

# Struggling for a Socialist Fatherhood: “Re-educating” Men in East Germany, 1960–1989\*

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## Abstract

Research on the history of masculinities and fatherhood during state socialism in East Central Europe is still rare. Therefore, scholars in the field of women’s and gender studies sometimes reproduce the idea of men in that region as stable characters across the period of socialist rule. In particular, they insist that “official,” that is, state-sanctioned, representations of masculinity did not change. Yet, as I show, there is evidence that socialist authors, journalists, and even the politburos of the regions’ communist parties did reflect on what they perceived as the need to change the conceptions of men and fathers. They advocated men’s greater participation in housework and childcare. In this paper, I examine this “struggle for a socialist fatherhood” in the GDR, focusing mainly on the discussions and suggestions of sociologists, educationalists, psychologists, and sexologists active in the study of childhood and adolescence, sex education, or marriage and family. From the 1960s on, experts from these fields as well as communist politicians targeted increasingly men to implement equality in marriage and parenting. In the 1970s and 1980s, their suggestions became more and more concrete. These suggestions as well as the theoretical discussions demonstrate the enduring

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belief in the socialist society's ability to overcome traditional gender stereotypes. Even in the late 1980s, they were future directed and contained a utopian element.

### Introduction

Critical studies of men and masculinities have shown that constructions of fatherhood and their representations were anything but stable in the course of history, for they have demonstrated the diversity of paternal subjectivities and their historical transformations. Consequently, scholars have questioned the gendered separation of public (masculine) and private (feminine) spheres, and the questioning of this separation has proved to be a precondition to understanding the history of men at home and fatherhood.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the study of men and masculinities has contributed to replacing the sometimes ahistorical or essentialist conception of patriarchy with a dynamic and relational one.

However, in recent work on the gender history of socialism in Central and Eastern Europe, scholars rarely raise the subject of masculinity. It often seems as if men in general and fathers specifically in those regions were stable characters across the period of socialist rule. A few scholars do acknowledge that constructions of masculinity changed “out of necessity”<sup>2</sup> in reaction to the changing conditions of women, but they also insist that “official,” that is, state-sanctioned, representations of masculinity did not change.<sup>3</sup> Yet, as I show, there is evidence that socialist authors, journalists, and even the politburos of the regions' communist parties did reflect on what they perceived as the need to change the conceptions of men and fathers. They advocated men's greater participation in housework and childcare. For example, in the early 1970s the Politburo of the Bulgarian Communist Party called for “the common participation of the two spouses in the organization of family life,” saying it was “imperative” to “combat outdated views, habits and attitudes as regards the allocation of work within the family [and] to prepare young men for the performance of

household duties from childhood and adolescence.”<sup>4</sup> A decade earlier, the ideology committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party had recommended that the media “popularize positive examples of the division of labor within the family [and] struggle to increase the part men play in managing the household and raising children.”<sup>5</sup> Communists in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) also believed in the power of state media. In 1965, members of the Politburo’s department for agitation and of the women’s committee hailed an article in the women’s magazine *Für Dich (For You)* that positively portrayed a “modern marriage” between equal partners who shared responsibilities, and they predicted that such articles would have a “contagious effect.”<sup>6</sup> As I say, historians, though having studied extensively the socialist attempts to overcome gender inequalities in Central and Eastern Europe, have only hesitantly, and very recently, turned to this ‘struggle for a socialist fatherhood.’<sup>7</sup>

Scholars of the gender history of socialism have identified close ties between communist ideals, norms, or fantasies of virility and “hyper-masculinity.”<sup>8</sup> They have demonstrated that “the ideal communist subject had distinctly masculine features”<sup>9</sup> and that at the same time representations of masculinity were profoundly heroic. However, as opposed to Western ideas of heroism, socialists proclaimed that everyone was able to become a hero, mainly through his or her commitment to work and participation in the construction of a socialist state; that is, through his or her realization in the public sphere.<sup>10</sup> The loyal soldier was also a socialist hero, though less so in the GDR where, because of the legacy of National Socialism, the worker hero was idealized more than the soldier hero. These representations clearly employed masculine codes in their idealization of strong, and mostly young, bodies; hard labor; and omission of emotions.<sup>11</sup>

However, the younger generation increasingly criticized these representations from the post-Stalinist period on as remote from everyday life.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the 1970s and 1980s are often described as a period in which Central and Eastern Europe experienced not only a crisis

of heroes<sup>13</sup> but also a crisis of masculinity. Indeed, an increasing number of men in this region began to deplore what they considered to be the consequences of the socialist “liberation” of women, namely, that the state’s support of women and mothers “marginalized” men in the family, that they had become “emasculated...victim[s] of a socialist nanny state,”<sup>14</sup> and that the young generation of boys lacked positive masculine role models.<sup>15</sup> In a number of representations, the very popular East German film “The Legend of Paul und Paula,” for instance, women and mothers were the principal heroes and depicted as independent, desirable, and eager to live life to the full, but men (Paul in this case) lacked courage and were ready to comply with the rules for the sake of their careers and personal comfort.<sup>16</sup> Other representations did maintain the ideal of at least morally, if not physically, strong men. However, these men were often represented as part of the unofficial culture, for instance, (masculine) leaders of the dissident movement or (masculine, and mostly Western) rock stars.<sup>17</sup>

In this “void”<sup>18</sup> of official masculinity, “socialist,” that is, involved, emotional, and equal, fatherhood emerged as a new ideal of masculinity. From the 1950s on, representations of men’s bodies as strong bodies performing hard work were increasingly complemented, if not replaced, by tender bodies, for example, fathers caring for their children.<sup>19</sup> Fatherhood discourse was part of the overall shift in post-Stalinist societies towards the private sphere. It was used to demonstrate the progressiveness of socialist societies in comparison to the supposedly conservative West, especially West Germany; it allowed those societies to maintain a future-oriented perspective by portraying fathers as the everyday heroes of an egalitarian society to be; and it provided a convenient opportunity to “domesticate” men and, thus, counterbalance dissident or sub-cultural ideals of masculinity. Fatherhood was certainly not a dominant or hegemonic masculinity under socialism, but it is a case of masculinity that incorporates historical change, contestation, and the diversity of masculinities, a diversity that

historians still struggle to grasp.<sup>20</sup> In this paper, I examine the struggle for a socialist fatherhood in the GDR, focusing on the discourses of experts, *viz.*, sociologists, educationalists, psychologists, and sexologists active in the study of childhood and adolescence, sex education, or marriage and family. Experts from these fields addressed fatherhood from very different perspectives. Specialists in early childhood education at Berlin's Humboldt University and Academy of Educational Sciences (Akademie der Pädagogischen Wissenschaften der DDR) studied fatherhood from the child's point of view. Researchers at the Central Institute for Youth Research in Leipzig considered it from the point of view of adolescents learning about sex and their future family life. And sociologists in the research group *Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft (The woman in socialist society)* at the East German Academy of Sciences in Berlin and physicians at marital counseling centers considered it from the perspectives of young spouses and new parents.

In all these sources, we can see the fundamental change in the way of thinking about the family that was at work in the late 1950s and the 1960s. The attempt to transform traditional gender arrangements and revolutionize the family was an important part of the socialist agenda.<sup>21</sup> However, this attempt was often limited to externalize (or socialize) domestic work and, thus, make women available for extra-domestic wage labor. Therefore, most of the concrete actions during state socialism targeted women.<sup>22</sup> Daily routine in families was considered individualist and a remnant from bourgeois times. By contrast, from the 1950s and 1960s on, the "traditional" or "nuclear" family was more and more addressed from different perspectives: in educational theory, the central importance of family's influence on the development of children was acknowledged; one's own preoccupations within the family were considered as important parts of developing the "socialist personality;" finally, also the limits of externalizing housework were admitted and household technologies

were now developed for individual families' use.<sup>23</sup> Hand in hand with this re-evaluation of the socialist family went the considerations about fatherhood that I will focus on in this article.

