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EAST-WEST DIFFERENCES IN GERMAN ABORTION OPINION

LEE ANN BANASZAK

Abstract This article examines East-West differences in abortion opinion in the German mass public. The article explains East Germans' greater support for abortion by differences in the social characteristics of individuals and by the social context of religion. I focus specifically on both individual and contextual effects of religion and on women's place in the workforce. Analyses of 1991 survey data indicate that two main factors explain differences in the abortion opinion of East and West Germany. First, opinions on abortion differ primarily as a result of the social composition of the two societies; secularization and high levels of women's employment produce more support for abortion in East Germany. Second, separate analyses in East and West Germany indicate that the significant factors explaining abortion opinion differed in 1991. For East Germans, women's employment played a significant role in determining abortion opinion, while religious denomination did not. In contrast, West Germans are largely unaffected by women's employment status, although the factors that determine abortion attitudes differ by sex. A replication of the analysis with 1996 data indicates the growing importance of religion in the East. However, women's employment continues to be insignificant in explaining abortion attitudes in West Germany.

Introduction

Of all the issues raised during the unification process, the status of abortion in the newly united Germany was especially contentious. In negotiating unification, the representatives of the German Democratic Republic

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Table 1. Abortion Opinion in East versus West Germany (1991)

	In the Case of a Birth Defect (%)		When Can't Afford More Children (%)	
	East Germans	West Germans	East Germans	West Germans
Always wrong	9.0	11.7	16.6	23.1
Almost always	5.5	9.3	12.3	22.7
Only sometimes	8.9	15.1	23.6	26.7
Never wrong	76.6	63.9	47.5	27.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9
N	1,375	1,223	1,302	1,171

SOURCE.—1991 German Social Survey (ALLBUS), v448 and v449.

(GDR) were unwilling to accept the West German law, which required a medical rationale or social hardship for a legal abortion (Böhm 1991/1992; Czarnowski 1994, p. 252). East German law, enacted in 1972, permitted women to have abortions in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. Although this liberal abortion law was dictated by the Communist party rather than by public opinion (Thietz 1992), polls taken around the time of unification showed that a majority of East Germans preferred the GDR abortion law to its West German counterpart (see, e.g., Forschungsgruppe Wahlen et al. 1990). Moreover, polls like the 1991 German Social Survey (ALLBUS) show that Germans from the former GDR feel differently about abortion than do West Germans (see table 1).

However, divisions over abortion are also apparent within the boundaries of the old West Germany among both elites and the mass public. For example, when the federal parliament managed to arrive at an abortion bill acceptable to both East and West, Christian Democratic Union (CDU)/Christian Social Union (CSU) members from Bavaria refused to accept the parliament's decision and petitioned the Federal Constitutional Court to invalidate the law. The Bavarian state government also passed legislation placing additional constraints on those seeking abortions. These actions reflect the fact that Bavarians are more likely to think that abortion is wrong than are their counterparts elsewhere in the former West Germany.

This article examines differences in abortion opinion in the German mass public and analyzes the sources of those differences. I focus on the degree to which differences between East and West Germans (and among West Germans) can be explained by the differing characteristics of the population, particularly the differences in religion and women's participa-

tion in the workforce, and by the social environment. The analysis also explores the cleavage structures within East and West Germany. Finally, I discuss the consequences of this research for the future of the abortion debate in Germany.

Factors Affecting the Development of Abortion Opinion in Germany

Differences in the aggregate abortion opinion between East and West Germany may be the result of two different types of causes. Compositional hypotheses suggest that these differences are a result of the distribution of individual characteristics that affect abortion opinion. For example, fewer East Germans have connections to organized religion than do West Germans. Since religiosity affects opinion about abortion, the observed East-West differences might be due entirely to East-West differences in religiosity. Theories of social context emphasize that individuals' opinions are influenced by their social environment. For example, an individual's support for abortion may be affected by the degree of religious fervor in his or her region.

INDIVIDUAL BASES FOR ABORTION ATTITUDES

While much of the literature on abortion public opinion has focused on the United States (see, e.g., Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox 1992; Craig and O'Brien 1993), there is a growing literature on Europe (Chapman 1986; Jelen, O'Donnell, and Wilcox 1993) and Germany (Legge 1983; Rattinger 1994). This research has explored numerous factors, but three of these factors are expected to explain the differences between East and West Germany in abortion attitudes.¹ First, in all countries respondents' religious denominations and strength of religious beliefs have a strong effect on their stance on abortion (Chapman 1986; Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox 1992; Craig and O'Brien 1993; Jelen, O'Donnell, and Wilcox 1993; Legge 1983; Rattinger 1994). Indeed, if one had to choose a single variable to predict abortion opinions, religiosity would be the most logical choice. Individuals who are very religious (e.g., as demonstrated by the frequency of their church attendance) are more likely to oppose abortion. While religious denomination plays an important role in the United States, the few empirical studies of German abortion opinion yield mixed find-

1. The reader will probably notice the absence of gender as an explanatory variable. Generally, women have been found to be no different than their male counterparts once differences in other variables are taken into account (Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox 1992; Rattinger 1994; Walker 1988; but see Chapman 1986). However, because some factors may work differently for men and women, I analyze abortion opinions of men and women separately.

ings. Legge (1983) finds that West German Protestants' abortion opinion was no different from other religions, while Rattinger (1994) finds that Catholics differ from other denominations in 1991 but not in 1990 or 1992.

The regions that constitute East and West Germany differed in religious denominations long before the founding of the GDR; in 1946 Catholics were concentrated in West German regions, while East Germany was overwhelmingly Protestant (Ausschuss der Deutschen Statistiker für die Volks- und Berufszählung 1946, pp. 100–107). However, additional changes occurred during the postwar period. Between 1946 and 1991 the percentage of individuals who were Catholics declined from 12 percent to 5 percent in East Germany. West Germany experienced only a small drop in the proportion of Catholics (from 44 percent to 42 percent) during the same period (Ausschuss der Deutschen Statistiker für die Volks- und Berufszählung 1946, pp. 100–107; Mohler et al. 1991, v315). More importantly, the percentage of individuals with no religious affiliation increased more than tenfold in East Germany during this period (from 6 percent to 64 percent); the increase in West Germany was much smaller (from 4 percent to 11 percent). As a result, West Germans are now much more religious than are East Germans. These differences in religious denomination and religiosity may explain East-West differences in abortion attitudes.

Second, women's labor force participation may explain East-West differences in abortion attitudes. Luker's (1984) study of pro-life and pro-choice activists in the United States argued that women's views on abortion are affected by their labor force participation. As women entered the labor force and deemphasized the traditional roles of wife and mother, control over their fertility grew in importance leading those with full-time occupations to be more supportive of abortion rights than are homemakers. While this research focused on women, it is also conceivable that men will be affected by the lifestyle choices of their spouses (Plutzer 1991). Indeed, in analyzing men's abortion attitudes in Europe, Jelen, O'Donnell, and Wilcox (1993) controlled for (but did not report the coefficients of) the spouse's labor-force participation of married male respondents.

Women's participation in the labor force was much higher in the former GDR than in West Germany. In 1989, the most conservative estimates were that 71 percent of all East German women were employed (Ferree 1993; Winkler 1990, p. 63); the comparable figure for West German women stood only at 54 percent (Bundesministerium für Jugend, Familie, Frauen und Gesundheit 1989, p. 32).² Thus, the different rates of women's

2. The figures for East German women exclude women on maternity leave or in some sort of vocational education program. Including these numbers raises the percentage of women employed to 91 percent.

employment in East and West Germany may account for the differences in abortion opinion.

Third, education is also a strong predictor of abortion attitudes in the United States (Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox 1992) and Germany (Legge 1983; but see Rattinger 1994). Education's effect on abortion attitudes is not surprising, given the strong influence it has on attitudes toward gender roles, the family, and sexual morality (Banaszak and Plutzer 1993; Plutzer 1988). There is a higher level of educational attainment among East Germans than among West Germans by most measures. Compared to East Germany, a higher percentage of the West German workforce lacks some sort of advanced training (Kolinsky 1993, p. 276). In the 1991 ALLBUS 21 percent of the West German respondents had no educational diploma, while this was true of only 7 percent of the East Germans. Similarly, 10 percent of the East Germans but only 8 percent of the West Germans mentioned receiving a Hochschule diploma.³ The higher level of education in East Germany may help to explain East-West differences in abortion opinion.⁴

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS

Individuals are also nested within social environments, which may influence their attitudes and political behavior (see, e.g., Huckfeldt 1986; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995; Noelle-Neumann 1993). Two types of theories are common in the social context literature. First, as Noelle-Neumann (1993) suggests, individuals feel social pressure to conform to their environment. Under this hypothesis we should find individuals, regardless of their individual characteristics, conforming in the direction of their environment.

