
Gender Differences in Chauffeuring Children among Dual-Earner Families

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The chauffeuring of children to/from school and childcare providers has received limited attention in previous research, although it structures parents' everyday activities in important ways. Combining analytical and cultural perspectives on juggling employment and caregiving, I explore the impact of such factors as household structure, employment and commute characteristics, residential location, and culturally defined norms about parenthood on chauffeuring arrangements for dual-earner households in Utrecht, the Netherlands. Fathers conduct a considerable share of chauffeuring trips, but arrangements are often informed by traditional gender norms. The spatial variability in the gendering of chauffeuring is limited. **Key Words:** chauffeuring trips, dual-earner families, mixed-method research, parenting.

One of the most significant socioeconomic trends of the past decades is the increased participation of women in the labor force in the Western world. The geographical literature about the consequences of women's increased labor-force participation for everyday life could be classified into three arbitrary groups. First, many spatial-analytical studies have addressed gender differences in commuting behavior and access to employment opportunities. Women's—and especially mothers'—shorter home-to-work journeys are usually explained with reference to their prime responsibility for household tasks, their lower income, the spatial pattern of female-dominated employment opportunities, and the spatial segmentation of the labor market (Hanson and Johnston 1985; MacDonald 1999). Second, other analytical studies have considered gender differences in complete activity-travel patterns and have shown the journey to work to be just one aspect of a gendered space-time budgeting process (Hanson and Hanson 1981; Kwan 1999). Third, cultural geographers have addressed the ways in which dual-earner families combine employment and caregiving by drawing on cultural and feminist theory. Where spatial-analytical research relies on questionnaires, time-space diaries, and/or census data, cultural geographers tend to employ qualitative, in-depth research methods to address such issues as moral concerns about good parenting and the reciprocal relationships between prac-

tices and identities (Aitken 2000; McDowell et al. 2005).

There have hitherto been only a few studies explicitly seeking to connect these spatial-analytical and cultural traditions, although such cross-fertilization may well advance our understanding of gender differences in mobility (Hanson and Pratt 1995; Kwan 2002, 2004). The current article therefore combines elements from both traditions to describe gender differences in chauffeuring children to/from primary school and childcare among dual-earner families. These chores are singled out because they tend to be firmly fixed in space and time and often act as pegs around which other activities and trips are scheduled (Kitamura 1983; Kwan 2000; Tillberg Mattson 2002; Southerton 2006). Chauffeuring children has nonetheless received rather limited attention in spatial-analytical or cultural geography as a separate kind of domestic responsibility. Consequently, little is known about how such factors as mothers' and fathers' employment schedules and characteristics, their commuting behaviors, and their residential neighborhood affect the household division of chauffeuring labor in dual-earner households. This article reports an investigation of these issues. The question of *who does what* in terms of conducting and organizing chauffeuring duties has also been explored by drawing on the cultural tradition, which allows the relationships with

culturally-defined norms about parenting to be explored in greater detail. Quantitative and qualitative data from dual-earner families in Utrecht, the Netherlands, are employed.

The reader should bear in mind that the Dutch institutional context differs in various ways from that in the United States or the United Kingdom, where most of the earlier geographical research on dual-earner families has been situated. The welfare system is more generous in the Netherlands than in the United Kingdom or the United States, but is not as extensive as in Scandinavia (Esping-Andersen 1999). As in other European countries, the system is being individualized, but reforms tend to be fairly moderate, taking into account that there are some adults—especially women—who cannot be full-time workers (Knijn 2004). Nonetheless, even though care-work is valued to a much greater degree than in, say, the United Kingdom, the overall changes are contradictory from a gender-equality point of view. On the one hand, national policies seek to stimulate women's labor force participation and alleviate problems with combining employment and care-work through an expansion of childcare and legislation about parental leave. On the other hand, recent financial reforms with respect to childcare have favored the breadwinner family. Partly reflecting these changes, the typical Dutch dual-earner household is a one-and-a-half earner household; in no other industrialized country is part-time employment for men and especially women so common (Dekker and Ederveen 2005). Less than one in every ten families with children under twelve combines two jobs of over 34 hours per week; almost half combine one full-time job with a (female) job of 12 to 34 hours per week (Van der Valk 2005).

Study Background

Studies about how dual-earner families negotiate, organize, and perform the chauffeuring of children to/from school or childcare providers can be positioned within, and informed by, the literature about how family-households juggle employment and domestic responsibilities in general. This theme has attracted the attention of researchers from various disciplines and with different philosophical and methodological dispositions. The study reported here is an attempt to combine these different traditions, conceiving

of each as providing a partial scientific narrative so that collectively they may "force a richer set of spatial stories" (Hanson and Pratt 1995, 2).

There is a long-standing tradition of investigating the gender division of labor within heterosexual couples using quantitative data derived from time-space diaries and questionnaires. This work draws on multiple theoretical perspectives on household decision making, including resource and gender ideology theories (Morris 1990; Kroska 2004). Consequently, empirical studies of who does what have considered the relative explanatory power of *temporal factors*, such as weekly employment hours, as well as employment schedules and time sovereignty; partners' absolute and relative *resources* as reflected in their income, educational attainment, and occupational prestige; indicators of the extent of *egalitarianism* with respect to gender roles; and *demand for care*, such as the number and ages of children (Presser 2003; Kroska 2004; Kitterød and Pettersen 2006). Typically drawing on time-geography (Hägerstrand 1970), geographers have contributed to this body of knowledge by emphasizing the importance of *(time)space*—through such factors as accessibility and commute length and mode—to the gender division of household labor (Hanson and Pratt 1995; Kwan 1999; Scott and Kanaroglou 2002; Zhang, Timmermans, and Borgers 2005; Schwanen, Ettema, and Timmermans, forthcoming).