I have based my study on three types of sources: archival documents and scholarly publications about these sociological, pedagogical, and sexological debates and advice literature for young people and parents. Some of these scholarly authors also wrote articles in the mainstream media, which broadened their influence. Despite the impact of such authors, their relatively progressive and constructivist views did not always fit the mainstream discourse about family, parenthood, and child rearing, and they contradicted typical representations of masculinity that ignored, or even opposed, paternal domesticity, e.g., the worker hero, the soldier, and the athlete.<sup>24</sup> The fact that the discourse I describe maintained a progressive and future-oriented character even in late socialism was without any doubt particular to East Germany. Debates about gender equality in Czechoslovakia, for instance, lost any progressive perspective in the 1970s and 1980s,<sup>25</sup> whereas several East German authors writing at that time sharply criticized the GDR's gender inequalities and expressed their belief in the socialist society's capacity to overcome them in the future.

Several scholars have correctly pointed out discrepancies between discourse and reality in gender equality in the GDR. Nevertheless, dismissing East Germany's discussions about transforming its gender arrangements as mere propaganda is simplistic. I believe that historians should take them seriously both ideologically, i.e., as a step toward the socialist goal of creating a new type of family,<sup>26</sup> and in terms of the *realpolitik* of pronatalist policies, as a proposed solution to the disproportionate burden on wives and mothers. For, as the sociologist Joachim S. Hohmann argued, one of the distinctive features of the 1970s in East Germany was the attempt to close the gap between the lived reality and the utopian discourse on the equality of men and women.<sup>27</sup> I do not claim that the attempt was successful. But I also do not overemphasize the gap between theory and reality, since my interest here is to

understand representations as the basis of “perceptions and judgments . . . which govern the ways we speak and act,” for representations “are just as ‘real’ as processes, behavior, and conflicts that are considered ‘concrete’.”<sup>28</sup> Although I concentrate in this study on theoretical reflections and expert discourses, I shall conclude with some empirical data showing the impact of what I call the ‘struggle for a socialist fatherhood’ on society, that is, on everyday attitudes of East German fathers.

### “Re-educating” men and the struggle for a socialist fatherhood

The authors I consider below were well aware of the discrepancy between the socialist claim to have liberated women and their everyday lives; in fact, the struggle for a socialist fatherhood was a reaction to socialism’s failure to institute gender equality. Public awareness of this failure, mainly from the late 1950s on,<sup>29</sup> led to the popular disillusionment that eventually contributed to undermining socialism. But because of the widespread belief that socialism could be reformed, it also reinforced the official commitment to the ongoing struggle for equality. Therefore, some politicians and official authors raised the new issue of men and masculinity. According to Inge Lange, a member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) and head of both the Central Committee’s women’s department and the Politburo’s women’s commission, by addressing only women in the 1950s and 1960s the Party failed to explain the socialist emancipation of women to men.<sup>30</sup> Lange also criticized the belief that gender equality would develop “automatically.”<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, she was optimistic in her conclusion that after more than 20 years of socialism, during which women had achieved legal and economic equality, East German society had reached the point where it could address the remaining, and fundamental, aspect of gender inequality, *viz.*, the “way of life” (*Lebensweise*) of spouses and families.<sup>32</sup> “Only now,” Lange added in 1980, was the process of transforming the everyday practices in the family under way.<sup>33</sup>

This new attention that promoters of gender equality paid to men is observable, in particular, from the 1960s onwards and constitutes a remarkable shift in the history of the socialist “woman question.” In the late 1950s and the 1960s, policy makers realized that the policies of integrating women into the labor market and of socializing housework and childcare, even if successful, would not change traditional gender arrangements, particularly in the domestic sphere. In a speech on International Women’s Day in March 1966, Inge Lange argued that real equality between men and women required the “education and re-education” of men because it could not be achieved without them.<sup>34</sup> In a similar vein, the authors of a marriage handbook in the early 1970s wrote that equality required more than the “unilateral promotion of women.”<sup>35</sup> According to Uta Brehm-Schlegel and Otmar Kabat vel Job of the Central Institute for Youth Research (Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung) in Leipzig, equality required a process of “rethinking” on the part of men and for them to take on a greater share of the burden in the family.<sup>36</sup> In the middle of the 1960s, the research group *Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft* at the East German Academy of Sciences came to similar conclusions: Up to now, the “re-education” of men had been addressed only superficially, and discussion of men taking part in the care of the household was “often Platonic, abstract, and marginal.”<sup>37</sup> In 1970, Erna Scharnhorst, a teacher and educationalist, also called for complementing the idea of a new woman with a “new concept of man.”<sup>38</sup>

#### The meaning of “socialist” fatherhood and the “new quality of family life”

As the research group *Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft* emphasized, the appeal for a new concept of fatherhood was often vague, for authors provided few concrete suggestions for integrating men into the family or for political measures to make fatherly commitment appealing to men. It was not until the late 1970s and the 1980s, as we shall see at the end of this section, that these suggestions became more specific. (Only the suggestions



concerning boys and young men, i.e., future fathers, were much more concrete, as I show below.)

One frequent suggestion was to rethink the role of the father not in terms of disburdening wives and mothers but of developing what was vaguely described as a “new quality of family life.”<sup>39</sup> Several authors, such as the educationalist Rosemarie Walther, who was the deputy chair of the communist women’s organization Demokratischer Frauenbund Deutschlands (DFD), argued for fathers’ involvement in early childcare.<sup>40</sup> However, they criticized using ‘help’ to describe men’s envisioned domestic role for the same reason, *viz.*, it reinforced the idea that housework and childcare were naturally women’s responsibilities.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, they emphasized that household and children should be shared responsibilities.

This idea was not new; it was included in the notion of equality inscribed in the East German constitution of October 1949.<sup>42</sup> In the following year, the principles of the equal rights of spouses and shared parental authority were codified in a law on the rights of women and the protection of mothers and children.<sup>43</sup> The family code of 1965 reaffirmed that “both spouses have a share in the education and care of children as well as in the management of the household.”<sup>44</sup>

The media frequently stressed that shared responsibility was a feature of the new socialist family. In late 1964, while preparing the new family code, East Germany’s Council of Ministers proposed a publication about the socialist family, whose aim was to “repudiate the argument of many husbands that the mother has to do the main share of childcare” and encourage the “shared responsibility of both spouses for children’s education.”<sup>45</sup> Educationalists also insisted that children’s education was a shared task of both parents.<sup>46</sup> And the authors of a handbook for married couples wrote that contraception and family planning were the equal concern of both spouses “because *both* are having a child.”<sup>47</sup>

Though it was made clear that both parents should share the responsibilities of the family, how to implement the new pattern and how fathers would benefit from it was not. The key phrase was “new quality of family life,” and this new quality should strengthen the family’s educational potential by allowing all of its members to develop and exploit their personalities (*Persönlichkeitsentwicklung*).<sup>48</sup>

Anita Grandke, a legal scholar who headed the Academy of Sciences’ research group *Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft* from 1964 to 1968 and became a professor of family law at the Humboldt University in Berlin in 1967, made one attempt to explicate these matters. According to her, the “new family” was a space for the development and self-fulfillment of both spouses. It was also characterized, in Grandke’s view, by a “conscious parenthood,” which was constituted by both partners desiring children, planning their family, and sharing responsibility for it.<sup>49</sup> Thus, conscious parenthood, and the wanted child (*Wunschkind*) it produced, expressed trust in society and led to a “meaningful life” and happiness.<sup>50</sup>

Conscious parenthood was also important for educators, physicians, and psychologists involved in sex education. For example, the physician Karl-Heinz Mehlan, who was well known for promoting contraception and the legalization of abortion, argued that because of the “insufficient preparation of men for fatherhood”<sup>51</sup> sex education had to include instruction on conscious parenthood.

