



Actor and Partner Effects of Gatekeeping on Household Labor in Same-Sex and Heterosexual Adopting Couples

Randi L. Garcia, PhD
Smith College
rgarcia@smith.edu

Abbie E. Goldberg, PhD
Clark University
agoldberg@clarku.edu

Introduction

- ▶ The unequal division of household labor in heterosexual couples remains despite gains in the participation of women in the paid labor force (U.S. Department of Labor, 2016).
- ▶ Inequity in the division of housework often becomes more pronounced following the transition to parenthood (Baxter, Hewitt, & Haynes, 2008; Goldberg & Perry-Jenkins, 2004; Helms-Erikson, 2001).
- ▶ Gatekeeping is an inherently interdependent behavior happening within a couple or family—i.e., one partner blocks another partner's participation in housework or child care

Gatekeeping and Division of labor

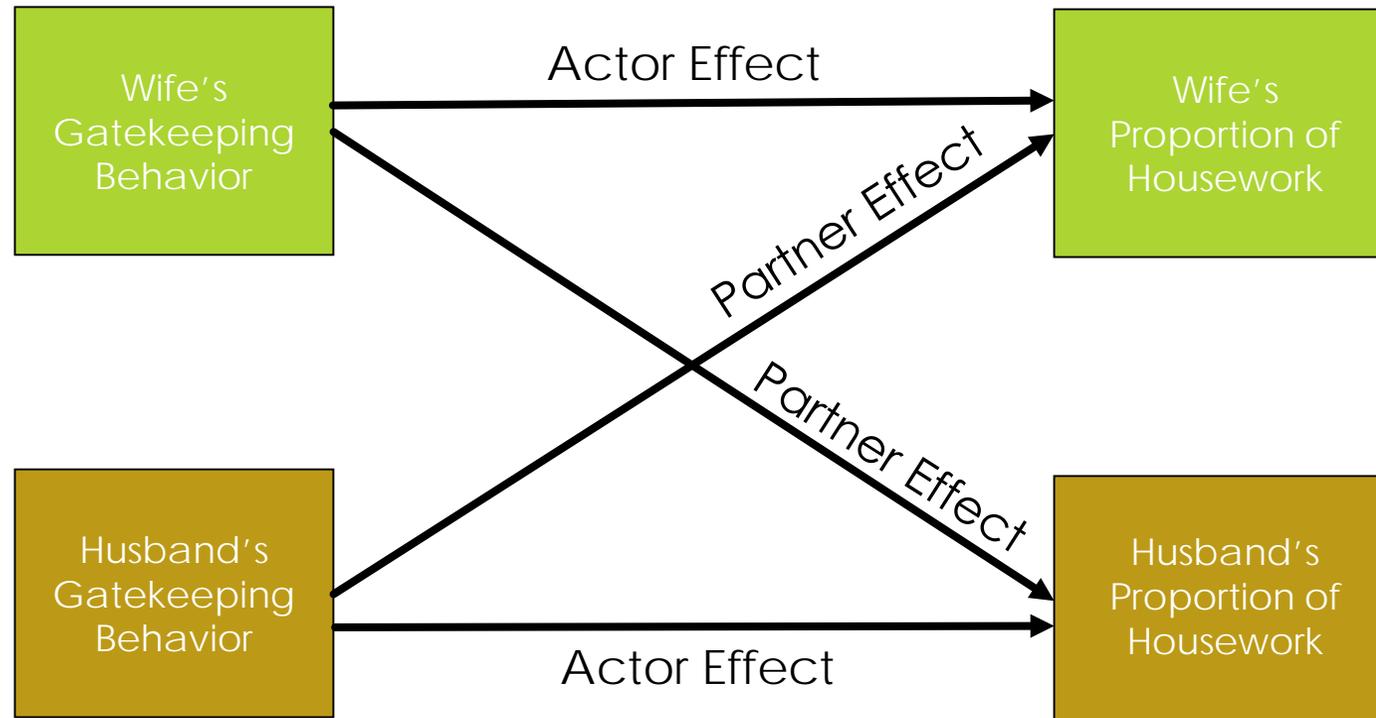
- ▶ Gatekeeping -- **the attitudes and behaviors that undermine a partner's participation in housework and/or childcare.** Often being referred to as "maternal gatekeeping" (Allen & Hawkins, 1999)
 - ▶ Decreases father involvement in domestic work (Barry, Smith, Deutsch, & Perry-Jenkins, 2011; Cannon, Schoppe-Sullivan, Manelsdorf, Brown, & Sokolowski, 2008; Fagan & Barnett, 2003)
 - ▶ Related to performing more hours of housework weekly
- ▶ Gatekeeping behaviors do occur in men and in same-sex couples, with gay men reporting higher gatekeeping than lesbian women, and at similar levels with heterosexual women (Sweeney et al., 2017).

