing and highly developed system of public support for childcare that again places it closer to the Nordic social democracies than to the other Bismarckian welfare states. In particular, the *Ecoles maternelles*, public institutions established in the late nineteenth century amidst the foundational church-state battles of the Third Republic, enroll virtually all French children between the ages of 3 and 5 in free, full-day preschool. Figure 4.2 (reproduced from Jaumotte 2003) offers one snapshot of this, showing how a selection of OECD countries deviate (expressed in terms of standard deviations) from the OECD mean value for three policy areas: childcare provision, child benefit payments and paid leave. And indeed Morgan (2003: 262) has argued convincingly that these two forms of French exceptionalism – weakness of Christian Democracy and strength of public childcare provision – are causally connected, suggesting that the key political condition for the emergence of such policies in countries like Sweden, Denmark and France is “not a hegemonic social democratic party but rather a secularized politics that has enabled departures from traditional family policy.”

France’s relative generosity in such policy areas is undoubtedly a crucial part of the policy mix that shapes a relatively favorable context for French working women. However, in this chapter I will suggest that policies that support women’s labor market participation are necessary but insufficient for the achievement of more egalitarian (from a gender viewpoint) labor markets. Comparing gender inequalities on the French, German and American labor markets suggests that a policy context that restricts class-based inequality and places significant restrictions on *male* work behavior can also be key contributors to reducing such disparities. Specifically, I argue that France’s distinctive mix of relatively low wage inequality, a large and heavily feminized public sector, extensive public provision of childcare and, finally, direct regulations that place at least some downward pressure on (male) work time, pro-
ducis a relatively benign labor market for women. Policies providing for (well-paid) parental leave and (especially) free or subsidized childcare facilitate working mothers’ careers, but the *de facto* unequal burdens of family responsibilities mean this is not enough to level the playing field for women. Measures that also restrict the degree to which male workers can exploit this asymmetry by working long hours and earning high incomes can – and in the French case do – at least partially compensate for this.²

In the next section I review some existing approaches in economics, sociology and political science to explaining gender inequality in the contemporary labor market, paying particular attention to those that give some causal weight to working time. I then partially replicate, and extend to France and Germany, one of the most important such approaches, the recent work of the labor economist Claudia Goldin (2014) on

---

²This was understood by the women’s organization within the Swedish Social Democrats in the 1970s, who campaigned for a universal six-hour day on feminist grounds, but were unsuccessful in this demand at the 1975 party congress (Karlsson [1996, 288], cited by Klausen 1999, 274)
what she calls “the last chapter” in the “grand convergence” between the sexes on the American labor market. This exercise provides some clues as to how gender inequality is structured differently beyond the American case - while I broadly confirm her findings for the US, I conclude that her framework may have less leverage in the European cases. In particular I find that the disproportionate rewards to working long hours that she highlights as a source of gender inequality in the US appears to be far less prominent in France. I then examine the nature of the gender pay gap in the three countries in more depth, presenting evidence for the centrality of each country’s work time regime in shaping gender inequality in its labor market. I then summarize the chapter in a brief conclusion, and point in the direction of future research into some hypotheses that emerge from it.
### Table 2: gender employment gaps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment gap (25-64 year olds, %)</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>1980</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>15 (1 - 65.9/77.6)</td>
<td>34.6 (1 - 55.9/85.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>12.3 (1 - 67/76.4)</td>
<td>34.6 (1 - 54.3/83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>13.3 (1 - 72/83)</td>
<td>45.1 (1 - 48.4/88.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* French number for 1982.

### 4.1 Explaining gender inequality and convergence

Perhaps the most fundamental change in gender relations in the second half of the twentieth century was the dramatic increase in female (paid) employment that took place across the developed world, a trend that continued into the early part of the 21st century in France and Germany, but stalled or even reversed in the United States from the turn of the millennium, as shown in Figure 4.3 (dashed lines for men, unbroken lines for women). Together with the decline from previous peaks in male employment, this development brought about a great convergence of male and female employment rates. This trend has been more belated in Germany, but has been all the more dramatic since 1980 – German women aged 15 to 64 have gone from lagging behind their American and French counterparts (less than 50% with jobs in 1980), to surpassing them.

However, the dramatic reversal since 2005 of the decline in male employment means that German women have been chasing a moving target, and the percentage gap in employment rates remained slightly bigger than that in France in 2011, as shown in Table 4.2 (figures in parenthesis show the calculation of the employment rate gender gap):
4.1.1 Economic Approaches

What might explain such historical and cross-national variation in the tendency of women to enter the labor market? Perhaps the simplest explanation would be a purely economic one – increases in the financial rewards available to women on the labor market drew their increased participation as the opportunity costs of non-participation rose correspondingly. This is known to labor economists as the “substitution effect” – the rate at which people choose to substitute paid work for “leisure”; or, in the case of many non-employed women, unpaid domestic labor. Thus, one 1980s estimate attributed 60% of the twentieth century growth in the United States female labor force to increased wages - though it should be noted that half of this substitution effect came via a negative income effect on the intervening variable of fertility, i.e. rising incomes were associated with women having fewer children and thus more scope to enter the labor market (Smith and Ward 1985).

Of course, labor economists also acknowledge that increasing wages do not automatically lead to an increased labor supply (from men or women) since alongside the substitution effect there is also an “income effect”, whereby greater prosperity reduces the compulsion or desire to work. Also looking at the US over the course of the twentieth century, Claudia Goldin (2006) tells a more nuanced story of three periods of evolution and, after 1970, a “quiet revolution”. Central to her explanatory approach are shifts in the balance of income and substitution effects. An important part of the story of increased female labor market participation has clearly been the convergence of participation rates between married and single women, and Goldin describes a number of developments that facilitated this part of the wider phenomenon.

Goldin points out that, unlike later eras, during the first “evolutionary” period of her story (from the late nineteenth century to the 1920s), working married women
had less education than non-working married women, implying that "the income effect greatly swamped the substitution effect" (Goldin 2006: 4). The mechanism would seem to be that of "assortative matching", whereby more highly educated women were married to higher income males and therefore had less need to seek paid employment than their less educated (and less fortunately – at least from a material viewpoint – "matched") counterparts.

The economistic jargon of income versus substitution effects, however, obscures some of the more sociologically interesting details of Goldin’s account, as well as the causal mechanisms behind the shifting balance of these descriptive effects. Thus, Goldin (2006: 4) points to the "[s]ubstantial social stigma regarding the work of wives outside the home [that] existed due in large measure to the nature of the work. Jobs were often dirty, dangerous, repetitive, and long in hours per day and days per week." This stigma (in addition to the inherent disutility attached to working in such “bad” jobs) helps explain the large negative income effect identified by Goldin in this period. Note that while Goldin does not elaborate on the exact contours of this stigma, the fact that the point pertains specifically to wives’ low participation rate (relative to single women) would suggest that the stigma’s impact operated chiefly upon the husband, who was seen as an inadequate provider for his wife in so far as she was compelled to continue working in such undesirable conditions. The potential explanatory role of gender norms around work and family are therefore manifest here (though not emphasized by Goldin).

As to the source of change in this stigma, this comes (in Goldin’s second evolutionary period, from the 1930s through to 1950) through exogenous changes in the nature of the jobs available to women – essentially the growth of clerical positions – together with the growth of female educational attainment, helping equip women for such work. A further exogenous development in this period shifted the substitut-
tion effect in favor of higher female participation: the near universalization (at lower cost) of access to the new household appliances (refrigerator etc.) "served to decrease women's reservation wage and increase the elasticity of the aggregate female labor supply function." In other words, jobs at a given wage became more attractive to women because the opportunity cost in terms of time that could be devoted to domestic tasks became less significant. In Goldin's third and final "pre-revolutionary" period, which ends in 1970, the "enormous diffusion" of opportunities for part-time work in the 1950s was a source of increased female participation – again, one seemingly arising from structural economic changes rather than anything specifically related to women (2006: 6).

What, then, of the sources of the pay gap between men and women? This gap, it should be noted, persists even after controlling for hours worked and educational attainment (and in many countries the latter is now in any case higher among women than among men), among other covariates. One prominent candidate for explaining this gap is the fact that women's career paths tend to be subject to significant interruptions during their child-rearing years. Such interruptions lead to both lost opportunities to accumulate human capital and depreciation of skills and relationships that have been developed prior to the interruption.

The lower remuneration from labor market participation is not confined to mothers however. In this light it is important to note that this "human capital" mechanism is not entirely distinct from the discrimination hypothesis in terms of explaining these gaps. This is because discrimination may take the form of "statistical discrimination", wherein employers discriminate against individuals (whether job candidates or employees) on the basis of perceived characteristics of some group (e.g. race or gender) to which they belong. This is distinguished from "taste"-based discrimination, where an employer discriminates against individuals simply because of a prejudice or "distaste"
for the group to which they belong. Statistical discrimination is seen as a heuristic used by employers faced by information asymmetries in hiring and promoting decisions (i.e. the fact that they know less about the productivity-relevant characteristics of potential and actual employees than those individuals do themselves). Of course where this informational shortcut entails the use of inaccurate information – including culturally prevalent prejudices – about groups, the distinction between (rational) statistical and (non-rational) taste-based discrimination is not a very clean one. Which ascriptive groups employers deem relevant in assessing expected productivity - race, gender, hair color, height etc. – also seems like a decision that may depend on “taste” – or cultural norms around gender roles – rather than rational choice. In the conclusion to this chapter I will speculate about one way in which such cultural norms – which may vary cross-nationally – may be behind the different relationship between work time and gender pay gaps across my three cases that I demonstrate in the empirical sections below.

4.1.2 Comparative Political Economy Approaches

Whether the mechanism through which familial constraints exacerbate gender inequality in labor markets is a negative effect on human capital (and hence productivity) or the statistical discrimination just described, such constraints are clearly central to the question. How, though, would this factor help explain cross-national variation in gender equality? One answer to this question is rooted in social policy and varieties of capitalism - factors often left in the background in economists’ accounts, whether because of disciplinary tastes or because of their focus on the American case, where social policy may be seen as conspicuous by its – if not absence – modest scale. Scholars with a more comparative and institutional perspective, however, have placed
social policy at the center of their analyses.

The starting point in research into the impact of the welfare state is, as ever, Esping-Andersen (1990) – or rather Ann Orloff’s (1993) classic critique of his most distinctive conceptual innovation, “decommodification”:

For many women and others excluded from paid labor, commodification – that is, obtaining a position in the paid labor force – is in fact potentially emancipatory. Contemporary and historical research has found that many women want paid work because it provides independence and enhanced leverage within marriage and the patriarchal family...

Accordingly, Esping-Anderson’s framework needed to be “supplemented with a new analytic dimension that taps into the extent to which states promote or discourage women’s paid employment – the right to be commodified” (Orloff 1993, 318). In later work, and acknowledging the validity of this critique, Esping-Andersen (1999: 45) introduced precisely the “new analytic dimension” called for by Orloff in the form of a concept of “defamilialization”, that is “policies that lessen individuals’ reliance on the family; that maximize individuals’ command of economic resources independently of familial or conjugal reciprocities.” It is in this dimension of “defamilization” that France has historically distanced itself not only from liberal welfare regimes such as the United States (where weak social services, and notably childcare provision, prevail), but also from its fellow “conservative corporatist” regimes such as Germany. In this chapter I argue that working time practices and regulations can be another crucial factor for the achievement of such economic independence and equality for women.

Some scholars have also argued that political economy institutions frequently held to produce egalitarian outcomes in terms of class, in fact exacerbate gender inequalities. Thus Estevez-Abe (2005) detects negative consequences for women arising
from the institutional arrangements that underpin the "coordinated market economies" (CMEs) described within the "varieties of capitalism" schema (Hall and Soskice 2001). Specifically, Estevez-Abe et al. (2001) identified a complementarity between the relatively generous systems of social insurance in CMEs (of whom the archetype is Germany) and the capacity for specific skills formation that is at the heart of such economies' comparative advantage. Social insurance, along with the compression of the wage distribution that comes from relatively centralized wage bargaining institutions (Iversen and Soskice 2009)3 protect workers and employers alike from the risks entailed by investment in co-specific assets, i.e. the specific skills ("human capital") of the workers. Estevez-Abe's insight is that precisely by promoting a production regime based on specific skills, CME social policy accentuates the cost to women of childrearing-induced career interruptions.

Estevez-Abe thus highlights (2005: 183) the existence of

a highly counterintuitive cross-national pattern of sex segregation...most evident in the case of the Scandinavian countries...otherwise known for their success in achieving gender equality, [but which] actually show high levels of occupational sex segregation. On some measures of sex segregation, they even underperform Anglo-American countries, which are otherwise notorious for their lack of policy support for working mothers.

The source of this surprising outcome is, Estevez-Abe argues, the fact that Scandinavian countries (like CMEs more generally) encourage firms to rely on specific skills through the existence of institutions (such as generous social insurance, centralized collective wage bargaining, or strong employment protection legislation) that allow employers and employees to make credible long-term commitments to each other.

3Such wage compression limits workers' risk of falling behind other workers should they invest in the "wrong" specific skills and protects employers against the risk of having workers in whose skills they have invested "poached" by other employers offering higher wages. The gender impact of such institutions will be expanded on below.
The logic of the gender bias of specific skills is most clearly illustrated by the extreme case of firm-specific skills:

The limited portability of firm-specific skills makes such skills unattractive for women who plan to interrupt their career to raise a family. A woman’s potentially short tenure at the same firm reduces the return on her skill investments every time she exits and reenters the labor force. Moreover, the critical skill acquisition period often coincides with a woman’s child-bearing years. Work discontinuity early in one’s career can jeopardize the process of firm-specific skill acquisition (Estevez-Abe 2005: 190).

Estevez-Abe offers some empirical evidence suggesting that CMEs are indeed marked by greater occupational sex segregation than LMEs in both the “vertical” (measured as the female percentage of private sector senior management positions) and “horizontal” (concentration into “gendered” occupations) dimensions. Among CMEs, furthermore, she distinguishes between countries with very large public sectors (Scandinavia) and those without, suggesting that gender-segregation is actually exacerbated by the expansion of public sector employment given the strong propensity of women to find employment in this sector, particularly in human services (2005: 205). Hence, while interpreting her findings as a challenge for the analytical unity of the CME category (and of the LMEs, where those with strong apprenticeship systems have, she argues, less egalitarian gender outcomes), Estevez-Abe nevertheless contends (2005: 206) that the “systematic gender bias” she imputes to the CMEs applies not just to Bismarckian regimes like Germany but also to the Nordic social democracies.

Estevez-Abe’s main dependent variable is sex-based occupational segregation. It

---

4 This empirical claim is challenged, however, by Maria Charles (2005), who finds “striking cross-national similarity in occupational gender distributions” (297) when she compared eight countries classed by Estevez-Abe as specific skills regimes with the US and UK. Charles does nevertheless confirm (298) a somewhat higher representation of women in management and manufacturing in the two LMEs, as well as a significantly higher female share of graduates from higher education.
is important to note therefore, that the translation of such segregation as Estevez-Abe identifies in the CMEs into either inferior outcomes for women in the areas of pay or participation (or indeed other metrics, e.g. status) is neither automatic nor uniform across CMEs. Indeed, though Estevez-Abe points to studies indicating that “[s]uch segregation accounts for the large bulk of the gender wage gap that currently exists” (2005: 181), this is a claim I demonstrate is incorrect (at least for my three cases) later in this chapter.

More broadly however, it is worth bearing in mind Mandel and Shalev’s (2009) argument that the effects of production and welfare regimes on class equality cannot be disentangled from their effects on gender equality given the universal over-representation of women in low-paying jobs. Estevez-Abe, they point out (2009: 3), does not address “the possibility that the causal mechanisms suggested by her theory are likely to vary between more and less advantaged women”, i.e. in class terms. Nor, they comment, does Soskice’s (2005: 175) dictum that “[i]f you’re a highly educated women, you want to work in an LME; if you’re a working-class man, you want to work in a CME”. say anything about the fate of working class women.

Mandel and Shalev thus analyze the gender pay gap as being the sum of three components: the extent of class inequalities, the unequal representation of women across classes or occupational categories and the extent of intra-class (intra-occupational) gender inequalities. Since, in the rest of this chapter, I focus to a large degree on this last, “intra-class” source of gender, it is worth emphasizing this point. They point out (2009a: 1897-8) that the relative success of women in LMEs, notably the US, in breaking the “glass ceiling” has a limited effect on overall gender pay equality because both inter- and intra-class inequalities (the length of the “earnings ladder”) are so great. In other words, even though American women are less concentrated at the bottom of the overall earnings distribution than their French or German counterparts.
(as shown in Appendix B Figure B.4), they remain much more likely to be found at the bottom of that distribution than their male compatriots—and it is therefore mostly women who pay the price of America’s greater class inequality.5

Mandel and Shalev also point out some crucial distinctions between the social democratic CMEs and more conservative ones like Germany: not only have the former countries tended, notwithstanding some recent decentralization, to have more centralized wage-setting institutions (which Blau and Kahn [1999: 1430] find “greatly lower the gender pay gap” in general), they also have led the way in “defamilializing” social policies such as childcare and parental leave (as seen in Figure 2 above), as much as they did in decommodifying ones.

Gornick et al. et al. (1997) after analyzing policies in fourteen developed countries, concluded that strong leave rights were indeed part of the optimal policy mix from the point of view of promoting mothers’ employment. However, the mix—how rights to maternity leave interacted with other policies—was all-important for this effect to emerge. Where the mix was incomplete, leave rights failed to have the expected positive effect on participation:

In some countries, such as Germany and the Netherlands, moderately generous maternity leave policies allowed women to leave the workplace at the time of childbirth without severing their employment, but the lack of child care left them with few options for care after leaves were exhausted. In these countries, women with children might be expected to accommodate their family responsibilities by reducing their hours of employment or by exiting employment altogether during the years between the end of maternity leaves and the beginning of reliable child care through public centers or public schools (25-6).