In the late 1970s and the 1980s, suggestions for implementing the father’s new role became more concrete. What is more, these suggestions pertained to such a range of behavior that authors of the period claimed that “(aside from birthing and breast-feeding) there is hardly any activity in which the man cannot assume the traditional female function.”<sup>52</sup> Thus, fathers were encouraged to participate in specific childcare activities. One example was pushing the baby carriage. In an article in April 1949, Elly Niebuhr challenged the perception

of a father pushing a baby carriage as a “henpecked husband.”<sup>53</sup> By the early 1970s, among the changes that the authors of a handbook for married couples observed was that “a young father, pushing the baby carriage – formerly the archetype of a fool – does not cause any stir.”<sup>54</sup> Another recommendation was that the father joined the mother in daily talking and singing to and playing and laughing with their infant.<sup>55</sup>

Fathers were also advised to involve themselves in the pregnancy, birth, and care for the newborn. Karl-Heinz Mehlan intended his proposed “preparation for fatherhood,” which included instruction on these matters, to familiarize men with their new role as fathers and new family tasks.<sup>56</sup>

Discussion of fathers’ presence in the delivery room began gradually in the 1970s, as more and more hospitals allowed men to accompany their wives during birth. Authors emphasized the particularly emotional moment of birth and explained how the father’s presence enhanced his relationship with his child.<sup>57</sup> His involvement in the pregnancy and delivery also benefitted the woman. The pediatrician Heinrich Brückner proposed that fathers take on more of the housework right after the birth so that the mother could regain her strength and dedicate herself to nursing. “In this way, men can also ‘breast-feed,’” he concluded.<sup>58</sup>

### Still believing in utopia? Future fatherhood and the creation of a socialist youth

The overwhelming majority of concrete propositions for creating socialist fathers—be they from the 1960s, the 1970s, or the 1980s—pertained to the boys who would be fathers in the future. Indeed, one of the main arguments for a new socialist family was that such families would bring up a new socialist youth. According to the educational psychologists Kabat vel Job and Arnold Pinther at Leipzig’s Central Institute for Youth Research, socialist society’s “main interest” in the family was the “influence that the family exerts upon the

communist education of the young generation.”<sup>59</sup> And taking full advantage of the family’s influence required the father’s daily participation in the care and education of his children, as Anita Grandke argued.<sup>60</sup>

Politicians, sociologists, sexologists, and educationalists all pinned their hopes for gender equality on children and youth. Because their hopes were future directed, they contained a utopian element. In a similar vein, advice literature for young parents frequently appealed to readers to be models of equality for their children to emulate, for, as the educationalist Herbert Zerle put it, “just as the father behaves toward the mother, so the son will probably behave towards his wife.”<sup>61</sup> Werner Strasberg and Ursula Rohde, legal scholars who specialized in divorce legislation, identified the unequal division of domestic duties as a major cause of marital conflict and, thus, the high divorce rate.<sup>62</sup> They believed that the solution lay in preparing the next generation for marriage and family, the most important factor in which was the parental example.<sup>63</sup> The sexologist Kurt Richard Bach argued that one of the objectives of East German sex education was to prepare young people to become parents who, “thanks to their exemplary behavior and a good education,” would prepare their children for equal, socialist marital partnerships.<sup>64</sup> Uta Bruhm-Schlegel and Otmar Kabat vel Job stressed more than other authors the “considerable educational relevance” of the “normal” everyday behavior of parents who share domestic duties equally, support each other, and share responsibility for their children.<sup>65</sup> In a similar vein, the educationalist Rolf Borrmann emphasized, “More important than talking [about family roles] is setting an example in the way one lives that convinces others to follow it.” (“*Wichtiger als Reden ist das ‘Vorleben,’ das zum ‘Nachleben’ hinreißt.*”) <sup>66</sup> Authors like these believed in the ability of the young to overcome traditional gender arrangements in the future.

However, according to an internal document of the East German marital counseling centers from the 1960s, “[t]he role of the man as lord and ruler at home and the role of the

woman as a patient sufferer... still runs, if we are honest, through the minds of a lot of younger people.” Therefore, the document continues, “we should set a better example for our youth by achieving complete harmony in marriage and family” and mutual respect between the sexes.<sup>67</sup> Rolf Borrmann also criticized parents for the example they set, citing surveys of young East Germans from the 1960s in which less than 50 percent of respondents said that their parents were a role model for partnership and marriage.<sup>68</sup> Beginning in the 1970s, several authors stressed, perhaps in response to these findings, the importance of parents as role models, particularly for children to learn about fatherly involvement in the household and childcare. And child researchers and educationalists agreed that paternal care enhanced trust between the generations.

The discussion about parents as role models was not apolitical. According to the educational scientist Rosemarie Walther, a father’s involvement in childcare also made it more likely that children would follow their parents’ “civic example,”<sup>69</sup> which in the East German context meant loyalty to the communist state and party. Thus, the highest party officials, including Erich Honecker, asserted that it was the duty of parents to teach their children “civic responsibility” (*staatsbürgerliche Verantwortung*).<sup>70</sup>

In the following three sections, I look at what scholars in the fields of early childhood psychology, family education, and sex education said about preparing boys and young men for marriage and fatherhood. In particular, I consider three subjects that were discussed as part of the preparation for fatherhood: implementing gender equality in early childhood, children’s participation in household chores, and sex education.

### *Early childhood*

Recognizing that gender was a social construct was a significant input to the discussion about the family’s education of young children. Erna Scharnhorst, an

educationalist and one-time teacher, stressed that gender is culturally constructed, and she considered that a tenet of socialist thought. In 1970, she wrote, “The idea that the mental features of man and woman are not determined by biology, but by history . . . , becomes more and more accepted among Marxist philosophers, psychologists and educationalists.”<sup>71</sup> Marxist social psychologists had defended the historical determination of gender since the late 1950s. For example, Hans Hiebsch and Manfred Vorweg, major figures in East German social psychology, claimed in their seminal introduction to Marxist social psychology (published in 1966 and reprinted 10 times) that no differences in the behavior of men and women nor in the division of labor between them could be explained by “original,” i.e., biological, differences.<sup>72</sup> In their introduction to child psychology several years earlier, Günter Clauß and Hans Hiebsch used gender stereotypes as examples of socially “learned” perceptions and behavior.<sup>73</sup> For instance, the fact that men express their emotions less than women was the result of the “constant emotional conditioning” (*Affektdressur*) to which boys were exposed from early childhood.<sup>74</sup> Clauß and Hiebsch also denied the “maternal instinct,” in terms of which emphatically “bourgeois” psychology explained women’s particular interest in caregiving.<sup>75</sup> And studies of behavior in school showed that gender differences, e.g., in obedience, were not the result of biology but of culture and history, that is to say, of stereotypes of “true boys” as undisciplined and girls as well behaved.<sup>76</sup>

These and similar findings were part of a larger discussion in Marxist psychology and educational science in the 1960s about the dialectical relation between biological and social factors in personality development.<sup>77</sup> According to the well-known sexologist and psychotherapist Siegfried Schnabl, the individual’s personality was not a “biological destiny.”<sup>78</sup> So, the social, cultural, and historical understanding of gender fit perfectly the Marxist understanding of human personality as determined by social relations. It justified socialist authors in criticizing “bourgeois” psychology as biologically reductionist.<sup>79</sup> And it

justified optimism about the future. Erna Scharnhorst recalled how under socialism this understanding of gender relations increased the confidence among East-German educationalists that the new social and political conditions would transform the society's gender arrangements.<sup>80</sup>