Gatekeeping on DOL Overtime

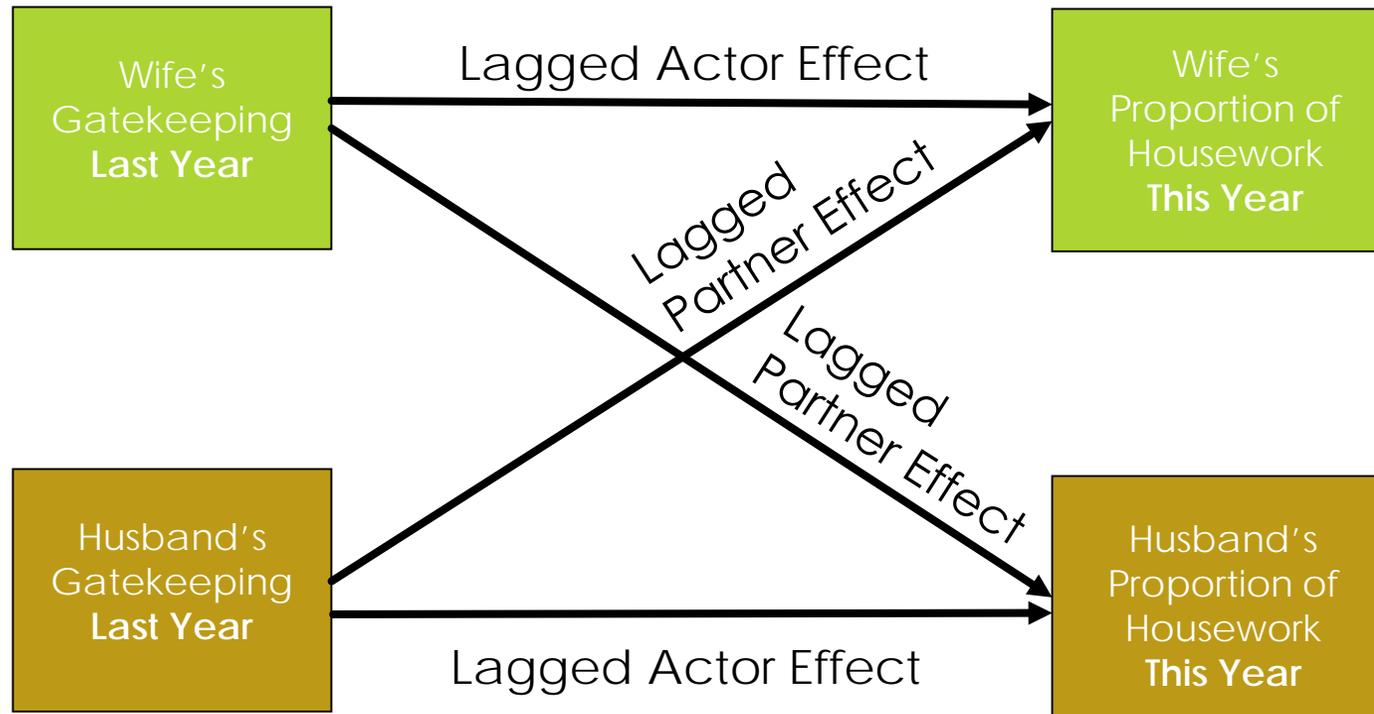
If one's partner engages in gatekeeping behaviors then do we see a decrease in time spent on household tasks later on?