Similarly, Gangl and Ziefle’s (2009) study of mothers’ labor market experiences,

---

5See also Blau and Kahn (1999) on the ways in which seemingly “gender-blind” features of the American political economy produce a greater gender pay gap than in many peer countries.
and their relation to social policy, in Germany, Britain and the US finds that “despite its more generous family policies, Germany displays the highest wage penalty for motherhood.” In terms of participation rates, similarly, German mothers’ employment rates were “a full 15 percentage points below those for British and American mothers even five years after childbirth” (353).

While this low German participation rate is consistent both with the findings of Gornick et al. and with Estevez-Abe’s critique of the gendered consequences of CME skills systems, Gangl and Ziefle’s findings in fact complicate this picture considerably. Not only does the archetypal LME’s labor market, that of the USA, “consistently tend to most strongly reward continuous labor market attachment” – more, that is, than the labor market of the definitive CME, Germany; Gangl and Ziefle also find that precisely this fact accounts for the elevated female participation rates in the US: “women in the United States seem to be acutely aware of the structure of the American labor market and act accordingly”; that is, anticipating the “punishment” likely to follow from career interruption, American women respond to the demands of the market by avoiding lengthy “inactive” spells after childbirth - though in the absence of statutory paid parental leave many would surely have no other choice.

Gangl and Ziefle place themselves in the “perverse effects” camp when it comes to Germany’s policy mix, in particular its system of family allowances and maternal leave rights, suggesting that one “worrysome side effect of Germany’s extensive entitlements may be that traditional gender roles are reinforced, which then also indirectly weakens mothers’ position in the labor market through reinforcing respective employer expectations” (2009: 365). That is, German social policy is held to encourage statistical discrimination by confirming the perception of women as “bad risks”.

While Germany has undertaken something like a U-turn in family policy in the past decade – expanding support for childcare and redesigning parental leaves to en-
courage mothers to take shorter career breaks and fathers to increase their caring role (Henninger et al. 2008; Ostner 2010) – the paternalistic legacy remains embedded in policies and cultural expectations alike. In any event, the idea of the right combination of policies being crucial in shaping women's fate in the labor market is very consistent with this chapter's conclusions regarding the complementary roles of childcare provision and work time regulations in underpinning gender equality in France in particular.6

4.1.3 Bringing in work time

A very fruitful line of research has recently drawn attention to the implications of work time norms and practices for gender inequality. In a series of recent papers analyzing US data, Youngchoo Cha has provided evidence that long hours norms reinforce occupational gender segregation by pushing mothers out of male-dominated occupations (Cha 2013), that the growth of “overwork” – a disproportionately male phenomenon – in recent decades contributed to the slowing or stalling of the process of labor market convergence among men and women (Cha and Weeden 2014) and that even having an “overworking” spouse increases women’s likelihood of quitting their own job, especially for mothers and professional or managerial workers (Cha 2010).

Labor economist Claudia Goldin’s recent work has also focused on the importance of working time arrangements for female labor market prospects. According to Goldin (2014), the “last chapter” in the story of gender convergence on the US labor market will take place within occupations and firms that currently disproportionately reward

6 Budig et al. 2011 find that France is one of a handful of the 22 countries examined in which no significant “motherhood penalty” (i.e. a loss of earnings for mothers compared to childless women) was identifiable. By contrast, American mothers earned 10% less for every child they had and in Germany this penalty was 16.5% in the west and 9% in the formerly Communist East.
long hours (worked at particular places and times). Noting that the gender pay gap widens over the course of the early decades of women’s working lives and that the majority of the gap exists within rather than between even highly detailed occupations, Goldin concludes that occupations with the greatest gender pay gaps are those with non-linear relationships between hours and earnings (i.e. an elasticity of earnings with respect to hours worked of greater than one) and heavy penalties for time out of the workforce. These compensation structures reflect work practices emphasizing the need for specific, non-substitutable employees to devote “face time” to clients or fellow employees. Other occupations (here Goldin picks out pharmacy – “the most egalitarian of all professions” [Goldin and Katz 2012]) have, in contrast, developed technologies and work organization that makes even highly qualified workers good substitutes for each other, allowing female workers to enjoy the benefits of flexibility without having to pay a corresponding wage penalty or “negative compensating differential.”

4.2 Gender inequality in three countries

In order to gain an understanding of the contours of gender inequality in my three cases beyond that offered by the summary statistics in Table 4.1, Figure 4.4 plots the size of the aggregate (i.e. unadjusted) earnings gap along the entire earnings distribution. Thus each circle on each graph marks the pay gap between a woman at a given percentile of the female wage distribution, and a man at the same point of the male distribution. The horizontal dashed line marks the mean pay gap in each country.

In all three cases we observe a U-shaped relationship, with the aggregate gender
pay gap largest at the bottom of the earnings distribution. This U-shape is more symmetrical in Germany and far less pronounced in the US, but in each country the pay gap between the lowest paid men and the lowest paid women is the largest. In terms of cross-national comparisons, the most striking aspect of Figure 8 is perhaps the fact that at virtually all points in the earnings distribution, the gender gap is considerably larger in Germany than in France or the US. The only exception to this is at the very bottom of the earnings distribution, where the lowest paid 4 percent of German female workers are closer to their low-paid male counterparts than is the case in France. The contrast between France and the United States is more nuanced. On the one hand, for the vast majority of the earnings distribution, the gender pay gap is larger in the US than it is in France. The strikingly steep left tail of the French

7 Because of top-coding of the earnings variable in the CPS, the figure for the US only shows the earnings distribution up to the 97th percentile, after which male earnings in particular are censored, leading to artificially small estimated gender pay gaps. It is therefore possible that uncensored data would reveal a somewhat steeper rise in gender inequality at the very top of the US distribution.
distribution, however, means that this is not the case in the bottom 19 percentiles; and the uptick in the gender gap among the highest paid employees in France is also steeper than that in the US, although the US gap only becomes smaller at the very top (the 96th percentile). Figure 8 therefore makes clear one important point about French women's relatively advantageous situation compared to their German and America peers - it is above all the result of especially low aggregate pay gaps across a broad swathe in the middle of the earnings distribution.

This observation of the U-shaped distribution of the gender pay gap along the earnings distribution appears, on the surface, to contradict the findings of other scholars (e.g. Blau and Kahn 2016) that, at least in the American case, the largest pay gap is found at the top of the labor market. However, such findings are based on analyses with samples restricted to full-time workers only. Figure 4.5 replicates Figure 4.4, but restricting the sample in this manner (with full-time workers defined as those usually working at least 30 hours per week). As found by previous scholars, in the American case there is a fairly linear increase in the gender earnings gap as one moves from the bottom to the top of the earnings distribution, with the lowest paid full-time males earning about 10% more than the lowest paid females, whereas the highest-earning men make 25-30% more than their female counterparts. In both France and Germany, however, some of the U-shape relationship between earnings and the gender gap remains visible. But in all three cases it is clear that restricting the sample to full-time workers effectively “censors” a significant portion of the bottom of the female earning distribution – namely part-time workers.

Highlighting the fact that the greatest earnings gaps are to be found not, as suggested in the many analyses that focus only on full-time workers, at the top of the labor market, but rather between the lowest paid men and the lowest paid women, is a useful corrective. Much of the media, and to some degree scholarly, discussion of the
Figure 4.5: Gender pay gaps by earnings distributions: FT workers only

gender pay gap focuses primarily on the challenges faced by high-skilled and high-paid women, and especially the possible existence of a “glass ceiling” making it particularly hard for women to attain (and sustain) positions at the very top of companies and professions (e.g. Slaughter 2016). And, of course, these issues are due much attention, not least because these senior positions are ones of great power and influence, and a greater share of women at the top may bring both symbolic (e.g. role model) effects and different, more female-friendly organizational and occupational cultures. However, these considerations, important though they are, should not obscure the fact that, at least in the three countries I look at, it is low-skilled, low-paid women who face the biggest gender gaps in overall earnings with regard to their male “distributional equivalents”.

As a further indicator of the role of work time in shaping these gender inequalities, Figure 4.6 shows the average hours actually worked in the survey week\(^8\) along percentiles.

\(^8\)Because the labor force surveys are carried out continuously through the calendar year, this
of the earnings distribution in each country. The hours patterns across the earnings distribution shown in Figure 4.6 correspond nicely to the patterns in the gender pay gap seen in Figure 4.4. In Germany, a large work time gap exists throughout the distribution, but it is especially gaping in the bottom half; it narrows a little in the middle before expanding somewhat again at the top. In France, the largest gaps are also at the bottom and the top (the latter driven by a fairly steep increase in hours among the top four or five ventiles of the male distribution), but the gap at the bottom is far smaller than in the German case and crucially there is a broad swathe of the middle of the distribution where differences in hours are relatively moderate - just as, we noted, French women’s relatively low gender pay gap is a result of especially low gaps in the broad middle section of the earning distribution. Finally in the US, while there is also a significant gap in hours between men and women throughout the earnings distribution (and it is somewhat larger at the bottom and the top), the most striking aspect of the graph is perhaps the consistency of the increase in hours as one moves up the earnings distribution.

4.2.1 Gender inequality at the bottom: part-time work

On the whole then, Figure 4.6 confirms what was already suggested by the fact that restricting the sample to full-time workers obscures the largest pay gaps, namely that the most important part of the story of the overall gender pay gap at the bottom of the labor market is the tendency of women to end up in part-time jobs at far higher rates than men. While women make up the majority of part-time workers in every country in the OECD, the degree of female predominance varies, with women making up

measure takes into account short term paid leave (most importantly paid vacations), which reveals far larger cross-national gaps in overall working time than a measure of the “usual” working week does.
Figure 4.6: Weekly hours by earnings ventile

between roughly two-thirds (as in the US) and four-fifths (as in France and Germany) of part-time workers, depending on the country. More importantly, however, the extent of part-time work itself varies greatly, and it is this extent (together with the greater or lesser degree of female predominance among part-timers) that to a very large degree determines how much part-time work contributes to gender inequalities on the labor market.

Figure 4.7 illustrates the huge increase in part-time employment (as a share of all employed) in Germany since the country was reunified in 1990. As shown in Figure 4.4 above, this was also a period of rapid increase in overall female employment in Germany. But whereas in the US, as women narrowed the employment gap with men they also somewhat narrowed the work hours gap (see Appendix B Figure B.1), in Germany this latter gap almost doubled (Appendix B Figure B.3), as women entering
the work force were heavily concentrated in part-time jobs.

France appeared to be on a similar trajectory in terms of both part-time work and consequently (albeit to a much smaller degree) the hours gap, until the mid-1990s. However, the trend in France reversed at this point, with part-time employment stabilizing and the hours gap declining back to its previous level (Appendix B Figure B.2), even as the employment gap continued to narrow. The timing of this French inflection point is suggestive, since, as outlined in Chapter 2 of this dissertation) it was also in the mid 1990s that France embarked on a new program of legislative work time reduction, starting with a small incentive program under a conservative government and culminating in the far more coercive and consequential 35 hour week legislation passed by the Socialists between 1998 and 2000. This legislation imposed both a mandatory overtime wage premium starting after the 35th hour, and imposed a relatively low ceiling on permitted overtime hours. By making it more costly to extend the hours of full-time workers beyond 35 hours a week, the legislation gave firms incentives to increase the hours of part-time workers instead, promoting some
of them to full-time status, or at least to create full-time rather than part-time jobs for new hires (Oliveira and Ulrich 2002).

In Germany, by contrast, where the system of joint taxation (Ehegattensplitting) has long discouraged married women from seeking full-time jobs, the growing ranks of working women were channeled into part-time work. Thus, in 2011, 22.3% of German employees between the ages of 20 and 64 worked part-time (defined internationally as a “usual” work week of less than 30 hours), compared to 13.6% in France and 11.7% in the US. For female employees, the figure was 38.2% in Germany, compared to 22% in France and 16.7% of Americans. Thus one 2015 analysis from Germany’s Institute for Labor Market and Occupational Research (IAB) found that while the number of employed women had increased by 21% since 1991, the total volume of hours worked by women had increased by only 4% (Spiegel Online 2015).

In particular, the phenomenon of the “Minijob” looms large on the German labor market today. These are jobs earning below a certain threshold (currently 450 euros per month) and which are exempt from employee social insurance (and, for the most part, income) taxes - and thus mostly not covered by social insurance benefits either. By 2011 14% of German working women were working in such a job as their main employment.

Until 2003 Minijobs were limited to a maximum of 15 hours per week, and they continue to be associated with short hours, contributing to the fact that Germany stands out not just for a high rate of part-time work, but especially for the prevalence of part-time jobs with very short hours. Thus the average “Minijobber” worked only 12.5 hours per week in 2011. And indeed, the introduction of a statutory minimum wage in 2015 means that there is once again a de jure limit on the number of hours that can be worked while retaining the tax status of a Minijob - only slightly more than 12 hours per week would bring someone earning the minimum wage (of 8.50
euros per hour) above the 450 euro ceiling. Wanger and Weber (2016) estimate that the introduction of the minimum wage thus further reduced the average hours of “Minijobbers” by 5% in eastern Germany and by 2.5% in the west. More generally, the average usual hours in 2011 of part-time workers in Germany was 16.4 hours, compared to 18.4 for the USA and just under 20 hours in France.

Figure 4.8 below illustrates this contrast in the nature of German and French part-time work, by showing the distribution of usual weekly hours among part-time workers. The French distribution is clearly skewed to the right, with relatively few (23%) part-time workers working 15 hours per week or less, whereas the German distribution has a far longer left tail, with 45% of part-timers working 15 or fewer hours.
4.2.2 Gender gaps in hourly wages

An alternative way of portraying the gender gap in labor markets is in terms of hourly wage rates (rather than total earnings from labor). Figure 4.9 thus shows the percentage gap between the mean hourly wages of men and women at each percentile of the male and female hourly wage distribution. The main contrast with Figure 4.4 (the analogous figure showing the gender earnings gap along the earnings distribution) is the fact that, while there are still some traces of a U-shaped relationship in France and Germany, there is a much clearer tendency for the gender gap in hourly wages to increase as one moves up the hourly wage ladder, so that the percentage difference in hourly wages is largest between the best paid men and the best paid women.

The second, and unsurprising, observation is that hourly wage gaps are in general far smaller than overall earnings gaps in each country. But the fact that this is so dramatically the case for Germany, where the mean hourly gap (marked by the horizontal dashed line) is lower than that in the US, only confirms that the overwhelming reason for Germany’s exceptionally high gender earnings gap is the fact that German women work far fewer hours than German men. Still, in comparison to France, Germany’s gender gap even in hourly wage terms is larger at every point in the distribution after the first three percentiles. And it even has a higher hourly gap than the US for roughly the bottom fifth of the distribution. This is no surprise since the predominant forms of female part-time work in Germany, e.g. Minijobs, are marked not just by short hours, but also by low wages and weak career prospects (Bäckker 2007).

Comparing France and the US, the lower French hourly wage gaps are most striking in the middle of the wage distribution (just as they were in the earnings distribu-

---

9 The dotted horizontal lines mark the mean gap for all employees.
tion) and at the top end of the distribution. Having focused in the previous section on the sources of gender inequality at the bottom end of the labor market, and in particular the role of part-time work, I now therefore turn to analyze the sources of gender inequality among high earners.

### 4.2.3 Gender inequality at the top: rewards for long hours?

While some of the work alluded to in the literature review above is deeply comparative, exploring how cultural, institutional and policy context shape gender outcomes, it is notable how much of the more micro-oriented work in this vein (e.g. both Goldin and Cha’s work connecting work time to gender inequality at the top of the labor market) is focused on the US labor market. It is therefore an open question whether these hypotheses apply in the contexts provided by the very different political economies of France and Germany. France’s history and reputation in the area of working time regulation make it an especially alluring object for comparison. The 35-hour week
legislation passed by the Socialist-led government in 1998 was only the latest in a long history of political conflict around working time regulation and has remained one of the most controversial (and repeatedly amended) policies in French politics, as shown in Chapter 2.

As also seen in that chapter, work time has likewise been the object of fierce contention in Germany, though characteristically such conflict has been centered in the industrial relations rather than the legislative sphere, most notably with the metalworkers’ partially successful – but later largely reversed – 1980s campaign for a 35 hour week. As this chapter shows, work time has come to play a particularly central role in shaping gender inequality in contemporary Germany. And in both countries, statutory rights to paid leave for maternity, paternity and parental leave - as well as paid vacations (a minimum of 4 weeks - usually more via collective bargaining - in Germany and 5 weeks in France) mean that the context in which the organization of work time is shaped differs radically from the US, where all of these statutory rights are absent at the federal (and mostly at the state) level.

It is therefore a worthwhile exercise to replicate parts of Goldin’s analysis, not just for the American case, but also extended to France and Germany – it may be that the ”last chapter” of the gender convergence story looks quite different elsewhere. To do so, whereas Goldin used the American Community Survey, I make use of the labor force survey of each country: the Current Population Survey for the United States, the Enquête Emploi for France and the Mikrozensus for Germany. While, as with any cross-national survey data, there are important differences between these datasets, they all have the merit of containing large enough samples to allow for the kind of occupation-level analysis that is at the center of Goldin’s approach, while also benefiting from some level of comparability due to international harmonization of survey procedures by the International Labor Organization. In order to preserve
Table 4.3: female wage penalty, USA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable:</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Earnings (log)</th>
<th>Census</th>
<th>ISCO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>-0.324***</td>
<td>-0.155***</td>
<td>-0.189***</td>
<td>-0.138***</td>
<td>-0.149***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>459,997</td>
<td>385,151</td>
<td>385,151</td>
<td>385,151</td>
<td>385,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>0.461</td>
<td>0.549</td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td>0.592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.157</td>
<td>0.461</td>
<td>0.549</td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td>0.592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual Std. Error</td>
<td>0.730 (df = 459946)</td>
<td>0.552 (df = 385119)</td>
<td>0.532 (df = 385135)</td>
<td>0.497 (df = 384615)</td>
<td>0.506 (df = 385006)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: "Basic" includes age as a quartic and dummies for year and race. Models 2-5 cumulatively add logged usual weekly hours, education and either census or ISCO occupation dummies.