Empirical support for the relevance of individual factors are mixed, suggesting that outcomes depend on the type of household chore considered as well as the space-time context in which studies are situated. Thus, although various studies have indicated that women's employment hours do not influence their partners' involvement in domestic labor (Hanson and Hanson 1981), others have found statistically significant effects (Kroska 2004; Kitterød and Pettersen 2006; Schwanen, Ettema, and Timmermans, forthcoming). Such differences are, at least to some extent, an artifact of which aspects of domestic work are considered, implying that not only should the total domestic workload be considered but also specific chores. The variability in findings also reflects institutional and cultural differences. For instance, Kitterød and Pettersen (2006) and Schwanen, Ettema, and Timmermans (forthcoming) use data from Norway and the Netherlands, which both have

social policies encouraging men to take up more domestic responsibilities.

To the best of my knowledge, no study within the quantitatively oriented research tradition has concentrated specifically on parents' chauffeuring of children to/from school and/or out-of-home childcare. The (spatial-)analytical literature is nonetheless useful in suggesting that the employment and commute characteristics of both parents—in particular their weekly employment hours, irregular employment schedules, time sovereignty, occupation, commute time and mode—as well as the number and ages of children and the residential neighborhood may affect the gender division of those chores. This literature also indicates that considering the employment and commute characteristics of both parents allows for a better understanding of power differentials within family households (Presser 2003; Kroska 2004).

A quantitative analysis of this kind is also, however, partial and limited. First, the gendered nature of chauffeuring is treated as a pattern and steady state; chauffeuring is not really treated as a process in which plans and arrangements are continually renegotiated and revised. Second, spatial-analytical studies pay scant attention to the question of how culturally defined norms, values, and identities with respect to parenting influence the ways in which dual-earner families juggle domestic and employment responsibilities. The latter point has attracted more attention in quantitative sociological studies; in these, however, measures of gender ideologies are often too generic and/or rooted in stable and essentialist, dichotomous notions of masculinity and femininity, considering certain behaviors and notions as inherently feminine or masculine (Lupton and Barclay 1997; Aitken 2000, 2005). These and other issues have attracted considerable attention among cultural geographers and sociologists.

The cultural tradition has demonstrated that mothers tend to be very anxious about not doing enough for their children irrespective of their employment status (Vincent, Ball, and Pietikainen 2004; McDowell et al. 2005). They tend to invest considerable time, energy, and moral commitment in their children and let what is best for them prevail in their decisions even when they work long hours. Thus, "mothers rather than fathers continue to feel responsible for managing childcare ... and for

managing the home and conduct of family life" in dual-earner families (Skinner 2005, 107). In contrast, fathers' care is believed to be qualitatively different and more disembodied: they know less about their children's daily lives, are less attuned to their needs, are better at distancing themselves from them, and often let their employment concerns prevail (Lareau 2000; Vincent, Ball, and Pietikainen 2004; Halford 2006). Other studies have, however, shown that there is a minority of "high-responsive fathers" (Matta and Knudson-Martin 2006) or "super-dads" (Cooper 2000) who are more attentive to the needs of children and partners and participate extensively in caregiving despite long employment hours.

These observed differences in mothering and fathering can be associated with feminist thinking about an ethic of care (Tronto 1993) and with culturally-constructed norms about what is socially appropriate for men and women to do as parents (Aitken 2000; Duncan et al. 2003). Feminist theorist Tronto (1993) discerns four phases or dimensions of care as a social process: (i) *caring about*: noting the need for care of those around us, demanding *attentiveness* on the part of the (potential) caregiver; (ii) *taking care of*: assuming *responsibility* for the identified need and taking the necessary steps to provide for the need in question; (iii) *caregiving*: meeting the needs for care through *competent physical work* and (usually) face-to-face contact with those with needs; and (iv) *care-receiving*: the response of those who receive the care. Combining these notions with the cultural literature discussed previously, it appears that mothers' childcare is often characterized by higher levels of attentiveness, responsibility, and competent physical work than fathers', although there are also some family-households where such differences do not exist or the opposite relationship holds. The analysis below indicates to what extent such differences between fathers and mothers can be identified for chauffeuring children to/from school or childcare providers.

With regard to cultural norms, Duncan et al. (2003) have conceptualized mothers' understandings of their identities as mothers and workers and their responsibilities toward their children as *gendered moral rationalities*. These understandings of the right thing(s) to do as a mother and worker function as a framework for decisions about how to juggle responsibilities.

Geographers, and some sociologists, have elaborated these notions by emphasizing their spatial variability (Duncan and Smith 2002) and showing how cultural norms interact with the childcare available in localities, parents' social networks, and their own biographies to constitute local cultures of parenting whereby notions of what is socially appropriate for parents to do vary systematically across neighborhoods (Holloway 1998; Vincent, Ball, and Bell 2004). Drawing on data from three London neighborhoods, McDowell et al. (2005, 2006) are, however, skeptical about the existence of locally-based, singular cultures of parenting and "found no clear evidence of different values and attitudes about parenting and childcare, whether by class, sector, occupation or area" (2006, 2172). Notions of gendered moral rationalities and the geographical differences within them can also inform research about chauffeuring children because these notions suggest that it is not only classic time-geographical factors like accessibility and time constraints that affect who does what within households, but rather the ways in which local physical conditions intersect with historically and geographically contingent norms about parenting practices and identities. If gender cultures vary spatially, differences between mothers and fathers in chauffeuring may also vary spatially. Since patriarchal relationships are challenged most extensively in cities in the Netherlands (Karsten 2003), one might expect fathers' chauffeuring to be associated with higher levels of attentiveness, responsibility, and physical work in urban neighborhoods.

Data and Empirical Setting

The empirical analysis draws on quantitative data to analyze who escorts children to/from childcare providers and/or primary school and how the gender division of labor varies with household structure, employment and commute characteristics, and residential neighborhood. Qualitative data have also been used for these purposes and additionally to investigate the relevance of culturally-defined norms about parenting on different aspects of chauffeuring children to/from school and/or childcare. To minimize social desirability effects, the role of norms was investigated indirectly through an analysis of parents' self-constructed narratives

about actual practices rather than through direct, survey-based questioning.

