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The social stratification of time use patterns

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Abstract

Time use is both a cause of social inequality and a consequence of social inequality. However, how social class stratifies time use patterns is seldom studied. In this paper, I describe the time use patterns in the years 1983 and 2015 by social class, and gender in the British context. Using sequence analysis methods, I show how the diversity of time use patterns in British society is socially stratified. I find that 13 clusters capture the heterogeneity of time use patterns and that these clusters are associated with social class, gender, and day of the week. These clusters capture patterns of paid and unpaid work schedules, as well as leisure patterns. The results show that men have experienced a reduction of the standard Monday to Friday 8-hr working day, while women have experienced a general increase in this type of schedule. On the other hand, patterns of domestic working days have reduced for women and increased for men. Important differences exist in paid and unpaid work patterns between social classes. Working-class women have experienced an important increase in shift work on weekends. They are also much more likely to be doing unpaid work on weekdays compared to upper-class and middle-class women. Working-class men are more likely to experience non-working days and leisure days on both weekdays and weekends and are more likely to be doing shift work. They are also more often doing unpaid work on weekdays

compared to men in upper-class households. Patterns of childcare indicate that all families have increased their childcare time. Men in upper-class households in particular have experienced an important growth in childcare time between 1983 and 2015. I conclude by discussing how time use can further our understanding of social stratification.

KEYWORDS
gender, sequence analysis, social class, stratification, time use

1 | INTRODUCTION

Time use is an effect of social inequality as much as a cause of social inequality. From the time spent at work or at school to the provision of childcare, time use is central to fully appreciating the extent of a society's stratification. Because everything we do takes time, inequality also must be temporally stratified. Time use research often takes a narrow view on daily activities by focusing on one or two activities at a time (Altintas, 2016; Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, & Robinson, 2000; Sullivan, 2010), making it difficult to grasp the overall structure and potential heterogeneous patterns of time use. A holistic approach is needed to better understand how activities in daily life are structured by gender, class, and social contexts (Vagni & Cornwell, 2018). The aim of this study is to explore the link between time use patterns and social stratification. I use sequence analysis to uncover time use patterns in Britain during 1983–2015. I then describe the link between these emerging patterns and social class by gender. I start by reviewing some of the most important trends in time use over the last few decades and then move on to the literature about time use and social stratification.

2 | PRIOR RESEARCH

2.1 | Time-use trends

Overall, paid work time has been declining over the last century. In 1870, it is estimated that people used to work about 60 hr a week (Huberman & Minns, 2007). In 1980, the figure dropped to 40 hr a week. The UK has some of the longest working hours compared to other European countries. From a historical comparative perspective, the UK did not always have the longest working hours; in fact, in 1870, the UK had the lowest working hours in Europe (Huberman & Minns, 2007). However, from the 1950s onwards, the UK has been above average in terms of working hours compared to its European counterparts.

During the Thatcher era, while working hours were either constant or in decline in continental Europe, working hours for men increased in the UK. It is only after New Labour came into power that working hours started declining and converging with those of the US, while still being much above Germany, France, and other European nations.

Women in the UK have lower working hours compared to women in other European countries, such as France and Sweden, as well as the US (see Figure 1), even though paid work has been increasing since World War II. Mothers in the UK have a relatively low level of employment, which can be partly explained by a very expensive private childcare system, and as a result, they experience one of the largest motherhood wage penalties in Europe (Grimshaw & Rubery, 2015).

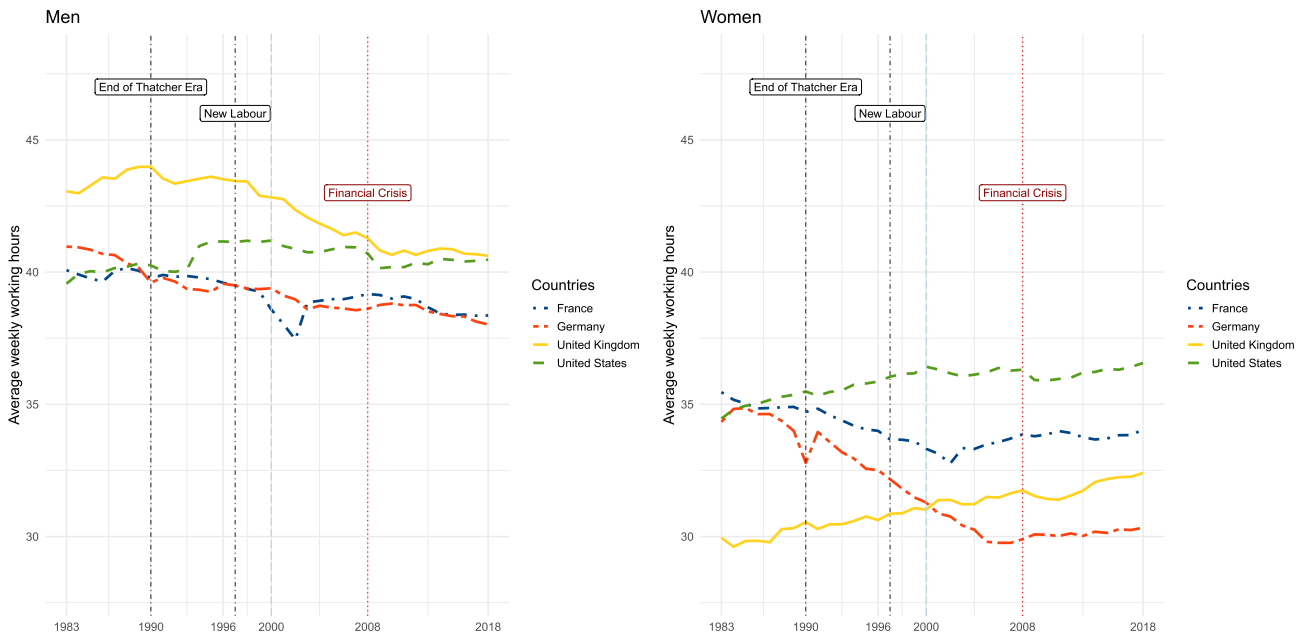

FIGURE 1 Trends in working hours in four countries by sex (computed from *stats.oecd.org* [accessed August 2019]) [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

Like working hours, unpaid work—in particular, domestic work—has been on the decline. Large-scale time use studies show a decline in domestic work for women since the 1960s (Altintas & Sullivan, 2016; Gershuny, 2000). The decrease in women's domestic time has been followed by a much smaller but still significant uptick in men's share of domestic work (Sullivan, 2000). Evidence suggests that at the population level, there is a gender convergence in time use (Sullivan, 2006). However, it is unclear if the convergence has stalled in recent years (England, 2010). While domestic chores have declined since the 1950s, childcare, which is another form of unpaid work, has been increasing for both mothers and fathers (Sani & Treas, 2016).