Comparability, I restrict these samples to employees aged 20 to 64 for all the analyses that follow.

Goldin’s first step is to show that the bulk of the remaining difference in men’s and women’s labor market earnings is due to differences in the earnings of men and women within occupations, rather than the “segregation” of women into lower earning occupations. As she puts it, “[w]hat happens within each occupation is far more important than the occupations in which women wind up” (Goldin 2014: 1097). She establishes this point in two ways: firstly by examining the change in the female coefficient in a log earnings regression when a full set of occupation dummies are introduced, thus controlling for the effects of differential selection of men and women into occupations. And secondly by using Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition, a technique that apportions inter-group differences in a dependent variable (in this case the gender gap in earnings) into one part due to the groups having different values of the explanatory variables (men and women tending towards different occupations) and another part due to the different effects of those variables (the fact that women earn less than men in the same occupation.)

Table 4.3 shows the result of my replication of Goldin’s regressions using a pooled sample of the Current Population Survey from 2009 to 2011 (whereas Goldin used the
American Community Survey for the same years), with similar results. Each column shows the female coefficient from a model regressing logged weekly earnings on a dummy variable for females, and a range of covariates. In the “basic” model (column 1), these covariates are age (as a quartic), year and dummies for four racial categories (black, white, hispanic and other), and the pay gap implied by the female coefficient is 0.324 log points (equivalent to about 28 percentage points) - almost precisely the same as in Goldin’s equivalent specification. The second model adds logged usual weekly work hours, the third adds to this dummies for levels of education and the fourth and fifth models further add a full set of occupation dummies, measured using either the census occupation codes (as in Goldin’s analysis) or the international ISCO-88 categories.

In her full sample, Goldin finds that adding census occupation dummies - and thus controlling for the fact that men and women tend to work in different occupation - reduces the female coefficient from .245 log points (in the model controlling for hours worked and education, as well as the “basic” covariates) to 0.191 log points, or by 22 percent. Comparing models 3) and 4) in Table 4.3 above brings a similar result: the female coefficient comes down from 0.189 to 0.138 log points, equivalent to a 27% reduction. Using ISCO-88 instead of the Census Bureau’s categories produces a qualitatively similar (though slightly smaller, as should be expected given that the hundred-odd ISCO categories are much broader than the more than 400 Census ones) result. This replication therefore offers no reason to question Goldin’s conclusion that that the remaining story of gender inequality in the US is one that takes place mostly within, not between occupations.

The second piece of evidence Goldin provides to support this conclusion is an Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition that allows her to assess how much of the overall gender pay gap would be eliminated by two counterfactual conditions: “if one equalized
earnings by gender within each occupation or, instead, evened their proportions for each occupation" (Goldin 2014, 1098). The basic procedure in Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition is to estimate separate models of female and of male (logged) earnings using the same independent variables, as in equations 1) and 2), where \( Y \) represents the average (logged) wages, \( X \) represents a vector of independent variables and \( B \) represents corresponding coefficients. Men and women are denoted by \( m \) and \( f \) respectively. (Error terms are ignored since they average zero).

1. \( Y_m = X_m * B_m \)
2. \( Y_f = X_f * B_f \)

One of these log wage equations is then subtracted from the other, giving

3. \( Y_m - Y_f = B_m * X_m - X_f * B_f = B_m * (X_m - X_f) + X_f * (B_m - B_f) \)

The first term on the far right-hand side represents the impact of different values of the independent variables \( (X_m - X_f) \), weighted by male coefficients \( (B_m) \), while the second term represents the difference between the effects of these variables in the two groups, weighted by the female values of the independent variables. The total gender pay gap can therefore be divided between these two types of differences - though the exact results will differ if one calculates \( Y_f - Y_m \) instead (thus using female coefficients and male independent variables as weights).

In this case, in order to decompose the gender pay gap into within- and between-occupation components, the only independent variable I include is a full set of occupation dummies. Using the US Census Bureau’s occupational categories (as in Goldin’s analysis), within-occupation differences account for the majority of the difference in earnings between the sexes - 66% if male wages and female occupational shares are used, 78% if the opposite choice (female wages and male occupational shares) is made.
Occupational segregation accounts for the remaining 22-34% of the gap. This result attributes an even higher share of the gender gap to within-occupation differences, since Goldin’s own analysis using the ACS data yielded a somewhat lower range of estimates - between 58% and 68%.

Carrying out this decomposition using the 1988 version of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88) allows me to render the results comparable across the three cases - albeit at a more aggregated level, with 107 occupational categories, compared to more than 400 for the US census schema. As one would expect with these broader occupational categories, the decomposition of the gender pay gap using ISCO-88 attributes an even greater share – 70-80% – of the aggregate gap to within-occupation differences, with only 20-30% (again depending on whether male or female wages are used as the benchmark) coming from between occupation differences, in other words “occupational segregation”. Again, then, Goldin’s conclusion is confirmed – but what happens if we apply these diagnostic tools to the French and German labor markets?

### 4.2.4 Extending Goldin’s approach to France and Germany

Starting with the question of how much the introduction of occupational dummies changes the residual gender gap in a log wage regression, Tables 4.4 and 4.5 carry out an analogous analysis to Table 4.3, this time using the French and German labor force surveys respectively.\textsuperscript{10} Again focusing on the impact of these dummies on the female coefficient in column 3 (already adjusted for work hours, education and basic covariates), the dummies reflecting the 467-category 2003 version France’s domestic occupational scheme (Professions et catégories socioprofessionnelles) reduce the

\footnotesize\textsuperscript{10} Since racial identities are not directly measured in the French or German surveys, I replace this variable with an indicator for whether the respondent is a native-born citizen or not.
Table 4.4: female wage penalty in France

Table: female coefficient in log wage models, France 2009-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Basic (1)</th>
<th>Hours (2)</th>
<th>Earnings (log) (3)</th>
<th>CSP (4)</th>
<th>ISCO (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-0.316***</td>
<td>-0.133***</td>
<td>-0.174***</td>
<td>-0.092**</td>
<td>-0.108**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>167.976</td>
<td>167.976</td>
<td>167.975</td>
<td>167.975</td>
<td>166.521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>0.457</td>
<td>0.553</td>
<td>0.646</td>
<td>0.618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>0.457</td>
<td>0.553</td>
<td>0.645</td>
<td>0.618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual Std. Error</td>
<td>0.559 (df = 167968)</td>
<td>0.436 (df = 167967)</td>
<td>0.395 (df = 167960)</td>
<td>0.353 (df = 167503)</td>
<td>0.366 (df = 166409)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 'Basic' includes age as a quartic and dummies for year and race. Models 2-5 cumulatively add logged usual weekly hours, education and either PCS or ISCO occupation dummies.

Residual gender gap by a far larger portion – 47% – was the case for the US. The far less detailed (100 categories represented in the French sample) ISCO-88 dummies, as expected, have a smaller impact, but still reduce the coefficient by .066 log points, or 38%.

Applied to the German data, this procedure gives virtually no explanatory weight to occupational segregation, with Germany’s domestic occupational scheme (the 400-plus category 1992 Klassifikation der Berufe) reducing the female coefficient of 0.269 log points in the third column by only 0.015 log points, or less than 6%, and the ISCO-88 dummies “explaining” even less of this residual gender pay gap.

I now implement Oaxaca-Blinder decompositions for France and Germany, using the same ISCO-88 occupational categories. The results indicate that in both of these countries, as in the United States, differences within occupations are more important than differences between occupations in terms of explaining the gender pay gap.
However, the dominance of within-occupation differences varies significantly. In Germany, 78-84% of the earnings gap is found to arise within occupations (similar to the 76-82% found in the US, as noted above). Combined with the evidence from the log wage regressions, Germany’s earnings gap appears at least as predominantly based on within-occupation differences as in the United States. In France by contrast, the estimates vary much more as a function of the choice of weights, with 55-83% of the pay gap coming from within occupations, and 17-45% therefore coming from differences in the occupations women and men work in. Taken together with the results for France in the regression analysis, we can conclude that between-occupation differences account for more of France’s (smaller) overall gender inequality than in the case in the other two countries.

Settling on the midpoint of the range of estimates for each country from these decompositions and multiplying by the aggregate, unadjusted earnings gaps reported in Table 4.1, those gaps can be broken into two parts, as shown in Table 4.6.

Thus, while, as Blau and Kahn (2016: 27) note, occupational segregation remains very high (and has been declining at an ever slower rate since), such differences would, based on these estimates, on their own only produce aggregate gender pay gaps in the range of 5-7%, depending on the country and the choice of weights in the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6: decomposing gender earnings gap, 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean gender earnings gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
decompositions - far smaller than those actually observed today. Within-occupation differences, by contrast, would produce gender pay gaps of about 16% in France, 20% in the USA and 30% in Germany, even if men and women were identically distributed across the hundred-odd ISCO-88 occupations.

In terms of comparing the three countries, the most striking result of this decomposition exercise is the fact that based on occupational segregation alone France would be expected to have as large a gender pay gap as Germany, and a slightly bigger one than that in the US. Just as Goldin identifies intra-occupational gaps as the key to the “next chapter” of gender convergence, France’s relatively small gender pay gap within occupations is clearly part of the secret of its lower overall gender inequality.

Having established that within-occupation differences are the source of the bulk of the gender pay gap, Goldin explores what exactly it is about some occupations that produces larger pay disparities between men and women than would be predicted by the kinds of standard explanatory variables used in Tables 2 to 4. She concludes, as noted above, that the key factor is the existence of occupations that impose a wage penalty on workers with a preference or need to avoid long and/or inflexible hours - the situation of many female workers and especially working mothers. Such occupations have an elasticity of earnings with respect to hours worked of greater than one, so that the earnings gap is greater than proportional to any difference in hours worked. Classic examples of this would include highly paid occupations with “tournament” or “winner-takes-all” characteristics, for example corporate law firms where associates compete for scarce positions as partner and are also under pressure to provide specific clients with plentiful “face time”.

I have now shown that Goldin’s basic insight about the primacy of within-occupation differences applies in all three countries, but that France appears to have found some
way to limit the impact of such differences. I therefore now investigate whether this French exception can be traced to something different about how French occupations work in this regard.

My first step is to replicate Figures 2 and 3 from Goldin (2014), using the same census occupations as she does. On the vertical axis in Figure 4.10, these figures show the adjusted gender gap within each of the occupations, as estimated by the interaction between the occupation dummies and the female indicator.\textsuperscript{11} Apart from this interaction, the model contains the same variables as model 4 in Table 4.3 above - this is thus the residual gender pay gap within each occupation after stripping out the effects of age, education, race and logged weekly work time. Consistent with Goldin's findings, the left hand panel shows that this pay gap is larger in higher paid occupations (as measured by mean logged male wages, $\beta = -0.041$, $p=0.00$). The horizontal axis in the right hand panel measures the estimated elasticity of wages in hours, where an elasticity of 1 means wages respond proportionately to an increase in hours worked.\textsuperscript{12} As Goldin observes, the adjusted pay gap is bigger the greater the elasticity of earnings in response to hours worked ($\beta=-0.08$, $p=0.00$).\textsuperscript{13}

Figure 4.11 illustrates these relationships again, but this time for all three countries, and using the ISCO-88 occupations. While the relationship in the US between male wages and the pay gap loses statistical significance with the smaller number of occupations ($p=0.27$), the sign of the bivariate coefficient is comparable to the previous result ($\beta=-0.029$). However, there is clearly no such relationship in French occupations.

\textsuperscript{11}These interaction coefficients are added to the female main effect to get the overall adjusted pay gap for each occupation.

\textsuperscript{12}These elasticities are estimated by adding an interaction between individuals' (logged) usual hours and the occupation dummies. Adding this interaction to the main effect of hours yields an estimate for each occupation of the response of log wages to log hours.

\textsuperscript{13}These bivariate correlations are robust to dropping outliers such as the one occupation with an adjusted gap of about -0.08.
Figure 4.10: Replicating Goldin, US census occupations

Gap increases with male wages

Gap increases hours-earnings elasticity

Logged mean male wage in occ.  
0.0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1.0 1.2 1.4 1.6
Elasticity of wages in hours

This is not to say that work time does not exacerbate gender inequality in these cases; on the contrary, it should be borne in mind that one of the variables that the pay gap illustrated in these figures is “adjusted” for is individual usual work hours (logged). But Goldin’s work on the American case would lead us to expect a larger gender pay gap in occupations where men work long hours even after accounting for differences in hours worked. This is because, she argues, one of the most important factors contributing to this residual pay gap is the fact that some occupations have non-linear returns to work hours, so that individuals – mostly men – who work long hours will be rewarded disproportionately.

Figure 4.12 offers further insights into the role of such non-linear returns to hours worked beyond the American case. Here we see a very similar statistically significant negative relationship between occupations’ estimated elasticities and their adjusted pay gap in both the United States ($\beta=-.13$, p=.01) and France ($\beta=-.1$, p=.01) – once a couple of outliers or leverage points are discarded – between the elasticity of
wages in hours on the one hand, and the adjusted pay gap on the other. This is consistent with Goldin’s finding for the US that occupations that disproportionately reward longer work time will also be occupations that penalize women. But while this relationship appears to hold in France as well – the more hours are rewarded, the greater the gender pay gap – the second striking conclusion on comparing the French and the American plots is that French occupations in fact reward work hours to a far lesser degree than in the United States. While the large majority of American occupations have an estimated elasticity greater than one – so that a 1% increase in hours produces a greater than 1% increase in wages – the opposite is true in France, where the vast majority of occupations reward a 1% increase in hours worked with a smaller than 1% increase in earnings, although many occupations are clustered near the point of perfect proportionality (i.e. elasticity = 1). So while French occupations that disproportionately reward hours do see higher pay disparities between men and
Figure 4.12: Hours-earnings elasticities and the gender gap

women, there simply are not many such occupations in France.

Figure 4.13 offer one final graphical test of whether the dynamic identified by Goldin is playing out in the same way in France’s “final chapter” as it appears to be in the US. The vertical axes are again the gender pay gap within occupations, after adjusting for the effects of a range of covariates, including usual hours. The horizontal axis shows mean hours worked by men in the occupations. My core hypothesis in this chapter is that long work hours on the part of men – and policy and normative environments that facilitate or encourage such long hours – pose a challenge to gender equality on the labor market, given the greater burden of unpaid care work placed on women compared to men. Claudia Goldin’s insights into occupations where long work hours are disproportionally rewarded identifies one excellent mechanism behind this hypothesis - and the implications of this are borne out in the US panel of Figure 4.13, where we see that the residual gender pay gap is larger in occupations where men typically work longer hours ($\beta=-.005, p=.09$). However, what if this labor market
dynamic were disrupted by an institutional context that placed significant downward pressure on male hours, while also unburdening women of their caring duties to a significant degree? The French case provides an answer: as seen in Figure 4.12, there is no apparent relationship in France between typical male hours in an occupation and the adjusted gender pay gap in an occupation ($\beta=.001$, $p=.71$).

What is also noticeable is, first, that French occupations are more narrowly concentrated on the horizontal axis than is the case for Germany or the US. There are certainly French occupations with long hours, but they are fewer, with most occupations seeming to cluster near the median value (marked by the vertical dashed line). Secondly, at 37 hours, average male weekly hours in this median French occupation are considerably lower than is the case for the US (40 hours) or Germany (39.25 hours). This is consistent with what one might expect based on the fact that French working time is subject to a more elaborate regime of national regulation – albeit one with plenty of loopholes and “derogations” – than is the case in either the US,
where firm- or even individual-based bargaining prevails, or Germany, where regional and sectoral collective bargaining is more prominent. Figures 4, 5 and 6 therefore represent clues in favor of my claim that the French combination of childcare provision (facilitating female labor supply) and work time regulations placing downward pressure on male hours – such as the 35 hour week law which, among other things, forces employers to pay overtime rates after 35 hours – make the French labor market a more hospitable place for women than it might otherwise be.

4.2.5 Gender inequality between mothers and fathers

Since the constraints placed on women’s labor market participation by the unequal division of the burdens of family life are at the heart of this chapter’s perspective on work time and gender inequality, one final way of looking at the gender pay gap suggests itself: the gap between the pay of mothers and that of fathers. In particular, if France’s relatively generous childcare and parental leave policies play the crucial role in underpinning gender equality that this chapter has suggested, we would expect it to be visible on this front. It has already been shown in Table 4.1 that the mean – and especially median – earnings (and hourly wage) gap between mothers and fathers is substantially lower than in the US, and dramatically lower than in Germany (where mothers’ monthly earnings are less than half those of fathers). Figure 4.14 shows this measure at different ventiles of the earnings distribution for the three countries, with the mean gap for the population marked by a dashed horizontal line.\footnote{Throughout the discussion “parents” refers only to parents of children under the age of 18. Note also that although I will use the term “parents gap”, the gap does not measure the difference between parents within households but rather between mothers and fathers on average (by ventile of the respective groups’ earnings distribution).}

As was the case with the earnings gap generally, it is clear in all three countries that this “parents gap” is greatest at the bottom of the labor market, above all in
Germany, where mothers are the paradigmatic “minijobbers”. Indeed, in 2011 34% of Minijobbers (of whom 77% were female) were mothers of children under the age of 18 with only 4% being fathers. Or put differently, one in five such German mothers had a Minijob, compared to one in 50 fathers. In France, but not the US or Germany, there is again something of a U-shaped relationship, with the gender earnings gap increasing in the top three ventiles compared to middle of the distribution. And indeed it is yet again – as it was for the earnings and hourly wage gaps in general – the broad middle middle section of the French earnings distribution that stands out for its relatively restrained gender inequality.