The data were collected in two phases, both targeting dual-earner households with at least one child (of age ≤ 8 years) in the Utrecht region. The age of eight was chosen because children in the Netherlands tend to become increasingly independent from that age onward: they participate less in after-school care and, depending on the distance and route to be traversed, gradually start walking or cycling to school and extracurricular activities on their own. In the first research phase, participants logged their activities in a one-day time-space diary and were interviewed about the diary and the juggling of responsibilities on the subsequent day (cf. Schwanen 2006). Forty respondents were recruited via a primary school and two nurseries and via snowballing in the period from September 2004 through February 2005. A deliberate attempt was made to include men and women, as well as respondents from neighborhoods differing in distance to the Utrecht central business district (CBD), local accessibility to facilities and services, and auto orientation.

The second phase consisted of a survey specifically about the chauffeuring of children to/from school and childcare providers. In five primary schools and nineteen nurseries, some 2,350 letters were distributed via pre-school-aged children in daycare programs (ages 0–3 years) and school-aged children (≤ 8 years) in August and September 2005. Parents were asked only to return the registration form if they were a dual-earner family (both parents working > 10 hours per week) or a single working parent. A total of 715 families were willing to participate, of whom 557 returned questionnaires. After screening and calculating dependent variables (see below), 475 dual-earner family-households were included in the analysis.

Table 1 shows the considerable variation in the number and age of children, use of primary schools, and residential location among the participants in both phases. However, men were underrepresented in the first phase, apparently because of the way in which the research project was introduced. It was described as an investigation of conflicts between work and caregiving responsibilities and that portrayal appealed more to mothers than to fathers. There were very few families in the second phase that

Table 1 Basic characteristics of the respondents whose information is used in the analysis

	Phase I (n = 40 persons)		Phase II (n = 475 households)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Number of children				
1 child	8	20.0	171	36.0
2 children	28	70.0	250	52.6
3 children	4	10.0	54	11.4
Age of youngest child				
0–1 year old	16	40.0	249	52.4
2–3 years old	13	32.5	163	34.3
4–5 years old	8	20.0	38	8.0
6–8 years old	3	7.5	25	5.2
Gender				
Female	30	75.0	—	—
Male	10	25.0	—	—
Residential location (Figure 1)				
Utrecht city	26	65.0	182	38.3
Leidsche Rijn	8	20.0	94	19.8
Nieuwegein (total)	0	0.0	50	10.5
Bunnik, Odijk, and Werkhoven	1	2.5	20	4.2
Houten	0	0.0	65	13.7
Harmelen	5	12.5	26	5.5
Other areas	0	0.0	38	8.0
Use of childcare				
Only formal childcare	28	70.0	309	65.1
Only informal childcare	2	5.0	13	2.7
Formal and informal childcare	6	15.0	144	30.3
No childcare	4	10.0	9	1.9
Use of primary school				
No child at primary school	18	45.0	251	52.8
≥ 1 child at primary school	22	55.0	224	47.2

	Phase I All respondents		Phase II Mothers		Phase II Fathers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Occupation sector						
Financial services	1	2.5	50	10.5	39	8.2
Business services	1	2.5	63	13.3	68	14.3
Manufact./construction	2	5.0	25	5.3	75	15.8
IT/software	1	2.5	19	4.0	54	11.4
Healthcare	4	10.0	69	14.5	31	6.5
Media and cultural industries	3	7.5	28	5.9	21	3.4
Education (including university)	9	22.5	63	13.3	41	8.6
Government	5	12.5	47	9.9	35	7.4
Personal services; retail	4	10.0	23	4.9	24	5.0
Other sectors	10	25.0	116	18.4	108	19.4

	Phase I All respondents		Phase II Mothers		Phase II Fathers	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Weekly employment hours	27.0	12.1	28.0	7.3	40.4	8.0
One-way commute time (min.)	25.2	17.6	29.7	19.4	35.1	21.6

did not utilize formal childcare through professional organizations (nurseries) because the potential participants were mainly approached via the nurseries. The subsequent overrepresentation implies that the respondents cannot be considered representative of all dual-earner families in the Utrecht region.¹

A focus on families using daycare and after-school care provided by nurseries can be justified on the grounds that many participants in both the current project and the study by Portegijs et al. (2006) experience a mismatch between the opening hours of formal childcare services and their own employment times. This study is also

not representative of the wider population because the participants were generally highly educated and held highly-skilled jobs. Half the respondents in the first phase were highly educated (university degree or higher vocational training); this share was 80 percent for the second phase. These high shares doubtless result to some extent from the tendency of highly-educated women to continue working after having a child and to utilize formal childcare (Portegijs et al. 2006), but probably also from the fact that the letters announcing the second phase may have appealed to Utrecht university graduates in particular. Nevertheless, although the respondents may not be representative of all dual-earner families, the large number of participants and the variation in household structure, occupation, employment schedules and commute characteristics, and residential location enable detailed insights to be gained in the escorting of children to/from school and childcare. Further, the relevance of the outcomes outside the specific context of Utrecht and the Netherlands became more plausible through the mix of respondents.

The phase II questionnaire contained questions about employment characteristics, socio-demographics, and the conduct of escorting trips to school and childcare providers by all transportation modes. Based on the phase I interviews, questions about who normally undertakes which chauffeuring duties were asked separately for each weekday and each child. The following indicators for the household division of escorting duties were developed: the share of the total number of escort trips to/from school and/or childcare by the father, the share of drop-off duties by the father, and the share of collection duties by the father. The use of relative measures of the division of chauffeuring duties ensures that comparisons across households are not complicated by differences in the number of children or days on which the child(ren) is/are escorted. Chauffeuring chores to/from school and childcare providers were pooled because the interviews had suggested that these tasks resemble each other in many ways and are coordinated in a weekly rhythm. Most schools have lunch breaks of 1–1.5 hours during which children are allowed to return home, but can also stay at school. Lunch-break chauffeuring has not been taken into account because the interviewees indicated that their children tend to

stay at school, especially on the days when both parents work. Escort trips to extracurricular activities and children's friends were also not considered because children younger than 4–5 years old hardly participate in such activities and parents also try to plan such activities on days when one of them is not working.