Paid and unpaid work can also be combined to form a measure of "total work." Gershuny and Sullivan (2019) report that total work per day was 511 min for women and 573 min for men in 1961. They show that total work has declined by 1 hr and 30 min for men and by 17 min for women since the 1960s. In proportion of time, this means that in 2015, women's unpaid work represents 50% of their total working time (compared to 63% in 1965), while unpaid work represents 30% of total work for men nowadays (compared to 16% in 1965) (Gershuny & Sullivan, 2019, p. 37). Finally, leisure and other measures of free time have increased over the past few decades in the US context (Aguiar & Hurst, 2007), while these measures have been fairly stable in the UK (Gershuny & Sullivan, 2019).

2.2 | The social stratification of time

Population averages can mask important group-level heterogeneity. Aside from gender differences in time use, class- and education-based differences are important. Regarding paid work, historical differences in working time exist between the upper class and working class. While "idleness" was a symbol of social status a century ago, "busyness" is the new sign of high status (Gershuny, 2011). Beyond the social status aspect of working time, studies have pointed to a real emerging divide in working hours between white collar and blue collar occupations (Costa, 2000; Gershuny, 2011). Workers in professional occupations are now working the longest hours.

Harriet Presser stressed that work was moving towards a "24-hr, 7-day-a-week economy" (1999, p. 1778). The growth of the service sector, the interconnectedness of global markets and the increase in consumer demand for "on-call" work has changed the nature of the standard workweek and increased non-standard work schedules (Presser, 2005). Non-standard work schedules are socially stratified as members of the working class or lowly educated individuals have less control over their schedules (Breedveld, 1998; Lesnard, 2004). Even though evidence suggests that families use non-standard work schedules to manage work–family responsibilities (Presser, 2005), non-standard schedules can create negative externalities for families if imposed upon workers and families (Lesnard, 2008; Täht & Mills, 2015).

Work schedules can be an important mechanism in the creation or reinforcement of social inequalities (Lesnard, 2008). Working hours directly and indirectly impact the consumption of leisure. Non-standard work schedules affect the possibility of enjoying leisure in synchronicity with the rest of society and might, therefore, affect the enjoyment and quality of leisure (Cornwell, 2015). Time use research has highlighted important gender differences in leisure, such as the fact that women's leisure is more fragmented and more likely to be shared with children (Bittman & Wajcman, 2000). Studies have documented a divergence of leisure time between educational groups and show that lower-class individuals are enjoying an increase in leisure over time compared to highly educated individuals (Aguiar & Hurst, 2007; Sullivan & Gershuny, 2004).

Regarding the content of leisure, Bourdieu's influential work highlighted the stratified nature of leisure consumption along the highbrow/lowbrow axis (1984). Even though the highbrow/lowbrow patterns might have moved towards a model of "omnivore" consumption patterns (Peterson & Kern, 1996), time use research still shows that highly educated individuals spend less time watching TV and more time going to the cinema or theater and reading (Gershuny, 2000). So, even though leisure time might be higher for low-income individuals, the content of that leisure might not necessarily contribute to their cultural and human capital. Another important leisure-related

time use activity that appears to be stratified is eating and, in particular, eating together in families (Putnam, 2016). Evidence for the UK shows that individuals in managerial and professional occupations spend significantly more time eating with partners and children compared to working-class families (Jarosz, 2019). Working-class individuals are also more likely to skip meals and spend less time eating on average. Shift work also plays a significant role in the propensity of skipping meals, which can create health risks (Jarosz, 2019).

Childcare appears to be a highly stratified time use activity. Even though childcare has been increasing steadily over time, educated fathers and mothers spend more time doing childcare activities on average, even after controlling for other socio-demographic characteristics (Altintas, 2016; Sani & Treas, 2016; Sullivan, Billari, & Altintas, 2014). Some evidence suggests that in the US context, the educational gap in childcare has been increasing over time (Altintas, 2016; Putnam, 2016; Sani & Treas, 2016). Childcare is an important component of social stratification and inequality (Fiorini & Keane, 2014; Fomby & Musick, 2018; Schneider, Hastings, & LaBriola, 2018). Childcare, and more generally parent–child interactions, can have long-lasting consequences for a child's life course (Bono, Francesconi, Kelly, & Sacker, 2016; Hsin & Felfe, 2014; Kalil & Mayer, 2016; Rowe & Goldin-Meadow, 2009). Childcare therefore might be an important mechanism in the creation of social inequality (Ermisch, 2008; Hoff-Ginsberg, 1998; Huttenlocher, Waterfall, Vasilyeva, Vevea, & Hedges, 2010; Rowe, 2008). Even though childcare is a heavily stratified activity, its determinants are less understood. While some researchers argue that resources and constraints are the main determinants in the provision of childcare (Bennett, Lutz, & Jayaram, 2012; Chin & Phillips, 2004), others show that class differences in parenting practices exist beyond resources and constraints (Weininger, Lareau, & Conley, 2015). Moreover, working time constraints alone do not fully explain a mother's involvement with her children, as full-time working mothers are capable of providing a similar level of childcare compared to other mothers who work part time or who do not work (Hsin & Felfe, 2014).

2.3 | The social and political context of this study

The UK has undergone important socio-demographic changes during the last few decades. Since the end of the 1950s women have entered the labor market in large numbers (Tilly & Scott, 1989); therefore, the proportion of dual-earner couples has gradually increased (Bonney, 1988). At the same time, fertility declined and more and more couples decided to stay childless. The number of lone-parent families also grew over time. Parents started to spend an ever growing amount of time with their children. These changes are often referred to as the Second Demographic Transition (Lesthaeghe, 2014).

However, these changes did not spread equally between social classes (Bonney, 1988; McLanahan, 2004). Working-class women have lagged behind in terms of working hours and full-time employment compared to middle-class women. Lone parenthood has disproportionately affected working-class households. These factors are relevant to understand how everyday life potentially became more unequal over time.