Does this “gender equality for the middle class” reflect the distinctive organization of work time in France? Figure 4.15 below provides some reason to believe that it does. As Figure 4.6 above did for all men and women, Figure 4.15 shows the average hours actually worked by mothers and fathers in the survey week along the earnings
distributions of (mothers and fathers) in each country. And as with Figure 4.6, the patterns in Figure 4.15 correspond quite well to the patterns in the gender pay gap seen in Figure 4.14 above. In Germany, mothers’ working time lags massively behind fathers throughout the earnings distribution, but with a gradual partial narrowing as earnings increase. In the US the largest gaps are also at the bottom of the distribution, but, perhaps surprisingly, in contrast to Figure 4.14 above there is not much sign of an expansion of the hours gap at the very top - and similarly there is also no increase in the earnings gap between the highest paid mothers and fathers, unlike in the population at large (see Figure 4.4 above).

Finally, France also displays its largest gap in hours between mothers and fathers at the bottom of the labor market, and sees an uptick towards the top as the highest earning fathers increase their hours. But it is again the relative equality of work hours in the middle (or lower middle) class that stands out in cross-national perspective.
4.2.6 Who (still) works 35-hours?

Before concluding, I present one last piece of circumstantial evidence that this co-occurrence of low gender pay gaps and relatively low gaps in work time in the middle of the French earnings distribution is the result of a favorable conjunction of the French policy context - namely the combination of childcare services that facilitate women’s ability to work and work time regulations that place downward pressure on men’s hours. The key policies in regard to the latter element, as I have explained, is played by both relatively generous paid leave entitlements and, more distinctively, the controversial 35 hour work week regime introduced in the late 1990s.

Although continually denounced by the right, and at best tepidly defended by the left (at least in the mainstream gauche de gouvernement), and riddled with derogations and loopholes as a result of repeated rounds of amending legislation over the past 15 years, the 35 hour week regime has retained some binding power on the organization of work time in France, if only through force of path dependence. Thus 35 hours remained the modal “usual” work week, with just under 28% of employees (compared to less than 5% of Germans, suggesting IG Metall’s epic 35 hour campaign of the 1980s has left behind little trace).15

Who then, still works 35 hours in France? Figure 4.16 offers an answer by showing the percentage of male and female employees reporting a regular 35 hour work week across the earnings distribution. Predictably, it is certainly not the lowest earning women who still enjoy les trente-cinq heures, since they of course are working in part time jobs - albeit, as shown above, with relatively long hours compared to Germany (thanks arguably in part to the side-effects of the 35 hours law). Nor is it men or

15See Chapter 2 for more discussion of the institutional design of the 35 hour week law and its relative resilience in contrast to its German equivalent.
women at the top, many of whom are not directly subject to the law.\textsuperscript{16}

Instead it is precisely a combination of the broad lower-middle and middle swathe of female earners who are most likely to work 35 hours, while among men this work week covers a majority among the low earners (except the bottom 5%) and is still fairly widespread among the lower-middle and middle section of the distribution. Given that men at any point in the male earnings distribution are earning more than women at the same point in the female distribution, it is highly likely that these respective male and female groups are found in the same industries and occupations – and in similar positions in the internal hierarchies of those industries and occupations. It therefore seems highly plausible that women – especially mothers – in these circumstances are better able to “keep up” with their male peers and competitors on the labor market.

\textsuperscript{16}Only senior executives are entirely exempt; a broad swathe of managerial staff (cadres) – about 10% of the workforce – are instead subject to a regime limiting their number of work days in the year.
than they would in the absence of such legislative intervention, and therefore that the 35-hour week is helping such women limit the gap between their earnings and those of their male peers.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the gender pay gap in France, Germany and the United States and concluded that, unsurprisingly, no single variable alone explains this phenomenon – its size, its determinants and its distribution across various social categories – in any of the three countries, nor how it varies between them. However, I have argued for the central role of each country’s work time regime in shaping gender inequality in their respective labor markets. In particular, I have emphasized that France’s provision of extensive childcare services together with its unusually restrictive work time regulations produce a significantly more favorable labor market context for the majority of French women than is the case in the United States or Germany.

Whereas in Goldin’s (2014) analysis of the more unregulated US labor market, women (or anyone with a preference for shorter or more flexible hours) have to pay the price of a lower hourly wage, the French regulatory context makes it less costly for women with caring burdens (or simply preferences for shorter hours) to select out of occupations whose work norms would place them at a disadvantage; there is simply a much larger supply of occupations (and firms) where the normal work week – including, crucially, that of men – is reasonably limited. As a result the kinds of occupations that offer disproportionate returns to long working hours play a much more subdued role in sustaining gender inequality in France than in Goldin’s account. In addition, complementary childcare policies lighten the burden of the “double shift”
faced by female workers, allowing them to work longer weekly hours (even for part-timers) than their German counterparts.

I conclude with a couple of speculations about mechanisms underlying this relative absence of wage-hours elasticities greater than one in France. One plausible hypothesis is that hours restrictions could force organizational and technological adjustments by firms of the kind that Goldin sees as exogenous in the case of pharmacy. Just as theory and evidence suggests that tight labor markets and high wages generally incentivize investments in labor-saving technologies and organizational practices, the costliness to employers of hiring employees for long hours could encourage them to develop organizational alternatives.

It is also possible, however, that cultural differences between France and the US are what drives the greater tendency to disproportionately reward long hours. A key assumption in economic models of “rat race” or “tournament” labor markets – where individuals work long hours for scarce rewards, corporate lawyers seeking promotion to partnership status being a classic example – is that employers cannot observe employee productivity directly and therefore rely on more visible signals (such as long work hours spent in the office) that they judge to be correlated with productivity (Landers et al. 1996). This obviously opens up the potential for normative assumptions and other “cultural” forces to play a role in shaping the “social construction” of traits deemed so correlated.

There is some experimental evidence in support of the hypothesis that while motherhood is deemed a signal of lack of commitment to a job (and penalized accordingly in simulated wage-bidding by experimental subjects and by employers in resume experiments), fatherhood is in fact rewarded as a trait signaling responsibility (Corell et al. 2007). It seems at least plausible that American managers and employers are quicker to take a willingness of (especially high status) employees and professionals
to work long hours as a stronger signal of productivity than are their French counterparts. Indeed this would be consistent with the finding of Lamont (1992), whose interviews with members of the French and American upper-middle class revealed a contrast between an American tendency to equate hard work and competitiveness with moral purity, and a skepticism or even hostility towards such ideas among some of her French subjects, a “significant minority” of whom ridiculed workaholism, subscribing to what Lamont calls an “antiwork ethic”.

161
5 Work time and Redistribution Preferences

Whereas the previous two chapters have considered the way work time regimes shape class and gender inequality through the labor market, in this chapter I turn my attention to the political consequences of work time. In particular, I argue that the new patterns in the social organization of work time outlined earlier in this dissertation have an impact upon the politics of inequality by shaping people’s perceptions of deservingness and thereby altering their preferences for (or against) redistribution. I propose that the hours people work in their jobs as well as those they observe among their occupational peers are seen as work time “norms” which shape individuals’ perceptions of their own deservingness and that of “people like them”.

Specifically, the primary thesis of this chapter is:

H1. Higher-earning individuals are more hostile to redistribution the longer the hours worked by such individuals (or their peers), because they see the high market incomes of the affluent as merited by effort.

In the context of the historic reversal, discussed above, of the gradient between social class and work time, away from a world in which the upper classes flaunted their

---

1 I use the term “norm” in the sense of “a pattern or trait taken to be typical in the behavior of a social group” (Merriam Webster). For the employed, I expect their own work time patterns (e.g. how many hours they work in a typical week) to be the most important determinant of these norms, but I also expect that people draw on the observed working patterns of their peers to inform their sense of what is typical of “people like them”.  

162
leisurely lifestyle to distinguish themselves from socially inferior “workers” (Veblen 2009[1899]), the impact of work time norms on political attitudes, if confirmed, may be an important part of the contemporary politics of inequality and redistribution. Stylizing, the idle rich of an earlier era may have felt greater sympathy — noblesse oblige — for toiling factory workers than today’s millionaire investment banker working 90-hour weeks does for their often underemployed poor contemporaries. In any event, given the profound importance of working time — its quantity, quality, timing, predictability, location — in shaping individuals’ life experiences, it would be surprising from a political sociology perspective if institutionalized work time practices did not shape the norms and worldviews of individuals. This intuition is well expressed by Kohn (2001: 205, quoted in Kitschelt and Rehm 2014: 690):

> in an industrialized society, where work is central to people’s lives, what people do in their work directly affects their values, their conceptions of self, and their orientation in the world around them — “I do therefore I am.”

In the next section I elaborate on my theory and its relation to existing approaches to redistribution preferences, also presenting a second, related hypothesis applying the theory to low earners. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a range of empirical tests of these hypotheses, using surveys from two very different political economies, the United States and Germany. I first briefly describe the American data I use for the chapter’s main empirical analyses, before presenting the results of these analyses, which show the predicted negative association between work time and support for redistribution among high earners. I then present data from a German panel survey,

---

1. I use the term “norm” in the sense of “a pattern or trait taken to be typical in the behavior of a social group” (Merriam Webster). For the employed, I expect their own work time patterns (e.g. how many hours they work in a typical week) to be the most important determinant of these norms, but I also expect that people draw on the observed working patterns of their peers to inform their sense of what is “typical” of “people like them”.

163
which allows additional observable implications of the theory to be tested not only in a very different political and institutional context, but also using an individual fixed effects strategy that allows me to rule out the potential selection effects posing the greatest threats to inference. The results of this part of the analysis show that the longer German high earners work, the more likely they are to believe their pay is unfairly low – and thus less likely, I argue, to support redistribution, as reflected in their increased propensity to support Germany’s pro-business, anti-redistribution political party. A brief conclusion summarizes the evidence and elaborates on the broader significance of the theory.

5.1 Theory and literature: the socio-cultural consequences of the labor market

Many of the core theories and hypotheses in political sociology derive expectations about individuals’ political beliefs, values and behavior from their position in relation to the labor market and the world of (paid) work (e.g. the literatures on class- and gender-based voting [Lipset 1960; Evans 2000; Inglehart and Norris 2000]). It is easy to conflate such labor market-centered approaches to preference formation with theories of rational and self-interested political behavior, and to thus oppose them to approaches that give more weight to “cultural” forces such as ideology, public discourses and identity (Lamont 2000; Quadagno 1996; Steensland 2006). In the literature on mass preferences for redistribution these latter approaches are best represented by scholars highlighting the importance of the perceived deservingness of potential welfare recipients, particularly (but not exclusively) in the American case (e.g. Alesina, Glaeser and Sacerdote 2001, Bénabou and Tirole 2006, van Oorschot
Where do such perceptions of deservingness come from? Prominent among the explanations offered are ethnocentrism and ethnic heterogeneity. Again, the American case looms large, with Gilens (2009) and Alesina et al. (2001) arguing that (white) Americans “hate welfare” because they associate it with an ethnic minority (African Americans). Another set of scholars have focused on the “feedback effects” of the institutional design of welfare programs (e.g. Rothstein 1998, Larsen 2007), with particular focus on the different ways means-tested and more universalist programs structure attitudes towards the welfare state and its “clients”. The focus of much of this work has been on explaining cross-national differences in perceptions of deservingness and the center of causal analysis, whether rooted in institutions, national cultures and histories or the ethnic heterogeneity of societies, has lain outside the labor market. Because deservingness-based preferences are a departure from material self-interest, it has been natural to look past economic causes in explaining their origins.

However, there is no inherent reason to see labor market-centered theories of political behavior and theories focused on non-material or other-regarding considerations as mutually exclusive categories. Many theories of class-based political behavior are of course grounded in the material self-interest of rational individuals – thus, lower-income individuals support the welfare state because they stand to benefit from redistribution (Meltzer and Richard 1981), or perhaps because they are more exposed to the economic risks (notably unemployment) welfare states insure against (Rehm 2009). Others, however have conceived of class-based political consciousness and behavior as arising from historically specific experiences and conditions, shaped as much by the political, cultural and ideological context as by the economic “structure”
(Thompson 1963; Przeworski 1985; Lamont 2000).³

The theory proposed in this chapter is very much in the tradition that sees the politics of the labor market as being about more than the struggle to improve or protect one's place in the distribution of income or one's grip on a job. Compared to such materialistic approaches, it represents a more "sociological" account wherein an individual's attitudes towards redistribution are determined not only by self-interested motives but also by their judgment as to the fairness of such redistribution. Yet the causal origins of these perceptions of fairness and deservingness are located in economic relations and experiences. I therefore challenge the usual dichotomy between economic and "cultural", self-interested and other-regarding determinants of attitudes towards redistribution, instead seeing the economy as itself a locus of cultural activity and value formation.

In so doing I extend the "moral economy" approach pioneered by EP Thompson (1971; 1991) to explain the conditions under which 18th Century English peasants engaged in bread riots in times of dearth and high prices. For Thompson (1991: 266), the empirical variation in peasant behavior in such conditions showed that sheer hunger alone was not an adequate explanation: "of course hunger rioters were hungry...but [a]n outrage to [the poor's] moral assumptions, quite as much as actual deprivation, was the usual occasion for direct action." In this chapter I argue that, just like Thompson's peasants, the political attitudes and behavior of today's "working rich" are not automatically determined by material self-interest even when such attitudes and behavior are consistent with self-interest. Specifically I contend that self-

³A similar distinction can be made regarding the "new gender gap" whereby women have become more likely than men to vote for the left as they have entered the labor market, with some attributing this to material self-interest (based on female employment in either low-paid or public sector jobs, e.g. Esping-Andersen 1999; Mandel and Shalev 2009), but others pointing to the experience of employment — whether one of emancipation, discrimination, or both — promoting "feminist consciousness"(Manza and Brooks 1998).
interested opposition to redistribution has to be *legitimized* in order to be activated, and that the increasingly long hours worked by today’s affluent plays an important role in the "moral economy" that enables such groups to assert their self-interest in this way.

A more specific contribution of this chapter arises from two shifts of focus in relation to the bulk of the literature on deservingness perceptions and redistribution. First, I suggest that attitudes towards redistribution depend on perceptions of the "deservingness" not only of the potential *beneficiaries* of redistribution (the subject of a large literature), but also of the potential *contributors* to it. Until now the deservingness literature has focused on the former question - "are the poor (seen as) deserving of redistribution?" - mostly neglecting the latter consideration - "do the affluent deserve their high incomes?" One significant exception is McCall (2013), who describes the conditions under which the rich are seen as deserving or undeserving by the rest of the US population; the second shift of focus I make, however, is to consider group (i.e. class) *self*-perceptions of deservingness: to what degree do the affluent themselves think they (and their peers) deserve their high incomes? Do the poor think they (and their peers) deserve higher incomes via redistribution?

My contention is that in forming these perceptions of their own deservingness (and that of "people like them"), individuals draw on their beliefs about the working habits of the social groups they belong to (e.g. the affluent and the poor). Crucially, individuals operate with very limited information to support these beliefs. I suggest that the key heuristics available to them concern their own work lives and those of "people like them". In this chapter I measure the latter source of information at the level of detailed occupations, using the 3-digit level of the 1988 International Standard
Classification of Occupations (ISCO88).\textsuperscript{4}

This approach answers Kitschelt and Rehm's (2014: 670) recent call for political scientists to take account of individuals' occupational experiences when modeling the formation of political attitudes and to thereby make greater use of the theoretical insights of sociology into the central role of occupations in social stratification. Kitschelt and Rehm posit a form of "spill-over" effect from individuals' occupational experiences into their political values, outlining a logic of "generalization and transposition from one important sphere of life – work – to others, and especially from private experiences to policy preferences. People apply the kinds of reasoning, heuristics, and problem-solving techniques they learn and use at work in all realms of life" (2014: 674). I focus on a different dimension of occupational experience from Kitschelt and Rehm\textsuperscript{5}, namely working time norms, but, like them, I posit that individuals' experiences of the world of work – including their observations of peers – serve as an "availability heuristic" allowing them to draw conclusions about, \textit{inter alia}, the fairness or otherwise of the existing distribution of income.

The logic of this argument can be applied equally to workers at the upper and lower ends of the class hierarchy, but with opposite implications for their preferences. At the top, high-earners who are exposed to long hours norms – based on their own working lives and those of their peers – are expected to see redistribution as more unfair than similarly affluent individuals in lower work time environments (H1). Re-

\textsuperscript{4}Working practices within firms would be a strong alternative source of norms, but I am not aware of any firm-level surveys that also contain appropriate measures of redistribution preferences or related variables. One practical alternative to occupations may be to develop a composite measure incorporating work norms in the individual's industry and geographical location (in addition to occupation), as well as the work practices of spouses.

\textsuperscript{5}The two dimensions of occupational experience identified by Kitschelt and Rehm as shaping socio-political attitudes are: first, the nature of the tasks individuals – in particular high-skilled professionals – perform in their jobs, and specifically whether those tasks involve organizational-administrative, technical or interpersonal logics; secondly, whether the individual is in a position of authority in their organizational or professional hierarchy.
cent ethnographic research on the cultural formation of investment bankers provides some suggestive evidence in support of this hypothesis. Ho (2009: 99-106) concludes that “[o]n Wall Street overwork is normative practice”, a practice that helps generate among such workers “the understanding that they have become a part of the business elite...a qualitatively different kind of people than ‘nine to five’ workers” and the internalization of which justifies investment bankers’ “assumptions about their cultural and technical superiority.”

Among lower-income individuals, long work hours might be expected to spur an equal and opposite “deservingness” response. Namely, they might conclude based on their experience that the less well off – “people like them” – are just as hard-working and deserving of prosperity as the rich, that the market is not very “meritocratic” and that redistribution is therefore justified. The theory would therefore predict (in addition to H1), that:

H2: Low earning workers are more likely to support redistribution the longer the hours worked by such individuals (or their peers), because they perceive low income people such as themselves as deserving higher incomes.