Five sets of potential determinants of gender differences in escorting duties were identified on the basis of the literature: (i) *household structure*, number and ages of children; (ii) *employment schedules*, each parent's weekly employment hours, whether they work in shifts/irregular hours, and their level of employment-hours autonomy; (iii) *commuting*, each parent's average commute time and regular commute mode; (iv) *occupation*, each parent's position at work (measured through the number of employees for whom one is responsible) and employment sector; and (v) *residential neighborhood*.

With regard to residential location, zip-code zones were aggregated on the basis of location in the Utrecht region, the contiguity of the built-up area, the building density, and the age of the construction (Figure 1). The Utrecht center area corresponds to the old medieval city and an adjacent neighborhood housing many well-to-do dual-earner couples. Utrecht north, south, and west each comprise different neighborhoods from the nineteenth century and 1930s, with many dwellings that are popular among dual-earner families. The suburbs of Houten and Nieuwegein grew rapidly after 1970 when national physical planning designated them as growth centers to curb suburbanization from the city. Vleuten-De Meern, IJsselstein, and Bunnik also expanded strongly after 1970, but lacked the official growth-center status. Nieuwegein north, Leidsche Rijn, and Houten south have been developed since the mid-1990s; the last two are urban expansion areas indicated by the national government as part of its endeavors to curtail urban sprawl and auto dependence. Odijk, Werkhoven, and Harmelen are villages with relatively poor public-transport facilities; since the 1960s, these settlements have grown less than others in the region.

Who Does What?

Both the interview and questionnaire data suggest that mothers conduct most of the chauffeuring tasks, although fathers also perform a

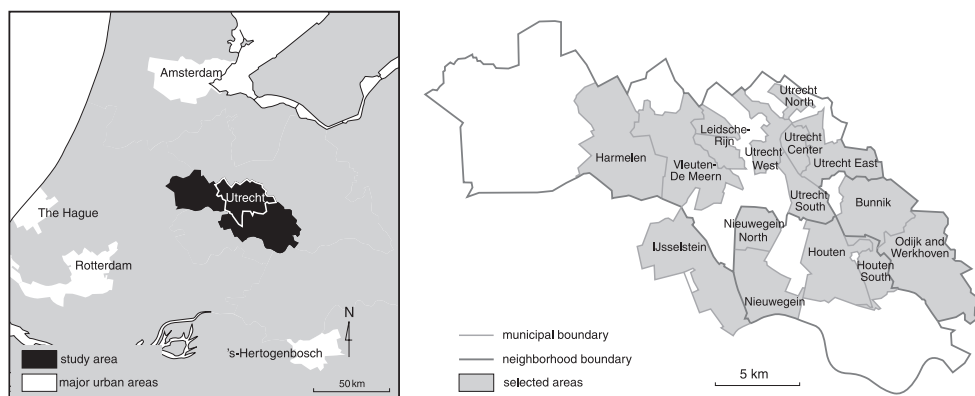


Figure 1 *The Utrecht area.*

substantial share. According to the questionnaire data, on average fathers conduct 38.4 percent of all escort trips to/from school and childcare providers. Fathers participate more extensively in trips to childcare and school than in trips home in the afternoon or evening: the corresponding averages for the 475 family-households considered are 44.5 percent and 32.3 percent, respectively.² The results in Figure 2 and other statistics reinforce this conclusion: while the share of households where the father performs more chauffeuring tasks in the afternoon or evening than in the morning is 21.5 percent, fathers conduct more drop-off than pick-up trips in more than twice as many other

families (45.5 percent). Figure 2 further indicates that fathers conduct exactly half of the escorting duties in almost 30 percent of the family-households. Here too, fathers' participation is more pronounced for trips to school or childcare, with 48.9 percent of fathers conducting more drop-off than collection activities.

The quantitative data thus suggest a household-level strategy of split-shift chauffeuring with one parent (the father) taking and the other collecting the children. The interviews corroborate this conclusion, indicating that split-shift chauffeuring enables both parents to work an acceptable number of hours per day (cf. Pratt and Hanson 1990; Presser 2003). The split-shift

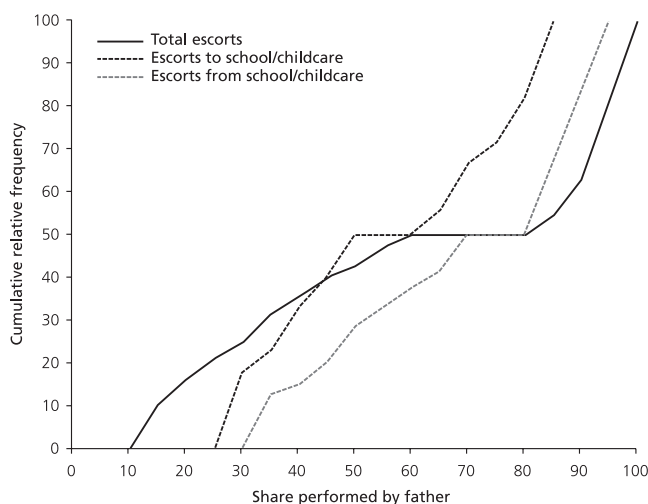


Figure 2 *Cumulative distribution of shares of escorting tasks performed by the father.*

Tim: "And then [partner] takes her to school and the day care center?"
 Juliet: "Yes, first to day care and then lastly [oldest child] goes to school, yes...."
 Tim: "And you collect her?"
 Juliet: "Yes, I collect her, yes"
 Tim: "Is that a fixed routine to do it like that...?"
 Juliet: "Yes, because [partner] is his own boss so he is more able to choose when he starts work and I actually can't. I just have to begin at eight o'clock, but I can get away earlier, more easily earlier, because I usually work to five o'clock, or actually until I have to collect the children and then I just leave."