- ▶ Examine the temporal process by which gatekeeping can lead to the entrenchment of unequal divisions of labor over time, and how this process is affected by gender
- ▶ Dyadic over time model: Lagged Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006; Thompson & Walker, 1989, Trinder, 2008)

Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM)



Lagged APIM



Research Question and Hypotheses

How does one's own and one's partner's gatekeeping behaviors affect the division of household labor?

- ▶ We hypothesize that
 1. one's own gatekeeping at the previous time point will be positively related to doing a larger proportion of the housework at the current time point, and
 2. one's partner's gatekeeping at the previous time point will have a negative effect on one's proportion of household labor at the current time point.
- ▶ We hypothesize that these relationships will not be as strong for same-sex couples as for heterosexual couples

Sample

- ▶ 180 adopting couples (102 heterosexual, 39 lesbian, 39 gay male)
- ▶ They had been in their relationships for an average of 8.10 years when they became parents (range: 1-23; $SD = 4.02$)
- ▶ Their median annual personal salary was \$50,000 ($M = \$60,688$; range \$0-\$400,000; $SD = \$58,676$)
- ▶ The sample was 85.3% white, 10.3% of color, and 4.4% of participants did not report their race
- ▶ Children's average age at placement was 17.33 months ($Mdn = 0.63$ months; range: 0-16 years; $SD = 37.44$ months)