In addition, the social context may affect individuals differentially, depending on their relationship to the specific environment. In this case, an individual's reaction to his or her environment will differ depending on whether he or she is similar to or different from the social context. Two different types of interaction effects are possible. Under the assimilation hypothesis, the pressure to conform is stronger for individuals who differ

3. However, not all the evidence points to a higher education level in East Germany; fewer East Germans study at university than do West Germans (Kolinsky 1993).

4. Since education also contributes to higher socioeconomic status and income, one could argue that perhaps these factors, rather than education, affect an individual's abortion stance. However, previous research has suggested that social status and income have little effect on abortion attitudes after accounting for the effects of education (Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox 1992; Legge 1983). Nonetheless, social status is included as a control variable in the models that follow. However, income is not included because a comparison of income across both East and West is likely to be misleading. Both the cost of living and wages differ dramatically between East and West. Hence, an East German and a West German with the same income level may have very different standards of living and even be members of different social classes.

from their social environment than for those who are similar to their environment. For example, Banaszak and Plutzer (1993) find that the least educated grow more supportive of feminism as the level of women's educational attainment in the region rises, but the most educated are less influenced by the region's educational level. Alternatively, some social context literature has found a backlash effect; that is, individuals who differ from their social context may react against the attitudes prevalent in their social environment. For example, Jelen, O'Donnell, and Wilcox (1993), using country as the social context, find greater pro-choice sentiment among non-Catholics in Catholic countries than among non-Catholics in Protestant countries. Banaszak and Plutzer (1993) find that in the European Community women homemakers were more opposed to feminism in regions with high levels of women in the workforce than in regions where more women were housewives. Thus, it is necessary to test for social context effects by examining both the influence of the region's social composition on the individual and the interaction of certain individual characteristics with the social context where the interaction may have either an assimilation or a backlash effect.

I focus on those four contextual factors that appear most salient in the abortion debate and where there is considerable variation among the various German Länder: religious denomination, religiosity, education, and women's employment. Since the Roman Catholic church opposes abortion more stringently than does the dominant Protestant church in Germany, the ratio of Catholics to Protestants in a region may affect a resident's abortion opinion. If the assimilation theory is correct, we might also expect heavily Catholic contexts to increase Protestants' opposition to abortion more than that of their Catholic counterparts in the same region. That is, we should find a negative effect associated with an interaction term between an individual's Catholicism and the ratio of Catholics to Protestants in the region. If the backlash theory is correct, we would expect a positive sign on the interaction term indicating that the social context leads those who are different from their environment toward greater opposition to the prevailing attitudes. Since religiosity is also an important factor, a high percentage of nonreligious in the individual's state (Land) should also affect a respondent's abortion attitudes. Again, an assimilation hypothesis would find that highly secular regions would have a greater effect on religious individuals' support for abortion than for the nonreligious. A backlash theory would suggest that in a region with few religious people, the nonreligious would be even more supportive of abortion, while the religious would be even more opposed when they are in the minority.

Levels of women's labor force participation and educational levels in the Länder should also influence abortion attitudes within Germany. Banaszak and Plutzer (1993) suggest that we may find a backlash among

homemakers living in regions with high levels of women's labor force participation. While they find no reaction against the social environment in the case of education, I will also examine whether an individual's level of education interacts with the characteristics of his or her social environment.

PERSISTENT EAST-WEST DIFFERENCES

If East-West differences in abortion opinion are not completely a result of the individual's characteristics or their social environment, they may derive from the propaganda and socialization activities of the GDR regime. Although Thietz (1992) has shown that abortion politics was not highly publicized, egalitarian beliefs about the role of women in society were a part of the official GDR ideology.⁵ The East German constitution included a statement of equal rights, and the GDR emphasized women's right to employment (Kolinsky 1993, p. 259). Despite the collapse of the East German government, some public opinion research has found that some values emphasized by the regime persist (Bauer-Kaase 1994; Mason 1995). Hence, we may also find that the difference between East and West Germans in abortion opinion remains even after accounting for individual and contextual factors.

In addition, East and West Germany may differ in the lines of cleavage that distinguish supporters from opponents of abortion. For example, religious institutions in the GDR were limited in how strongly they could oppose government policy. As a result, we may find that religious denominations are more important in determining abortion attitudes in the West than they are in the East.

Data and Measures

To evaluate these competing explanations, I analyze the German Social Survey (ALLBUS) conducted by the Zentralarchiv für empirische Sozialforschung in Cologne. The 1991 ALLBUS consists of face-to-face interviews conducted between May and June with 1,514 West Germans and 1,544 East Germans. Each sample is drawn using clustered, random sampling from the population of noninstitutionalized adults (age 18 years or older). The overall response rate was 55 percent (53 percent in West Ger-

5. However, the regime's support of gender equality was not as strong or unequivocal as was its support of other socialist values. The East German regime ignored many existing inequalities, such as the perseverance of a pink ghetto and the absence of women in leading political roles (Hampele 1991; Kolinsky 1993; "Programm des UFV" 1990). Moreover, the official policies of the GDR were even ingrained with a view of gender divisions that saw women as responsible for the household and children (Ferree 1993).

many, 58 percent in East Germany), which includes a refusal rate of 25 percent and approximately 18 percent where the household or person to be interviewed could not be reached even after repeated attempts (Bandilla, Gabler, and Wiedenbeck 1992, p. 46).⁶

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Respondents were asked whether they thought it was always bad, almost always bad, only sometimes bad, or never bad if a woman has an abortion (1) when the baby has a high probability of having a serious birth defect, and (2) if the family has a small income and can't afford any more children.⁷ By summing the answers to the two abortion questions, I created a scale that runs from 1 to 7 with higher numbers indicating more support for abortion rights (see table 1 above). The scale's reliability, measured by Cronbach's alpha, is .68. While respondents were only asked about abortion in two specific circumstances, the scale serves as a reasonable measure of abortion support since it includes the two key dimensions ('hard' or medical reasons and 'soft' or social reasons) identified in other research (see, e.g., Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox 1992; Craig and O'Brien 1993).

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES⁸

On the individual level, four variables are of particular interest: religious denomination, religiosity, women's employment, and education. Religious denomination is indicated by a set of three dummy variables. The first is coded 1 when the respondent is a Roman Catholic. The second indicates that she or he is not a member of a religion, and the third denotes that the respondent is a member of a nonstate sponsored Christian religion (Freikirche).⁹ The omitted category is mainstream Protestants. Religiosity is measured by a variable that runs from one to six indicating an individual's church attendance with a six indicating that the respondent attends church more than once a week.

Because a woman's own labor force participation affects her abortion attitudes while men are affected by the employment status of their part-

6. These data were made available by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR Dataset 9832).

7. The original German read, "Halten Sie persönlich es für schlimm oder nicht schlimm, wenn eine Frau einen Schwangerschaftsabbruch vornehmen läßt, 1) wenn das Baby mit höher Wahrscheinlichkeit eine ernsthafte Schädigung haben wird, und 2) wenn die Familie nur über ein geringes Einkommen verfügt und sich keine Kinder mehr leisten kann."

8. A description of all variables along with the means and standard deviations are found in the appendix.

9. Respondents who are not members of Christian religions (.5 percent of the total sample or a total of 13 respondents) were excluded from the analysis.

ners, this variable is coded slightly differently for each sex, and men and women's abortion attitudes are analyzed separately. For women, labor-force participation is coded as a set of dummy variables representing whether the respondent works, is unemployed and looking for work, is retired, or is a student.¹⁰ The omitted category consists of women who stated that they were full-time homemakers. Women's marital status is included as a separate dummy variable indicating whether or not the woman was single. For men, women's employment status is a set of dummy variables that combines their marital status with their spouse's or partner's employment status.¹¹ This consists of five dummy variables: (1) respondent has no spouse, (2) respondent's spouse works; (3) respondent's spouse is unemployed; (4) respondent's spouse is retired; and (5) respondent's spouse is a student.¹² As was the case for women, the omitted category represents those men who indicated that their spouse is a full-time homemaker.