Figure 5.1 illustrates H1 and H2 graphically, with the hypothesized marginal effect of work time on support for redistribution declining from positive among low income respondents to negative among high income respondents.

However – again in line with Kitschelt and Rehm (2014, 1681) – the theory seems most likely to apply to the more high-skilled end of the labor market. Empirically, a number of scholars have recently found that when it comes to redistribution preferences, departures from self-interest are more common among the better off. Cavaillé (2015), for example, finds that better-off individuals are more likely to rely on the deservingness heuristic in forming preferences over social spending. Other scholars
have attributed similar findings to the diminishing marginal utility of income – essentially meaning that the affluent can afford to let non-material considerations, whether perceptions of fairness or ethnic biases, shape their attitudes and behavior. For similar reasons, the better off are held to enjoy longer time horizons, allowing them to consider redistribution’s short-term costs as being mitigated by longer term benefits of a more equal society, such as lower crime (see e.g. Ferwerda 2015). But whereas Dimick, Rueda and Stegmueller (forthcoming) argue that the exercise of “altruism” by the affluent is conditional on perceptions of the worthiness of its recipients, I present evidence below that it also depends on their perceptions of their own deservingness, and that of “people like them”.

Beyond these reasons to expect that factors unrelated to economic self-interest are
generally more likely to influence the affluent than the poor, there are more specific reasons to doubt that exposure to longer work time norms will promote support for redistribution among low earners. Since my theory is centered on the impact of individuals’ working lives on their redistributive preferences, my analyses are restricted to people with jobs. As a result, the poorest people in the samples are the “working poor” – not necessarily the very poorest people in society as a whole. This raises the possibility that, while the kinds of “peers” the affluent have in mind when they draw connections between work time and redistribution will be people working in high paying jobs like their own, this might look quite different among the low paid. Here, the relevant “others” whose work time norms may be salient in the minds of lower paid workers are plausibly the non-working poor, often dependent on government assistance – and often stigmatized for this, especially by the working and lower-middle classes for whom differentiating themselves from these less virtuous poor – often their neighbors – is essential to protecting their social status and moral self-conceptions (Lamont 2000, Halpern-Meekin et al. 2015).

At least for low-paid workers predisposed to think in these terms, exposure to longer work time norms in their occupational lives could accentuate perceptions of the undeservingness of the non-working poor and thus provoke less support for redistribution, as among the affluent. At any rate, this could happen often enough to counteract the pro-redistribution reaction, predicted by H2, against the gap between such workers and the affluent.
5.2 Empirical analysis I: United States

5.2.1 Data

To test the hypotheses outlined above, I first turn to the General Social Survey (GSS), one of the best sources of survey data on social and political values in the United States stretching back to the 1970s. While the GSS is not a panel survey, but rather a repeated cross-section with a new sample of respondents each year\(^6\), it offers a rare continuity in the survey items available over time. A wealth of questions directly or indirectly touching on redistribution have been asked, though most of them on only a handful of occasions. As outcome variables, I focus on the two relevant items that have been asked in most waves of the GSS. The first is an item asking respondents to place themselves on a seven-point scale where one means the government ought to reduce the income differences between rich and poor, while a seven means the government should not concern itself with reducing income differences. The second item focuses more specifically on whether the poor should be helped. It asks respondents to place themselves on a scale ranging from one (the government “should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans”) to five (agreeing that “it is not the government’s responsibility, and that each person should take care of himself”).\(^7\) In the analyses below I reverse both these scales, so that positive regression coefficients can be interpreted as indicating a variable is associated with increased *support* for government action to reduce income inequality and help the poor respectively.

Both of these survey items are of course flawed instruments in so far as they are

---

\(^6\) Though a rotating panel element has been introduced since 2006.

\(^7\) Full question wordings for all dependent variables in this chapter are provided in Appendix C.
likely to reflect not only the perceptions of fairness and deservingness central to my theory, but also more general attitudes towards government intervention. In addition, since it is likely that most people consider themselves neither “rich” nor “poor”, these items will only imperfectly cue respondents to consider their own deservingness and that of their peers. Nevertheless, these shortcomings are a form of measurement error that should make it more difficult to find any statistically significant relationship in support of my hypothesis.

In the analyses below, I examine the association with redistribution preferences of both individual work time and work time “norms” measured at the occupation level. Since the GSS is not large enough to meaningfully estimate occupational characteristics – such as average work hours – at anything other than the most aggregate of levels, I use the much larger Current Population Survey (CPS) for these purposes. Ultimately, the analysis covers up to 19 waves of the GSS over a 30 year period (1980 to 2010).8 To facilitate cross-national comparison, I convert the US Census occupational codes used in the CPS to the widely used ISCO88 international occupational classification scheme.9 After excluding the small number of occupation-years with fewer than 20 observations in the CPS, there are 94 three-digit level occupations in the GSS analysis. This allows me to calculate the mean hours “actually worked last week” in each occupation for each year, which I then proceed to use as my measure of occupational work time “norms”. Matching these two data sources therefore allows me to estimate the impact of these norms on individuals’ redistribution preferences, conditional on their material interest in redistribution as proxied by their individual

---

8Since 1994 the GSS has been conducted only biannually, having previously been carried out in almost every year since 1972. The “help the poor” item is asked once less than the “reduce income differences” one in this period.

9For this I used slightly adapted versions of recoding schemes available on the websites of Torben Iversen and Harry Gandeboom.
income (measured in constant 1986 dollars, and logged to produce a more normal distribution of the variable).

5.2.2 Results

My theory implies that the effect of work time on redistribution preferences will vary as a function of income levels. My first hypothesis, H1 predicts that longer work time will intensify the opposition of the affluent by bolstering their sense that their favorable social status is merited. H2 additionally predicts that longer work time norms will have the opposite effect on those at the other end of the social scale – their self-interested reasons for supporting redistribution will be bolstered by a moral conviction that their socio-economic superiors are not deserving of their superior status. The appropriate way to test these theoretical expectations is therefore through including in my models a parameter for an interaction effect between my measures of income and work time: the expectation being that longer work time (or occupational work time norms) is negatively associated with support for redistribution among the affluent, but positively correlated with such support among low earners.

Table 5.1 shows the results from an OLS analysis of these two survey items. Across all models, I control for a range of basic characteristics likely to shape redistribution preferences. These include sex, marital status, age (and its square), years of education, trade union membership, race (coded as 1 for whites and 0 for others) and self-employment.\(^\text{10}\) In general, men, whites, the married, the older and the self-employed are expected to have both higher economic status and lower support for redistribution. Union members are expected to support redistribution while expecta-

\(^{10}\)By virtue of the nature of the analysis, only employed people are included, though future research should attempt to include the non-employed by finding a way to measure the work time “norms” they are exposed to via influences such as their spouses or their own previous labor market experience.
tions for education are ambiguous, since it is associated with both higher economic status and more left of center ideological leanings. In addition to these controls, I include year fixed effects for each wave of the survey to account for general trends and year-specific shocks (e.g. changes in macroeconomic conditions) that might affect all respondents in the same manner. Columns (1) and (3) show the result of analyses at the individual level only. Columns (2) and (4) add two occupation-level variables (calculated from the CPS): occupational work time norms (as explained above) and, as an occupation-level control, the median hourly wage in the occupation. Columns (3) and (6) add occupation fixed effects to these models. Standard errors are in parentheses – for models (2), (3), (5) and (6) these are clustered by occupation.

5.2.3 Individual work time

The first empirical hurdle for the theory to pass is to show that there is a statistically significant and negative interaction effect between work time and income. Such a negative interaction would imply that work time becomes more associated with opposition to redistribution as income increases. All of the models in Table 1 pass this test.\textsuperscript{11} Beyond this, the theory implies (H1) that the marginal “effect” (more cautiously: coefficient) of work time should be negative and significant among the affluent. H2 predicts a corresponding positive association with support for redistribution among the poor.

Figure 3, based on columns (1) and (3), illustrates just such an opposite relationship between individual work time and preferences at the top and bottom of the income scale. The y-axis shows the marginal coefficient of individual working time, assessed at different income levels, measured on the x-axis. (The histogram in the

\textsuperscript{11}At the .01 confidence level for models (1), (2) and (4). The p-values for models (3), (5) and (6) are larger: .067, .095 and .067 respectively.
Table 5.1: Interaction of income and work time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable:</th>
<th>Govt. should reduce income differences</th>
<th>Govt. should help poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiv. hours</td>
<td>0.039***</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiv. income (logged)</td>
<td>-0.028</td>
<td>0.331*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.035)</td>
<td>(0.176)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occ.-level hours (mean)</td>
<td>0.120***</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.038)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiv. hrs. X Indiv. inc.</td>
<td>-0.004***</td>
<td>-0.001***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occ. hrs. X Indiv. inc.</td>
<td>-0.013***</td>
<td>-0.008*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occ.-level wage (median hourly)</td>
<td>-0.236**</td>
<td>0.262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.107)</td>
<td>(0.215)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-0.232***</td>
<td>-0.223***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.031)</td>
<td>(0.047)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>-0.161***</td>
<td>-0.146***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.030)</td>
<td>(0.033)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age squared</td>
<td>-0.0001</td>
<td>-0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0001)</td>
<td>(0.0001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educ. (yrs)</td>
<td>-0.060***</td>
<td>-0.056***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union member</td>
<td>0.350***</td>
<td>0.326***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.043)</td>
<td>(0.040)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>-0.679***</td>
<td>-0.660***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.047)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-emp.</td>
<td>-0.392***</td>
<td>-0.404***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.045)</td>
<td>(0.067)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occ. fixed effects?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year fixed effects?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>16,731</td>
<td>14,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.082</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Std. errors in parentheses (occupation-clustered in models 2, 3, 5 and 6).

176
background portrays the actual distribution of logged income; the dotted lines are 95% confidence intervals). For both survey items, greater work time is associated with greater hostility to redistribution among the affluent; for both of them, greater work time is *positively* correlated with support for redistribution among the poor, though the effect is statistically insignificant for the item on “helping the poor”.

Figure 5.2: Individual work time

![Diagram showing marginal coefficients for individual work time associated with government policies.](image)

Note: dashed lines are 95% confidence intervals.
This difference between the results for the two survey items among the poor—significant and positive for reducing inequality but insignificant for helping the poor—seems consistent with the caveats to H2 expressed above. Those caveats suggested that while longer work hours among the low paid should make them question the fairness of the market distribution of income—by boosting their sense of their own deservingness—it might also accentuate stigmatizing attitudes towards the non-working (or less-working) poor, perceived as the true beneficiaries of government largess. Thus longer work time for the working poor might be expected have a more ambiguous (and imprecisely estimated) effect on their attitudes toward government assistance for “the poor” than on their views of intervention to reduce income inequality.

Models (1) and (3) can be seen as an update on the only existing work I am aware of to specifically investigate the causal link between work time and redistribution preferences. Barnes (2012) finds some empirical support for a negative relationship between hours worked and support for redistribution, controlling for income. Theoretically, Barnes grounds this finding in a model where the “utility cost” of taxation is higher to those working longer hours. The intuition is that while taxation systems generally do not care how many hours an individual worked to earn a given income, work time does determine the “utility cost” of a given dollar of taxation. Put differently, it will take a $10 an hour worker twice as long as a $20 an hour worker to make up for each dollar lost to taxation. Thus between two individuals with the same income (and therefore the same tax bill) but different working time, the person working longer hours should be more opposed to redistribution.

However, Barnes does not consider the utility benefits of redistribution, focusing exclusively on the costs imposed by taxation. Yet the same logic would suggest that a net beneficiary of redistribution should be more supportive of redistribution the longer their work time, holding income constant—again, every dollar of redistribution to
a $10-an-hour worker represents twice as much work as it does to a $20-an-hour worker. Models (1) and (3), which demonstrate an association between working time and opposition to redistribution only among the affluent, are therefore arguably more consistent with the causal logic of Barnes' theory than is her empirical analysis, which assumes work time will have the same effect on preferences at all income levels.

However, as explained above, my own argument is rooted not in self-interest or the "utility cost" (and benefit) of redistribution. Rather I hypothesize that work time shapes individuals' perceptions of their own deservingness and thus of the fairness of the market distribution of income. Besides the obvious methodological limitations of the individual-level analysis just presented, there are therefore strong theoretical grounds for my focus on occupation-level analysis in the remainder of this section, since there is no reason, in Barnes' account, why occupational work time norms should have the same effect as individual hours worked.

Focusing on occupations also links my approach closely with the occupational sociology-based research agenda advocated by Kitschelt and Rehm (2014) and is consistent with the intuition that individuals form their redistributive preferences by drawing conclusions about the deservingness of "people like them" based on their observations of peers. Occupations are obviously not the only locus of such observations, even considering the world of work alone, but they are one (measurable) source of information that is available and relevant to individuals assessing the deservingness of their peers. Moreover, if it can be shown convincingly that occupation-level work norms influence redistribution preferences even controlling for individual work time, this would seem reasonably strong evidence that the causal mechanism linking the two

---

12 Most obviously, there is likely to be a good deal of self-selection into individual working time, and such self-selection is likely to be associated with unmeasured individual characteristics also potentially associated with redistribution preferences.
is one rooted more in processes of socialization or perceptions of deservingness than in more rationalistic accounts of self-interest in terms of the utility of redistribution.

5.2.4 Occupational work time

Models (2) and (5), which interact occupational work time with individual income, do indeed show the predicted relationships. But while they are clearly an improvement, methodologically, over Models (1) and (4) (and produce similar results), there is clearly still potential for self-selection into occupations. Individuals with predispositions to believe in the meritocratic nature of the labor market may for instance be more likely to enter harder-working occupations even than others with similar observable characteristics (though one might expect this to be reflected in higher individual work time, which are controlled for). Models (3) and (6) thus represent the best attempt in Table (1) to get around the self-selection issue. By introducing occupation fixed effects, these models’ estimates of the coefficients on occupational work time are derived only from variation over time within the 94 3-digit occupations.

Of course, the fixed effects only control for time-invariant characteristics of the occupations, and these occupations probably changed in unmeasured ways over such a long period. However, while it is possible that the kind of people who entered a given occupation changed over the period – even in ways not adequately controlled by measures such as individual working time, income, gender, education, occupational skill level (as proxied by the median wage in the occupation) etc. – these occupations are sufficiently narrowly defined that it would be surprising if compositional change of this kind had taken place on a large scale.13 It is therefore plausible that selection

---

13 The 3-digit occupations are the second most detailed level in the ISCO88 system. A random sample of the categories give a flavor: “231 College, University and Higher Education Teaching Professionals”, “831 Locomotive-Engine Drivers and Related Workers”, “324 Traditional Medicine Practitioners and Faith Healers”.

180
into occupations is mostly controlled for. In addition, with only ninety four units over 18 to 19 survey waves, the occupation fixed-effects model is a relatively hard empirical test for the theory.

Figure 5.3 below shows the results from these occupation fixed effects models. They offer support for H1, but not H2. Thus an increase in occupational work time norms (measured as the average week worked in an individual’s occupation) are associated with reduced support for redistribution among the affluent; but there is no evidence for the opposite relationship holding among the less well off, with the point estimates for the poor also being negative, though they are statistically indistinguishable from zero. Substantively, the effects – if they are causal – shown in Figure 4, though not very large, are significant: a standard deviation shift (equal to about 4.5 hours) in occupational work norms is associated, for an individual at the 90th percentile of the income distribution (in 2010) with a decrease in support for government action to reduce income inequality equivalent to about 14% of a standard deviation. This is a larger change than that associated with a standard deviation shift in years of education (equivalent to more than 3 years of schooling), based on the estimates in Model 3.

Results from linear probability models (not shown) with the dependent variable converted to a binary measure (with respondents above four on the seven point scale coded as being in favor of redistribution) show that a standard deviation change in occupational work time is associated with a five percentage point reduction in the probability that such an affluent individual supports redistribution (from a baseline probability of support, among the top 10% of earners, of 25%).¹⁴ The corresponding results for the “help the poor” dependent variable are very similar: a standard

¹⁴Results are similar if the threshold for support for redistribution is shifted from four to three on the seven point scale.
deviation shift in occupational work norms is associated with a decrease in support equivalent to about 13% of a standard deviation in this outcome (more than twice the change associated with an equivalent shift in education). Binary outcome models (not shown), with respondents above two on the five point scale coded as supporting "help for the poor", associate a standard deviation shift in occupational hours with a reduction in the probability of support for government aid for the poor from someone at the 90th percentile of the income distribution by about 5 percentage points.\textsuperscript{15}

Importantly, while the decision to control for \textit{individual} hours was necessary to

\textsuperscript{15}Though the interaction coefficient in these models is only significant at conventional levels when the threshold for "support" is set at three rather than four on the five point scale.
lend some credibility to these observational findings, the cost is a downward “post-treatment” bias on the magnitude of the estimated effects of occupational work time norms. This is because occupation-level work norms can be expected to directly influence individual working time, which (as I theorize) may in turn influence redistributive preferences, so that a significant part of any occupation-level effect is “controlled away”, since it will operate precisely through the mechanism of increased individual hours. While estimating the magnitude of any such mediated effect is beyond the scope of the current chapter, this does suggest that the magnitude of the associations derived from these models may be lower bound estimates.

5.2.5 Belief in meritocracy

The analyses thus far have focused on dependent variables that are directly related to government policy, namely whether the government should act to reduce the gap between rich and poor or to raise the living standards of the poor. As mentioned above, these measures do not allow a direct test of the relationship between working time and perceptions of fairness or deservingness, since they conflate these considerations with broader attitudes towards government intervention (though as also argued above, this measurement imprecision should make it harder to find the association I predict, unless there is an alternative account linking work time to broad attitudes towards government intervention).