Thus, several books, such as *Unsere Familie (Our Family)*, a marriage handbook first published in 1973 and reissued six times until 1989, emphasized that educating children to live in ways that respected gender equality should begin early.<sup>81</sup> They adduced children's choice of toys and role play to support that claim. For example, observations of children in families and daycare confirmed that girls primarily played with dolls and played the role of mothers caring for babies, cleaning the house, and cooking. Researchers from different fields argued that such early gender differences influenced the development of the child's personality.<sup>82</sup> Uta Bruhm-Schlegel and Otmar Kabat vel Job, for instance, pointed out that in playing with dolls children developed their social emotions and the ability to form relationships.<sup>83</sup> On the basis of such findings, Erna Scharnhorst held that it was important for boys to play with dolls to develop affective capacities and girls with building blocks and cars to develop technical skills.<sup>84</sup> And the sociologist Hildegard Maria Nickel, who in the 1980s investigated how the family socialized children into their gender roles, proposed a new model for the education of boys, who "have a right to have their 'social' faculties developed more emphatically."<sup>85</sup> For the same reason, educational scientists concerned with childcare facilities, such as Netti Christensen, called on daycare workers and nursery school teachers to ensure that in play "every child respects the norms of socialist morality in the relations between the different roles."<sup>86</sup> So, they should encourage play in which "father" and "mother" were both in charge of everyday household tasks,<sup>87</sup> and boys should be encouraged to play with dolls and girls with cars and building blocks in order to erase the distinction between "girls' toys" and "boys' toys."<sup>88</sup> Again, these educational recommendations were clearly

oriented towards the future, for this “equal” education of boys would better prepare them for future fatherhood and participation in childcare and domestic duties.<sup>89</sup>

### *Household chores*

Studies that the Central Institute for Youth Research in Leipzig conducted in the 1970s and 1980s showed that young people increasingly accepted the ideas of an equal partnership and division of housework.<sup>90</sup> Of course, self-reported values did not always match behavior. The Institute’s director, the sociologist and sexologist Kurt Starke, addressed this possibility in summarizing the data from several surveys of East German youth from the 1970s and early 1980s: “The traditional views do not influence the choice of one’s partner anymore, despite how difficult it may be to overcome them in everyday married life and replace them with something new and better.”<sup>91</sup> The authors of a marriage handbook from the early 1970s agreed that “nobody” still seriously asserted that household, family, and childcare were “women’s matters.” Yet, the participation of men in domestic work was “unsatisfactory,” with women still performing 80 percent of the household chores.<sup>92</sup> The authors did not blame men for their unwillingness to contribute; their explanation of the persistence of traditional attitudes was that the education of boys kept them away from housework.

Similarly, Helmut Stolz, the author of the handbook *Autorität und Elternliebe* (*Authority and Parental Love*), first published in 1967 and reissued eight times until 1987, explained that parents tended, often unconsciously, to treat their children differently depending on their sex—for example, they urged daughters to help with housework and sons to do better in mathematics. Stolz warned against such “pushing” of children into gender roles.<sup>93</sup> In fact, a number of studies showed that families expected girls to help around the house much more than boys.<sup>94</sup> Numerous authors criticized such differential treatment as “unjustified”<sup>95</sup> and argued that boys and girls should participate in the daily duties “in the



same way.”<sup>96</sup> So, parents should check that they don’t assign girls more of the housework than boys.<sup>97</sup> Advice literature for young people and for parents gave different examples of how to entice boys to participate. In particular, involving boys in caregiving, both with younger siblings and with dolls in play, was recommended.<sup>98</sup> Thus, many authors saw children’s, and particularly boys’, participation in everyday domestic duties from an early age not only as part of educating them to value work and to feel a responsibility towards the collective—both goals of socialist educational theories—but also as part of their learning to live in ways that accord with the equality of men and women.<sup>99</sup> Authors of advice literature considered participation in household chores important for the development of the child’s personality, autonomy, and sense of responsibility and, again, for preparing the child to conduct his or her future household and raise his or her family in accord with the principle of gender equality.<sup>100</sup>

However, Erna Scharnhorst and others identified the father’s failure to share the housework with the mother as an obstacle to the socialization of boys.<sup>101</sup> Therefore, authors again stressed the importance of the parental example. For girls and boys to learn “in a similar way” to manage a household, they had to see their parents living in an equal partnership. “The children should witness that the father feels as responsible for the needs of the household and the childcare as the mother does.”<sup>102</sup>

### *Sex education*

Comprehensive sex education beginning in early childhood and open discussion of sexuality was considered “one of the key achievements of a developed socialist society.”<sup>103</sup> In some aspects, East German sex education was more liberal as it was in West Germany, for instance in tolerating premarital intercourse already in the 1950s or in acknowledging that sexuality does not only serve procreation, but also pleasure.<sup>104</sup> Nevertheless, it developed its

own—socialist—type of a deeply heteronormative “sexual conservatism,”<sup>105</sup> maintaining that sex (even premarital) would lead, sooner or later, to marriage and family. Even if East German sex education preserved a kind of liberal approach towards intimacy, sexuality, and sexual pleasure, it thus always included what Kurt Richard Bach called “Family Life Education.”<sup>106</sup> Bach borrowed the term ‘Family Life Education’ from the International Planned Parenthood Federation, with which East German sexologists were affiliated. Bach emphasized that the principles of equal rights (“*Gleichberechtigung*”) and equal responsibility (“*Gleichverpflichtung*”) should characterize sex, birth control, family life, and childcare.<sup>107</sup> Therefore, he and Heinz Grassel, an educational psychologist and author of sex education handbooks for parents, argued that sex education should be an integral “part of the education of socialist personalities and, thereby, part of an education that leads to equality between the partners.”<sup>108</sup>

The youth law of 1974 also had the goal of educating young people to become “socialist personalities.” It made it the duty of the state; schools; parents; and organizations, such as the Free German Youth, to help young people prepare themselves for marriage, family, and the care and education of children by developing “socialist behavior.”<sup>109</sup>

In East German schools, sex education was made mandatory for different grades. Kurt Richard Bach developed a sex education curriculum for the Polytechnische Oberschule, which all children attended from the ages of 6 to 16. His curriculum included biology and anatomy with love and marriage, hetero- and homosexuality, family planning and contraception, infant care, principles of child education, and problems in implementing equality between men and women.<sup>110</sup> Bach’s objective was to establish sex education as cross-curricular, though he acknowledged that it was hard to overcome the “dominance of biology” (“*Biologielastrigkeit*”), that is, not to treat sex education merely as a biological subject.<sup>111</sup> Nevertheless, his curriculum included classes for male and female adolescents on

cooking, household management, and baby care.<sup>112</sup> These courses were meant to prepare young people for the “essential components of everyday life in marriage and family,” which were often the cause of marital conflict.

### Conclusion

The struggle for equality between men and women in East Germany acquired a new dynamic in the 1960s. Though it was believed that equality had been achieved in the workplace and the law, politicians, sociologists, educationalists, psychologists, physicians, and others were well aware of the persisting inequalities in domestic life. And though equality was considered to be a women’s issue in the early phase of socialism, men should now play their part in realizing it. To be able to do that, they should be “re-educated.” And their “re-education” should begin at an early age. It would occur mainly in daycare, the family, and sex education in school but also through publications for young people and parents.

From the 1960s on, men were increasingly targeted to implement equality in marriage and parenting. In the last two decades of socialism in East Germany, the vague idea of shared responsibility for childcare and the household included in the law since the late 1940s, was made more concrete in terms of the daily tasks a father should perform. As these included childcare, the new fatherhood denied that childcare was the “natural” responsibility of women and, thus, challenged traditional gender stereotypes.