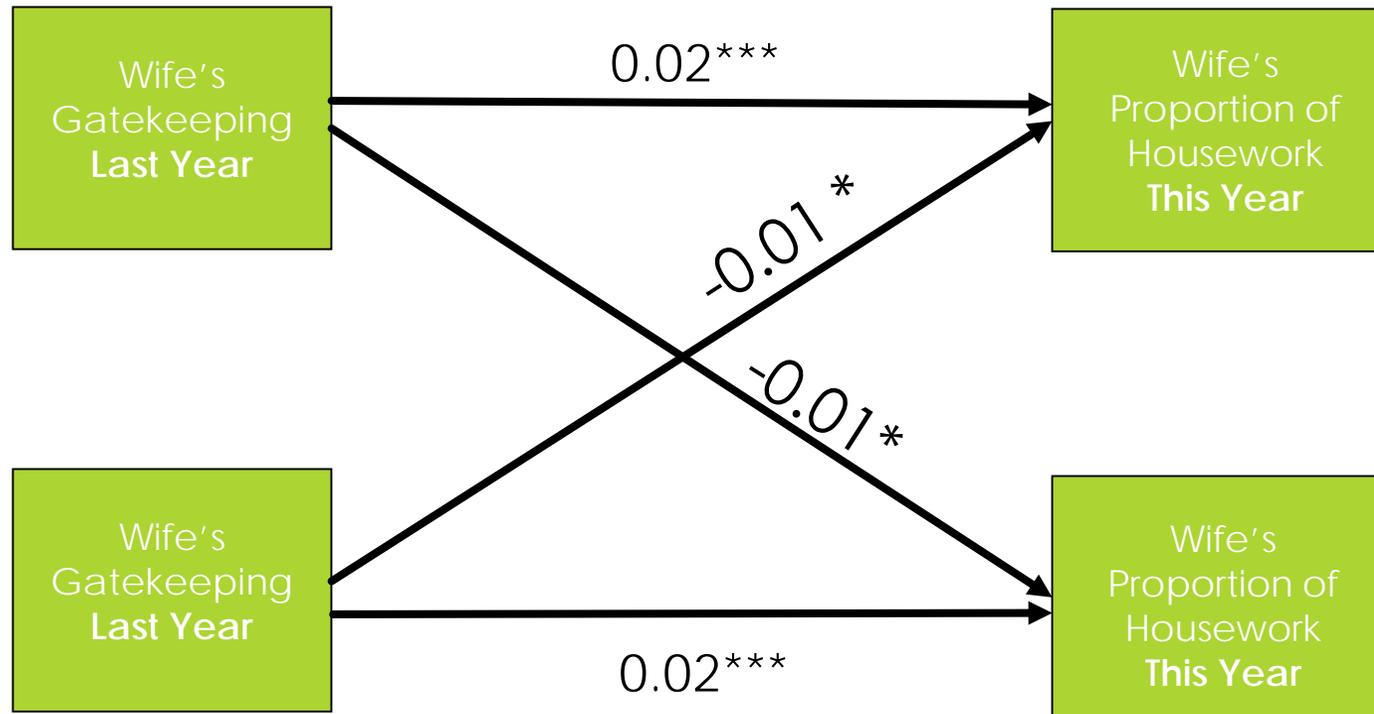
Model Parameters

Controls	Predictors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work hours• Personal income• Education• Child age• Relationship duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender (actor and partner)• Family Type• Time• Household Tasks (feminine) – “Who does what?”• Gatekeeping in Household Labor – “Child Care and Chores”• Interactions!!

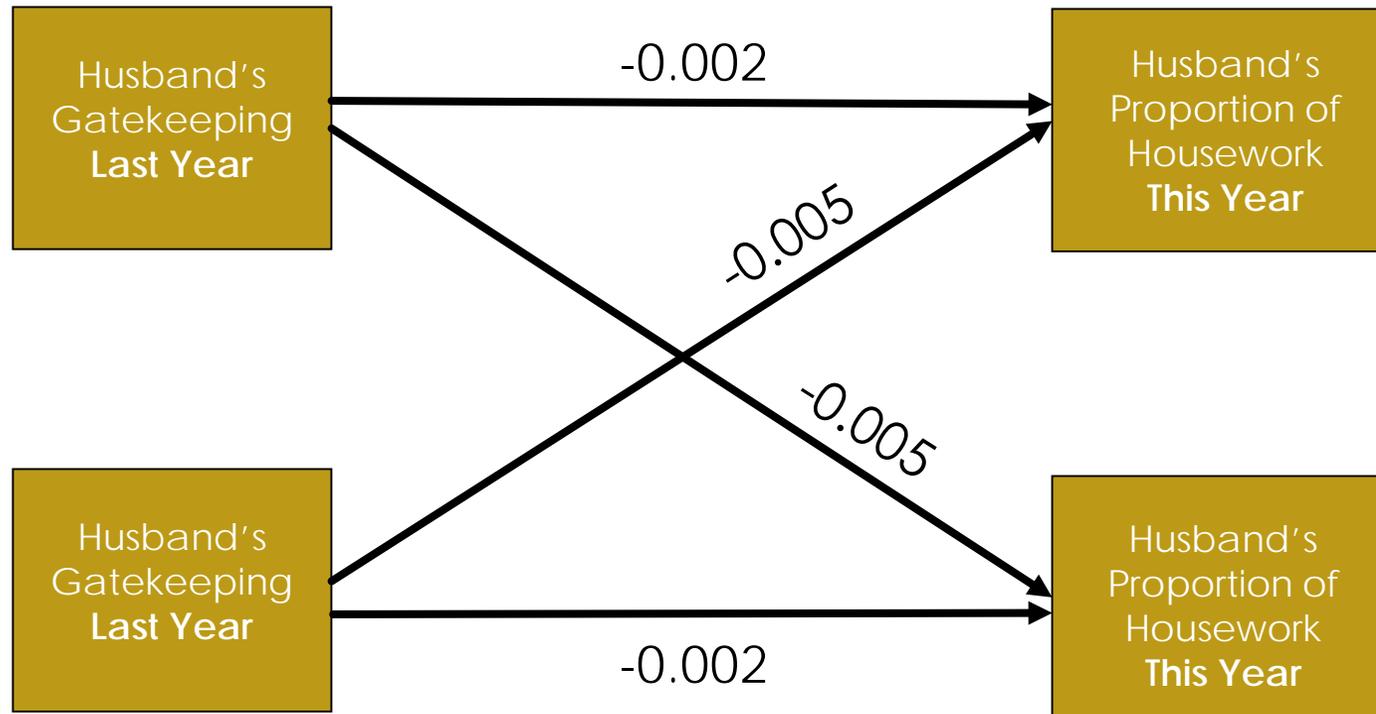
Results

- ▶ Lagged **actor effects** of gatekeeping on reported proportion of labor
 - ▶ Interaction with actor gender, $p = .017$, such that there was no effect for men, $p = .818$, and a statistically significant effect for women, $p < .001$.
- ▶ Lagged **partner effects** of gatekeeping on reported proportion of labor
 - ▶ Three-way interaction of partner's gatekeeping, actor gender, and family type, $p < .001$.