Educational attainment is more difficult to measure. Because students are tracked into different systems after the fourth year of study in West Germany (OECD 1995, pp. 276–78) and because of differences in the East and West German school systems, years of schooling is not a valid indicator of education. In the analyses that follow, I have chosen to use a set of two dummy variables to measure education: a variable coded 1 if the respondent had a degree from a Realschule and a variable coded 1 if the respondent had an Abitur or more.¹³ Respondents with a Hauptschule diploma or less were in the omitted category.

Finally, controls for the respondent's socioeconomic status, number of children, and age were also included in the model. These, along with the other variables, are described in the appendix.

To examine the influence of an individual's social environment, I constructed four measures. In all four measures, the social environment is measured at the level of the federal state (Land). The single exception is Berlin where separate environment measures exist for East and West Berlin. The four social environment measures were created by aggregating

10. The last category also includes individuals who stated that there were other reasons for not being in the workforce. These reasons were either unspecified or for a small category of men involved being on active duty in the army. However, over 75 percent of this group were students.

11. Initial regression analyses for men and women included both respondent's employment status and spouse/partner's employment status. The employment status of a woman's husband or partner had no effect on her abortion attitudes, and men's own employment status had no effect on their abortion attitudes.

12. Throughout the article, I use the word "spouse" to indicate both spouse or a live-in partner.

13. The East German system was somewhat different. For this set of variables, a diploma from a polytechnical school after tenth grade is considered the same as a Realschule diploma; an E- or F-class Abitur or a diploma from an "Erweiterte Oberschule" after twelfth grade is considered the same as the West German Abitur.

individuals in the 1990 German Election Study (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen 1990) and the 1990 German Election Study (Politbarometer East) (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen et al. 1990) by state of residence.¹⁴ I then used these groups to determine regional rates using respondents' answers to survey questions. The measure, the ratio of Catholics to Protestants in the state population, was calculated by dividing the number of Catholics by the number of Protestants in each Land. The second religion measure, the percentage of nonreligious in the state, was calculated by determining the proportion of the respondents in each Land who did not identify themselves as a member of any denomination. The percentage of women in the state who are employed was estimated by the proportion of female respondents in each Land who indicated that they worked for pay.¹⁵ The environment of women's educational attainment was computed as the percentage of women in the state with an Abitur diploma or a higher level of education.¹⁶

I also examine interactions between the individual and the environment. Four of these interactions will be discussed below: (1) the effect of being Catholic in a region with a high ratio of Catholics to Protestants, (2) the effect of being in a nonreligious region if the individual is not religious, (3) the effect of being in a region where women work if the woman of the household is active in the workforce (if the respondent is male, whether his spouse is employed), and (4) the effect of being in a region where women are highly educated if the respondent is highly educated. In each case, a backlash hypothesis would be indicated by a positive coef-

14. Unfortunately, I was unable to find the statistics broken down by Bundesland from public sources. Normal sources for such statistics, such as Eurostat's Yearbook of Regional Statistics or the Statistisches Bundesamt's Statistisches Jahrbuch, either failed to have information for the five new federal states or failed to have any information by state.

15. This includes women who indicated that they worked part-time or, in East Germany, on short hours (Kurzarbeit)—even if they actually worked no hours.

16. The aggregation of public opinion data introduces the additional concern about the size of the samples on which the data on individual states is based. The sample size of the context measures is important since small sample sizes can lead to Type II error and heteroskedasticity problems. In this case, the sample size varied across the three measures. The two surveys included over 17,000 respondents (6,809 in the East German survey and 11,169 in the West German survey). Since few respondents failed to answer the question on religious denomination, the average sample size per state for this measure was 1,057, and for 95 percent of the respondents the measure of religious context was based on a sample size of 493 or more. However, the sample size for the other two environment measures was considerably smaller since both were based on the characteristics of women in the sample. For both of these context measures the average sample size per state was 551, with the contextual variables for 95 percent of respondents being based on a sample size of 249 or more. All four of these measures are centered around the mean to help reduce multicollinearity. Since the analysis below reports results separately for men and women and East and West Germany, I should note that in each case the context is centered around the mean for the group under analysis. For example, if I am examining East German women's abortion opinion, the four social environment measures are centered on the means for East German women.

ficient, while an assimilation hypothesis is indicated by a negative coefficient.¹⁷

Finally, I include a dichotomous variable coded 1 to indicate if the respondent is a resident of the five new federal states or East Berlin.

Results

This section explores East-West differences in German abortion opinion in two ways. First, I analyze whether individual and social context variables account for the East-West differences in the level of support for abortion. I then examine differences in the determinants of abortion attitudes between men and women and between East and West Germany. Although separate models are reported for men and women and later for East and West German men and women, our focus is on the significant differences among these groups. Therefore I will focus only on those variables where the coefficients for each group are significantly different.

GENDER DIFFERENCES

Table 2 presents three different models of abortion opinion for women and men, respectively. Model 0 is the baseline model, which includes only the dummy variable for East Germans. It indicates that there is a significant difference between East and West Germans in their attitudes toward abortion (.73 point difference for women and .56 for men). Model 1 examines whether the differences between the two Germanys in abortion opinion can be explained with individual level factors, while Model 2 adds the environmental factors.

For both men and women, the differences between West Germany and the five new German states in abortion opinion disappear with the inclusion of individual-level factors (they also disappear when only the environmental factors are included). Therefore, we must conclude that there was no direct regime socialization effect on attitudes toward abortion on the mass level. Given that East-West differences can be explained by the other factors in the model, the next step is to explore which factors affect abortion opinion. A comparison of the *R*-squared values for models 1 and 2 shows that the social context factors do not explain much additional

17. Readers should note that the interaction term indicates the differential effect of the social environment on the individuals with a characteristic compared to those of the omitted category. For example, the coefficient on the interaction term of nonreligious individuals in secular regions tells us how the social environment affects the nonreligious compared to those who are religious. Hence, the coefficient estimate tells us something about both religious and nonreligious individuals.

Table 2. Regression of Men's and Women's Attitudes toward Abortion (East and West Germany Combined)

Variable	Women			Men		
	Model 0	Model 1 (Individual Effects)	Model 2 (+ Context Effects)	Model 0	Model 1 (Individual Effects)	Model 2 (+ Context Effects)
Constant	4.886** (.076)	6.234** (.296)	7.035** (.524)	4.991** (.079)	6.114** (.268)	6.813** (.506)
East German	.727** (.104)	.035 (.134)	-1.523 (.825)	.562** (.109)	-.006 (.151)	-1.280 (.850)
Church attendance	...	-.436** (.051)	-.425** (.052)	...	-.402** (.058)	-.411** (.058)
Respondent's occupational prestige ^b	...	.008** (.003)	.007** (.003)	...	.001 (.003)	.001 (.003)
Age (in years)	...	-.009 (.006)	-.009* (.006)	...	-.003 (.005)	-.004 (.005)
Number of children	...	-.025 (.046)	-.028 (.046)	...	.022 (.050)	.017 (.051)
Religious denomination: ^a						
Catholic	...	-.282** (.150)	-.147 (.168)	...	.176 (.164)	.097 (.189)
No religious affiliation	...	-.068 (.147)	.017 (.180)	...	.057 (.160)	.056 (.169)
Independent Protestant affiliation ^b	...	.110 (.304)	.082 (.304)	...	-1.315** (.445)	-1.307** (.447)

Women's employment status: ^c					
Woman employed	...	.361** (.176)	.726** (.244)	...	.390** (.171)
Woman looking for work	...	.290 (.273)	.634** (.318)	...	.423 (.333)
Woman retired	...	.557** (.248)	.900** (.294)	...	.499** (.237)
Woman is a student, etc.	...	.210 (.330)	.526 (.369)	...	.566* (.300)
Respondent is single	...	-.053 (.129)	-.056 (.129)	...	.086 (.202)
Education:					
Respondent attended Realschule	...	.284** (.136)	.267* (.136)	...	.221 (.142)
Respondent has Abitur or Hochschule education	...	-.048 (.191)	-.078 (.192)	...	.140 (.180)
Denominational context:					
Ratio of Catholics to Protestants in Land	...	...	.001 (.130)	...	...
Catholic respondent × ratio of Catholics to Protestants	...	...	-.060 (.178)	...	...
Religiosity context:					
Nonreligious in Land (%)	...	...	.025** (.013)	...	...