Although I have investigated theoretical reflections and debates, we should not neglect the impact these representations had in shaping everyday practices. Certainly, the contemporary surveys and scholarly studies that have concluded that “[a]ttitudes to the domestic division of labour...proved remarkably resistant to change”<sup>113</sup> are numerous. For instance, an East German survey from 1982 demonstrated that married women with children

spent three times more time on household chores than their husbands.<sup>114</sup> Nevertheless, there was definitely change, as female work was increasingly considered normal and, thus, so was men's participation in the household. In particular, men's daily involvement in childcare, for instance, playing with and teaching children, taking them to and picking them up from daycare, and attending parent's evenings increased, as several surveys proved.<sup>115</sup> For Mary Fulbrook, these changing attitudes were part of "at least incipient generational shifts."<sup>116</sup> Indeed, from the 1960s on, women more frequently cited the lack of equality of the sexes as grounds for divorce, and divorce courts "increasingly saw their role as part of the country's modernization drive to confront patriarchal attitudes and male 'egotism' at home."<sup>117</sup> The historians Anja Schröter and Eva Schäffler also identified a trend in divorce proceedings towards a more active attitude of fathers. From the 1970s on, fathers openly criticized the courts' practice of almost automatically giving mothers custody of children<sup>118</sup> and increasingly sought child custody, especially in the late 1980s.<sup>119</sup> These generational shifts became still more apparent after the collapse of communism. Recent sociological surveys show that even decades after German reunification fathers' involvement in early childcare and participation in household duties remain common values among East German men, in clear contrast to their "traditional" West German counterparts.<sup>120</sup>

The direct impact of the East German struggle for socialist fatherhood is difficult to evaluate, for a truly social and everyday history of fatherhood in the GDR is still missing. Nevertheless, the debates I have analyzed in this study show an early attempt to challenge gender stereotypes and put forward a new understanding of fatherhood. Admittedly, this was mostly a concern of marginal groups in East German society and remained largely theoretical. Nonetheless, as these recent sociological surveys suggest, the long-term continuities are still visible.

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<sup>1</sup> For a concise and instructive discussion of the approach towards men in the private sphere, see Raffaella Sarti, “Men at Home: Domesticities, Authority, Emotions and Work (Thirteenth – Twentieth Centuries),” *Gender & History* 27, no. 3 (2015): 521–58.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Fulbrook, *The People’s State. East German Society from Hitler to Honecker* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 141.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.; Klaus Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat. Geschichte und Strukturen der DDR 1949–1990*, 3<sup>rd</sup> rev. ed. (Köln: Böhlau, 2013), 694; Donna Harsch, *Revenge of the Domestic. Women, the Family, and Communism in the German Democratic Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 231.

<sup>4</sup> *Enhancing the Role of Women in the Building of a Developed Socialist Society. Decision of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party of March 6, 1973* (Sofia: Sofia Press, 1973), 30.

<sup>5</sup> “Náměty k práci tisku, rozhlasu a televise,” n.d. [early 1960s], Národní archiv České republiky, Prague, f. 1261/2/2, a.j. 369, fol. 17–18.

<sup>6</sup> “Einschätzung der illustrierten Zeitschrift ‘Für Dich,’ Berlin,” 22 April 1965 (Anlage II zum Protokoll 3/1965 über die Sitzung der Frauenkommission beim Politbüro vom 4. Mai 1965, Berlin, 10 May 1965), Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv, Berlin (hereafter, SAPMO-BArch), DY/30/70814.

<sup>7</sup> Helene Carlböck, “Fatherly Emotions in Soviet Russia,” *Baltic Worlds* 10, no. 1–2 (2017): 20–29; Claire E. McCallum, *The Fate of the New Man. Representing and Reconstructing Masculinity in Soviet Visual Culture, 1945–1965* (Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2018), especially 160–92.

<sup>8</sup> Karen Petrone, “Masculinity and Heroism in Imperial and Soviet Military-Patriotic Cultures,” in *Russian Masculinities in History and Culture*, ed. Barbara Evans Clements, Rebecca Friedman, and Dan Healey (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 172–193. For the

fantasies of virility and, simultaneously, the representations of wounded and mutilated male bodies, see Lilya Kaganovsky, *How the Soviet Man was Unmade. Cultural Fantasy and Male Subjectivity under Stalin* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> Éva Fodor, “Smiling Women and Fighting Men. The Gender of the Communist Subject in State Socialist Hungary,” *Gender and Society* 16, no. 2 (2002): 240–63, here 241.

<sup>10</sup> For the numerous representations of bricklayers as symbols for the building of a new society in the early period of socialism, see Dietlind Hüchtker, “Traktoristinnen, Rockstars und der polnische James Dean. Die Performativität popkultureller Geschlechterbilder in der Volksrepublik Polen,” *L’Homme* 29, no. 1 (2018): 87–105.

<sup>11</sup> Sylka Scholz, “Everyday Socialist Heroes and Hegemonic Masculinity in the German Democratic Republic, 1949–1989,” in *Extraordinary Ordinarity. Everyday Heroism in the United States, Germany, and Britain, 1800–2015*, ed. Simon Wendt (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2016), 185–215.

<sup>12</sup> Rainer Gries, “Die Heldenbühne der DDR. Zur Einführung,” in *Sozialistische Helden. Eine Kulturgeschichte von Propagandafiguren in Osteuropa und der DDR*, ed. Silke Satjukow and Rainer Gries (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2002), 84–100.

<sup>13</sup> Silke Satjukow and Rainer Gries, “Zur Konstruktion des ‘sozialistischen Helden’. Geschichte und Bedeutung,” in *Sozialistische Helden. Eine Kulturgeschichte von Propagandafiguren in Osteuropa und der DDR*, ed. Silke Satjukow and Rainer Gries (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2002), 15–34, here 27.

<sup>14</sup> Ewa Mazierska, *Masculinities in Polish, Czech and Slovak Cinema. Black Peters and Men of Marble* (New York: Berghahn, 2008), 106.

<sup>15</sup> Libora Oates-Indruchová, “The Void of Acceptable Masculinity During Czech State Socialism: The Case of Radek John’s Memento,” *Men and Masculinities* 8, no. 4 (2006): 428–50.

<sup>16</sup> See, also about the “transformation” of Paul’s masculinity at the end of the film, Irene Dölling, “‘Wir alle lieben Paula, aber uns liegt an Paul.’ Wie über die ‘Weiblichkeit’ einer Arbeiterin der ‘sozialistische Mensch’ konstruiert wird. Analyse des Films ‘Die Legende von Paul und Paula’,” *Potsdamer Studien zur Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung* 1, no. 2 (1997): 73–109.

<sup>17</sup> Hüchtker, “Traktoristinnen, Rockstars und der polnische James Dean.” For a gender history of the dissident movement with a special focus on masculinities, see, very recently, Anna Muller, “Masculinity and Dissidence in Eastern Europe in the 1980s,” in *Gender in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Eastern Europe and the USSR*, ed. Catherine Baker (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 185–200.

<sup>18</sup> Oates-Indruchová, “The Void of Acceptable Masculinity.”

<sup>19</sup> For the post-Stalinist Soviet Union, see McCallum, *The Fate of the New Man*, 160–92, and Carlbäck, “Fatherly Emotions;” for the GDR, see Ina Merkel, *... und Du, Frau an der Werkbank* (Berlin: Elefant Press, 1990), 166–67.

<sup>20</sup> Ben Griffin, “Hegemonic Masculinity as a Historical Problem,” *Gender and History* 30, no. 2 (2018): 377–400.

<sup>21</sup> See the seminal work of Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution. Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917–1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Cf. also Anna Krylova’s very recent contribution to the discussion, stressing the non-linear evolution of “socialist feminism” and its contradictions: Anna Krylova, “Bolshevik Feminism and Gender. Agendas of Communism,” in *The Cambridge History of Communism, vol. 1: World Revolution and Socialism in One Country 1917–1941*, ed. Silvio Pons and Stephen A. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 424–48.

<sup>22</sup> For a recent discussion of the state of research, see Donna Harsch, “Communism and Women,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, ed. Stephen Anthony Smith

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 488–504. For the making of “new” women, see e.g. Brigitte Studer, “La femme nouvelle,” in *Le siècle des communismes*, rev. ed., ed. Michel Dreyfus, Bruno Groppo, Claudio Sergio Ingerflom, Roland Lew, Claude Penetier, Bernard Pudal, and Serge Wolikow (Paris: Éditions de l’Atelier, 2004), 565–81.