It is also during this period of time that income inequality started to diverge[1] (Atkinson, 2015a). Especially after 1980, the Gini coefficient increased in the UK (Atkinson, 2015b).

Since the 1980s, the UK has progressively shifted towards to a "workfare state" (Esping-Andersen, Hemerijck, Myles, & Gallie, 2002). Unemployment benefits have diminished over time and means tests have become stricter, pushing individuals to seek employment rather than to rely on social benefits. Flexibility in the labor markets and deregulation became core principles for promoting growth and economic development for both Thatcher and New Labour. Important changes in the legislation regarding employment took place during the Thatcher era (see Deakin & Reed, 2000, for the full list and for a comprehensive review for the UK). Collective bargaining was slowly dismantled towards more individual- or firm-wage bargaining.

New Labour did not reverse collective bargaining or employment protection policies set by previous conservative governments. In some cases, New Labour furthered deregulations, such as with the Sunday Trading Act 1994, which gave shops the right to open on Sunday (Boulin & Lesnard, 2016). The Working Time European

Directive, setting a limit on 48 hr a week, was implemented in 1998 during the New Labour government. It is worth contrasting this figure with the French government's attempts to set a 35-hr workweek in 2000 (Pailhé, Solaz, & Souletie, 2019).

This set of policies makes the UK an interesting case study. The UK has often been described as belonging to the "liberal" welfare states regime characterized by free-market principles and means-tested benefits (Esping-Andersen, 1990). But it is arguable that the UK has more regulations than the US, so the two countries cannot simply be conflated. The US can be considered the epitome of a free-market capitalist society with low employment protections, low collective bargaining, and low social expenditure. The US also lacks federal working-time regulations and does not guarantee parental leave at the federal level.

The UK is much less regulated and has less family-friendly policies compared to other European countries. Parental leave is much more limited in the UK (Daly & Ferragina, 2018, Gauthier, 2002, Thévenon 2011). The cost of children is substantial for most British families, which translates into lower enrollment of children under 2 years old in formal childcare compared to other European countries, such as France, and a lower employment rate for mothers (Boeckmann, Misra, & Budig, 2014). France and Germany would be closer to the ideal type of European style "managed" capitalism or state capitalism (Schmidt, 2002, 2003) with a highly regulated labor market, high level of employment protections, high social expenditure and important coverage of social security benefits (e.g., unemployment, childcare, etc.).

The UK lies somewhere between these two ideal types (see the Online Appendix for some illustrations).

3 | Summary and research questions

This paper aims to provide a general description of time use patterns from the 1980s to 2015 by social class and gender in the British context. I am interested in uncovering which time use patterns exist in British society and how these patterns are stratified. Because past research never focused on time use patterns but only on averages, it is difficult to make hypotheses about what kind of patterns we expect to find. However, I draw a general picture of the expected findings. Following previous literature, I expect working hours to be lowering over time for working-class men compared to upper-class men. For women, I expect a general increase in working hours between 1983 and 2015. I expect working-class individuals to be experiencing more non-standard working hours over time, especially during weekends. Because class is related to temporal autonomy, assuming that shift work and non-standard work schedules contain undesirable hours, I expect to see more working-class people in these types of schedules. I thus expect an increase in leisure time or free time during weekdays for working-class households. Finally, I expect men to increase and women to decrease their domestic time over this period, but I also expect upper-class households to increase their childcare time at a faster rate compared to working-class households.

3.1 | Data

I use two time use surveys for this study: the ESRC Time Budget Survey 1983/84 (UKTUS 1983) and the United Kingdom Time Use Survey 2014/2015. The UKTUS 1983 is a stratified national random sample of all households in the UK. The survey took place during autumn 1983 and winter 1984. It was collected by SCPR, the University of Bath and the University of Sussex. A total of 78% of households completed the household interview, and 51% of eligible members returned diaries. The UKTUS 2015 was collected by NatCen for the Centre for Time Use Research between April 2014 and March 2015. It drew a random national sample of households in the UK with a response rate of about 40%. The sample includes 1,501 individuals aged 30–69 years (for more information about the sample selection, see the Online Appendix).

3.2 | Harmonization process

I harmonized the time use activities from the original codes for the two surveys, and mapped the detailed activities into a 10-activity schema. The 10 activity categories are: (1) childcare; (2) domestic work; (3) eating; (4) leisure; (5) paid work; (6) sleep; (7) travel; (8) TV; (9) other; and (10) unknown. I harmonized social class using the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) (Rose, Pevain, & O'Reilly, 2005). The NS-SEC has become the standard socioeconomic classification used at the Office of National Statistics in the UK. One important theoretical distinction with this schema is the difference in employment relations between, on the one hand, the "service relationship" and, on the other hand, the "labour contract" (Rose et al., 2005, p. 16). The service relationship concept is based on the idea that there is a long-term mutually beneficial relationship between employers and employees and that the amount of effort and work put forth by the employee is not directly commensurable by a "wage per hour" but rather by long-term, deferred benefits, such as career opportunities, pension, and so on. In the service relationship, the employment is stable, and employees look to future opportunities for career development. Contrarily, the labor contract captures the idea of a worker only being committed to the job for a certain number of hours, often with no long-term perspective. In contemporary society, one can think of the jobs generated by the new service economy (e.g., Deliveroo) and by seasonal workers (e.g., fruit picking). A continuum exists between these two ideal types of employment relations. Social class has been widely used in social science because it has been shown to be a good measure of economic condition in the long run. Class not only captures income differences but employment security (e.g., becoming unemployed) and, more generally, economic security (Goldthorpe, 2000). Therefore, it is a natural stratifying variable to use in this study. We used the so-called "dominance model" proposed by Erikson (1984) to attribute social class to families or households rather than individuals. Even though we analyze men and women separately, our social class variable is a household variable.[2] Therefore, it reflects the household social position rather than the individual social position. This is important, even though I did not conduct couple-level analyses, because time use allocation, such as paid work or childcare time, is decided at the household level. Classifying individuals based on their own social class can also underestimate the total household resources at an individual's disposal; in particular, this is true for stay-at-home parents. We coded the original NS-SEC categories in a 3-class schema: Class I (managerial class), Class II (professional and intermediate class) and Class III (working class). I kept the managerial class separate, even though in the 1980s, the proportion of managerial households was rather small; I did this primarily because I am interested in comparing the behaviors of the most privileged social class (managerial or upper class[3]) to the most unprivileged class (working class) to capture potential divergence patterns.