Table 2. (Continued)

Variable	Women		Men	
	Model 0	Model 1 (Individual Effects)	Model 0	Model 1 (Individual Effects)
Nonreligious respondent × percentage of nonreligious	...	...	...	-.008 (.006)
Employment context: ^c				
Women in Land employed (%)	...	...	...	.021 (.017)
Woman employed × percentage of women employed	...	...	...	.023 (.014)
Educational context:				
Percentage of women in Land with Hochschule diploma	...	...	...	-.005 (.019)
Hochschule diploma × percentage of women with diploma	...	...	...	.011 (.021)
Adjusted R^2	.038	.147	.022	.113
Increase in R^2 over Model 0	N.A.	.119	N.A.	.090
N	1,236	1,088	1,139	1,037
F	49.242**	13.502**	26.388**	9.703**
				6.761**

NOTE.—Entries are OLS regression estimates (SE). N.A. = not applicable. “Land” refers to the 15 federal states. In this analysis, Berlin is split into East and West Berlin.

^a There is a significant difference between men and women on the coefficients for this set of variables.

^b There is a significant difference between men and women on the coefficient for this variable.

^c Because men and women are coded differently for this set of variables, the equality of these coefficients could not be tested.

* $p < .05$, one-tailed test.

** $p < .025$, one-tailed test.

variance in abortion attitudes. For women, a model with only individual level variables increases the R^2 by .15 (model 1, table 2), while the addition of all of the context variables increases the adjusted R^2 by only .005. For men, the improvement in the adjusted R^2 of model 1 (the individual-level variables) over model 0 in table 2 is .12, while the social context variables in model 2 increases the variance explained by only .001.

Individual level factors. One interesting finding is that men's and women's abortion opinions are influenced by different factors. Among the religion variables, religiosity as measured by church attendance has a significant effect on abortion opinion for both men and women, while only men are influenced by religious denominations. The cumulative effect of the three religious denomination variables in model 2 is significant for men ($F_{3,1,037} = 3.23$, $p = .02$) but not for women ($F_{3,1,088} = .336$, $p = .80$). Even after controlling for religiosity, men in independent Christian sects are more opposed to abortion than are those in the Catholic or state-sponsored Protestant churches. Indeed, the effect of this variable is very large; on the 7-point abortion scale, men in these other sects are over one point less supportive of abortion than are men in the mainstream Protestant church.

Both men and women are affected by women's employment status. Employed women, unemployed women looking for work, or those women who had retired are less opposed to abortion than are full-time homemakers. Moreover, the joint F -test for the four employment status variables indicated that they have a significant impact on women's abortion attitudes ($F_{4,1,088} = 2.74$, $p = .03$). Similarly, men whose wives or partners were employed, retired, or not employed for other reasons (largely because they were students) are more likely to approve of abortion than are men whose spouses are housewives. The joint F -test of the five variables indicating spouse's occupational status is also significant ($F_{5,1,037} = 3.14$, $p = .01$).

The only other individual level factor that exhibited a significant difference between men and women was occupational prestige. Women who worked in higher prestige occupations were more supportive of abortion. However, occupational prestige did not play a role in determining men's abortion opinion.

Finally, it is worth noting that some variables were significant for one group but not the other, although the difference in the coefficients of the two groups were not significant.¹⁸ Educational attainment has an impact

18. In order to test whether there is a significant difference in the coefficients across equations, I combined groups in a single equation with a variable indicating the group (i.e., sex of respondent, or East or West Germany), the variables in model 2 of table 2 and in the models in tables 3 and 4, and variables representing the interaction between the group variable and those variables in the models that appeared to have differential effects across groups. Coefficients that are significantly different are indicated in the tables below. These supplementary analyses are available from the author by request.

on women's abortion attitudes but not on men's (see table 2), although there was no significant difference in the size of the coefficients for the two groups. The individual coefficient for attending Realschule is significant and positive, indicating that women who receive a diploma from these vocational schools are more likely to support abortion than are women with a Hauptschule degree or less or women who obtain their Abitur degree. The joint F -test on educational variables for women is also significant ($F_{2,1,088} = 3.26, p = .04$). Further analyses showed that the effect of having the higher Abitur degree is suppressed by the inclusion of occupational prestige; when that variable is removed from the equation, both educational variables become significant. On the other hand, men's abortion attitudes are not affected by the education dummy variables, either individually or jointly ($F_{2,1,037} = 1.31, p = .27$).¹⁹ In addition, older women are less supportive of abortion rights, although age is not a significant predictor of men's attitudes in the separate equations.²⁰

Social environment factors. There are also gender differences in the effect of the social environment variables on abortion attitudes. Men are unaffected by their social context. None of the social context variables are significant individually (see table 2, model 2) and joint F -tests examining the significance of a region's level of religiosity, Catholicism, women's employment, or women's education, and the appropriate interaction term are also insignificant.

On the other hand, women's abortion opinion is affected by the level of women's employment but not by the religious denomination or educational environment of the region.²¹ In model 2 of table 2 the employment interaction variable is significant, indicating that the level of women's employment in the state increased abortion approval for employed women. Although the individual coefficient representing the main effect of women's employment context is not significant, a joint F -test of the main effect and the interaction indicates that they are jointly significant ($F_{2,1,088} = 3.16, p = .04$). Figure 1 illustrates how a woman's employment status and the percentage of women employed in the region interact to affect abortion opinion.²² The points on each line indicate the 15 different German states. The figure suggests that there is a backlash effect among homemakers. The dotted line, indicating women who are homemakers,

19. In analyses not reported here, I also examined whether a high education level, measured by whether the respondent had a Hochschule diploma, affected abortion attitudes. This variable had no significant effect for either sex.

20. However, the difference in the coefficients for men and women is not statistically significant.

21. Because the interaction term for the individual with the employment context is based on a different individual level employment variable for men and women, a test of the joint significance of context variables is not possible. Nonetheless, the individual-context interaction variable for women is significant.

22. In making these calculations, all other variables in the regression are set to the mean for women.

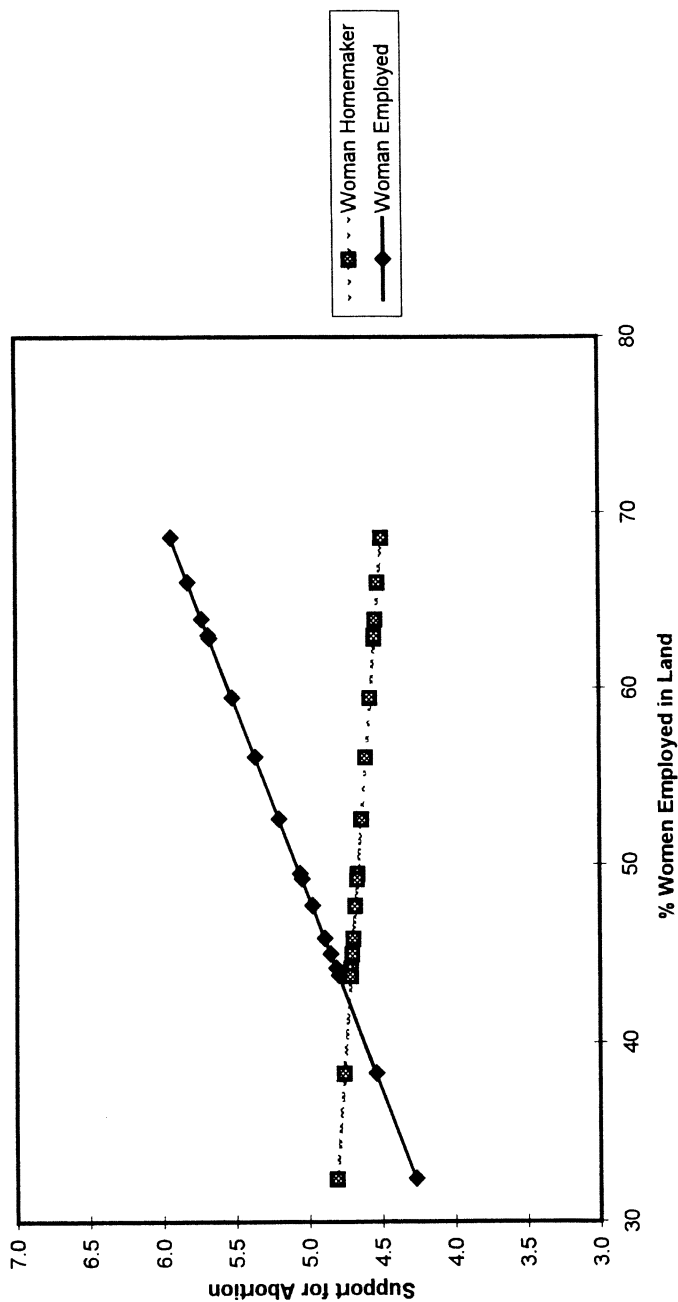


Figure 1. Interaction of employment context and individual employment for all women

decreases slightly as the percentage of women employed in the region increases. This shows that homemakers are more opposed to abortion where more women around them are in the labor force and that high levels of women in the labor force increases the polarization among women.