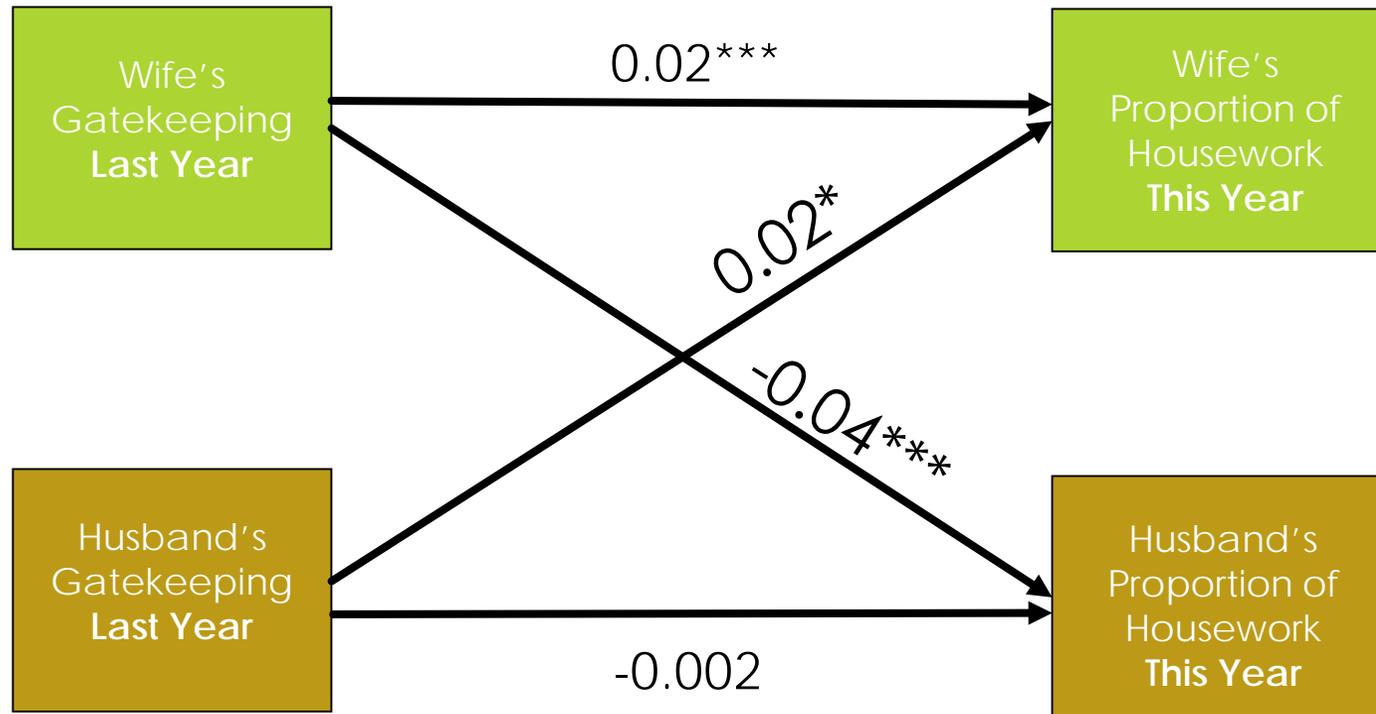
Lesbian Couples



Gay Male Couples



Heterosexual Couples



Conclusion

- ▶ Evidence that women's gatekeeping at a previous time point is related to a reduction in their partner's housework
 - ▶ This goes for male partners and female partners
- ▶ Evidence that men's gatekeeping at a previous time point does nothing to reduce their partner's housework, if their partner was a man, but it was related to an **increase** in their partner's housework, if their partner was a woman
- ▶ Gatekeeping in heterosexual relationships may be related to "doing gender" (West & Zimmerman, 1987), while this is less the case in same-sex couples

Thank you!

RANDI L. GARCIA, PHD
RGARCIA@SMITH.EDU