3.3 | Control variable

My analyses disaggregate the results by class, gender, year, and day of the week. So in effect these factors are accounted for. I will only use one additional control variable in my analysis: family status. I distinguish between couples with children, couples without children, single parents, and single-person households. Family status will control for the fact that the distribution of these family forms is not even between social classes. Other control variables available did not make much sense in the context of this study (e.g., working hours, employment status). I conducted additional regressions including education,[4] age, and age of the youngest child but the results did not change (see the Online Appendix). I believe that family status captures the most relevant heterogeneity in time use in this context (Gershuny, 2000).

The approach I take in this paper is close to a population approach, where I focus on exploring global patterns of time use. The spirit of the analysis is descriptive, not causal, therefore readers must keep this limitation in mind.

3.4 | Analytical strategy

I take a holistic approach to considering how all daily activities have changed over time. Given the descriptive purpose of this paper, I use sequence analysis to uncover time use patterns (Lesnard, 2008; Vagni & Cornwell, 2018). Lesnard introduced sequence analysis in time use research a decade ago, and I follow the standard steps of this method (Lesnard, 2010). The overall goal of the method is to create a finite set of clusters made of homogeneous sequences, not unlike a latent class analysis. However, it is worth noting that sequence analysis is much broader than the clustering approach I use in this paper (Aisenbrey & Fasang, 2010; Cornwell, 2015; Gabadinho, Ritschard, Mueller, & Studer, 2011).

The first step is to run a matching algorithm to create a pairwise distance matrix between all sequences. Then, I apply a clustering technique on that distance matrix to create homogeneous groups. I used the matching algorithm proposed by Lesnard called Dynamic Hamming (Cornwell, 2015; Lesnard, 2010). The algorithm is built on the Hamming distance, which is a simple count of simultaneous events only using substitution costs (Hamming, 1950). Lesnard introduced an important modification to the method related to the weighting of the substitution costs.

Lesnard's original empirical example has only two states: doing paid work (e = 1) and not doing paid work (e = 0). The sequences are strings of zeros and ones from 1, …, T (T equals 24 hr in time use diaries). Distance algorithms are always applied to pairwise sequences (for instance, comparing sequence i to sequence j).

In the most basic Hamming distance, each matched episode (or event) is counted 1, so that the Hamming distance between i and j is simply a sum of matched events or states (e) of pairwise sequences.

$$\text{Hamming}\,(i,j) = \sum_{t=1}^{T} 1 - \left| e_t^i - e_t^j \right|$$

Dynamic Hamming reweights t according to the transition frequencies for each time period. The transition matrix is simply the probability of transitioning from one state to another from*t-1* to *t*.

Let us express the transition matrix between (t_{-1},t) and (t,t_{+1}) as a transition weight (w), where t, rather than denoting the starting and ending point of an episode (e.g., 10:00 a.m., 10:10 a.m.), represents an interval of time [10:00 a.m., 10:10 a.m.]. The low transition rate between states around the interval t would suggest that these states belong to different trajectories, while high transitions rate at a certain time would suggest similar trajectories.

We can then simply write the following:

$$\text{DynamicHamming}\,(i,j) = \sum_{t=1}^{T} 1 - \left| e_t^i - e_t^j \right| \cdot \frac{1}{w_t}$$

The substitution costs are, therefore, time-varying and are inversely proportional to transition rates (Lesnard, 2010). I then use the Ward hierarchical clustering to group the pairwise distances into a small number of homogeneous discrete groups (Gabadinho et al., 2011). Using the derived set of clusters, I investigate their distribution by year, social class, gender, and weekdays/weekends. No consensus on how to best choose the optimal number of clusters exists. Time use sequences are particularly difficult to group due to the high number of episodes and the often high number of states. I follow some heuristic criteria to determine the number of clusters (see the Online Appendix).

I finally use multinomial logistic regressions to study cluster membership by social class and to control for family status. I am presenting the predicted probabilities using marginal effects at representative values. I used the following values for the dummy control variables: childless couples at 0.41, single parents at 0.04, and single person at 0.19 for the women's regressions. For the men's regressions, I used the values 0.46 for childless couples, and single person = 0.14 (there is no single parents in the men's sample). The reference being "couples with

children" in the models. All the other variables are fully specified. I show in the Online Appendix the predicted probabilities with all the variables, including the controls, fully specified.

4 | RESULTS

Before describing the results from the clustering analysis, let me describe some general changes found when comparing the sequences by social class and gender (see the Online Appendix for the Figure A.1).

I find that on weekend days, leisure, domestic work, and TV occupy most of the day, while paid work fills most of the time during weekdays. I find a decline in paid work on weekdays between 1983 and 2015 and a general increase in leisure time. On weekends, I find that paid work seems to have slightly increased between the two periods. We can clearly see that childcare increased on weekends between the 1980s and 2015. TV and domestic chores have, on the contrary, decreased.

Important class differences structure men's lives both on weekdays and on weekends. First, we see that men in Class I are working longer hours during weekdays compared to working-class men. They also travel more, eat at more structured times and watch less TV. Working-class men seem to be working at earlier times in the morning in 2015. We can see that they also do more domestic chores than upper-class men. Middle-class men have patterns that seem to lie between the two other classes. They work on weekdays more than working-class men but enjoy more leisure during the day compared to upper-class men. Over time, we see that men from all classes work less and are enjoying more leisure time during weekdays. The patterns on weekends seem less stratified than those on weekdays; however, we note than upper-class men watch less TV and provide more childcare, especially in 2015.

Regarding women's time use, we first see that they are doing much more domestic work compared to men, regardless of their social class. In 1983, working-class and upper-class women had fairly similar weekdays and weekends. However, it seems that time use on weekdays has diverged over time by class for women. Women in Class I are spending a much greater proportion of their day working for pay in 2015 than working-class women. Domestic work has reduced for all women between the two periods; however, it seems to have reduced at a faster rate for upper-class women. Overall, childcare increased between 1983 and 2015. However, we see that upper-class women are spending much more time providing childcare on weekdays compared to working-class women. Time spent traveling has also increased over time. I also find that working-class women have started to work more on weekends, while upper-class women barely spend any time working for pay on weekends. Finally, upper-class women seem to have given up domestic work at a much faster rate than working-class women on weekends.