The level of religiosity of a region clearly affects women's opinions about abortion and may also affect abortion support in men as well. Although the coefficient for the religiosity of the region is significant only for women in model 3, the coefficients for men and women are virtually identical in size, and the coefficient narrowly escapes significance for men in model 3 ($p = .067$, one-tailed).²³ In both cases, those who live in regions where religion is less important are more likely to support abortion. The lack of significance of the interaction effect (both as an individual coefficient and in a joint F -test with the main effect) suggest that this contextual effect follows Noelle-Neumann's theory (1993) that individuals will react in the direction of the majority.

Thus, among Germans as a group, women's attitudes were affected by both individual and environmental factors, while men are influenced mainly by their personal characteristics (except for the level of religiosity). However, we still do not know to what extent the processes determining support for abortion differed between East and West. Factors such as women's employment may affect both East and West Germans similarly, even as the level of employment differs between the two regions. Alternatively, the influence of these factors may be fundamentally different for East and West Germans, just as the role of some factors differs for men and women. A third possibility is that the significant factors in table 2 are largely a result of differences between East and West; these differences may disappear when we examine the two regions separately. To explore this question more thoroughly, table 3 reports regression equations with all variables for East German men, East German women, West German men, and West German women, respectively.

EAST-WEST DIFFERENCES

The results suggest fundamental differences between East and West Germany in the way that the variables affect abortion opinion. Only religiosity affects the abortion opinion of all four groups. The difference between those who never attend church and those who attend more than once a week ranges from 1.7 points for East German men to 2.3 points for West German women. While there are no additional factors that influence the abortion opinion of both East and West German men, retired women in both parts of Germany are more supportive of abortion than are housewives (net of age).

23. There is no significant difference between the coefficients for men and women according to the analyses described in footnote 18.

Table 3. Regression on Abortion Opinion for East and West German Men and Women Separately

Variable	East German Men	East German Women	West German Men	West German Women
Constant	6.130** (.445)	6.492** (.402)	6.212** (.348)	6.086** (.473)
Church attendance	-.348** (.118)	-.384** (.083)	-.415** (.068)	-.452** (.069)
Respondent's occupational prestige	.002 (.004)	.005 (.003)	.000 (.004)	.012** (.005)
Age (in years)	-.004 (.008)	-.011 (.008)	-.004 (.006)	-.011 (.009)
Number of children	.023 (.070)	.002 (.061)	-.004 (.075)	-.087 (.074)
Religious denomination:				
Catholic	-.267 (.435)	-.171 (.307)	.250 (.192)	-.181 (.191)
No religious affiliation	-.149 (.240)	-.129 (.184)	.341 (.269)	.327 (.337)
Independent Protestant affiliation	-.826 (.761)	.240 (.414)	-1.586** (.563)	-.074 (.464)
Women's employment status: ^a				
Woman employed ^{b,c}	.853** (.376)	1.101** (.447)	.133 (.209)	.205 (.214)
Woman looking for work	.800* (.475)	.868* (.492)	.676 (1.303)	.334 (.645)

Table 3. (Continued)

Variable B(SE)	East German Men	East German Women	West German Men	West German Women
Woman retired ^b	.873** (.415)	1.069** (.484)	.324 (.369)	.778** (.370)
Woman is a student, etc. ^{b,c}	.646 (.528)	1.004* (.564)	.578 (.405)	-.196 (.513)
Respondent is single	-.249 (.438)	-.017 (.170)	.017 (.239)	-.161 (.201)
Education:				
Respondent Attended Realschule	.230 (.212)	.134 (.204)	.210 (.206)	.319 (.204)
Respondent has Abitur or Hochschule education	-.189 (.267)	.109 (.273)	.371 (.247)	-.398 (.293)
Denominational context:				
Ratio of Catholics to Protestants in Land	17.465 (13.314)	-1.459 (12.235)	.020 (.168)	-.114 (.183)
Catholic respondent × ratio of Catholics to Protestants	-14.618 (17.316)	2.176 (13.156)	.104 (.224)	.021 (.242)
Religiosity context:				
Nonreligious in Land (%)	.151* (.088)	.028 (.080)	-.001 (.033)	.008 (.036)

Nonreligious respondent \times percentage of nonreligious					
Employment context: ^a					
Women in Land employed (%) ^b	.039 (.031)	.022 (.025)	.022 (.035)	-.007 (.050)	
Woman employed \times percentage of women employed ^b	.245* (.130)	.053 (.119)	.014 (.024)	-.003 (.029)	
Educational context:					
Women in land with Hochschule diploma (%)	-.222 (.171)	.012 (.157)	-.021 (.025)	-.002 (.025)	
Hochschule diploma \times percentage of women with diploma	.036 (.051)	.036 (.045)	-.014 (.038)	-.003 (.038)	
R^2	.130	.116	.164	.209	
Adjusted R^2	.093	.083	.125	.170	
N	540	619	497	469	
F	3.518**	3.541**	4.219**	5.354**	

NOTE.—Entries are OLS regression estimates (SE). “Land” refers to the 15 federal states. In this analysis, Berlin is split into East and West Berlin.

^a There is a significant difference between East and West German men on the coefficients for this set of variables.

^b There is a significant difference between East and West German men on the coefficient for this variable.

^c There is a significant difference between East and West German women on the coefficient for this variable.

* $p < .05$, one-tailed test.

** $p < .025$, one-tailed test.

Particularly interesting, however, are the differences within each sex between East and West Germany. East and West German men differ most in the effect that women's employment has on their attitudes toward abortion. On the one hand, East German men are affected by women's employment status—both that of their wife or partner and the level of employment in their region—while West German men are not. Three of the five individual coefficients for wife or partner's employment status are positive and significant for East German men, and the five dummy variables are also jointly significant ($F_{5,540} = 4.59, p < .01$). East German men who are married to working, unemployed, or retired women are over three-quarters of a point more supportive of abortion than are those whose spouses are housewives.

The employment characteristics of the region also have a strong influence on abortion approval for East German men but not for West German men. The effect of the environment in this case follows the assimilation hypothesis described above with abortion opinion differing for men with employed spouses/partners and men whose spouses/partners are homemakers. Figure 2 illustrates how the characteristics of East German men's spouses and the percentage of women employed in the region interact to affect abortion opinion.²⁴ The negative interaction term indicates that men whose spouses are homemakers assimilate to the environment more than do those men whose spouses are employed. Thus, the solid line—East German men with employed spouses/partners—rises at a slower rate, as there are more women employed in the Land than the dotted line that indicates East German men whose spouses are not employed.

In the individual equations reported in table 3, the religious denomination variables are jointly significant for West German men ($F_{3,497} = 4.26, p < .01$) but not for East German men ($F_{3,540} = .574, p = .63$). In addition, the individual coefficient for members in independent Protestant religions was significant for West German men but not East German men. However, the religious denomination coefficients for East and West German men are not significantly different (neither individually nor as a set). Since religion was significant for all men in table 2, the difference between East and West German men probably lies in the distribution of religious denominations rather than in the effect that denomination has on abortion opinion.²⁵

Thus, East and West German men are influenced differently by spouse's employment. West German men's abortion opinion is not af-

24. In making these calculations, all other variables in the regression are set to the mean for East German men.

25. Some readers might notice that the coefficient for independent Protestant sects is nearly twice as big for West German men as it is for East German men. This difference is not statistically significant largely because the paucity of East German men in this denomination (only 12 East German men are members of independent Protestant sects) inflates the standard error.

