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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

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Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Conrad, C., & Triebel, A. (1985). Family budgets as sources for comparative social history: Western Europe - U.S.A. 1889-1937. *Historical Social Research*, 10(3), 45-66. <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.10.1985.3.45-66>

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FAMILY BUDGETS AS SOURCES FOR COMPARATIVE SOCIAL HISTORY:
WESTERN EUROPE - U.S.A. 1889-1937

Christoph Conrad and Armin Triebel(+)

Abstract: Income and expenditure data from family budgets since the mid 19th century are often used as illustrations in social historical writing, but seldom systematically analyzed. Presenting two large data bases of individual budgets, the authors point to new comparative uses for these major sources of micro-economic and social history. The data base on Germany allows for comparisons among occupational groups and among different cross-sections over time (from 1903 to 1937). The other set, presented first, is composed of data from 1889/1890, covering the U.S. as well as Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, and Switzerland, and adds an international and inter-ethnic dimension. The sources, composition, and limitations of the data sets are outlined separately. Recent studies as well as perspectives for a planned research project are discussed at the end.

O. Introduction

One of the time-honoured presumptions accompanying household budget investigations in Germany runs as follows: The circumstances of life vary from one individual to the next and in space and time; it's no use trying to catch the diversity of real history in average numbers. A methodologically refined version of the argument maintains that the survey methods have been too different to allow comparisons. Whereas there is some reason to believe that German household budgets during the 19th century were simply drawn up incompletely, the case has not been put to the test. In this paper, our primary intention is to make a contribution to the problem of comparability by discussing empirical data. We do not wish to report on overall changes of consumption patterns in the U.S. or in Germany, nor to touch upon purely theoretical considerations.(1) Three dimensions of comparison are involved:

- 1) The comparison of surveys at the methodological level for the same country, at different points in time was not considered a problem in the American case. Regarding German sources, the question of comparability is less clear, because the data are more sophisticated.
- 2) Comparative studies of ethnic groups had practically no echo in Europe, while in the U.S. it was considered a crucial effort. They represent but one aspect of comparative analysis. An aspect recently much discussed in Germany is differential consumption according to social status and occupation.
- 3) These levels of comparison intersect where the focus is on the international dimension.

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In the following paper, we will also consider methodological questions. For social differentials, we will confine ourselves to the problem of occupation and social status, touching briefly age structure and income distribution. Comparisons on the international level will be discussed as a task for future research.

I. North American and Western European Budgets 1889/1890

I.1 The U.S. Commissioner of Labor Survey

In 1889 and 1890, the Bureau of the United States Commissioner of Labor directed a survey of family budgets in the U.S. and five Western European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, and Switzerland). This data collection (total $n = 8,544$ households) was a part of a larger project, designed to determine and compare the "cost of production" in nine selected industries within these six countries. As the Congress was at that time dealing with legislation concerning high protective duties for imports in steel, iron, textiles, etc., it was felt that a statistical basis could help to evaluate the necessity of such tariffs (Wright 1891).

Carroll D. Wright, the first U.S. Commissioner of Labor and a father-figure to contemporary empirical social researchers, included a vast survey on family economics in this project in order to determine the comparative standard of living and to establish a basis for price indices. "The task was an enormous one and took three years to complete. The final publication in the form of the Sixth and Seventh Annual Report required three thick volumes totalling 4,293 (sic!) pages in all.⁽²⁾ Unfortunately for an ambitious young bureau, the Reports probably had no impact whatsoever on tariff legislation. Well then, if that's so, why all the fuss?" (Williamson 1967, 105; cf. Leiby 1960, 107). Compared to today's economic historians, who have benefited from the large amount of micro-data, Wright's biographer takes a rather critical stand in answering this question. While recognizing Wright's merits, he points to the theoretically unprepared data gathering as an expression of a naive positivist belief in the persuasive power of mere facts. Moreover, at that time the technical means at his disposition were insufficient for any thorough analysis (Leiby 1960, 84-86, 98-102, 133-141). But even today, one is astonished by the amount, variety, and accuracy of the cross-tabulations published in the Annual Reports (Commissioner of Labor 1891; 1892; 1904).

Carroll D. Wright used the opportunity of the cost of production survey to pursue one of his particular research interests on an unprecedented scale. Already in 1874, as head of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor, he was the first to apply the Belgian and German survey techniques of collecting family budgets in America. His officials gathered budgetary information from a stratified sample of 397 worker families. This study made Wright famous and was used as a model for subsequent surveys (Stigler 1954; Williamson 1967). The 1874 data has been analyzed by social and economic historians from several different perspectives (cf. Williamson 1967; Modell and Hareven 1973; Modell 1978). The resources of his new office in Washington and his considerable managerial skills allowed Wright to expand the scale of his statistical projects. The next big budget survey after 1889/90 encompassed over 25,000 families. The huge amount of individual data was this time not printed; what was published, however, were extensive summary tables with detailed expenditure categories from selected families within this survey (Commissioner of Labor 1904; Halbwachs 1933, 75).