4.1 | Typology of daily activities

Overall averages and distribution can hide heterogeneous patterns. This is why I turn to the clustering of sequences to reveal hidden sequence time use patterns. I derived 13 clusters that are able to capture the patterns of activities found in the two time use surveys (see the Online Appendix for more details). I found six clusters that capture paid work patterns (two clusters capture standard work schedules patterns, four capture shift work patterns); five clusters that capture unpaid work patterns; one cluster that captures leisure, TV, and personal care activities; and one residual cluster ("Other"). Figure 2 shows the distribution of activities throughout the day by cluster.

4.1.1 | Paid work clusters

Six clusters capture the patterns of paid work with two subgroups. One subgroup captures patterns of standard "full-day" work patterns while the second captures shift work and non-standard schedules patterns. Cluster 1,

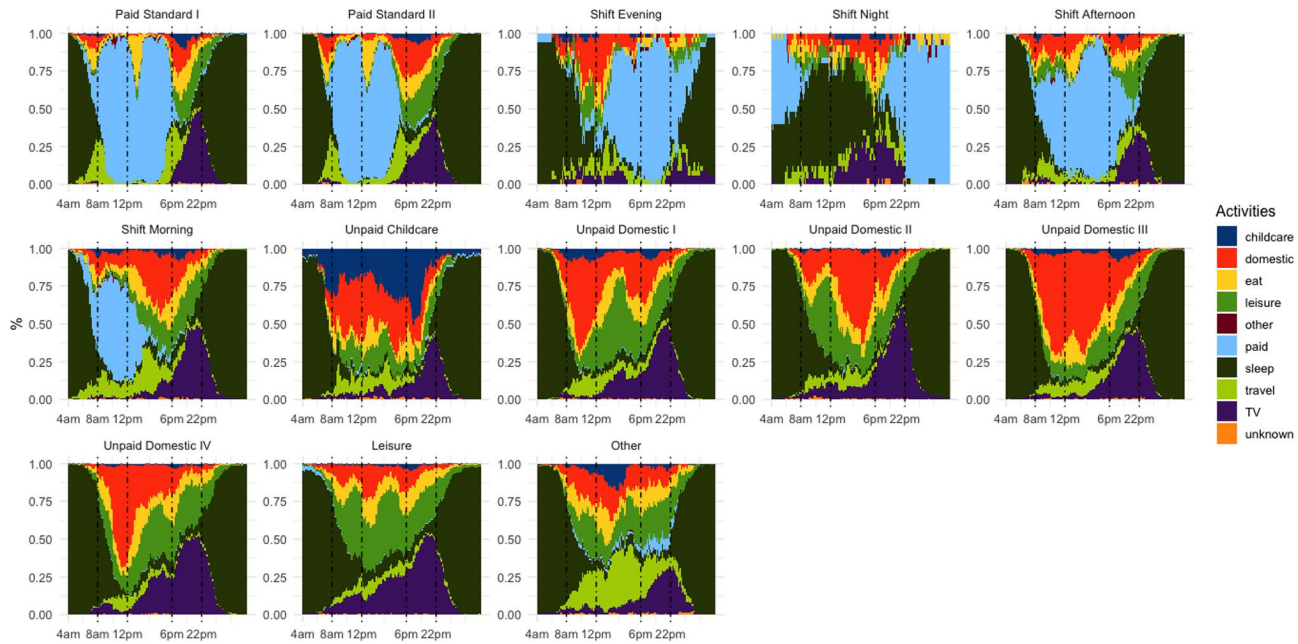

FIGURE 2 State distribution graphs showing the proportion of members in each Dynamic Hamming-distance-based cluster engaging in certain activities at each time point throughout the day [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

Paid Standard I, captures 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. standard work schedules. Paid Standard II captures a slightly shorter working day with an earlier work ending point. The four shift work clusters capture morning shift, afternoon shift, evening shift and night shift, respectively.

4.1.2 | Unpaid work clusters

Five clusters capture unpaid work patterns. The Unpaid Childcare cluster captures individuals spending a large proportion of their day providing childcare. The Unpaid Domestic I cluster is a mix of domestic work, childcare, and afternoon leisure. Unpaid Domestic II captures mainly afternoon domestic work. Unpaid Domestic III captures individuals who spend most of their day doing housework. Finally, individuals in the Unpaid Domestic IV cluster have a morning housework shift.

4.1.3 | Leisure and other clusters

The leisure cluster captures individuals who spend most of their day enjoying free time, leisure activities and personal care, with a bit of time still dedicated to domestic work.

These 13 clusters capture the heterogeneity in time use patterns in the data. However, I further reduced these patterns to study their association with class and gender. Informed by the similarities and qualitative differences between these clusters, I collapsed the two Paid Standard working day clusters into one cluster. I also collapsed the morning, evening, and night shifts into a single cluster. I excluded the afternoon shift because I noticed that the association between afternoon shift and class is quite different from the one of the other clusters. I grouped the unpaid "shift" domestic clusters together (Unpaid I, II, and IV) and left the childcare cluster and the full day domestic work cluster separate (see the Online Appendix). This results in 8 final clusters. Nonetheless, I present the complete regression tables with the 13 clusters in the Online Appendix.

4.2 | Class and clusters

In this section, I explore the distribution of clusters by social class and gender for weekdays and weekends. I present both the regressions tables (on the 8 clusters' schema) and the predicted probabilities of the multinomial models. The reference category for the regressions is managerial class, with family status set to couples with children and the year set to 1983. For weekdays, I took the paid standard work schedule cluster as the reference category and I took the leisure cluster as reference category for the weekends.

Table 1 shows the multinomial regressions for men on weekdays; Table 2 shows the regressions for men on weekends. We can see that both middle-class and working-class men have more chances to work morning and evening shifts on weekdays ($p < .01$). Working-class men are also more likely to be found in the long domestic work cluster ($p < .05$) and the leisure cluster ($p < .05$) on weekdays. The regressions suggest that middle-class men ($p < .001$) and working-class men ($p < .10$) have fewer chances of being in the childcare clusters on weekends compared to upper-class men. Working-class men are also less likely to be in the long domestic work cluster on weekends ($p < .05$).