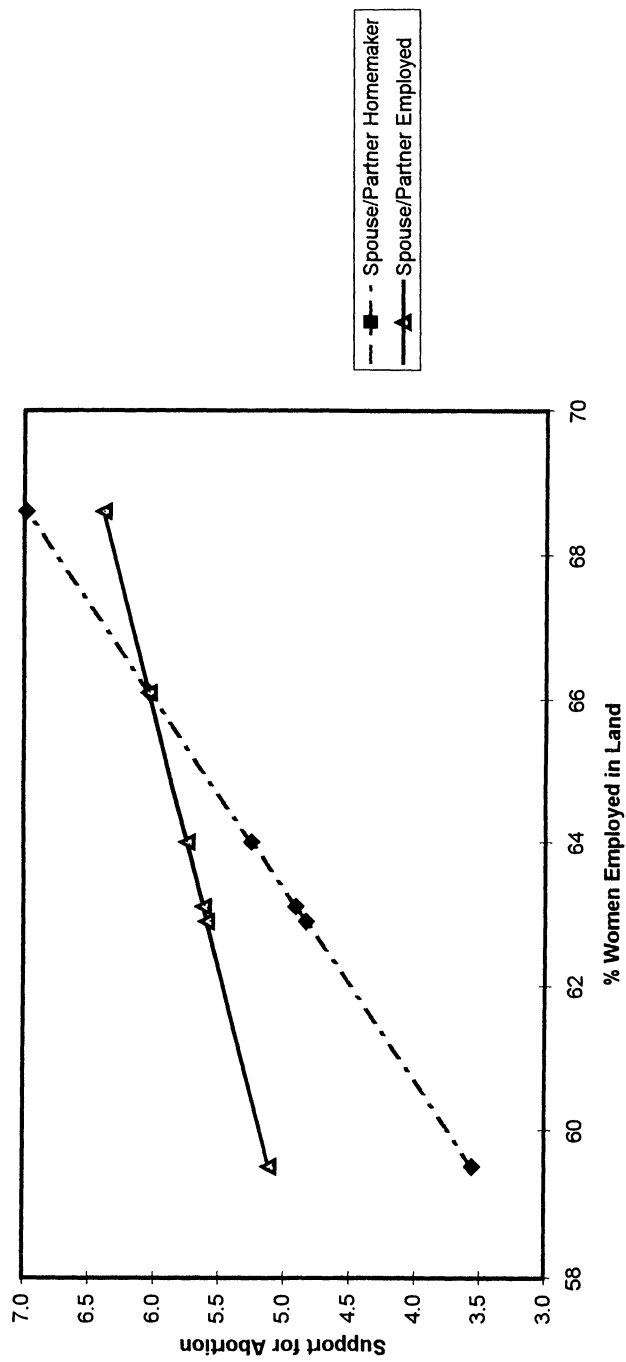


Figure 2. Interaction of women's employment context and individual level for East German men

affected by either social context or by the spouse's employment status. In contrast, East German men are affected by the social context of women's employment and by their own spouse's employment status. Differences in the religious composition between East and West German men also affect their abortion opinions.

No context variables achieve statistical significance in the separate regressions on East and West German women. Employment context, which was significant in table 2, no longer plays a role in determining abortion attitudes when East and West German women are analyzed separately. This change suggests that the significance of employment context in the previous table is largely due to differences in the regional levels of women's employment between East and West.

West and East German women differ only in terms of their own employment status. West German women's attitudes toward abortion are not affected by employment outside of the home. Although the individual coefficient for retired women is significant, a joint F -test indicates that the four employment variables did not have a significant role in determining West German women's abortion attitudes ($F_{4,469} = 1.32, p = .26$). Indeed, even when only individual level variables are included in the model, employment has no significant effect on West German women. On the other hand, the four employment status variables have a large and significant effect on the abortion attitudes of East German women. Approval of abortion is over one point higher among East German women who are employed or retired than among those who label themselves housewives. However, the coefficients are only significantly different between East and West Germany for women who are employed or in the other category.

Summary

Thus, with the exception of religiosity and religious denomination, East and West Germans are influenced by different factors when it comes to their support for abortion. For East Germans, women's employment plays a big role in determining abortion opinions. East German men are influenced by the women around them—both those in their immediate family and in the wider environment—while East German women are more influenced by their own experiences. On the other hand, West German men and women are largely unaffected by women's employment status, although the factors that affect abortion opinion differ somewhat by sex. West and East German men are also affected by their religious denomination.

These results suggest that differences in abortion opinion between East and West Germany are a result of both social composition and differing

social cleavages of the two societies. These compositional and cleavage differences are largely in the areas of religion and women's employment.

In the case of religion, East German attitudes toward abortion have been affected by the societal changes wrought by the German Democratic Republic. While the regions comprising East Germany have traditionally been more Protestant than have the western *Länder*, the largest transformation between 1946 and 1989 was in discouraging all organized religion (Goeckel 1994; Moltmann 1986; Solberg 1961). By 1991, a majority of East Germans had no religious affiliation, and church attendance among all religious groups except Catholics was lower in East Germany than in West Germany (1991 ALLBUS). Since religiosity has a strong effect on abortion opinion of men and women in both parts of Germany, the increased secularization of East Germany is likely to be one continuing factor in the abortion debate.

Women's employment also divides East and West Germans on the issue of abortion. On the one hand, a greater proportion of women were employed in the GDR, and this contributes to the East's more liberal opinion concerning abortion. On the other hand, East and West differ in that women's employment does not impact the abortion attitudes of West Germans at all. East German men's appraisal of abortion is affected by the employment status of the respondent's spouse, the regional levels of women's employment, and the interaction between the two, but West German men are unaffected by these variables. East German women are affected only by their own employment experience, but being employed does not increase support for abortion among West German women. Before we discuss the reasons for this difference, let us examine the stability of these differences over time, using the more recent 1996 German Social Survey.

The Future of Abortion Politics in Germany

Since unification, East Germany has undergone rapid and intensive change in its social, economic and political structure. Two types of recent change could be expected to have consequences for abortion opinion in the former GDR. First, as the five new German states become assimilated into the former West Germany, East German church organizations are being absorbed into the West German religious system, and independent denominations are moving into East Germany. These changes in the structure of religion may increase the importance of religious denomination as a cleavage point in the five new federal states.

Second, recent changes in women's employment in the five new federal states may reduce the East-West differences in abortion opinion. GDR policies designed to encourage women's employment—day care facilities, maternity benefits, and the generous parental leave—disappeared or

were curtailed with unification. More importantly, the economic restructuring that accompanied unification has greatly decreased the level of women's employment in the East. Unemployment is currently at 19 percent (German Information Center 1997), and two-thirds of the unemployed in the East are women (Atkinson 1995). To the extent that the economic restructuring returns women to the position of full-time homemaker, it may reduce support for abortion rights among East German women and their spouses. On the other hand, a survey of unemployed women in the former GDR showed that most of these unemployed women (78 percent) were not staying home by choice (Senatsverwaltung für Arbeit und Frauen 1992, p. 8). If East German women continue to view a career as important, their support for abortion is unlikely to dissipate.

To see whether these changes altered the abortion opinion in the years since unification, I replicate the analysis in table 3 using data from the 1996 German Social Survey (ALLBUS) (Zentralarchiv fuer empirische Sozialforschung and Zentrum fuer Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen 1996). The variables used in this analysis are described in the appendix. In general, these variables are similar to those utilized in the previous analysis with a few exceptions. First, the dependent variable is somewhat different from that used in 1991. In 1996, respondents were asked whether it should be legal or illegal for a woman to get an abortion in six different situations: (1) when the baby has a high probability of having a birth defect, (2) if the family has a small income and can't afford any more children, (3) if the woman's health is endangered by the pregnancy, (4) if the woman is married and doesn't want more children, (5) if the pregnancy is the result of rape, and (6) if the woman is unmarried and doesn't want to marry the man. These questions were combined in an additive scale running from 0 to 6 with a six indicating that the respondent believes abortion should be legal in all six cases.²⁶ Second, in order to capture the quickly changing social environment, the 1994 and 1996 German Social Surveys were combined to create the context variables in each of the 15 states (with East and West Berlin reported separately).²⁷ Because there were too few respondents (less than 50) from Bremen and Saarland to accurately calculate the measures of social context, respondents in these two states were deleted from the analysis.

26. The scale has a reliability, measured by Cronbach's alpha, of .79. Since the scale mirrors that used by abortion researchers in the United States, justifications of the scale's validity can be found elsewhere (Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox 1992; Plutzer 1988).

27. The individual respondent was not included in the calculation of his/her social context. The two surveys included 6,968 respondents (3,450 in the 1994 survey and 3,518 in the 1996 survey). The average sample size per state for the religious context measures was 423, and for 90 percent of the respondents the measure of religious context was based on a sample size of 217 or more. The average sample size per state for the two environment measures based on women's characteristics was 398, with the contextual variables for 90 percent of respondents being based on a sample size of 109 or more. All four measures of context are centered around the mean for the group in each analysis.