In an attempt to get somewhat closer to the precise mechanisms I posit, Figure 5.4 again shows an interactive relationship between occupational work time norms and individual income for a survey item that is less immediately policy-centered, but more directly related to beliefs about the fairness of the socio-economic hierarchy.¹⁶

¹⁶See Appendix C for the regression results table from this part of the analysis.
The item, which is also available for 19 GSS waves over the 1980-2010 period, asks respondents whether they think hard work, “lucky breaks or help from other people” or “both equally” are most important to “get ahead”. This can be seen as a broad indicator of belief in the “meritocratic” nature of existing social hierarchies – do the successful “get ahead” through their own effort (in which case they may be seen as deserving) or because of luck? In practice, because fewer than 12% of respondents choose the “luck or help” response, I turn this into a binary variable coded 1 for people (66% of respondents) who answer that hard work is the most important, 0 for the remaining third who answer either “luck or help” or “both equally”.

Figure 5.4: Hard work most important to get ahead

![Graph](image)

Note: dashed lines are 95% confidence intervals from occupation-clustered standard errors.

If, as my theory argues, longer work time norms reinforce the perceptions of the
affluent that they deserve their place at the top, it would be expected that work
time would be positively associated with this belief in "actually existing meritocracy"
within this group. The left-hand panel of Figure 5.4 therefore shows the marginal
coefficient plots from a linear probability model regressing this binary dependent
variable on the same independent variables as in models (3) and (6) in Table 5.1 –
including the year and occupation fixed effects. This plot shows that among high
income individuals, increases in occupational work time were associated with an in-
creased probability of believing that hard work was more important than luck or
help from others in getting ahead. For someone at the 90th percentile of the 2010
income distribution, the effect is quite significant substantively, with each additional
hour of occupational work time associated with a 1.4 percentage point increase in the
probability of holding the meritocratic view. Therefore a standard deviation change
in occupational work norms (about 4.5 hours) would produce a 6.5 percentage point
increase in this probability for such an individual. Among the low paid, although the
point estimates remain positive, there is no significant association between work time
and such beliefs (i.e. the confidence intervals cross zero at lower income levels).¹⁷

Of course this dependent variable, though closer to the precise mechanism I posit,
may also be more prone to endogeneity – perhaps some underlying personality fea-
ture, such as "work ethic", causes people both to believe that hard work is important
and to choose long hours occupations. Again, the combination of occupational fixed
effects and a control for individual working time (among other individual-level con-
trols) should partly assuage such concerns. But to further account for this possible
endogeneity to "personality type", I show in the right hand panel the effect of adding
one additional control variable. This comes from an item asking respondents to rank

¹⁷The p-value for the interaction term for this model is less than .01.
in order of importance five values (proposed by the survey interviewer) a child should learn to prepare for life. One of the values was “to work hard” and I use the resulting variable as a 5-point scale measuring respondents’ inherent belief in the value of hard work, with people who ranked hard work as the most important value being coded as 5, while those who chose it as the least important value are coded as 1.

The idea here is to distinguish people who simply have certain personality types or values that may cause them to select into harder working occupations (yet for some reason are not working especially long hours themselves) from, on the other, those who have acquired empirical beliefs about how people “get ahead” based on, *ex hypothesi*, the work time norms they are exposed to. Interestingly the result of adding this control is to increase the marginal coefficient of occupational work time at all income levels, to the point where it is positive and significant even at the lowest incomes. For someone at the 90th percentile of the income distribution in 2010, the probability of the meritocratic belief increases by 2.8 percentage points with every one hour increase in occupational work time norms, so that a standard deviation increase in work time translates into a 12.5 percentage point increase in this probability. At the 10th income percentile, each hour of additional work time is associated with an increase of 2.2 percentage points, with a standard deviation shift amounting to a 10.2 percentage point increase in the probability of meritocratic beliefs.

While this positive association between work time norms and meritocratic belief among low earners is not consistent with H2, the positive interaction between work time and income (significant at the .05 level) confirms that the association between occupational work time norms and belief in meritocracy becomes stronger as earnings increase. This is consistent with the broad contrast between the political consequences of work time among high and low earners that emerges from this chapter’s empirical analysis. If work time, as suggested by the right hand panel of Figure 5, has similar,
though weaker, effects on the meritocratic belief among low paid workers, this again points to the importance of the caveats raised about H2 above. It may be the case that for many of these workers, exposure to longer work time norms triggers an accentuated belief that hard work is what separates them from the poor and the welfare-dependent, rather than teaching them (as H2 would predict) that hard work does not separate them from the affluent – or indeed both effects may be present to different degrees, depending on other (e.g. ethno-racial) characteristics of the low paid.

### 5.3 Empirical analysis II: Germany

#### 5.3.1 Data

While the GSS offers an unusual continuity of survey items over time, the fact that it is a repeated cross-section – i.e. it interviews a different sample of respondents each year – is a significant limitation. In particular, it makes it challenging to rule out with complete confidence the possibility that different types of people are associated with different occupations or work practices (e.g. longer working hours). Individual-level panel data offer a solution to this problem. Unfortunately there are few such panel surveys that focus on political attitudes and behavior and/or cover a long period of time – and none for the United States. Internationally, one of the most important exceptions is the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) which has been carried out since 1984. Unfortunately, the GSOEP contains a far more limited range of politically themed survey items than the GSS but it does contain some that allow me to further test the observable implications of this chapter’s hypotheses, not only using the hard test of within-individual changes but also in a very different political, economic and
institutional context to that of the United States.

5.3.2 Perceived fairness of own income

One item in the GSOEP offers the opportunity to more directly examine the relationship between working time and redistribution preferences theorized in this chapter, though unfortunately it has been included in the survey far less frequently than the partisanship question. In every second wave since 2005, the GSOEP has asked respondents whether they deem their income from their current job to be “fair” or “just” (gerecht). This only yields four data points over a seven year period (2005-2011), but the question is well suited to test one part of the theory left untested by the American data. While it does not directly address attitudes towards redistributive policy in the way the GSS did (and therefore has the merit of avoiding conflation with broader attitudes towards government interventions), it directly touches on one of the mechanisms I specify. Specifically, I argued that the reason longer work time makes the affluent more opposed to redistribution is that it affects their perceptions of their own deservingness (and that of their fellow affluent) and thus of the fairness of the socio-economic hierarchy implied by the market distribution of income. One underlying assumption is clearly that the longer one’s work time is, the more one is likely to consider a high income to be justified.

On average across these four waves, about 64% of the total sample declare their current earnings from their job to be fair. In principle, for some of the 36% who said their income was “unfair”, the respondent could think their wage is higher than would be fair – in other words that they are overpaid. But an additional survey item, which asks respondents who declare their income to be unfair how much they would deem to be a fair income, reveals that virtually no respondents (less than 1%) declare this
view. To simplify the analysis I recode this tiny minority who say their income is unfairly high as belonging to those who see their income as fair. This category can then be interpreted to designate respondents who deem their income from their jobs to be "at least fair". Respondents who call their income unfair, by contrast, believe they deserve a higher income for their work. My contention is that a high income individual who thinks their pay is unfairly low clearly believes their high social status is deserved, and is therefore less likely to favor redistribution than a similarly highly paid individual who says they are fairly remunerated for their work.

Unsurprisingly, higher earners are more likely than others to say their income is fair in this sense. However, as the left-hand panel of Figure 5.5 shows, this relationship is "J-shaped" with the lowest quintile of the income distribution\textsuperscript{18} more likely to describe their income as "fair" than the second or third quintiles, though still significantly less likely than the top fifth of earners. This anomaly may be explained by the right-hand panel, which shows a monotonic decline in the propensity to perceive one's income as fair as work time increases.\textsuperscript{19}

Table C.2 in Appendix C shows the results of linear probability models with perceived fairness of earnings as the dependent variable and work time as the key independent variable of interest. A range of variables are controlled for, including years of formal education, the square of age\textsuperscript{20}, household size, marital status, a dummy variable for whether the respondent lives in the territory of the former German Demo-

\textsuperscript{18}Net income is shown in Figure 8 but gross income shows essentially the same relationship. Looking at men and women separately again yields a similar result.

\textsuperscript{19}Indeed, there is a monotonic positive relationship between hourly wages, estimated based on reported gross earnings and work hours, and perceived fairness of earnings – see Figure C.1 in Appendix C.

\textsuperscript{20}Age itself is not included as a control because of perfect multiple collinearity with the individual and year fixed effects.
Figure 5.5: perceived fairness of own earnings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By net earnings quintile</th>
<th>By work time quintiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1 0.66</td>
<td>Q1 0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 0.55</td>
<td>Q2 0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 0.67</td>
<td>Q3 0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4 0.8</td>
<td>Q4 0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 0.57</td>
<td>Q5 0.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Democratic Republic (i.e. East Germany) \(^{21}\) and three variables capturing features of their work lives other than work time: whether they work in the public sector, the size (in employees) of the firm they work in and the number of years they have been continuously employed in their current firm. Household income from sources other than the respondent’s labor is also controlled for. \(^{22}\)

Individual fixed effects are also included, meaning that only within-individual variation over time accounts for any correlations. (In addition, year fixed effects control for any trends or shocks common to all individuals). H1 and H2 imply the

\(^{21}\)Since the survey does not distinguish between east and west Berlin, I code Berliners as not being in the East, but the opposite coding does not affect results.

\(^{22}\)This variable is calculated simply by subtracting individual net earnings from household net income.
same basic relationship between work time and the perceived fairness of one’s own income, regardless of where one sits in the income distribution: longer work time should increase the perception of rich and poor alike that their incomes are unfairly low. (H1 and H2 of course imply that the implications of this perception for attitudes to redistribution differ by class). However, it seems intuitively plausible that the magnitude of this effect would be smaller among higher earners – in general, one might think that the higher an individual’s income, the harder it is for any factor, including work time, to cause them to declare their income unfairly low. I test this intuition by again allowing for the coefficient of work time to vary by income level, in other words by interacting work time and earnings.

These models confirm that longer work time is indeed associated with an increased probability of viewing one’s income as unfairly low. Model 1 from Table C.2 implies that every hour of additional work time is associated with a 0.7 percentage point reduction (regardless of income) in the probability of seeing one’s income as fair. The significant and positive interaction effects in Models 2 and 4, however, confirm that this correlation is far stronger among the low paid than among the affluent. This is illustrated by Figure 5.6, which shows how the marginal coefficient of work time, while still significant and negative, decreases in magnitude as net earnings increase.

Figure 5.7 below illustrates the implications of these results for the top (left-hand panel) and bottom (right-hand panel) quintiles of net earners, showing how the probability of perceiving one’s income as fair compares across different conditions: the mean for the quintile sample is shown in the left hand bar, followed by the predicted value, based on the model with no interaction between working time and income, for an “average” individual in the relevant quintile whose work time is one standard deviation above the quintile’s mean. The third bar shows the predicted change that comes from allowing the marginal coefficient of work time to vary by income (i.e. 191
based on Model 2 from Table C.2) – the predicted change in the probability of perceived fairness is thus smaller for the top quintile and larger for the bottom one, as implied by Figure 9.23

Bearing in mind the exclusive focus on within-individual variation based on such a short panel (four observations over eight years), the association of increased work time with decreased probability of respondents seeing their incomes as fair is meaningful (3

23To guard against the possibility that work time’s partial correlation, controlling for earnings, with perceived unfairness reflects resentment of low hourly wages, I also run models with hourly pay (estimated on the basis of respondents’ reported weekly hours and monthly earnings) instead of earnings (shown in Models 3 and 4 in Table C.2). Results are similar, though the magnitude of the association of work time with perceived unfairness is smaller and becomes statistically insignificant at the 90th percentile of the wage distribution (though still significant and negative at the 80th percentile).
to 7 percentage points depending on the model) for the highest earners and very large
(10 to 17 percentage points) for the lowest earners. As I have suggested, the political
implications of the working poor perceiving their net earnings as unfair are ambivalent
– it could just as easily provoke intensified resentment of the non-working (or less-
working) poor as it could support for redistribution. Among the highest earners,
while this dependent variable may not be the most sensitive gauge of their attitudes
towards redistribution or their own deservingness, there is evidence from this German
data that increased working time reinforces their sense that their superior status is
deserved. In the next section I examine whether it influences their partisan identity
accordingly.
5.3.3 Partisan attachment

The previous section suggests work time influences people’s perceptions of the fairness of their pay (even controlling for the level of that pay). Long hours make high-earners and (especially) low-earners alike more likely to feel they are underpaid. Does this then influence their attitudes towards redistribution?

The only question capturing political or ideological preferences that is asked every year in the GSOEP concerns respondents’ partisan affiliation. Specifically, respondents are asked if they have any persistent leaning to any party, which party (if any) that is and how strong this partisan attachment is. It should be noted that this question is asking not what party respondents would vote for if an election were being held, but rather what party if any they feel some attachment to. Accordingly, in the entire 1984-2012 sample, the majority of respondents (54%) simply answer “no” – they do not consistently lean towards any party. Only the remaining 46% of respondents can therefore be associated with a particular party.

I use this survey item to see if the relationship between working time and redistribution preferences I have found in the US data – with greater working time associated with greater hostility to redistribution among the affluent – is also found between work time and partisan identity in Germany. If this were the case, it would be expected, in line with my theory, that work time would be positively associated with support for parties seen as opposed to redistribution. In Germany, the party most clearly associated with these policy positions is the liberal, pro-business Free Democratic Party (FDP). The FDP has always been a niche party, usually winning between 5% and 10% of the vote for the lower house of parliament (Bundestag), but it has also historically wielded disproportionate power as a frequent junior coalition partner – indeed the FDP has been in government (with either the Social Democrats
or, more often, the Christian Democrats) for more than two-thirds of the Federal Republic's 67-year history.\textsuperscript{24}

This dependent variable offers a rare opportunity to test my hypothesis using a long panel (29 years). Crucially, this allows me to include individual fixed effects, thus ruling out many of the concerns that apply to the findings from the GSS. Specifically, I can rule out time invariant characteristics of individual respondents as possible drivers of the correlations found – thus ruling out selection effects based on "personality type" or persistent deeply held "values". Any results are therefore based on over-time variation "within" individuals.

Of course, this dependent variable is again a highly imperfect one for establishing the link between work time and redistribution preferences; whilst it is true that the FDP is the German party most clearly opposed to redistribution\textsuperscript{25}, as with any party, there are multiple policy (and other) reasons voters might identify with it, or not. In addition, since the dependent variable captures not simply voter choice for a hypothetical election but some more durable sense of attachment to parties, we would expect this outcome to be especially "sticky" over time. Still, as with the various caveats raised about imprecise measurement noted above, unless there are specific reasons (i.e. omitted variable bias) to suspect a spurious correlation, this should make it harder to find the expected relationship. The analysis below can therefore be taken as at least a "straw in the wind" (in van Evera's [1997, 32] sense) in further support of my hypothesis – the failure to find the predicted association.

\textsuperscript{24} The FDP is currently for the first time unrepresented in the Bundestag, having failed in the 2013 election to reach the 5\% threshold imposed by Germany's list-based proportional representation electoral system.

\textsuperscript{25} The main right of center party, the Christian Democrats is far more ambiguous on welfare and redistribution and has often been seen (not least by its own representatives) as a cross-class centrist party when it comes to such issues (e.g. Iversen and Soskice 2006, 176). A model (not shown) that takes as its dependent variable support for any right of center party (i.e. either the FDP or the Christian Democrats) yields similar results to those in the analysis presented in this section.
would not refute my hypothesis, since it is quite a hard test, nor would its presence prove it, but together with the other evidence presented in this chapter, the case for my theory would be strengthened should the appropriate correlation be established.

Figure 5.8 shows the result of a linear probability model with the binary dependent variable measuring whether the respondent declares a leaning towards the FDP or not. (Full results in Table C.1 in Appendix C). The hypothesized causal relationship is again modeled as an interaction between work time (usual hours worked by individuals, including overtime and second jobs) and income (gross labor earnings from all jobs, logged). FDP supporters are coded 1, everyone else (whether they support another party or none at all) as 0. If work time affects partisan preferences via the mechanism I posit, work time should increase high-earners’ probability of identifying with the FDP (following H1), but have either no effect or (if H2 is true) a negative impact among low-earners.

In addition to individual fixed effects, I include the same control variables (including year fixed effects) as for the “fairness of income” models above, with the exception of non-labor sources of income (since this variable could not be calculated prior to 2005).

As predicted, there is a positive and significant interaction (p<.01) between work time and earnings, meaning the relationship between work time and the probability of leaning towards the FDP becomes more positive as earnings get higher. Figure 5.8 shows the expected relationship – among high earners, the marginal coefficient of work time is positive and statistically significant; among lower earners, the point estimate for work time is negative, though the negative association is only significant at very low earnings. In other words, longer hours are associated with greater support for the

26Excluding non-aligned respondents does not change the results.
FDP among high earners, but have at best no relationship (and possibly a negative one) with support for the pro-business party among the low paid. This is therefore consistent with the voting behavior one would expect if, as the evidence from the United States suggested, working time promotes opposition to redistribution among the affluent, and has ambiguous effects among the working poor.

The magnitude of these marginal coefficients of work time are, though statistically significant, quite small in absolute terms; however, it is important to realize that the baseline probability of being an FDP supporter is also small. As noted, the FDP, although historically influential, occupies a socially liberal, economically conservative niche in the electoral market and the dependent variable in this analysis is designed to
capture not all their voters but something more like their “core electorate”. Across all waves of the GSOEP (i.e. 1984 – 2012), only 1.8% of the sample declares themselves to be supporters of the party in this strong sense.\textsuperscript{27} Even a very small absolute increase in the probability of attachment to the party can therefore be substantively significant when understood in terms of the low baseline probability of being an FDP supporter. Thus, for an individual at the 90th percentile of the earnings distribution in 2012, a standard deviation deviation increase in work time (equivalent to 12.1 hours, calculated among the top decile of earners in 2012) is associated with a .3 percentage point increase in FDP support, which (in relative risk terms) is equivalent to a 8.5% increase in probability compared to the average 2012 respondent in the top earnings decile. In other words, the absolute number of FDP supporters in the top decile of earners would be predicted to be 8.5% larger if their working time is increased by a standard deviation.