Juliet lives in Utrecht, commutes 15 minutes by car to a job as a primary school teacher; her partner runs his own pharmacy.

Vignette 1 *Split chauffeuring to accommodate employment schedules.*

strategy is especially attractive if at least one parent has autonomy over his/her employment times (Vignette 1).

The father's share of escorting duties obtained from the survey data was regressed onto the indicators of household structure, employment schedules, commuting, occupation, and residential neighborhood described in the preceding section. Table 2 shows that twenty-two of the tested variables are statistically correlated with men's participation in escorting children to/from school and/or childcare providers. Many effects are consistent with the literature reviewed in the Study Background section earlier in this article: fathers' overall responsibility for chauffeuring becomes greater as the number of children rises, if there are no school-aged children (4–8 years old), as their hours of employment become fewer, as the partner's hours of employment become longer, as commutes become shorter and/or they commute by car, and as their partners commute longer and use modes other than the private car. The effects differ considerably, however, between drop-off and collection tasks. The employment hours of the mother and father are by far the most important determinants of the latter's share of escort trips home, followed by both parents' commute times. Interestingly, the effect of the mother's employment hours is slightly stronger than that of the hours worked by the father, indicating that mothers' employment hours have important ramifications for fathers' chauffeuring. Whereas fathers' involvement in escort

trips to school or childcare is more strongly related to their own commute times, their partners' commute times are more relevant for collection chores. Commute mode is then also more important, mainly because of the negative effect of commuting by train.

With regard to occupation, fathers tend to participate less in chauffeuring in the afternoon or early evening as their position at work becomes higher. This finding contrasts with the results for the mother's position at work, which is also negatively associated with the father's share of picking up children: mothers do not perform fewer escort trips home if they are responsible for more employees. Apart from underlying differences in gender ideology (as discussed below), this finding seems to reflect that women at higher executive levels have more autonomy over their employment times and can schedule working hours more easily around their chauffeuring requirements. This presumption is based on the fact that the mother's employment-time autonomy has a negative (but weaker) impact on the father's share in escort trips home if position at work is replaced by the autonomy variable in the model. As expected, fathers with no autonomy over their employment times perform fewer chauffeuring duties, although the effect is only observed for escort trips to school or childcare. The sector in which parents are employed is also relevant, although the effects are small. Fathers tend to perform fewer escort trips home if they are employed in business services—known for their cultures of

Table 2 Regression analysis for the share of escort trips to/from the primary school and/or childcare by fathers

	Taking to and collecting from school and/or childcare		Taking to school and/or childcare		Collecting from school and/or childcare	
	Beta	t-stat.	Beta	t-stat.	Beta	t-stat.
Household structure						
Number of children	0.086	1.72	0.134	2.47	-0.023	-0.44
Child(ren) aged 4–5	-0.139	-2.94	-0.151	-2.93	-0.036	-0.71
Child(ren) aged 6–8	-0.100	-2.32	-0.116	-2.46	-0.017	-0.38
Employment schedules						
Weekly employment hours father	-0.206	-4.54	-0.098	-1.97	-0.195	-4.04
Weekly employment hours mother	0.232	5.32	0.108	2.27	0.223	4.79
Commuting						
Commute time father	-0.282	-5.84	-0.226	-4.29	-0.157	-3.04
Commute mode father						
Train	-0.102	-2.25	-0.018	-0.36	-0.133	-2.75
Bicycle	-0.132	-2.73	-0.102	-1.94	-0.077	-1.49
Other modes	-0.080	-1.95	-0.083	-1.85	-0.025	-0.57
Commute time mother	0.212	4.30	0.115	2.14	0.176	3.36
Commute mode mother						
Train	0.119	2.52	0.031	0.59	0.143	2.82
Bicycle	0.100	2.13	0.045	0.89	0.095	1.91
Other modes	0.112	2.70	0.023	0.51	0.137	3.10
Occupation						
Father's position at work	-0.032	-0.77	0.026	0.57	-0.076	-1.70
Mother's position at work	0.107	-2.53	-0.027	-0.58	-0.126	-2.80
Father no autonomy over employment times	-0.154	-3.76	-0.192	4.29	-0.014	-0.31
Employment sector father						
Business services	-0.093	-2.25	-0.032	-0.72	-0.101	-2.29
Manufact./construction	-0.032	-0.76	-0.149	-3.26	0.122	2.73
Healthcare	-0.014	-0.35	-0.074	-1.64	0.065	1.47
Personal services; retail	-0.034	-0.84	-0.070	-1.61	0.022	0.52
Employment sector mother						
Business services	0.012	0.31	-0.055	-1.26	0.083	1.92
Government organization	-0.026	-0.65	0.047	1.05	-0.089	-2.04
Residential location						
Utrecht west	0.072	1.74	0.132	2.92	-0.040	-0.91
Odijk & Werkhoven	-0.052	-1.29	-0.099	-2.26	0.039	0.91
R ²	0.349		0.228		0.261	
Adjusted R ²	0.312		0.184		0.219	

Note: $t > 1.65$ or $t < -1.65$ means that the standardized coefficient (Beta) differs from zero with 90 percent confidence; $t > 1.96$ or $t < -1.96$ that the confidence level is 95 percent.

long working hours (McDowell et al. 2006)—but more escort trips if their partners work in this sector. Fathers also participate less in collecting children if their partners are employed by the government, whose terms of employment are more family-friendly in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe (Dekker and Ederveen 2005; Portegijs et al. 2006).³ Finally, fathers in manufacturing/construction, healthcare, and personal services/retailing deliver the children to school or childcare less frequently, presumably reflecting conflicting time-space rhythms: many organizations in these sectors require employees to be corporally present before schools or childcare institutions are open.