The analyses of the 1996 data for four groups—East German men, East German women, West German men, and West German women—presented in table 4 indicate that some systematic changes in the cleavage structure of the East are occurring. First, the importance of religious denomination is expanding in East Germany. By 1996, both male and female independent Protestant church members in all parts of Germany were significantly less likely to support abortion than those in other denominations. Even more telling, in 1996 religious denomination influenced the abortion opinion of all groups. While the 1991 data showed that religious denomination played no role in explaining abortion opinion in the East or among women, in 1996 religious denomination, as measured by a joint *F*-test in the individual equations, significantly affected men's and women's approval of abortion (for men: $F_{6,1,521} = 4.98, p = .00$; for women: $F_{6,1,516} = 2.37, p = .03$).²⁸

Moreover, although the religious composition of the German states was not significant in the previous analyses, by 1996 its importance has increased. In table 4, West German men are affected by the religious composition of the particular German state.²⁹ In addition, both West German men and women differ from their East German counterparts in that the percentage of nonreligious in the region affects their abortion attitudes. Thus, compared to 1991, both the social environment of religion and an individual's religious denomination have increased influence on the abortion opinion of both West and East Germans.

Changes also occurred in the role played by women's employment in determining German abortion opinion. While East German men were affected previously by the employment status of women, this effect has disappeared. East German men now resemble their West German counterparts; the employment status of their spouse and the level of women's employment in the Land in which they reside do not play a role in determining their abortion opinion. On the other hand, significant differences between West and East German women persist. West German women are still unaffected by their employment status, while East German women are affected by whether or not they are in the workforce. The four variables representing employment status are jointly significant for East German women ($F_{4,534} = 3.68, p = .01$), and three of the four variables are individually significant as well.

These findings suggest that some of the social cleavages explaining abortion attitudes have changed even in the short period of time since

28. These joint *F*-tests derive from the single models for all men and all women used to calculate whether there is a significant difference in the coefficients between East and West German men and between East and West German women (see footnote 18).

29. Analyses to examine differences in coefficients indicate that the coefficients on the religious denomination variables of East and West German men are not significantly different. This may be due in part to the limited variation in religious denomination in East Germany.

Table 4. Abortion Opinion in 1996 for East and West German Men and Women Separately

Variable B(SE)	East German Men	East German Women	West German Men	West German Women
Constant	5.034** (.309)	4.663** (.216)	4.316** (.166)	4.483** (.249)
Church attendance	-.354** (.093)	-.339** (.076)	-.295** (.044)	-.266** (.041)
Respondent's occupational prestige	.005** (.002)	.004 (.003)	.004** (.002)	.005** (.002)
Age (in years)	-.002 (.005)	.001 (.001)	.000 (.001)	-.002 (.004)
Number of children ^d	.013 (.074)	.176** (.078)	-.025 (.053)	-.023 (.054)
Religious denomination:				
Catholic	-.142 (.337)	-.448 (.309)	-.275** (.115)	-.208* (.111)
No religious affiliation	.019 (.168)	.159 (.162)	.337** (.149)	-.210 (.170)
Independent Protestant affiliation	-1.521** (.464)	-.848* (.453)	-.687** (.248)	-.788** (.282)
Women's employment status: ^e				
Woman employed ^d	.383 (.359)	1.266** (.503)	.230* (.120)	.005 (.130)
Woman looking for work	.439 (.392)	.939* (.524)	.570 (.383)	.182 (.314)

Woman retired	.346 (.392)	.732	.094 (.191)	-.132 (.180)
Woman is a student, etc.	.669 (.479)	1.073* (.570)	-.050 (.241)	.070 (.262)
Respondent single	.044 (.390)	-.027 (.150)	-.164 (.157)	-.039 (.120)
Education:				
Respondent attended Realschule	.197 (.168)	-.156 (.170)	-.036 (.118)	.038 (.121)
Respondent has Abitur or Hochschule education ^d	-.185 (.214)	-.231 (.228)	.013 (.145)	.365** (.155)
Denomination context:				
Ratio of Catholics to Protestants in Land	-.044 (1.211)	-.032 (1.151)	.199** (.082)	-.069 (.081)
Catholic respondent \times ratio of Catholics to Protestants	.171 (3.915)	-.667 (3.308)	.282** (.128)	-.065 (.132)
Religiosity context: ^{a,c}				
Nonreligious in Land (%) ^{b,d}	-.009 (.010)	-.021 (.011)	.023** (.011)	.019* (.011)
Nonreligious respondent \times percentage of nonreligious	.010 (.021)	.024 (.019)	.003 (.012)	.010 (.013)
Employment context: ^{a,c}				
Women in Land employed (%) ^{b,d}	.005 (.013)	.019 (.014)	-.021 (.016)	-.011 (.016)

Table 4. (Continued)

Variable B(SE)	East German Men	East German Women	West German Men	West German Women
Woman employed \times percentage of women employed ^d	.012 (.021)	.044 (.064)	-.021 (.022)	-.025 (.029)
Educational context:				
Percentage of women in Land with Hochschule diploma	.050 (.033)	.017 (.033)	-.001 (.020)	-.013 (.021)
Hochschule diploma \times percentage of women with diploma	-.022 (.038)	.003 (.038)	-.013 (.022)	.018 (.024)
R^2	.155	.175	.146	.141
Adjusted R^2	.116	.140	.127	.121
N	497	534	1,024	982
F	3.959**	4.928**	7.767**	7.138**

NOTE.—Entries are OLS regression estimates (SE). “Land” refers to the 15 federal states. In this analysis, Berlin is split into East and West Berlin.

^a There is a significant difference between East and West German men on the coefficients for this set of variables.

^b There is a significant difference between East and West German men on the coefficient for this variable.

^c There is a significant difference between East and West German women on the coefficients for this set of variables.

^d There is a significant difference between East and West German women on the coefficient for this variable.

* $p < .05$, one-tailed test.

** $p < .025$, one-tailed test.

unification. The largest change in the former GDR has occurred among men. Religious denomination now plays a much greater role in their opinions about abortion than previously. On the other hand, women's employment situation (both the situation of their own spouses and partners or the wider social situation) no longer affects how they feel about abortion. East German women have not changed as dramatically. While those who are members of free churches in 1996 are significantly opposed to abortion while women free church members in 1991 are not, religious denomination otherwise plays no new role in determining their attitudes toward abortion. Moreover, their employment status is still a significant predictor of their abortion opinion.

One possible reason that East German men's attitudes toward abortion have changed more than women's attitudes may be their self-interest under the poor economic conditions of the unified Germany. With unemployment running close to 20 percent, men may be most concerned about their own employment status, pushing concerns about whether their spouses and partners are able to pursue a career into the background. As a result, women's unemployment may no longer play a role in determining their attitudes toward women's reproductive freedom.

Divisions between religious denominations also appear to be on the rise in East Germany, although again men are more influenced by this cleavage than are women. The changes in the church that have occurred since unification—particularly the elimination of sanctions against church members, the introduction of religious instruction in the schools, and the reorganization of Eastern churches under the West German system (Goeckel 1994)—appear to have led to an increase in religious denominations' influence on abortion opinion. That East German women are less influenced than are men by religion may be a result of the continued importance of employment and a career to their worldview. The increase in the importance of religious denomination for West German women between 1991 and 1996 is puzzling. One possible explanation is that the 1991 survey occurred before the abortion debate really began in West Germany. If so, there may have been increased church activity on the issue particularly around 1992 when the abortion law was being debated. The 1996 survey may therefore be picking up the increased mobilization of the church in response to the issue.

Conclusion

The analyses above suggest that abortion is likely to remain an issue that divides East and West Germany. While changes have occurred in the East as a result of unification, there continue to be fundamental splits between East Germans and their Western counterparts in their attitudes toward

abortion. Although the changes wrought by unification have altered some of the cleavage points within East Germany, bringing East German men closer to their Western counterparts, East Germany remains more secular than does West Germany. Given the importance of religiosity to abortion attitudes, East Germans will continue to be more pro-choice than will West Germans. However, secularization is also on the rise in West Germany; between 1945 and 1991 the percent of the population who declared themselves as having no religious affiliation rose from 4 percent to 11 percent (cf. Ausschuss der Deutschen Statistiker für die Volks- und Berufszählung 1946, pp. 100–107; Mohler et al. 1991, p. v315). As West Germans become less religious and affiliate less with religious denominations, they are likely to become more supportive of abortion. This change, however, is occurring only slowly; West German society is unlikely to become as secular as East Germany in the near future.