1.2 Sampling and Survey Methods

In the case of the 1889/90 survey, Wright unfortunately specified neither how the families were selected nor how the international investigation was organized. "Nowhere is Wright's interviewing method laid out, nor is it stated whether the budgets were composed from records or from memory" (Modell 1978, 208). The historians however, who worked with this data in the 1970s found reassuring points: Modell underlined that age heaping (the preference for 'round' years) was not much higher than in the census and that very few budgets included blanks in expenditure categories. Haines (1979b) compares the age structure of the 1889/90 husbands (see table 2) to that of married males in the same industries throughout the U.S. in 1890. He finds a reasonable correspondence, taking this as an argument for the representativity of the sample.

Nevertheless, the principal difference to the method of data gathering used in the German surveys mentioned below should be kept in mind. In the German investigations, all budgetary information was based on record-keeping by each family over one year. Contemporary authors already distinguished between the intensive approach pioneered by LePlay and further developed by German statisticians, and the extensive approach highlighted by the huge American surveys (Higgs 1891; Halbwachs 1933, VII-IX, expands on this differentiation).

My impression from short contemporary descriptions of the U.S. Commissioner's technique is that the survey is composed of one-time, extensive interviews made by specially trained officials. The head of the travelling commission in Europe, E.R.L. Gould (Professor at Johns Hopkins University) wrote: "When the workmen had not kept their accounts, or did not belong to a co-operative society, we were often accompanied into their homes by an old postman or policeman, or some other person enjoying their confidence and their acquaintance" (Gould 1893, 70; quoted from Higgs 1893, 260; cf. Lees 1979). This combination of empirical investigation and social control is also illustrated by the qualitative observations added unequally to a portion of the budgets (concerning home maintenance, furnishings, state of family, savings). To heighten the credibility of the data, Professor Gould pointed out that the information on the (main) income of the head of household could be cross-checked with the pay-sheet of the employers (Gould 1893, 70). However, the investigators had to estimate the amount of yearly incomes and expenditures from a short-term basis. Since the overall design of the survey focused on certain industries and included data gathering in a number of enterprises, it must be assumed that the families were approached in the context of the place of work of the head of household.

1.3 The Data

C.D. Wright's 1889/90 survey(3) includes 8,544 families (= households) representing 44,158 persons. The overall average family size of 5.17 is only slightly higher than that of the general population as recorded in the U.S. census for 1890 (4.93) (Commissioner of Labor 1892, 845). The distribution of the interviewed households in the different countries of residence is as follows:

Belgium	124
France	335
Germany	200
Great Britain	1,024
Switzerland	52
USA	6,809
Total n of cases	8,544

The U.S. subsample contains cases from 24 states and with 22 different nationalities (determined by place of birth of the head of household). The workers belong to nine industries selected for the overall purpose of the survey, i.e. tariff legislation. Especially in the countries with a small number of cases, not all the branches were covered:

	Pig iron, bar iron, steel	coal, coke, iron ore	cotton, wool	glass
Belgium	86	14	0	24
France	40	0	295	0
Germany	57	47	96	0
Great Britain	345	181	472	26
Switzerland	0	0	52	0
USA	1,568	922	3,043	1,276

The main variables included in the data file are: age of the family members; occupation and nationality of the family head; number of children; number of children at work, school, or home; sex of children over 10 years of age; income from different family members and from boarders and lodgers; total income; total expenditure; expenditures for food, rent, taxes, labor contributions, sickness, and other purposes, separately recorded; homeowner or renter; number of rooms, various qualitative remarks; etc. Unfortunate for further analyses, the detailed expenditure categories in the original data were not coded.

Table 1. gives an overview of the distribution of families in categories of occupational status, demonstrating the concentration of the Wright survey on industrial workers. This is in contrast to the wider scope of the German surveys. The classification is not a part of the original data; all occupations have been put in seven very rough categories by today's investigators. Hence, it only allows for a very approximate orientation. For our table, helpers and apprentices are joined to the unskilled.

In table 2., the age structure of the 1889/90 family heads is shown. For purposes of life-course analysis, the presence of a considerable number of husbands above fifty years of age is particularly useful. Again, this contrasts with the later German surveys.