It is important to emphasize that regression analyses of this kind indicate statistical correlations rather than causal relationships. The phase I interviews show that the causality of relationships is not as clear-cut as Table 2 might suggest. First, although in some families the decisions about chauffeuring are driven by employment and commute factors, in other family households a parent—most often the mother—works fewer hours, works at other times, or changes job locations to be able to drive the children to school or childcare. This point has been made before (Hanson and Pratt 1995; Kwan 1999; Jarvis, Pratt, and Wu 2001), but is reiterated here to show that mothers continually monitor and renegotiate their juggling

"If I'm not finding work enjoyable, then I think to myself, what am I doing this for? ... Every week I think about it, or if I get stuck in a traffic jam yet again [on the way to the day care center] then I think, I'll look for something closer to home, but I also know that that doesn't make sense, because if I go and work in Utrecht then it will take me 20–25 minutes to get there, so now, yes, those twenty minutes per day, we could use that, but you don't know what you'll get in return or whether you would have just as pleasant colleagues and you know, I do work at the level I studied for."

Amber lives in Harmelen, commutes 50 minutes by car, and has a partner who usually takes the children to the nursery.

"Of course, you've got the stress of will I get there in time or not [to be at the child care center before it shuts], but underneath that I'm asking myself, am I doing the right thing? Yes, what am I doing to myself and the children? And then I'm not even thinking about my partner's work, but more about my own choices ... what I do say to myself is, each year, I'll think about it again: Has it worked out? What can we see that we've got? Is this still what we want?"

Andrea lives in Utrecht, commutes 12 minutes by bicycle, and normally takes care of all the escort trips to and from school and childcare.

Vignette 2 *Mothers' mental (re)negotiations of the space-time arrangements of employment and childcare.*

of employment and escorting responsibilities (McDowell et al. 2005, 2006). For female interviewees in particular, the run to the childcare center after work functions as a focal point in the (mental) renegotiations of everyday space-time arrangements and tensions between their worker and mother identities (Vignette 2).

Second, where the regression analysis shows that the employment hours and commuting times of both parents are most strongly associated with the household division of chauffeuring labor, the interviews suggest that both are dependent on, and underpinned by, complex moral rationalities about parenting that simultaneously challenge and reproduce traditional patriarchal gender relations. Not only did doubts about juggling employment and chauffeuring responsibilities as articulated in Vignette 2 come to the fore, primarily in interviews with mothers, but these doubts also usually concerned their own practices, leaving the role of the father basically unchallenged. This lack of challenge was self-evident and implicit in most interviews but sometimes surfaced more explicitly, as with Amber in Vignette 2. Gilbert's narrative in Vignette 3 provides another example. Although he likes to visit his daughter's school and could accommodate delivering her

given the sovereignty he enjoys with respect to the times and places where he works, his worker identity ultimately prevails (cf. Aitken 2000), making his contribution to escorting the children fit in with a "cultural script that posits men's involvement as laudatory but still voluntary" (Vincent, Ball, and Pietikainen 2004, 583). It is this script that helps legitimize his reasoning and the care and employment arrangements within his family with his partner employed part-time in Utrecht.

More generally, the interviews suggest that, at least among the participating family households, fathers tend to perform a substantial share of caregiving tasks in the early morning (getting children up, preparing breakfast, and transporting them) and evening (putting the children to bed, reading bedtime stories, housework), but that this caregiving is *folded around* the space-time requirements of paid employment. Consistent with the literature (Hanson and Pratt 1995; Kwan 1999), the converse can be observed for many mothers: domestic responsibilities and especially chauffeuring requirements tend to be less discretionary and circumscribe space-time opportunities for paid employment. Despite interviewees' (of both sexes) continual emphasis on egalitarianism and

"Because I have a fairly long journey, I just find it extremely frustrating to travel for such a long time for only three or four hours, but what I do have: I'm in the office about two days a week and for the rest of the time I'm traveling around a lot ... and then it happens sometimes that I have a morning meeting in Delft and then three hours in the city [Utrecht] and then I collect her ... I think that it's about once a fortnight, besides on my free day, that I'm at the school. Because if I take [oldest child] to school, then I get to work at a quarter past ten, which is not exactly ideal, but it is a possibility ... you know, I enjoy being at the school, but I feel that it costs me an awful lot of time, and while that may turn out better than expected, if I [go to the office and] have that long journey I just want to stay there for the whole day"

Gilbert lives in Utrecht, commutes 75 minutes by train, normally chauffeurs only on nonworking days.

Vignette 3 *Prioritizing employment responsibilities.*

(stated) attempts to share domestic responsibilities equally, the gendered prioritizing of chauffeuring vis-à-vis employment responsibilities seems to be rooted in (and to reproduce) deeply ingrained norms and expectations about motherhood and fatherhood (cf. Aitken 2000; Vincent, Ball, and Pietikainen 2004).

That mothers tend to bear the ultimate responsibility for trips home from childcare or school is also borne out in the result that *they take care* of the need to chauffeur even when they are not performing the actual *caregiving* (Tronto 1993). It is often the mother who organizes support from relatives, neighbors, and friends should this be required (Schwanen, forthcoming) and coordinates escort trips in the event of aberrations from normal routines, as Zoë's words in Vignette 4 illustrate. Some interviewees found it hard to delegate the management of the escorting of and caring for their children to others: "I see that with many women, friends, that you find yourself simply indispensable. . . . You feel kind of responsible" [Janine]. Other mothers admitted to phoning their spouses on the days when it was the father's turn to collect the children, to remind them of leaving their workplace so that they would be sure to arrive at the nursery before closing time. This confession is true of Ophelia, whose children need to be collected before 5:45 p.m. (Vignette 4). Her words also suggest that the way she *cares about* collecting the children before the clock-time set by the nursery differs from her husband's way of coping with his responsibilities. More generally, the interviews suggest that a mother's way

of organizing chauffeuring is more embodied than a father's. This assertion is illustrated by Andrea's remarks about the inconvenience of departures from the chauffeuring routines; her comments demonstrate a strong attentiveness to her partner's inconvenient space-time arrangements in such situations. No such concerns as those in Vignette 4 were articulated during interviews with fathers.