<sup>23</sup> Cf., for instance, Harsch, *Revenge*, 165–235; Anna Kaminsky, *Frauen in der DDR* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2016), 98–140.

<sup>24</sup> Holger Brandes, “Hegemonic Masculinities in East and West Germany (German Democratic Republic and Federal Republic of Germany),” *Men and Masculinities* 10, no. 2 (2007): 178–196; Sylka Scholz, “‘Sozialistische Helden.’ Hegemoniale Männlichkeit in der DDR,” in *Postsozialistische Männlichkeiten in einer globalisierten Welt*, ed. Sylka Scholz and Weertje Willms (Berlin: Lit, 2008), 1–35.

<sup>25</sup> See, for instance, *The Politics of Gender Culture under State Socialism. An Expropriated Voice*, ed. Hana Havelková and Libora Oates-Indruchová (London: Routledge, 2014); Kateřina Lišková, *Sexual Liberation, Socialist Style. Communist Czechoslovakia and the Science of Desire, 1945–1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

<sup>26</sup> Mary Fulbrook identified what she called the often underestimated “genuine desire for female emancipation, which was a permanent, if at times submerged, strand running through SED thinking.” Fulbrook, *The People’s State*, 173.

<sup>27</sup> Joachim S. Hohmann, “Einleitung. Geschichte, Ziele, Leistungen und Perspektiven der Sexuologie in der DDR,” in *Sexuologie in der DDR*, ed. Joachim S. Hohmann (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1991), 9–50, here 18.

<sup>28</sup> Roger Chartier, “The Meaning of Representation,” *Books and Ideas*, 25 August 2014, accessed 4 June, 2018, <http://www.booksandideas.net/The-Meaning-of-Representation.html>.

<sup>29</sup> One has to keep in mind that gender equality was one of the issues where shortcomings could have been addressed openly. The political scientist Christiane Lemke is certainly right



in stressing the new quality that these open critiques acquired in the late 1970s and 1980s as a result of the publication of several collections of interviews (the so-called 'Protokolle').

However, she does not mention the diverse critiques (of scholars, politicians, and the media) that had been formulated well before and, particularly, in the 1960s. Christiane Lemke, *Die Ursachen des Umbruchs 1989: Politische Sozialisation in der ehemaligen DDR* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1991), 232.

<sup>30</sup> [Inge Lange], "Referat für die propagandistische Veranstaltung der KL Berlin-Mitte," 12 May 1971, SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/70508, fol. 1–50, here fol. 45.

<sup>31</sup> "Lektion der Genossin Inge Lange, Kandidat des Politbüros und Sekretär des Zentralkomitees, auf dem Lehrgang mit den Vorsitzenden der Frauenkommissionen bei den Bezirks- und Kreisleitungen der Partei an der Sonderschule des ZK 'Karl Liebknecht' in Kleinmachnow, 21. - 26. September 1981 zum Thema: 'Der X. Parteitag der SED zur weiteren Gestaltung der entwickelten sozialistischen Gesellschaft in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik und die sich daraus ergebenden Aufgaben für die Arbeit mit den Frauen'," 17 September 1981, SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/70539, fol. 10–90, here fol. 70.

<sup>32</sup> "Entwurf der Disposition für die Lektion auf dem Lehrgang mit den Vorsitzenden der Frauenkommissionen der Bezirks- und Kreisleitungen im Oktober 1974 in Kleinmachnow," 6 August 1974, SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/70538, fol. 1–10, here fol. 8; "Eröffnungslektion der Genossin Inge Lange, Kandidat des Politbüros und Sekretär des ZK, auf dem Lehrgang mit den Vorsitzenden der Frauenkommissionen bei den Bezirks- und Kreisleitungen der Partei an der Parteischule 'Karl Liebknecht' in Kleinmachnow vom 26. bis 30. Oktober 1987. Thema: 'Zur Verwirklichung der Beschlüsse des XI. Parteitages – Aufgaben, Ergebnisse und Erfahrungen in der Arbeit mit den Frauen'," SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/70540, fol. 95–201, here fol. 170.

- <sup>33</sup> “Rede der Genossin Inge Lange auf einer Propagandistischen Veranstaltung der SED Stadtleitung Leipzig,” 28 February 1980, SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/70541, p. 40.
- <sup>34</sup> Untitled document, handwritten: “[Vortrag Inge Langes] Gehalten auf einer Großveranstaltung zum I.F. [internationalen Frauentag] 1966 in Zwickau,” 4 March 1966, SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/70506, fol. 71–88, here fol. 84.
- <sup>35</sup> Anita Grandke, Gerhard Misgeld, and Rosemarie Walther, eds., *Unsere Familie. Ratgeber für jung und alt* (Leipzig: Verlag für die Frau, 1973), 29.
- <sup>36</sup> Uta Bruhm-Schlegel and Otmar Kabat vel Job, *Junge Frauen heute. Wie sie sind – was sie wollen*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Verlag für die Frau, 1981), 91.
- <sup>37</sup> “Analyse des Standes der wissenschaftlichen Arbeit zum Problem ‘Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft’,” 27 April 1965, SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/70814.
- <sup>38</sup> Erna Scharnhorst, *Süppchen kochen... Zeitung lesen... Erziehung zur Gleichberechtigung* (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1970), 11.
- <sup>39</sup> “Analyse des Standes der wissenschaftlichen Arbeit zum Problem ‘Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft’,” 27 April 1965, SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/70814.
- <sup>40</sup> Rosemarie Walther, “Die Erziehung in der Familie als Bestandteil sozialistischer Lebensweise,” *Einheit* 26, no. 9 (1971): 986–97, here 990.
- <sup>41</sup> “Analyse des Standes der wissenschaftlichen Arbeit zum Problem ‘Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft’,” 27 April 1965, SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/70814.
- <sup>42</sup> Verfassung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik vom 7. Oktober 1949, Article 7, <http://www.verfassungen.de/de/ddr/ddr49-i.htm> (accessed 4 June, 2018).
- <sup>43</sup> Gesetz über den Mutter- und Kinderschutz und die Rechte der Frau, 27 September 1950, § 14, <http://www.verfassungen.de/de/ddr/mutterkindgesetz50.htm> (accessed 4 June 2018).
- <sup>44</sup> Familiengesetzbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 20 December 1965, § 10, <http://www.verfassungen.de/de/ddr/familiengesetzbuch65.htm> (accessed 4 June 2018).

<sup>45</sup> “Entwurf. Thematischer Plan für eine langfristige publizistische Arbeit zur Rolle der Familie und der positiven Einstellung zum Kind in unserem sozialistischen Staat,” n.d. [December 1964], SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/96433.

<sup>46</sup> Rosemarie Walther, “Familienbeziehungen und Erziehung der Kinder,” *Einheit* 34, no. 11 (1979): 1157–65, here 1160.

<sup>47</sup> Grandke, Misgeld, and Walther, *Unsere Familie*, 62 (emphasis in original); Scharnhorst, *Süppchen kochen*, 17.

<sup>48</sup> Anita Grandke, “Zur Entwicklung von Ehe und Familie,” in *Zur gesellschaftlichen Stellung der Frau in der DDR. Sammelband*, ed. Herta Kuhrig and Wulfram Speigner (Leipzig: Verlag für die Frau, 1978), 229–53, here 235.

<sup>49</sup> Anita Grandke, “Gutachtliche Stellungnahme,” in *Sozialistische Beziehungen in Familien und Hausgemeinschaften bewußter gestalten. Materialien der Sitzung des Verfassungs- und Rechtsausschusses der Volkskammer der DDR vom 24. Februar 1971* (Aus der Tätigkeit der Volkskammer und ihrer Ausschüsse, Heft 21, 5. Wahlperiode 1971) (n.p. [Berlin]: Staatsverlag der DDR, 1971), 55–63, here 58.