Figure 3 shows the predicted probabilities for men on weekdays in the upper panel and weekends in the bottom panel.[5] The predicted probabilities for men on weekdays show that men in the managerial class are found in greater proportion in the paid standard cluster (around 55% in 2015) compared to working-class men (28% in 2015). We can note that the proportion of this cluster has been diminishing over time for all men on weekdays. The proportion is rather stable over time on weekends. We can note the more important proportion of working-class

TABLE 1 Multinomial regression on the 8 clusters for men on weekdays

	Cluster of reference: Paid Standard						
	Shift morning/evening	**Shift afternoon**	**Unpaid childcare**	**Unpaid domestic**	**Unpaid domestic long**	**Leisure**	**Other**
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**
Middle class	1.062**	−0.286	−0.528	0.477	0.192	0.290	0.058
Working class	1.478**	−12.970	−1.316	0.744+	1.171*	1.072*	1.291*
Year 2015	0.360	0.469	0.464	0.093	0.576	0.245	0.535
Childless couples	0.227	−0.138	−1.305*	1.127***	1.177**	1.165***	0.810+
Single person	−0.566	−0.592	−1.069	1.451***	0.546	1.249**	0.742
Constant	−2.459***	−1.934***	−2.133***	−2.094***	−3.055***	−2.641***	−3.421***
n = 614							
dev.base = 2,136.1							
aic = 2,114.6							
dev.full = 2,030.6							
McFadden.R^2 = 0.049							

+$p < .1$; *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

TABLE 2 Multinomial regression on the 8 clusters for men on weekends

	Cluster of reference: Leisure						
	Paid standard	**Shift morning/evening**	**Shift afternoon**	**Unpaid childcare**	**Unpaid domestic**	**Unpaid domestic long**	**Other**
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**
Middle class	0.466	0.266	−0.049	−1.987**	−0.064	−0.380	−0.353
Working class	0.161	−0.474	−1.071	−1.693*	−0.316	−1.272**	−1.133*
Year 2015	−0.023	−0.179	0.612	2.314*	−0.107	−0.659*	0.366
Childless couples	−0.563	−0.936**	0.295	−2.648***	−0.038	−0.508^{+}	−0.380
Single person	−0.642	−0.742	1.390^{+}	−2.046^{+}	0.013	−0.323	0.255
Constant	−1.310*	−0.348	−2.964**	−1.908^{+}	0.580^{+}	0.537	−0.865^{+}
n = 620							
dev.base = 2,181							
aic = 2,177.5							
dev.full = 2,093.5							
McFadden.R^2 = 0.04							

$^{+}p < .1$; $^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$.

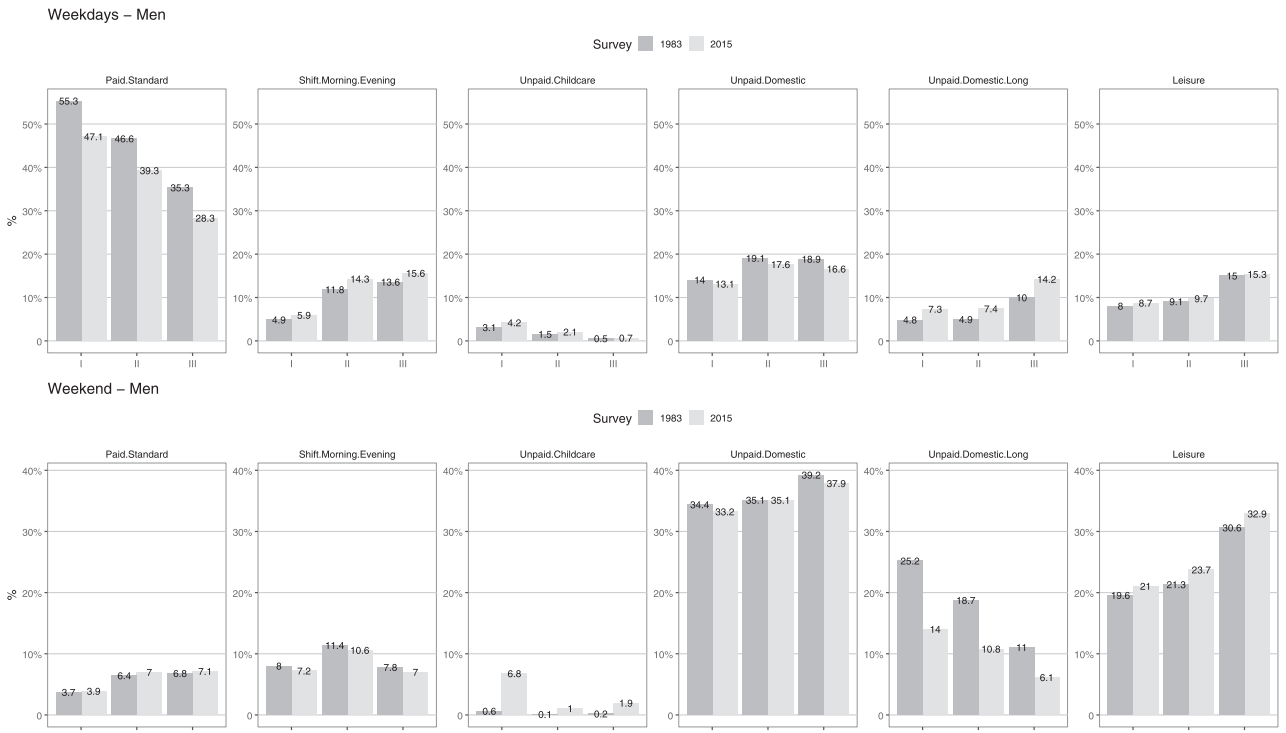

FIGURE 3 Predicted probabilities from the multinomial regression models for men by year and social class on weekdays and weekends. Social class is displayed on the x-axis (Class I, II, III)

men in this type of schedule on weekends. Middle-class men are right in the center in terms of proportion of paid standard work schedules (7% in 2015). In 2015, about 15% of working-class men were found in the morning or evening shift cluster on weekdays, compared to only 6% of men in the managerial class. The third figure displays the proportion of the childcare cluster, and we can see that about 4% of upper-class men have this type of pattern on weekdays compared to less than 1% for working-class men. Looking at weekends, we see that the proportion of upper-class men in that cluster grew dramatically from less than 1% to almost 7%, compared to less than 1% to 2% for working-class men.

The long domestic work cluster seems to have declined during 1983–2015 for men on weekends while slightly increasing on weekdays. The proportion diminished from 26% to 14% for upper-class men and from 11% to 6% for working-class men. Finally, the proportion of men in the leisure cluster is highly stratified. On both weekdays and weekends, working-class men have more likelihood to be found in that cluster.