And yet the arguments presented above showing that mothers care more about chauffeuring, look after escorting to a greater degree, and perform most of the physical work are only part of the story. There are important differences *between* fathers in how they combine employment and chauffeuring requirements, suggesting that the label of "helping out" (Aitken 2000, 2005) in caregiving does not fit them all. This variation became apparent in the statistical results in Figure 2 and Table 2 and is corroborated by the interviews, which show how the subtle interplay of practical constraints imposed by the employment locations and schedules of both parents and moral discourses about being parent and employee results in unique arrangements for individual households that both challenge and reproduce patriarchal relations.

Two examples help to question the appropriateness of grand claims about the gendered nature of chauffeuring. Donald, for instance, works very close to his children's school and collects them four days per week, which means that he also makes arrangements with the children and fellow parents about where and with

"I must say that I think about it differently from [my partner], because this morning I said when [our daughter] was sick, you call the crèche and then he said 'I don't have their number'. Yes, I've got that very clearly in my diary in case anything should happen ... I will have planned things carefully or thought them out beforehand, then this or that comes up ... that goes for all sorts of things, but certainly for this sort of transport [escorting children]."

Zoë lives in Utrecht, commutes by bike, and shares chauffeuring chores fairly equally with her partner.

"I am actually a bit extreme in the sense that I check up on him [my husband]. He is more relaxed about it, but then I call him at ten past five and he says, 'I've just got into the car.' YOU'VE JUST GOT INTO THE CAR? ARE YOU GOING TO GET THERE IN TIME? He says, 'Yes, of course, I'm in Nieuwegein now and that's absolutely no problem. I could do it easily twice over!' And then I can get very upset about it. Sometimes I get so anxious that I call him at twenty to six to ask if everything has gone all right." [Words in capital letters were spoken more loudly.]

Ophelia lives in Leidsche Rijn, commutes 25 minutes by car, takes and collects the children most times.

"I almost always collect the children, but there have been exceptions. Then my husband has to fetch them and so he has to leave Amsterdam by car very early, then he gets held up in the traffic, then when he gets here he has to jump on his bike, first he has to collect [oldest child] in the center, then he has to cycle back and drop him here [at home], then he fetches [youngest child]. That's dreadful, so we avoid it as much as possible."

Andrea lives in Utrecht, commutes 12 minutes by bicycle, and normally takes care of all escorts to and from school and childcare.

Vignette 4 Mothers taking care of and caring about chauffeuring arrangements.

whom they will be playing on a given afternoon. The interview indicated that his leading role in escorting trips is a consequence of the proximity of his workplace to the children's school, his limited career ambitions, his rather flexible employment schedule, and his wife's managerial position in a mental care unit at a 20–25 minute drive in another city. Yet, as Vignette 5 suggests, he does not consider himself the primary caregiver for the children. Thus, even though exceeding the level of voluntary participation or helping out, his chauffeuring role seem to be contingent on practical constraints and his own biography rather than being primarily associated with an embodied drive for caregiving to his children (as for almost all the interviewed mothers).

Another example is provided by Thomas who has an executive job at a large national logistics firm. Despite his rather strong career orientation and the importance he attaches to his

provider role as primary wage earner, he is determined to continue to wrap his employment responsibilities around his chauffeuring role (Vignette 5). Although discrepancies between fathers' statements and actual practice of caregiving should not be ruled out entirely (Aitken 2000; Lareau 2000), the remainder of the interview suggests that he is keen to implement his stated intentions: his wife has strictly fixed hours during which she will be away from home whereas he has considerable autonomy over employment times and places, (at present) he prefers not to draw on practical assistance from grandparents or other social network members, and he performs a major share of the caregiving to his child in the evening after work. That is, his behavior bears some resemblance to that of a high-responsive father (Matta and Knudson-Martin 2006) or superdad (Cooper 2000).

"My wife does a lot. Look, I think I do more in the house with housework jobs, but [she] does much more ferrying the children about. That's not something we've chosen or agreed about, it's just worked out like that. But I have to admit that if you ask me do I enjoy seeing to it that the children are happily busy or would you prefer to go and cook the meal? Then I would say, let me go and cook."

Donald lives in Utrecht, commutes 15 minutes by bicycle, and takes care of the majority of escorts to/from school.

Thomas: "Of course, I work in a very large organization and I've worked in lots of places over the whole country, and it is the case that to a large extent the company decides [where you go to work]. I shall enjoy it for as long it goes on and I shall try to arrange for the next job to be like that too, but it's difficult, because of course the company is spread over the whole of the Netherlands and, yes, for certain jobs they expect a high level of mobility from you, every two or three years you have to go and work someplace else. ... I hope in any case not to have to go to the Head Office in The Hague" [implying a 60-km drive on one of the busiest highways of the country].

Tim: "What would that mean for your schedule?"

Thomas: "Now yes ... on Tuesdays and Thursdays I have to be at home at certain times [to collect his daughter from the child care center] then I think I would have to leave The Hague at about four o'clock, if not earlier, to be here by five o'clock ... so that means that I would have to do more work at home in the evening, because of course I would have a longer journey ... that could be arranged with my employer, but all the same it's difficult, it would be much more difficult than it is now, but..."

Thomas lives in Leidsche Rijn, currently commutes 20 minutes by car, and normally takes and collects his daughter to/from a private child minder.

Vignette 5 Fathers challenging dominant gender cultures?