Moreover, East German women are motivated by fundamentally different factors than are West German women and this changed little in the 5 years since unification. Most important is the difference between East and West German women in the influence of employment on abortion attitudes. Given the importance of women's employment in the United States and elsewhere in Europe (Jelen, O'Donnell, and Wilcox 1993; Luker 1984; Plutzer 1988), it is surprising that women's employment is not salient to West German women but is salient to East German women. Why are East German women more similar to women in Western Europe and the United States than are West German women? These findings suggest that the "mommy politics" of the East German regime have resulted in women's worldview being connected to employment (Ferree 1993). Even as unemployment has risen as a result of unification, East German women continue to find a career important. As a result, they also continue to be more supportive of abortion.

We are still left with the puzzle of why women's employment is less salient to abortion politics in West Germany. One characteristic of women's employment in West Germany that differentiates it from both the United States and East Germany is that few women have uninterrupted careers. While women are working more than they have in the past, it is still typical for women to interrupt their careers for periods that range from a couple of years to close to two decades (Kolinsky 1993, p. 154). Moreover, West German women tend to prefer part-time employment; three out of four women who are thinking of returning to work and one out of every two women currently working full-time would prefer part-time work (Kolinsky 1993, p. 174). Unlike in the United States or East Germany, employment is not an indicator of a different lifestyle; a career of full-time employment is important in the worldview of very few employed women (or their spouses). Because career interruptions, especially for children, are the norm, reproductive freedom is not as important to

employed West German women as it is to employed women elsewhere. Thus, among West German women, those who are employed and those who are staying at home are likely to be simply at different stages in the same type of life cycle pattern—one that mixes employment with being a full-time homemaker. This may explain why there is no essential difference between women employed at the time of the survey and those who are homemakers at the time of the survey. Since most of the employed women are likely to leave the paid labor force for a substantial period of time, the lack of political cleavage on the abortion issue between employed women and homemakers is understandable.

However, long-term changes are also occurring in West Germany that may eventually change the face of abortion politics. Women's employment at all age levels is on the rise in West Germany, as it is in most industrial countries, and the breaks in employment for child raising are getting shorter. Moreover, West Germany is in the process of increasing the number of child care and kindergarten positions, which will make full-time employment for women less difficult. In the long term, employment may therefore become a more salient factor in support for abortion among West German women in the future.

This study also has two more general implications for the study of abortion attitudes. First, the findings suggest that the social environment also has a significant impact on individuals' attitudes toward abortion. While the study mirrors others in showing that religion and employment are the significant factors in explaining abortion attitudes, it is not just an individual's own employment or religious beliefs that affect his or her support for abortion. Rather, individuals are influenced by their community; abortion attitudes are a result of the interplay between individual and environmental factors.

Second, the findings also suggest that abortion attitudes may be indirectly influenced by the policies of the state toward women and toward religion. In this study, the effect of religion has changed in a short time as the policies toward religious institutions have changed in East Germany. More importantly, by encouraging women's employment the East German government made this an important part of the worldview of East German women. The analysis of the 1991 and 1996 data suggest that this may be a lasting effect of the East German regime. Although East German women no longer receive the same support from the government that initially encouraged them to become employed, attitudes toward employment do not appear to have changed much. This may be the biggest legacy that the East German government has had on abortion politics.

Table A1. Variable Descriptions, Means, and Standard Deviations (in Parentheses) of Variables in the Analysis by Sex^a

Variable	1991		1996	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Support for abortion (1991: runs from 1 to 7 calculated from v448–449; 1996: runs from 0 to 6 calculated from v22–v27)	5.28 (1.85)	5.28 (1.86)	4.10 (1.58)	4.14 (1.56)
Catholic (dummy variable derived from v315 in 1991 and v318 in 1996)	.24 (.43)	.23 (.42)	.30 (.46)	.28 (.45)
No religious affiliation (dummy variable derived from v315 in 1991 and v318 in 1996)	.32 (.47)	.44 (.50)	.29 (.46)	.35 (.48)
Independent Protestant sects (dummy variable derived from v315 in 1991 and v318 in 1996)	.03 (.18)	.02 (.14)	.03 (.16)	.03 (.18)
Church attendance (runs from 1 to 6; reverse coding of v316 in 1991 and v319 in 1996)	2.30 (1.36)	2.05 (1.27)	2.34 (1.31)	2.07 (1.19)
Woman employed (women: dummy variable indicating respondent is employed; derived from v154 for women in 1991 and v155 in 1996; men: dummy variable indicating spouse/partner is employed; derived from v229 and v288 in 1991 and v203 and v237 in 1996) ^b	.49 (.50)	.43 (.50)	.48 (.50)	.44 (.50)
Woman looking for work (women: dummy variable indicating respondent is unemployed; derived from v154 for women in 1991 and v155 in 1996; men: dummy variable indicating spouse/partner is unemployed; derived from v229 and v288 in 1991 and v203 and v237 in 1996) ^b	.05 (.23)	.03 (.18)	.07 (.25)	.04 (.20)

Woman retired (women: dummy variable indicating respondent is retired; derived from v177–v178 in 1991 and v170–v171 in 1996; men: dummy variable indicating spouse/partner is retired; derived from v237–v238 and v296–v297 in 1991 and v211 and v245 for men in 1996)^b

Woman is student, etc. (women: dummy variable indicating respondent is a student or belongs to another nonemployed group; derived from v177 in 1991 and v170 in 1996; men: dummy variable indicating spouse/partner is student or belongs to another nonemployed group; derived from v237 and v296 in 1991 and v211 and v245 for men in 1996)^b

Respondent is single (dummy variable derived from v200 and v268 in 1991 and v183 and v212 in 1996)

Realschule diploma (dummy variable derived from v140 in 1991 and v142 in 1996)

Abitur or Hochschule education (dummy variable derived from v140 in 1991 and v142 in 1996)

Respondents occupational prestige (Wegener's Magnitude Prestige Scale derived from v197 in 1991 and v160 in 1996)

Age (years of age derived from v321 in 1991 and v37 in 1996)

.22 (.42)	.10 (.30)	.22 (.41)	.11 (.32)
.06 (.23)	.05 (.21)	.06 (.24)	.04 (.20)
.29 (.45)	.21 (.41)	.25 (.43)	.19 (.39)
.37 (.48)	.31 (.46)	.32 (.47)	.29 (.45)
.16 (.37)	.24 (.43)	.19 (.40)	.25 (.43)
56.61 (23.53)	54.78 (24.90)	58.00 (26.12)	61.28 (32.59)
45.34 (16.87)	44.84 (16.34)	49.45 (43.47)	46.55 (43.57)

Table A1. (Continued)

Variable	1991		1996	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Number of children (1991: runs from 0 to 9, derived from v317; 1996: runs from 0 to 7 or more, calculated from v264, v271, v278, v285, v292, v299, and v306) ^b	1.66 (1.26)	1.42 (1.26)	.67 (.94)	.69 (.95)
Land population who are nonreligious (%; aggregation of survey results by state. 1991: v249 in 1990 Politbarometer East and v277 in 1990 Politbarometer; 1996: v321 in 1994 ALLBUS and v318 in 1996 ALLBUS) ^{ab}	34.89 (23.58)	34.44 (23.75)	32.09 (27.10)	31.41 (26.77)
Ratio of Catholics to Protestants (aggregation of survey results by state. 1991: v249 in 1990 Politbarometer East and v277 in 1990 Politbarometer; 1996: v321 in 1994 ALLBUS and v318 in 1996 ALLBUS) ^{ab}	.62 (.74)	.65 (.77)	.86 (.82)	.88 (.84)
Women in Land employed (%; aggregation of survey results by state. 1991: v253 in 1990 Politbarometer East and v270 in 1990 Politbarometer; 1996: v25 in 1994 ALLBUS and v170 in 1996 ALLBUS) ^{ab}	55.51 (9.06)	55.04 (8.97)	44.00 (5.61)	44.22 (5.63)
Women in Land with Abitur or Hochschule (%; aggregation of survey results by state. 1991: v251 in 1990 Politbarometer East and v266 in 1990 Politbarometer; 1996: v12 in 1994 ALLBUS and v142 in 1996 ALLBUS) ^{ab}	15.23 (5.66)	15.42 (5.76)	17.57 (5.01)	18.02 (4.76)
N	1,088	1,037	1,516	1,521

NOTE.—“Land” refers to the 15 federal states. In this analysis, Berlin is split into East and West Berlin.

^a Means reported for context variables are before centering for each group.

^b SPSS code used to calculate variable available on request from author.

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