Table 3 shows the results for women on weekdays, and Table 4 shows the results for women on weekends. The regressions suggest that working-class women also have higher likelihood of being found in the leisure cluster on weekdays compared to upper-class women ($p < .10$). Working-class women have more chances of having morning or evening shifts on weekdays ($p < .05$). They also are more likely to be found in the two domestic clusters ($p < .01$) compared to upper-class women with standard work schedules on weekdays. On weekends, I find that working-class women are more likely to have standard work schedules ($p < .10$) and more likely to have long domestic work-type days ($p < .10$).

The predicted probabilities for women shows that all women have increased their time spent at work and diminished their domestic work time (Figure 4). However, important class differences still exist between working-class and upper-class women. As the regressions showed, upper-class women are more likely to have standard working days compared to working-class women on weekdays. The proportion increased from 20% to almost 30% for women in Class I, compared to 10% to 15% for women in Class III. However, working-class women are more likely to be working a standard, full-day schedule on weekends. The proportion rose from 1% to 5% for working-class women, but stayed constant (around 1%) for upper-class women. We can also see that working-class women are more likely to have a full day of housework on weekends compared to upper-class women. We do not find significant differences in the patterns of childcare between classes for women.

5 | DISCUSSION

In this paper, I explored the time use patterns structuring British society in the years 1983 and 2015. I found meaningful patterns that capture the heterogeneity of daily time use. This paper is one of the first efforts to bridge time use research and social stratification research. The "sequence pattern approach" offers insights that looking at average time spent in activities cannot provide. For instance, the average time spent at work cannot distinguish the multitude of shift work schedules (Lesnard, 2008). Linking these heterogeneous patterns to class, I found an important divide between social classes.

I found that upper-class men and women have a higher likelihood of standard work schedules on weekdays and a lower likelihood of working for pay on weekends. Non-standard work schedules, such as morning, evening, and night shifts, are more prevalent in working-class households. Working-class men have experienced an important reduction in their standard work schedule and in paid work more generally and have experienced an increase in non-working days and in domestic work (especially during weekdays) over the years 1983–2015. Working-class women are more likely to be clustered in the housework clusters, both during weekdays and on weekends. Over time, I found a higher proportion of working-class women working for pay on weekends, doing both shift work and a standard working day. Finally, the results show that the childcare cluster (i.e., a full day spent providing childcare) has been increasing over time, but the results suggest that the increase has been particularly important for men in upper-class households on weekends.

TABLE 3 Multinomial regression on the 8 clusters for women on weekdays

	Cluster of reference: Paid Standard						
	Shift morning/evening	**Shift afternoon**	**Unpaid childcare**	**Unpaid Domestic**	**Unpaid domestic long**	**Leisure**	**Other**
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**
Middle class	0.431	−0.159	−0.521	−0.363	−0.178	−0.012	−0.541
Working class	1.138*	0.523	0.327	0.996**	0.866*	0.830^{+}	0.175
Year 2015	−0.349	−0.172	0.450	−0.575*	−0.785**	−0.575^{+}	−0.179
Childless couples	−0.500	−0.287	−2.999***	0.178	0.396	0.949^{+}	0.128
Single parent	−0.214	−1.013	−2.021*	−0.452	−0.386	1.029	0.389
Single person	−0.474	−0.313	−3.043***	0.300	0.334	1.839***	0.334
Constant	−0.801^{+}	−1.205*	0.190	0.389	−0.075	−2.006***	−1.174*
n = 783							
dev.base = 2,979.7							
aic = 2,887.7							
dev.full = 2,789.7							
McFadden. R^2 = 0.064							

$^{+}p < .1$; $^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$.

TABLE 4 Multinomial regression on the 8 clusters for women on weekends

	Cluster of reference: Leisure						
	Paid standard	Shift morning/evening	Shift afternoon	Unpaid childcare	Unpaid domestic	Unpaid domestic long	Other
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Middle class	0.906	0.631	0.567	−0.462	0.062	0.205	−0.239
Working class	1.514^{+}	0.710	−0.043	0.253	0.455	0.704^{+}	−0.070
Year 2015	0.985	0.693	−0.325	0.654^{+}	−0.630**	−0.730**	0.132
Childless couples	−0.803	−0.672	0.710	−3.888***	−0.131	−0.863**	−0.747^{+}
Single parent	0.026	0.367	−10.577	−0.898	−0.555	−0.067	−0.252
Single person	−1.607^{+}	−1.028	−14.967***	−3.314***	−0.308	−1.068**	−0.433
Constant	−2.904**	−2.101**	−2.831**	0.225	1.358***	1.093**	−0.222
n = 773							
dev.base = 2,517.6							
aic = 2,454.3							
dev.full = 2,356.3							
McFadden. R^2 = 0.064							

$^{+}p < .1$; $^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$.