<sup>50</sup> Anita Grandke, *Familienförderung als gesellschaftliche und staatliche Aufgabe* (Berlin: Staatsverlag der DDR, 1981), 17–18.

<sup>51</sup> K.-H. Mehlan, “Die Familienplanung aus gesellschaftlicher Sicht,” n.d. [1960s], SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/96432.

<sup>52</sup> Arnold Pinther, *Mit dir leben. Kleine Eheschule für junge Verheiratete und solche, die es werden möchten* (Leipzig: Verlag für die Frau, 1984), 52.

<sup>53</sup> Elly Niebuhr, “Wenn der Vater einen Kinderwagen schiebt,” *Die Frau von heute*, no. 8 (1949): 22–23.

<sup>54</sup> Grandke, Misgeld, and Walther, *Unsere Familie*, 184.

<sup>55</sup> Pinther, *Mit dir leben*, 94. For the importance of fatherly presence and fathers spending time with their children, see Otto Ernst Kurz, *Kleines Elternbuch. Gespräche mit Eltern über Familienerziehung* (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1959), 15–16.

<sup>56</sup> K.-H. Mehlan, “Die Familienplanung aus gesellschaftlicher Sicht,” n.d. [1960s], SAPMO-BArch, DY/30/96432; cf. also Wolfgang Polte, *Unsere Ehe*, 5th ed. (Leipzig: Verlag für die Frau, 1975), 275, 290–91; Rudolf Neubert, *Das Kleinkind. Zur Erziehung in der Familie*, 6th ed. (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1975), 19–25.

<sup>57</sup> Thea Koberstein and Horst Wagner, ed., *Kinder in unserem Land*, (Leipzig: Verlag für die Frau, 1979); Heinrich Brückner, *Ein Kind wird erwartet*, 3rd rev. ed. (Leipzig: Verlag für die Frau, 1986), 129–31.

<sup>58</sup> Brückner, *Ein Kind wird erwartet*, 169, 171.

<sup>59</sup> Otmar Kabat vel Job and Arnold Pinther, *Jugend und Familie. Familiäre Faktoren der Persönlichkeitsentwicklung Jugendlicher* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1981), 30.

<sup>60</sup> Grandke, “Zur Entwicklung von Ehe und Familie,” 235.

<sup>61</sup> Herbert Zerle, *Sozialistisch leben. Arbeitsmoral. Familienmoral. Erziehung* (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1964), 125.

<sup>62</sup> Indeed, opinion surveys indicated that the lack of willingness to contribute to housework was one of the main reasons for marital conflicts in the GDR. Arnold Pinther, “Familien- und junge Eheforschung,” in *Das Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung Leipzig 1966–1990. Geschichte, Methoden, Erkenntnisse*, ed. Walter Friedrich, Peter Förster, and Kurt Starke (Berlin: Edition Ost, 1999), 420–29, here 427.

<sup>63</sup> Werner Strasberg and Ursula Rohde, *Liebe ade – scheiden tut weh. Über Familienrechte und Familienpflichten* (Berlin: Staatsverlag der DDR, 1988), 23.

- <sup>64</sup> Kurt Richard Bach, “Grundpositionen und Ziele der Sexualerziehung in der DDR,” in Hohmann, *Sexuologie in der DDR*, 239–61, here 241; cf. also Grandke, “Zur Entwicklung von Ehe und Familie,” 234.
- <sup>65</sup> Bruhm-Schlegel and Kabat vel Job, *Junge Frauen heute*, 89–90.
- <sup>66</sup> Rolf Borrmann, *Jugend und Liebe. Die Beziehungen der Jugendlichen zum anderen Geschlecht*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Urania-Verlag, 1966), 227.
- <sup>67</sup> Untitled document [document, probably from Elfriede Paul, concerning the work of the marital counselling centres], n.d. [1960s], Bundesarchiv Berlin, NY 4229/32, fol. 26–30, here fol. 29–30.
- <sup>68</sup> Borrmann, *Jugend und Liebe*, 225.
- <sup>69</sup> Walther, “Die Erziehung in der Familie,” 990.
- <sup>70</sup> Erich Honecker, *Bericht des Zentralkomitees der SED an den IX. Parteitag der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (Dresden: Zeit im Bild, [1976]), 132.
- <sup>71</sup> Scharnhorst, *Süppchen kochen*, 34; among many others, cf. also Bruhm-Schlegel and Kabat vel Job, *Junge Frauen heute*, notably 91.
- <sup>72</sup> Hans Hiebsch and Manfred Vorweg, *Einführung in die marxistische Sozialpsychologie*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1967), 81–84.
- <sup>73</sup> The East German psychologist Heinz Dannhauer referred to Hiebsch, Vorweg, and others in further developing this idea that interiorizing gender roles was a “learning process.” Heinz Dannhauer, *Geschlecht und Persönlichkeit. Eine Untersuchung zur psychischen Geschlechtsdifferenzierung in der Ontogenese* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1973), especially 77–96.
- <sup>74</sup> Günter Clauß and Hans Hiebsch, *Kinderpsychologie*, 4th rev. ed. (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1962), 83.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

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<sup>76</sup> Karlheinz Otto, “Psychische Geschlechtsunterschiede im Kindes- und Jugendalter,” in *Frau und Wissenschaft. Referate und ausgewählte Beiträge*, ed. Anita Grandke (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1968), 115–18, here 117.

<sup>77</sup> See Christiane Lemke, *Persönlichkeit und Gesellschaft. Zur Theorie der Persönlichkeit in der DDR*, (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1980), 98–104; for an important contribution to this debate, see Irene Dölling, “Biologische Konstitution und sozialistische Persönlichkeitsentwicklung,” *Weimarer Beiträge* 20, no. 11 (1974): 97–126

<sup>78</sup> Siegfried Schnabl, *Intimverhalten. Sexualstörungen. Persönlichkeit* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1972), 383.

<sup>79</sup> Schnabl, *Intimverhalten*, 383; Clauß and Hiebsch, *Kinderpsychologie*, 227; Otto, “Psychische Geschlechtsunterschiede,” 117.

<sup>80</sup> Erna Scharnhorst, “Die Geschlechterfrage in der Pädagogik der DDR,” in *Geschlechterverhältnisse und die Pädagogik*, ed. Ulla Bracht and Dieter Keiner [= Jahrbuch für Pädagogik 1994] (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1994), 43–68, here 47.

<sup>81</sup> Grandke, Misgeld, and Walther, *Unsere Familie*, 166.

<sup>82</sup> Among many others, see Danuta and Gerhard Weber, *Es geht um die Liebe. Fragen der Sexualerziehung* (Berlin: Volk und Gesundheit, 1967), 67; Klaus Pleißner, *Junge Liebe*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Neues Leben, 1990), 55–56.; Neubert, *Das Kleinkind*, 102–103.

<sup>83</sup> Bruhm-Schlegel and Kabat vel Job, *Junge Frauen heute*, 84; Gerhart Neuner equally stresses the importance of an education that develops emotions: Gerhart Neuner, *Die zweite Geburt. Über Erziehung im Alltag*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Urania-Verlag, 1985), 157–59.

<sup>84</sup> Scharnhorst, *Süppchen kochen*, 39.

<sup>85</sup> Hildegard Maria Nickel, “Die geschlechtsspezifische Arbeitsteilung in ihrer Bedeutung für die Sozialisation von Jungen und Mädchen – Fragen zur Geschlechtersozialisation in der

DDR,” *Informationen des Wissenschaftlichen Rates “Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft”*, no. 3 (1989): 3–16, here 8.