Figure 5.9 illustrates the substantive magnitude of the association between work time and FDP support in these terms. The left-hand bar shows the share (3.9%) of the top decile of earners who declare themselves to be FDP loyalists in the most recent year in my sample, 2012. The middle bar shows the predicted support (4.3%) in this group of high earners when their working time is increased by a standard deviation.\textsuperscript{28} As noted, the difference (0.4 percentage points) may appear small, but given the sticky nature of the dependent variable and my individual fixed effects strategy this

\textsuperscript{27}Excluding respondents who do not identify with any party, 3.9% are FDP supporters. By comparison, 42.7% of respondents who indicate a party support the Social Democrats, 40.4% the Christian Democrats, 9.2% the Greens and 5% the Left party - all averages calculated to weigh each year of the survey equally. Results from models that exclude the non-aligned from the sample do not differ significantly from those shown in Figure 5 and Table A1.

\textsuperscript{28}Of course we would generally expect such a person to earn more than the mean income for the decile because of their longer-than-average work time. If so, this implies my estimate of work time’s association with FDP support is if anything biased downwards, since increased income is also expected to drive such support.
is, I would argue, of some substantive as well as statistical significance - even over the long period of time tracked by this survey, we would not expect the same individual to often change their status as loyal supporters of a particular party. The last bar in 5.9 illustrates this point by way of comparison with the predicted value of FDP support among the top decile of earners should their incomes, rather than their work time, be increased by a standard deviation. If any variable might be expected to increase support for this party (and there is a strong cross-sectional relationship), it is surely income. And yet the predicted increase in support from such an increase in income – in contrast to work time – is statistically and substantively indistinguishable from zero. Thus German high earners’ partisan identities appear more likely to shift in line with changes in their work time - a mostly neglected variable within political science - than they do when that mainstay of every model and theory of the politics of redistribution, income, does so.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented evidence from observational data in two developed democracies with quite different political economies that work time shapes attitudes towards redistribution through its influence on perceptions of deservingness. The causal logic outlined by my theory works differently at the top and bottom of the labor market. Among affluent workers, long work time norms reinforce perceptions that they and their peers are deserving of their higher socio-economic status, thus undermining any tendency towards the kind of altruistic support for redistribution identified by recent scholarship (e.g. Dimick, Rueda and Stegmueller forthcoming).

One of the innovations of this chapter is that the kind of “deservingness” being considered by the affluent when they form their redistribution preferences is not

199
(only) the deservingness of the poor but rather (also) the deservingness of the affluent themselves. This stands in sharp contrast to the common assumptions in the relevant literature that deservingness perceptions are other-regarding and that the deservingness that counts is that of the potential recipients of welfare, not its potential contributors. This perspective has echoes of the distinction made by Cavaillé and Trump (2015), who argue that redistribution preferences can be separated into empirically distinct attitudes towards “redistribution from” (the rich) on the one hand, and “redistribution to” (the poor) on the other. However, whereas Cavaillé and Trump see the politics of “redistribution from” as one of “self-oriented income maximization”, with the role of “social affinity” reserved for “redistribution to”, there is no logical reason why the attitudes towards the deservingness of the rich should not play a role
too; furthermore, there is no reason why self-perceptions (e.g. of the rich by the rich) should be neglected either. The evidence I present makes the case that these considerations do in fact play a role in the contemporary politics of inequality and redistribution.

This logic might be expected to imply that longer work time among low income workers should cause them to reach the opposite conclusion, namely that their relatively low social status is not justified and such inequalities should therefore be reduced through redistribution. However, my empirical analysis, which is quite consistent in its findings regarding the affluent, does not on the whole support this “equal and opposite reaction” hypothesis. I speculate that the reason for this may be that in addition to this kind of reaction against the legitimacy of the market distribution, higher work time norms may also accentuate the tendency of the working poor – to whom my analysis is limited – to perceive as undeserving the non-working poor, a group against whom working and lower-middle class individuals often define themselves in socio-economic and moral terms (Lamont 2000, Halpern-Meekin et al. 2015). In terms of Cavaillé and Trump’s dichotomy, longer work time might push the low paid to support redistribution from, but to oppose redistribution to. Testing this empirically, with a view to separating out the effects of work time on low paid workers’ perceptions of their own deservingness on the one hand, and the implications of this for their attitudes towards both the affluent and “the poor” on the other, should be the subject of future research in the vein of this chapter.

Even surveys as rich as the GSS and GSOEP provide limited possibilities to test the causal logic proposed in this chapter more closely.29 It may be that truly doc-

29 There is an item in the GSS asking respondents whether they believe taxes on the rich are too high or too low, but it has only been asked on four occasions, precluding anything more than a cross-sectional analysis. Such an analysis (not shown) produces the expected interaction effect between occupational work time and individual income.
omenting these mechanisms will require a combination of experimental and more qualitative interview-based or ethnographic methods with the kind of correlational evidence presented here. Notably, ethnographic work has already highlighted the role of “hard work” (along with “smartness”) as a “key value” among investment bankers on Wall Street, “a badge of honor and distinction” that renders them, in their own eyes, “a qualitatively ‘different’ kind of people than ‘nine to five’ workers” and is used to “reinvigorate workplace hierarchies, to use the infamous American work ethic to judge and segregate... between investment bankers and the rest of corporate America”, thereby legitimating both their own elite status and the consequences of their work, e.g. corporate “downsizing” (Ho 2009, 102-3). Similarly among the poor, such work has found that “work behavior, and not whether one must approach the government for assistance, is the basis [used by the working poor] for drawing the line” between the deserving and undeserving poor (Halpern-Meekin et al 2015, 16). Further investigations in this vein should be complemented by laboratory and survey experimental approaches, as well as a wider range of observational tests.

More generally, this chapter has focused attention on a fundamental aspect of social, economic and, I argue, political life that has heretofore been largely neglected by comparative political economy: working time. It has given some summary idea of the important changes in the distribution of work time that have taken place over recent decades in the United States and suggested a connection between these changes and shifting attitudes towards redistribution. This chapter should only be one step towards bringing the investigation of the causes and consequences of these changes, and of the broader historical and cross-national variation in working time arrangements, closer to the center of the field’s attention.
6 Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, I summarize the key contributions of the dissertation, reflecting on some of the political and policy implications of its findings for two central themes: class inequality and gender inequality. I then consider some possible lines for future research, focusing especially on whether this study’s approach to work time is relevant to the pressing issue of the exponential growth of “top incomes”. Finally, I briefly note some of the profound changes in the world of work that are already transforming the lived experience of work time, drawing attention also, however, to the emergence of early regulatory attempts to respond to these developments.

6.1 Main contributions

6.1.1 Work time and the politics of class inequality

One of the main contributions of this study has been to highlight, and explore the consequences, of what I have called the “great reversal” in the relationship between class and work time. This refers to the long process (whose historic origins mostly precede the temporal reach of the data I have deployed in this dissertation) whereby high socio-economic status was once associated with a lesser engagement in paid employment than those at the lower end of the social hierarchy, whereas the high-earning, high-status strata today work longer hours than their low-paid socio-
economic subordinates.

Chapter 3 documented these developments empirically for France, Germany and the United States over the past three decades or longer and argued that it is partially responsible for the growth of inequality over that period. It also noted that the reversal had occurred much sooner in the United States than elsewhere — indeed the high-paid already worked slightly more than the low-paid at the start of the period I looked at — and had resulted in a bigger gap in work time between the top and bottom of the labor market.

Casual empiricism suggests that these patterns are also reflected in long-term cultural shifts in the values assigned to work and leisure; where the socio-economic elite once disdained paid work as a mark of low status (Veblen 2009 [1899]), for their 21st Century counterparts, as Gershuny (2005) suggests, “busyness”, not leisure, is worn as the “badge of honor” indicating high status. Likewise, whereas it was once — especially in periods and countries where a quasi-feudal cultural superstructure survived atop an industrialized economic base, though Veblen’s theory was developed in Gilded Age America — precisely the fact of being reliant on paid work for their subsistence that marked the stigma of the “working” class, the lower socio-economic order today is more often disparaged for dependency on welfare.

In Chapter 5, I examined the implications of these economic and cultural shifts for the contemporary politics of inequality. In particular I presented a new theory connecting work time to redistribution preferences via perceptions of the deservingness of one’s own group. The evidence from both the United States and Germany was consistent with my hypothesis that the increasingly long hours worked by affluent workers shape what I refer to as the “moral economy of the working rich”, reinforcing them in their sense of their own individual and collective deservingness. As a result, long work time norms among the affluent bolsters their belief in the meritocratic justification of
social inequality and legitimizes self-interested opposition to redistribution.

In this context we would do well to remember that for the coiner of the term, Michael Young, the idea of “meritocracy” was meant as a satirical warning against elite self-justification. As recently summarized by Ivan Kratsev (2017): “a meritocratic society would be a disaster. It would create a society of selfish and arrogant winners, and angry and desperate losers. The triumph of meritocracy, Young understood, would lead to a loss of political community.”

One possible political implication of this finding relates to the political and discursive strategies of left-of-center politicians and the economic justice movement in the United States today. “Nobody who works 40 hours a week should be living in poverty” – such has been the wording deployed by, among others, Barack Obama and Bernie Sanders in arguing for a higher minimum wage. And the minimum wage has been the central focus of economic justice campaigners in the US for many years - the “Fight for Fifteen” (i.e. a $15 an hour minimum wage) has proven highly effective as a focal demand for unions and others to mobilize around – much like the 8-hour day did in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.

This is a perfectly logical strategy, since the public opinion data could not be clearer - there are few policies more popular than a higher (if not a $15) minimum wage (e.g. The Hill 2017). Yet it is a policy and political strategy with a couple of limitations that are suggested by this dissertation’s findings. Firstly, at a discursive and ideological level, the rhetoric deployed by Obama and Sanders fails to challenge – indeed it helps consolidate – the conservative normative assumption that deservingness is conditional on (paid) work that is so influential a strand in America’s political culture. This assumption – whose power is again confirmed in Chapter 5 – tends to undermine alternative framings of demands for redistribution around citizenship rights – the alternative formulation would be to the effect simply that “no American
Secondly, and more prosaically, unlike tax- and transfer-based egalitarian demands, the minimum wage's influence on earnings depends on the number of hours worked. This being so, it is all the more imperative that economic justice campaigners give as much thought to policies bringing about access to “minimum hours” as they do to raising minimum wages. Later in this conclusion I describe some recent policy innovations that point in such possible directions.

It may be that the grooves of American political culture are too firmly embedded for practical politicians or activists to challenge or bypass its assumptions about work-conditioned deservingness with arguments rooted in the social citizenship tradition. Previous such challenges have failed, such as the “welfare rights” movement of the 1960s which “sought to fashion ... a normative world untethered to work” (Fobath 2001: 1823) and strategic decisions to work with the available discursive repertoire are, after all, how political cultures reproduce themselves (Swidler 1986).

This point also recalls Rodgers’ (2014: 153-5) study of the construction of the industrial “work ethic” in 19th Century America, where workers often resisted what was “in its origins a middle-class idea ... a businessman’s creed”, but in so doing tended to mimic and reproduce its values by countering a “working-class version of the work ethic”. But Fobath (2001: 1845) also notes that the welfare rights movement’s defeat was built on, among other causes, the conservatism of a labor movement whose achievement of a “private welfare state” in the postwar era “meant that now the language of social and economic rights no longer resonated for organized workers”. In Chapter 2 of this dissertation, precisely this historical turn in the US labor movement also emerged as an important juncture in explaining the divergence of the American work time regime from the two western European cases.
6.1.2 Gender equality and work time

The second major theme of the dissertation was primarily developed in Chapter 4, which showed that gender inequality in a country's labor market—and therefore in its society—is fundamentally shaped by its work time regime. This is the case through at least two mechanisms. The first and most fundamental is that women in every country work fewer hours of paid employment (but far more hours of unpaid domestic labor) than men. Even if men and women were paid the same per hour worked, this mechanism would still leave a yawning gap—a cavernous one in Germany, where the hours gap between men is especially large due to the prevalence of the tax-favored "Minijob"—in earnings.

The question of whether this form of gender inequality is normatively problematic is non-trivial in principle, but perhaps less so at current margins. On the one hand, it is entirely legitimate for individuals to have different priorities as between paid work and other activities, just as it is legitimate for opposite sex-couples to divide their household labor as they see fit—though it would of course be mistaken to assume that politics, and therefore power, stop outside the hearth.¹ The asymmetrical biological burdens of childbearing necessarily imply some asymmetrical provision of paid labor around the time of childbirth—at least in the absence of strong societal support for, if not pressures on, fathers taking extensive paternal leave.

In practice of course, to the degree that just such strong institutional frameworks—supporting working mothers and caring fathers—are absent, observed work time gaps between mothers and fathers cannot be seen as revealing deep preferences—even leaving aside the deep and powerful forces of gender socialization that undoubtedly

¹See Iversen and Rosenbluth 2010 for insightful discussion of the theory of intra-household bargaining in labor supply decisions.
also help underpin the gendered division of household labor. And as noted in Chapter 4, the degree to which these policy frameworks – childcare, parental leave and so on – are in fact present varies dramatically. Specifically, in the three cases at the center of this dissertation, these supports are virtually absent in the United States, whereas such provision is longstanding and reasonably comprehensive in France, especially regarding pre-school (écoles maternelles).

Germany has long been a laggard in this regard – indeed it has had a far stronger ideological commitment to limiting mothers' employment than in the US – yet has in the past ten years performed a near U-turn in recent years, not least due to mounting concerns about the country's troubling demographic outlook in the coming decades. This involved a shift from a policy model involving lengthy (up to 3 years), poorly-compensated and means-tested parental leaves towards a more Scandinavian model of shorter leaves with more generous compensation based on prior wages. It also involved the introduction of two so-called “Daddy-months” – a period of parental leave that could only be used by a second parent, i.e. typically the father.

Germany's ambitious goals for rapid expansion of the childcare system have created some strains in the system, with the introduction of a statutory right to childcare provision far outpacing the capacity of local authorities to deliver. Yet both at a policy and behavioral level, this quiet policy revolution – advanced mostly by “Grand Coalitions” of Christian and Social Democrats – has begun to bear fruit, with Germany recently actually overtaking France in terms of the share of children under three years old in some form of collective childcare and the first signs of increases in the very low birth rate (Collombet et al 2017; Die Zeit 2016; Henninger et al 2008).

But the key point from Chapter 4 is that while it is possible that these policies will succeed in persuading more German working women to have more babies, policies that support women combining family life with labor market participation are neces-
sary but insufficient to produce a fuller measure of gender equality in labor markets. Just as it has been increasingly recognized that policies encouraging greater paternal involvement in childcare are needed if greater equality in the division of household labor is to be achieved, policies that place de facto constraints on male hours of paid work can also level the playing field for women who remain temporally disadvantaged in their careers by the "dual shift".

6.2 Further research: work time and the 1%

Inevitably given the sprawling nature of the subject, this dissertation can only hope to have scratched the surface of the political economy of work time. If it has helped bring greater attention to the generally neglected political dimension of the deeply personal question of how we, as societies as well individuals, consume our most finite resource, it has achieved most of its aim. Even those questions which I have addressed directly, I can only claim to have offered preliminary answers based on partial evidence. As for the many vital questions I have left unasked, they represent a promising if daunting research agenda: truly, a vast programme, as General de Gaulle is supposed to have said (on encountering a slogan proclaiming "death to fools").

One of the challenges - and pleasures - of studying work time is the inevitably inter-disciplinary nature of the relevant literature. A formidable range of disciplines - economics, sociology, history, social psychology, industrial relations studies - have their very different angles of attack for the subject. It is my hope that this study will contribute to the development of a more sustained political science literature on work time as a substantive object of inquiry.

A range of literatures within political science, and in particular comparative political economy, do speak directly or indirectly to (and offer rich insight into) different
parts of the work time puzzle. The literature on labor market dualism, for example (e.g. Emmenegger et al 2012; Thelen 2014), rightly includes (at least certain forms of) part-time work as one manifestation of the politics of insider-outsider conflicts and institutionalized dualism. Similarly, scholars have explored how industrial relations institutions mediate the intensifying pressures of the international economy and the consequent efforts of firms to press their workforces into ever more “flexible” (and longer hours) work time arrangements (Burgoon and Raess 2009; 2011). Work on the politics of pensions (Orloff 1993) and, even more directly, early retirement (Ebbinghaus 2006; Trampusch 2005) are an important starting point for thinking about the political economy of work time over the life cycle. The growing volume of studies on the politics of parental leave and childcare provision (Morgan 2003; Kittilson 2008) are an essential guide to the historic and contemporary origins of such policies – which can compound or challenge gender inequalities in work time regimes.

Moreover, besides these political science literatures that implicitly take work time as part of their subject, and as noted in the introduction to this dissertation, a handful of comparative political economists have also taken on work time as their central question, and made valuable and sometimes innovative contributions to our understanding of it (e.g. Alesina et al. 2005; Burgoon and Baxandall 2004; Goodin et al 2008). Yet it remains the case that this work has not cohered into a research program befitting the centrality of work time in shaping workers’ lives and the dimensions of inequality comparative political economists are rightly preoccupied by.