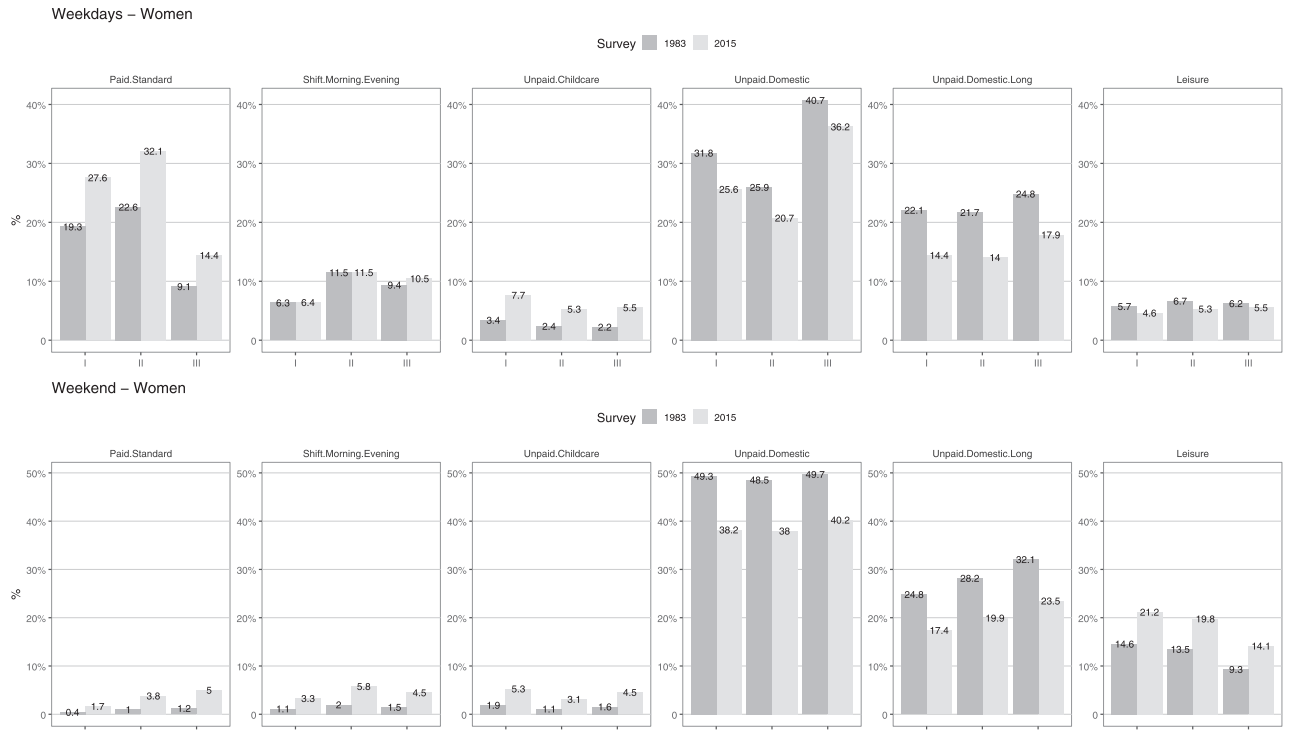

FIGURE 4 Predicted probabilities from the multinomial regression models for women by year and social class on weekdays and weekends. Social class is displayed on the x-axis (Class I, II, III)

The reduction of paid work and unpaid work during 1983–2015 is in line with the literature (Gershuny, 2000; Robinson & Godbey, 2010). My results suggest that the class divide in working hours is a real phenomenon (Gershuny, 2005). I found strong gender differences in the distribution of time use clusters. Gender is an important factor of time stratification. Women are more likely to be in the domestic/housework clusters and less likely to be in the standard work schedule cluster compared to men (Gershuny & Sullivan, 2019). I also found a large proportion of women to be working shifts. Working-class women are particularly over-represented in these types of schedules.

My study took place in the British context from 1983 to 2015. The goal was not to analyze a particular policy, but we can speculate on the role of social policy in shaping time patterns. A comparative study of time use patterns shows little difference at the population level between the UK and other countries such as the US and France (Vagni & Cornwell, 2018). However, we can still reflect on how institutions and policies, in affecting inequalities, might impact time patterns. The scheduling of work is an obvious area where policies can make a difference. For instance, a study focusing on the French 35-hr workweek reform showed how an exogenous change in working hours affected general time use allocation (Pailhé et al., 2019). Gershuny and Sullivan note that "it appears that public policy regimes involving the kinds of state regulatory activity on production and consumption … have a greater effect on the time that people spend in paid work" (2003, p. 223). They do not find differences in domestic work and leisure across regime. Domestic work is more strongly associated with individual characteristics, such as education, than with welfare regime (Gershuny & Sullivan, 2003). Even though to my knowledge no study has shown how work-related policy affects inequality in daily time use patterns, we can hypothesize that the paid work clusters might be the ones most affected by policies and institutional contexts. My results support the idea that working-class individuals, especially women, have proportionally more shift work on weekends compared to upper-class women. Obviously, it is unclear if shift work is the result or the cause of inequality, but it is nonetheless an important dimension of inequality because it is stratified. Work schedules are not randomly assigned to people but are structured by class. Temporal autonomy and control over schedules are important dimensions of social stratification. A comparison between the stratification of time use patterns in the UK with more regulated economies, such as in France, Germany, or the Scandinavian countries, could be informative in our understanding of the link between inequality and time patterns.

As pointed out by Goodin, Rice, Parpo, and Eriksson (2008), social institutions matter depending on household types (e.g., dual-earning families, lone parents, etc.). To fully understand the role of welfare regime, one should explore how social stratification and family status interact. In this study, I simply controlled for family status. The next natural step will be to explore the interaction of family structure and class. Different regimes will impact the temporal autonomies of single households, dual-earning parents, and lone parents differently. Because working-class households are the most affected by single parenthood, political regimes will affect inequalities in different ways and, thus, will impact time use patterns differently. Further research should try to combine a social stratification approach of time use patterns with a cross-country comparison approach focusing on different family status.

The limitations of this study should be highlighted. One limitation is that the analyses focused on individual time use rather than accounting for household time use patterns. Further work should investigate this issue using multiple diaries per household. Another limitation is the lack of a longitudinal link between time use and the life course. Linking life course to time use patterns will offer researchers a more complete picture and a better understanding of these patterns.

This study is exploratory and descriptive in nature. My aim was to establish associations between time use patterns and social class stratification. Further work should tackle the question of mechanisms and causality. How do these patterns emerge, and what causes them? Time is a crucial component of everyday social contexts. Everything takes place in time. The time to commute to work, to the nursery, or to school, as well as the time spent at work and to sustain basic needs—all these spatio-temporal factors are intimately linked to differential opportunities that are socially stratified. Embodied time in the context of human capital accumulation is an important

link between time use, life course, and social stratification, as well as gender inequalities (DiPrete & Eirich, 2006). More effort is needed to understand how the class of origin shapes time use and how time use shapes class destination from a longitudinal point of view. The same can be said about the life course. How do life course events interact with time use patterns and social stratification? In this paper, I controlled for family status, but it is likely that family status or different stages of the life course interact differently with class and time use contexts.

Despite these limitations, this study is the first to explicitly explore the heterogeneity in time use patterns for men and women in a social stratification context. I show how the sequential pattern approach can help unveil hidden patterns (Lesnard, 2010; Vagni & Cornwell, 2018). This paper contributes to the field by showing what these patterns look like, how they change over time and how they are stratified by class and gender.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are openly available at https://www.timeuse.org/mtus/download

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ENDNOTES

[1] Income inequality in the UK follows a U-shape pattern over the 20th century (for a detailed discussion see Atkinson, 2015a).

[2] Single parents are attributed their own social class.

[3] To help the manuscript read more easily, we use the terms Class I, managerial class, and upper class indistinguishably.

[4] Available upon request.

[5] The probabilities for the clusters "Shift Afternoon" and "Other" are not displayed.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section.

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