The examples of Donald and Thomas show how traditional gender regimes are simultaneously challenged and reproduced in complex and contradictory ways through escorting practices. Although Donald chauffeurs extensively, he ultimately operates within a rather traditional division of labor when it comes to caregiving to his children; Thomas does not correspond to the generalization of the male careerist with almost no attentiveness to, or responsibility for, domestic labor. The interviews suggest the need for additional detailed research about the *variability* in the ways family households balance employment and caregiving to children by focusing on specific domestic and employment-related tasks and then relating these to practical constraints experienced and moral discourses about parenting (cf. Aitken 2000; Jarvis, Pratt, and Wu 2001; McDowell et al. 2005).

One may wonder how space is entwined with the chauffeuring division of labor. The regres-

sion analysis in Table 2 suggests that the differences between residential locations in fathers' involvement in chauffeuring are fairly limited. The model shows that fathers residing in Utrecht West tend to take their children to school or childcare relatively often, whereas the opposite is true for fathers in Odijk and Werkhoven. These differences align with the notion that patriarchal gender relations are challenged in urban neighborhoods. Nonetheless, given that only 10.7 percent of family households included in the statistical analysis reside in these areas, one may conclude that the independent effects of residential location on the division of chauffeuring duties between parents are not strong. The interviews reinforce this conclusion: they do not point to homogeneous locally-based gender cultures with respect to chauffeuring (or indeed juggling employment and parenting in general). At least for the respondents in this study, there is no

evidence of a tendency for families challenging dominant gender regimes to be more likely to reside in (specific sectors of) the city of Utrecht. This statement reflects the fact that most interviewees have relatively young children (Table 1) or moved into their current residence only a few years ago, or both, so that local social ties are not (yet) well developed (cf. McDowell et al. 2006). Only when children start attending primary education do contacts with fellow parents become extensive (Schwanen, forthcoming). Nevertheless, even interviewees with stronger ties with local fellow parents tend to exchange childcare and chauffeuring trips on an occasional rather than a structural basis⁴ and some use local social networks to renegotiate norms about parenting in general, but not specifically about escorting children to/from school or childcare. In brief, issues about who chauffeurs the children to/from these places appear to be individualized and private matters to be arranged and solved within the context of the family household.

Conclusions

This article has evaluated gender differences in chauffeuring children to/from school and childcare providers among dual-earner households in Utrecht, the Netherlands. The results indicate that the fathers participating in the study tend to conduct a substantial share of the escort trips, but that these chauffeuring arrangements are often underpinned and informed by rather traditional gender norms. Another key outcome is that the spatial variability in different aspects of the gendered nature of chauffeuring children to/from school and childcare is rather limited. However, the numerous differences between individual family households render grand generalizations about the gendered nature of chauffeuring problematic. The broad brush on diversity enabled by statistical analysis needs to be supplemented by perspectives that further unravel the ways in which different practical and moral factors coalesce into workable, yet provisional, chauffeuring arrangements for individual households.

The research reported in this article contributes to the existing literature in various ways. Many previous studies have tended to collapse different domestic responsibilities into a single category, however this study has added further evidence to the need to distinguish between

such forms and also to consider time of day, as there are important differences between morning and afternoon/evening chauffeuring. The study also highlights the importance of studying not only how mothers, but also fathers, juggle their responsibilities. Despite the burgeoning interest in fatherhood in sociology, fathering remains as yet a largely unexplored territory in geography (Aitken 2005). Relevant topics for future research would be the causal relationships between autonomy over employment times and places, and moral notions about fathering and the importance of the institutional regimes within which family households juggle responsibilities. International comparative research might shed more light on the reasons for the differences between the Netherlands and, say, the United Kingdom, where employed fathers tend to take on less domestic work (e.g., Vincent, Ball, and Pietikainen 2004; McDowell et al. 2006).

Finally, the study has provided further evidence that research about everyday mobility can benefit from theoretical and methodological triangulation to address a given research question (Hanson and Pratt 1995; Kwan 2004). The cultural tradition affords a better understanding of the continuous interplay of socially-constructed gender norms and actual parenting and chauffeuring practices, whereas the spatial-analytical tradition enables more systematic evaluation of the associations between chauffeuring and factors that are generally (somewhat) easier to measure, such as employment and commute characteristics and household structure. At the same time, the use of different perspectives also allows for a more nuanced understanding of the gendered nature of chauffeuring, as the interview fragments illustrate. In this way, feminist concerns about the partiality and modesty of scientific accounts (Haraway 1991) can be accommodated in studies of daily mobility and transportation. One advantage of mixing theoretical notions and research methods is that the outcomes may ultimately be more convincing in the policy arena. Confidence in this assertion comes about because this approach utilizes information from larger groups of respondents and goes beyond a pure case-study approach, while simultaneously allowing more depth than questionnaires or time-space diaries. The findings suggest that policies enhancing parents' autonomy over employment times and challenging

traditional norms about parenting may help to reduce gender inequalities in the negotiation, organization, and conduct of chauffeuring. Such initiatives might make the juggling of responsibilities less burdensome for mothers and alleviate some of the constraints preventing their more extensive participation in the labor force. ■

Notes

- ¹ National-level statistics for dual-earner households with children aged 0–3 years suggest that 20 percent use formal childcare (nursery or registered nanny), 13 percent a mix of formal and informal (via social networks) childcare, 44 percent only informal care, and 23 percent no childcare at all. Corresponding figures for households with school-aged children (4–12 years) are 6, 3, 34, and 57 percent, respectively (Portegijs et al. 2006).
- ² The conclusions for mothers are approximately the converse of those for fathers because there are only a few households where people from outside the family-household are structurally involved in chauffeuring.
- ³ More or less the same holds for the healthcare and education sectors, which also employ many women (see also Table 1).
- ⁴ According to the phase-II questionnaires, 9 percent of the participating family-households depend on escorts back home by relatives, friends, and so forth on a structural basis. This usually concerns only one or two trips per week. Support from outside the family-household is used even less for trips to school or childcare (3 percent).

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