<sup>86</sup> Netti Christensen and Irmgard Launer, *Über das Spiel der Vorschulkinder. Ein Beitrag zur Führung der Kinder beim Spiel* (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1979), 92–93.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 44–45, 80, 82. See also already *Sozialistisch erziehen – allseitig bilden – auf die Schule vorbereiten* (Diskussionsbeiträge zu Fragen der Pädagogik 26), ed. by Netti Christensen et al. (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1961), 65.

<sup>88</sup> Eva Schmidt-Kolmer, *Zum Einfluß von Familie und Krippe auf die Entwicklung von Kindern in der frühen Kindheit* (Berlin: Volk und Gesundheit, 1977), 201–202.

<sup>89</sup> Scharnhorst, *Süppchen kochen*, 39.

<sup>90</sup> See, for instance, Kurt Starke, *Junge Partner. Tatsachen über Liebesbeziehungen im Jugendalter*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Urania-Verlag, 1981), 175–88.

<sup>91</sup> Starke, *Junge Partner*, 187.

<sup>92</sup> Grandke, Misgeld, and Walther, *Unsere Familie*, 182.

<sup>93</sup> Helmut Stolz, *Autorität und Elternliebe*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1974), 94–96.

<sup>94</sup> Bruhm-Schlegel and Kabat vel Job, *Junge Frauen heute*, 85; Walther, “Familienbeziehungen und Erziehung der Kinder,” 1163.

<sup>95</sup> Otmar Kabat vel Job, *Keine Angst vor großen Kindern. Ratschläge für den Umgang mit Jugendlichen in der Familie*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Verlag für die Frau, 1987), 40–41; in a similar way, Hans-Joachim Schille, *Familienleben und Lernen. Ein Ratgeber für Eltern* (Berlin: Volk und Wissen 1988), 59–60.

<sup>96</sup> Bach, “Grundpositionen,” 248; see also Karl Hauser, *Die politisch-moralische Erziehung in der Familie unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Anteils von Mutter und Vater* (Ph.D. thesis: HU Berlin, 1973), 6.

<sup>97</sup> Grandke, Misgeld, and Walther, *Unsere Familie*, 114.

<sup>98</sup> Scharnhorst, *Süppchen kochen*, 46.

<sup>99</sup> Polte, *Unsere Ehe*, 79; Walther, “Die Erziehung in der Familie,” 992; Arnold Pinther, *Gesamtbericht zur Sekundäranalyse Geschlechtstypische Einstellungen und Verhaltensweisen Jugendlicher. Teil III: Bereich Partnerschaft, Ehe und Familie* (Leipzig: ZIJ, 1985), 27; Roland Rudolf, *Mit Beispiel und Liebe. Ratschläge für die Erziehung in der Familie*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Verlag für die Frau, 1987), 75–76.

<sup>100</sup> Among many others, see Kabat vel Job and Pinther, *Jugend und Familie*, 65; Scharnhorst, *Süppchen kochen*, 46, 59.

<sup>101</sup> Bruhm-Schlegel and Kabat vel Job, *Junge Frauen heute*, 82; Scharnhorst, *Süppchen kochen*, 45.

<sup>102</sup> Grandke, Misgeld, and Walther, *Unsere Familie*, 167.

<sup>103</sup> Mark Fenemore, “The Growing Pains of Sex Education in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), 1945–69,” in *Shaping Sexual Knowledge. A Cultural History of Sex Education in Twentieth Century Europe*, ed. Lutz D.H. Sauerteig and Roger Davidson (London: Routledge, 2009), 71–90, here 71.

<sup>104</sup> For the history of sexuality in East Germany, see Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism. Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 184–219; Josie McLellan, *Love in the Time of Communism. Intimacy and Sexuality in the GDR* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>105</sup> Dagmar Herzog, “East Germany's Sexual Evolution,” in *Socialist Modern. East German Everyday Cultures and Politics*, ed. Katherine Pence and Paul Betts (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 71–95, here 75.

<sup>106</sup> Bach, “Grundpositionen,” 239; for an early example of this close linking of sex education and preparation for marriage and family life, see Wolfgang Bretschneider, *Sexuell aufklären*



*rechtzeitig und richtig. Ein Ratgeber für sexuelle Erziehung* (Leipzig: Urania-Verlag, 1957), 36–39 and *passim*.

<sup>107</sup> Bach, “Grundpositionen,” 240.

<sup>108</sup> Heinz Grassel and Kurt R. Bach, “Zur Vorbereitung unserer Jugend auf Ehe und Familie. Aufgaben und Probleme bei der Sexualerziehung,” *Einheit* 29, no. 5 (1974): 582–91, here 586.

<sup>109</sup> “Gesetz über die Teilnahme der Jugend der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik an der Gestaltung der entwickelten sozialistischen Gesellschaft und über ihre allseitige Förderung in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik,” 28 January 1974, section 41 (1), <http://www.verfassungen.de/de/ddr/jugendgesetz74.htm> (accessed 4 June 2018). In section 33 (2) of the 1964 youth law, this task was described in yet more vague terms as “explaining” to young people the sense of marriage as a union based on mutual love and respect, equality, and shared child education. “Gesetz über die Teilnahme der Jugend der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik am Kampf um den umfassenden Aufbau des Sozialismus und die allseitige Förderung ihrer Initiative bei der Leitung der Volkswirtschaft und des Staates, in Beruf und Schule, bei Kultur und Sport,” 4 May 1964, <http://www.verfassungen.de/de/ddr/jugendgesetz64.htm> (accessed 4 June 2018).

<sup>110</sup> Bach, “Grundpositionen,” 250; Kurt Richard Bach, *Geschlechtererziehung in der sozialistischen Oberschule. Entwicklung und Realisierung eines Programms zur systematischen Geschlechtererziehung in den Klassen 1 bis 10 der Oberschule der DDR – ein Beitrag zur Vorbereitung der Heranwachsenden auf Ehe und Familie*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1974).

<sup>111</sup> Bach, “Grundpositionen,” 251; See also Heinz Grassel, *Jugend. Sexualität. Erziehung. Zur psychologischen Problematik der Geschlechtererziehung* (Berlin: Staatsverlag der DDR, 1967), 183–85.

<sup>112</sup> Bach, “Grundpositionen,” 241.

<sup>113</sup> Fulbrook, *The People’s State*, 158.

<sup>114</sup> Fulbrook, *The People’s State*, 159; see further *Familienleben in der DDR. Zum Alltag von Familien mit Kindern*, ed. Jutta Gysi (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1989), 156–67.

<sup>115</sup> *Sozialreport ’90. Daten und Fakten zur sozialen Lage in der DDR*, ed. Gunnar Winkler (Berlin: Die Wirtschaft, 1990), 272; Jutta Gysi and Dagmar Meyer, “Leitbild: berufstätige Mutter—DDR-Frauen in Familie, Partnerschaft und Ehe,” in *Frauen in Deutschland 1945–1992*, ed. Gisela Helwig and Hildegard Maria Nickel (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993), 139–65, here 160–61.

<sup>116</sup> Fulbrook, *The People’s State*, 158.

<sup>117</sup> Paul Betts, *Within Walls. Private Life in the German Democratic Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 103–104.

<sup>118</sup> Eva Schäffler, *Paarbeziehungen in Ostdeutschland. Auf dem Weg vom Real- zum Postsozialismus* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2017), 204–13; Anja Schröter, *Ostdeutsche Ehen vor Gericht. Scheidungspraxis im Umbruch 1980–2000* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2018), 195–98.

<sup>119</sup> Schröter, *Ostdeutsche Ehen*, 190.

<sup>120</sup> Cornelia Behnke, *Partnerschaftliche Arrangements und väterliche Praxis in Ost- und Westdeutschland. Paare erzählen* (Opladen: Barbara Budrich, 2012), 23; Sylka Scholz, *Männlichkeit erzählen. Lebensgeschichtliche Identitätskonstruktionen ostdeutscher Männer*, Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 2004), 65.