If such a research program is to emerge, it could deepen my attempts to explore the role of belief in “hard work” in shaping the “moral economy” of the affluent. Although the growth of inequality could hardly be a more pressing issue, a question lingers about this dissertation’s contribution to understanding the causes and consequences of the phenomenon: the question of where the very peak of the socio-economic status
hierarchy – the proverbial “1%”, or even 0.1% of the distributions of income and wealth – fit in. Particularly in the US case, the rise in this group’s share of wealth and income has been such a fundamental part of the story of the recent rise of inequality that no account can afford to entirely neglect them. This question poses potential problems for this study for a couple of specific reasons.

First, one might rightly think that the role of wealth – financial, corporate and physical assets – is far more important among these economic elites than it is for the remainder of the population who mostly depend on income from jobs (earnings). After all, dramatic increases in both the ratio of wealth to income – roughly a doubling across the developed world from 1970 to 2010 (Piketty and Zucman 2014) – and in the concentration of the ownership of such wealth – with 76% today held by the top 10% of US households, compared to 1% held by the bottom half (CBO 2016) - are among the most striking facts in the recent research on the growth of economic inequality.

Second, the kind of mass survey evidence I have for the most part made use of are not in general reliable sources of information about these rarefied economic strata. This is why so much of the contribution of Thomas Piketty and colleagues’ justly celebrated work on the growth of inequality resided in their use of tax return data to get around precisely this limitation of conventional surveys (Piketty 2014; Atkinson and Piketty 2007).

Regarding the first point, however, Kenworthy, drawing on Saez (2015), notes that “[u]nlike in the 1920s, most of [the 1%’s] income comes from compensation – salaries, bonuses, fees, stock options, stock awards, golden parachutes – rather than from assets they own” (2017: 2). So while the surveys I analyze probably do not pick up on the 1% very effectively, it remains the case that, certainly to a far greater degree than in the time of Veblen’s leisure class, their incomes are more closely tied to their work than to their wealth.
As to the undoubted limitations of mass representative surveys, political scientists have also begun to make similarly targeted attempts to tap into the political preferences of the wealthy (Page et al 2013). Indeed some of the early results from this research offer tantalizing evidence that some of the dynamics linking work time to inequality may be at play even among the very rich. Consider Figure 6.1, which is based on this new data (Page et al’s [2013] “Survey of Successful Americans”) and which attempts to reveal the causal beliefs held by the rich about how people “get ahead” in society.\(^2\) The question was deliberately chosen to precisely match an equivalent item – which I made use of in Chapter 5 – in the General Social Survey (GSS), so that the views of the “1%” can be directly compared to those of the US public.

A basic contrast between the beliefs of the US public and the 1% emerges from this

\(^2\)I am grateful to Leslie McCall for providing me with a version of this figure, which I have slightly adapted, and for suggesting the interpretation of it that I outline in the following paragraph.
figure. While both groups overwhelmingly believe that “hard work” is very important or essential to “getting ahead”, the mass public holds a relatively “multi-causal” theory of social success, with about half also believing that social connections (“knowing the right people”) or educational attainment of one’s parents’ are equally important, and almost a third holding that a wealthy family background is key. Relative to the public, however, the very wealthy hold a strikingly “monocausal” view of the recipe for success, with far fewer thinking that anything other than hard work is essential or very important. Extraordinarily, it seems a mere 1% of the 1% think that coming from a wealth family plays a central role in determining social outcomes.

Further research into the beliefs and self-understanding of the 1% should help resolve the tension between, on the one hand, the enormous rise of wealth relative to income and in the unequal distribution of that wealth and, on the other, its beneficiaries’ remarkable faith in the power of hard work and meritocracy. One possible answer suggests itself based on the following observation by Kenworthy (2017: 6):

most of the income gains for America’s top 1 percent have come from increases in compensation rather than in capital income. Yet a lot of the movement in compensation over time is tied to the stock market. A large portion of the mammoth compensation increases for high-level executives in big firms has come in the form of stock options, which hinge on increases in the share price of the executive’s firm. A key part of the rise in pay for financial professionals is linked to trading in stocks and related financial instruments, which tends to increase when stocks’ values rise.

The rising incomes of the 1% are not (mostly) caused by their working hard. But it may be easy for them to see it that way, given the long hours that they, their rich peers (and their merely affluent associates and employees – the non-super-rich “working affluent” who appear at the top end of the earning distributions in the data I exploit) have increasingly been working, and the fact that so much of their incomes are tied to compensation in this way. This hypothesis, and its implications for the
political attitudes and behavior of this extremely influential population, are ripe for further exploration.

6.3 Work Time in the 21st Century

This dissertation has mainly focused on the quantity of work time – how this varies across countries, historical periods and, crucially, across social classes and between men and women. This is in part motivated by the substantive importance of this measure of work time. It also reflects, however, the fact that it is easier to measure the quantity of work time than it is to measure – or even conceptualize – its quality.3 As it goes for researchers, so to it is for regulators – for with the exception of basic workplace health and safety regulations, work time regulations have also primarily focused on limiting, one way or another, the quantity of work time performed by workers for their employers.

I will conclude this dissertation, however, by considering the possibility that this traditional focus of researchers and regulators alike may be rendered increasingly obsolete by some of the emergent trends in the contemporary world of work. In doing so I will briefly describe some of the already-emerging regulatory policies being experimented with in response to these developments.

6.3.1 New challenges, new policy responses

"The establishment of a normal working-day," as Marx noted, "is the result of centuries of struggle between capitalist and laborer" (Tucker 1978: 376), and this struggle was in part the subject of Chapter 2 of this dissertation. And yet, paradoxi-

---

3 Though see e.g. Gallie (2007) for one extended attempt to measure and analyze the multiple dimensions of work quality in a cross-national perspective.
ially, the history of the process of reducing the working day – and week, year and life – to a “normal” level has often been associated with the introduction of various forms of work flexibility. This was as true of Henry Ford’s 8-hour day – which facilitated the introduction of the triple-shift, 24-hours factory day in order to eliminate downtime for expensive physical capital – as it was of the collective bargaining trade-offs (e.g. seasonal or demand-based fluctuations in work time over the course of the year) that accompanied the introduction of the 35-hour week in both France and the German metallurgy sector.

Yet both the Fordist shift-work model and the kinds of flexibility that were expanded as part of the 35-hour week bargains were still rooted in an industrial mode of production that required some level of physical co-location and temporal syncronicity of labor inputs. As noted in the introduction to this dissertation, the service economy that already overwhelmingly dominates employment in the developed countries more closely binds workers to the presence and/or schedules of customers. And this is at the source of one of the most significant and troubling contemporary developments in work time, particularly in the low-wage services sector, namely the growth of schedule instability.

The most striking example of this phenomenon is the deployment by retailers of sophisticated softwares capable of adjusting workers schedules in real-time response to customer footfall. The sublime suppleness of these programs can mean a total lack of predictable working – and therefore family – lives for these companies’ employees. A *New York Times* report on the impact of this on one Starbucks barista offers great insight into the challenges this mode of work time management bring:

She rarely learned her schedule more than three days before the start of a workweek, plunging her into urgent logistical puzzles over who would watch the boy. Months after starting the job she moved out of her aunt’s home, in part because of mounting friction over the erratic schedule, which
the aunt felt was also holding her family captive. Ms. Navarro’s degree was on indefinite pause because her shifting hours left her unable to commit to classes. She needed to work all she could, sometimes counting on dimes from the tip jar to make the bus fare home. If she dared ask for more stable hours, she feared, she would get fewer work hours over all (Kantor 2014).

At the other end of the labor market too, though in a quite different way, the digital age also raises the prospect of a dissolution of the distinction between “work” and and “non-work” time that underlies this dissertation. This arises, for example, from the impact of smartphones and other digital technologies that make workers both permanently available to their supervisors and colleagues and constantly within access of their basic work tools. Another force in this direction for high-end workers is their integration, for some, into global service supply chains or teams, which creates a “24-hour economy” where it is always “working time” in one or more of one’s colleague’s time zones (Presser 2005).

Somewhere in between these challenges to traditional work time models and their regulation, meanwhile, comes the so-called “platform economy” most famously represented by Uber. These jobs share much of the economic insecurity and directly customer-driven scheduling affecting low-wage workers in the retail sector. But it also presents the specter of the breakdown not just of standardized work time, but of the employer-employee relationship as a whole, with platform-owners such as Uber denying that its workers are in fact employees, rather than self-employed drivers and thus attempting to escape the entire apparatus of labor market regulation – minimum wage, benefits and, of course, overtime pay.

But these new work time challenges do not render the older forms of work time regulation – rights to paid vacation and family leave, overtime bonuses, maximum hours limits etc. – obsolete. Nor are these new developments beyond the grasp of
innovative policies designed for this new age of work and work time. Indeed a range of policy responses to these changes are already visible.

Thus for example, following a 2013 agreement signed by employer groups and several unions, the French government legislated in 2014 for a new 24-hour “minimum work week” for part-time workers. Besides certain categories of worker (such as temps and domestics) being excluded, this is a rather soft constraint in that it can be superseded by a sectoral collective agreement (provided, however, that such agreements make provision for regular schedules for part-time workers that would allow them to seek second jobs) or by the employee’s written consent to shorter hours (La Croix 2014). While it is therefore too early to identify the concrete effects of this law, it nevertheless represents recognition of the challenges posed by the fragmentation of work time, and in particular the unequal distribution of hours by class and sex.

Also emerging in France, as well as Germany, are the beginnings of attempts to come to terms with – and limit – the blurring of the lines between work and non-work time associated with the omnipresence of “smart” technologies. Thus the French 2016 labor market reforms introduced a so-called “right to disconnect” (droit à la déconnexion) – in fact merely an obligation on employers to negotiate their employees’ representatives to put in place firm-level policies governing the use of digital devices with a view to limiting the encroachment of email etc. on non-working hours (Libération 2017).

Similarly in Germany, modest measures have begun to appear in discussions between social partners at the firm-level, with companies such as Daimler and Volkswagen winning headlines for policies such as automatic deletion of emails received during vacations and disabling of company email servers during evenings (Bryant 2014). More substantively, Germany has in recent years introduced a “right to part-time work”, whereby full-time employees have a formal right to request part-time work,
which employers can only reject based on certain legitimate business reasons (subject to court challenge). In 2017, however, Labor minister Andreas Nahles brought forward proposals to facilitate employees who wish to return to full-time hours by giving them a similar “right to full-time”. This policy, which was agreed in principle in the “grand coalition” governing program signed in 2013 by Nahles’ Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats, represents a growing recognition of the “part-time trap” into which so many female German workers have been guided by existing policy.

In his unsuccessful 2015 election campaign, British Labour Party leader Ed Miliband made the growth of so-called “zero-hours contracts” a major campaign issue, promising that a Labour government would abolish them. These are jobs where the employee is bound to make themselves available to their employer for a certain period of time each week, but has no guarantee of how many – if any at all – hours she will actually be asked to work, and hence no guarantee of any wage whatsoever. Labour’s 2015 defeat meant that these jobs – a growing but still relatively marginal phenomenon in the UK labor market, but one seen as a strong symbol of the growing precarity of the labor market – continue to exist in the UK. But they are expected to be outlawed across the Irish sea, where Irish legislation already provides that workers on such contracts must be paid for 25% of the hours they are available to work, up to a maximum of 15 hours.

The issue of schedule uncertainty has even been taken up by legislators in the United States - specifically in the state of Oregon, where legislation passed in 2017 will require large employers in selected sectors (retail, food, hospitality and hospitals) to provide employees with two weeks’ notice of their work schedules, as well as to pay overtime rates if employees are denied at least ten hours’ rest between shifts. Similar measures have passed in a range of cities, including New York, San Francisco and Seattle (Washington Post 2017).
The biggest challenge to the traditional model of working time, of course, would be the mass disappearance of jobs as a result of dramatic advances in robot technology and other forms of automation. Such a prospect has a long history as both a panicked vision of a jobless dystopia and a utopian horizon of material abundance and freedom from the shackles of work. Thus far, the productivity statistics offer no evidence that this is an imminent prospect for better or worse. And these past fears and hopes have of course proven largely illusory, as new industries and occupations have emerged to replace those rendered obsolete.

Still, such utopian hopes and dystopian fears have always played a role in motivating actors in the long history of campaigns for shorter hours. Fear of unemployment and demands for free time have gone hand in hand in such mobilizations. The return of the debate about mass automation is therefore, if nothing else, an opportunity to bring work time (back) into the center of our attentions.

---

4See Frase (2016) for a recent essay at sketching possibilities of both variety.
Appendix to Chapter 3
Figure A.1: "Great reversal": USA (deciles)

Figure A.2: "Great reversal": USA (ventiles)
Figure A.3: “Great reversal”: France (deciles)
Figure A.4: “Great reversal”: France (ventiles)
Figure A.5: “Great reversal”: Germany (deciles)

Men

Women
Figure A.6: "Great reversal": Germany (ventiles)
Figure B.1:

USA 1979-2011

USA 1979-2011
Figure B.2:

Figure B.3:

Germany 1973-2011

Germany 1973-2011
Figure B.4:

Women more likely to be at low end of earnings distribution

- USA
- France
- Germany
Appendix to Chapter 5

C.1 Survey Questions

GSS

Redistribution

"Some people think that the government in Washington ought to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor, perhaps by raising the taxes of wealthy families or by giving income assistance to the poor. Others think that the government should not concern itself with reducing this income difference between the rich and the poor. Here is a card with a scale from 1 to 7. Think of a score of 1 as meaning that the government ought to reduce the income differences between rich and poor, and a score of 7 meaning that the government should not concern itself with reducing income differences. What score between 1 and 7 comes closest to the way you feel?"

Help the poor

"Some people think that the government in Washington should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans; they are at Point 1 on this card. Other people think it is not the government’s responsibility, and that each person should take care of himself; they are at Point 5. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven’t you have up your mind on this?"

Hard work to get ahead

"Some people say that people get ahead by their own hard work; others say that lucky breaks or help from other people are more important. Which do you think is most important?"
GSOEP (author’s translations from German)

Partisan identity

"Many people in the Federal Republic have a long term leaning towards a particular party, although they also vote for a different party now and again. What about you: do you lean towards a particular party?"

["Viele Leute in der Bundesrepublik neigen längere Zeit einer bestimmten Partei zu, obwohl sie auch ab und zu eine andere Partei wählen. Wie ist das bei Ihnen: Neigen Sie einer bestimmten Partei in Deutschland zu?"]

Fairness of own income

"Is the income that you earn in your current position fair, in your view?"

["Ist das Einkommen, das Sie in Ihrer jetzigen Stelle verdienen, aus Ihrer Sicht gerecht?"]
C.2 Additional Figures and Tables

Figure C.1:

Perceived fairness of income by hourly wage quintile
### Table C.1: Work time and FDP support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work hours</td>
<td>-0.001***</td>
<td>(0.0003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earnings (logged)</td>
<td>-0.005***</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work hrs. X earnings</td>
<td>0.0001***</td>
<td>(0.00004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educ. (yrs)</td>
<td>-0.0001</td>
<td>(0.0004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age squared</td>
<td>-0.00001**</td>
<td>(0.00000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household size</td>
<td>-0.00004</td>
<td>(0.0005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Germany</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm size</td>
<td>0.00000</td>
<td>(0.00000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm tenure</td>
<td>-0.00002</td>
<td>(0.0001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>-0.0003</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Indiv. fixed effects?                | Yes          |
| Year fixed effects?                  | Yes          |
| Observations                         | 219,983      |
| R²                                   | 0.556        |
| Adjusted R²                          | 0.470        |
| Residual Std. Error                  | 0.102 (df = 184358) |

**Note:** *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Individual-clustered std. errors in parentheses.
Table C.2: Work time and perceptions of fairness of own income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable:</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earnings fair?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work hours</td>
<td>-0.007***</td>
<td>-0.006***</td>
<td>-0.003***</td>
<td>-0.012***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net earnings (logged)</td>
<td>0.145***</td>
<td>0.044**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.016)</td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly wage (logged)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.114***</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work hrs. X net earnings</td>
<td>0.004***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work hrs. X hourly wage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.004***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educ. (yrs)</td>
<td>-0.012</td>
<td>-0.018**</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
<td>-0.013*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age squared</td>
<td>0.0002***</td>
<td>0.0003***</td>
<td>0.0002***</td>
<td>0.0003***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0001)</td>
<td>(0.0001)</td>
<td>(0.0001)</td>
<td>(0.0001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Germany</td>
<td>-0.005</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>-0.017</td>
<td>-0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.064)</td>
<td>(0.064)</td>
<td>(0.065)</td>
<td>(0.065)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm size</td>
<td>-0.00000</td>
<td>-0.00000</td>
<td>-0.00000</td>
<td>-0.00000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.00001)</td>
<td>(0.00001)</td>
<td>(0.00001)</td>
<td>(0.00001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm tenure</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.019)</td>
<td>(0.019)</td>
<td>(0.019)</td>
<td>(0.019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>-0.005***</td>
<td>-0.005***</td>
<td>-0.005***</td>
<td>-0.005***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>-0.005</td>
<td>-0.0001</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household size</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other HH inc.</td>
<td>0.00001*</td>
<td>0.00001**</td>
<td>0.00000</td>
<td>0.00000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.00001)</td>
<td>(0.00001)</td>
<td>(0.00001)</td>
<td>(0.00001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiv. fixed effects?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year fixed effects?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>36,903</td>
<td>36,903</td>
<td>36,899</td>
<td>36,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.693</td>
<td>0.695</td>
<td>0.692</td>
<td>0.694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.440</td>
<td>0.443</td>
<td>0.438</td>
<td>0.441</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Individual-clustered std. errors in parentheses.
References


Bowles, Samuel and Yongjin Park. 2005. "Emulation, inequality, and work hours: was Thorsten Veblen right?" *The Economic Journal* 115


236


Ostner, Ilona. 2010. “Farewell to the Family as We Know It: Family Policy Change in Germany.” *German Policy Studies* 6(1): 211–244, 246.


Thompson, Edward Palmer. 1963. 322 The Making of the English Working Class. IIICA.