In table 3., the providers of income are cross-tabulated with classes of total expenditures, the percentages being calculated from the total number of families in each class. The differences over time and among nations in the contributions by wives and children highlight a major area of variation in the family economy (cf. the tabulation by age and life-cycle stage in Haines 1979b, 325 seq.). An important difference between American and German data should be noted here. In the latter (real one-year) budgets, total expenditure is for the most part higher than total income and, moreover, is considered the more accurate category. In contrast to the German surveys of

the 20th century, the officials of the U.S. Commissioner of Labor underscored the quality of the income data since it could be cross-checked with information from the employers. This may also be the reason for the fact that about 61 percent of all the 1889/90 households display a surplus of income over spending (6 percent having a balanced budget and 33 percent a deficit). Studies in consumer psychology suggest that small expenditures are very likely to be forgotten or underestimated for a longer time period. To interpret the arithmetical surplus generally as net savings (as done by Kelley 1972, 24-27) seems to be too optimistic, or simply misleading. Looking more critically at the same evidence, Fishlow (1973, 55) concludes: "Accordingly total expenditures reflect more adequately the normal standard of living than do current receipts, at least at the lower reaches of income distribution."

1.4 Prior Research on the 1898/90 Survey

A group of economists and historians in the 1970s decided that they would tackle this unique mass of cross-sectional micro-economic information (see Williamson 1967, 100, for earlier interest in this source). Among them were Michael Haines, Allen Kelley, Peter Lindert, and John Modell (see bibliography). They were responsible for putting the printed data into a machine-readable form and constructing a data set with, at the end, all 8,544 families. This set was subsequently subjected to major statistical analyses mainly using multiple regression techniques. Although these studies were concerned with important questions of family and social history (e.g., 'strategies' of the family economy, labor force participation by women and children, income squeezes over the family life cycle), they were for the most part ignored in Germany. Only the British subsample, the biggest of the European subsamples, was analyzed separately (Lees 1979, with 777 English cases).

The special interests of the above mentioned researchers, as well as the particularly prominent features of the data set, led to a concentration on the income side of family economy. Only Modell (1978) probed into various aspects of consumption behaviour, comparing American- and Irish-born families in the United States. He also called upon data from the 1874 and 1901 surveys while using a file of the 1889/90 data which included only a portion of the cases, but with more detailed expenditure variables than the file we have at hand. The labor force activity of wives and children constituted a major area of interest. Combined with the application of a family life cycle or an individual life-course approach, this focus led to considerable insight into the role of "secondary workers" and boarders as alleviators of economic constraints when the head of household entered the later stages of his life (Modell and Hareven 1973; Modell 1978; Haines 1979a and b; 1981). The existence of a small set of households headed by widows ($n = 181$) or widowers ($n = 92$) even allows to expand this type of analysis to incomplete families.

Other principal investigators of this survey concentrate on the cost of children (Kelley 1972; Lindert 1978), considering them both as "consumer durables" and as "producer durables", and contrast the 1889/90 data with recent surveys. Fishlow, in his paper (1973), only uses summary tables provided by C.D. Wright's publication as well as by other early twentieth-century surveys. He compares consumption patterns in the U.S., France, and Great Britain in order to analyze the role of demand for industrial development, drawing conclusions for third-world countries in the latter half of the 20th century.

2. German Budgets of the 20th Century
2.1 Making Different Sources Comparable

Four years ago, the implementation of a data base comprising German private household budgets of the first decade of our century was announced (Triebel 1981). Time has come to give more information about some salient features of this data base, which is called, in abbreviation, the Berlin File.⁽⁴⁾ Established by French and Belgian researchers, microeconomic statistics of the private households soon flourished in 19th century Germany as well, being much favoured by the socialist trade unions. Nevertheless, budget surveys were carried out by different promoters and organizations such as governmental authorities, trade unions, social scientists, statisticians, and other individuals outside the realms of science (e.g. publishers). They refer to different time periods, and cover numerous towns as well as country-side districts. Most contemporary scholars agreed in the conviction that the survey methods used, including the questionnaires, were too disparate to allow any comparisons between several investigations. A closer look, however, reveals that a lot of surveys may be compared if the single account books have been published extensively. The sources which Reinhard Spree and Armin Triebel picked out to be fed into the Berlin File had to meet several prerequisites, among them

1. each budget must cover precisely one year,
2. each budget must be authentic; no interviews or estimated budgets were allowed.

On the level of individual budgets, a number of surveys may be compared indeed. The statistics of household consumption was more of an autonomous science throughout the 19th century than it is today. It had worked up a system of consumption categories largely agreed upon by most research workers. The categories seem to have been taken as a matter of course to the extent that many investigators even did not care about explaining them in detail. This is true for food, the only sector of some fuzziness being luxury foodstuffs. Categories used by different investigators are named differently, this is to be admitted, but in most cases they have the same meanings and, therefore, can be transferred into data processing variables. Only two sectors of household consumption offered considerable resistance to the forming of consistent variables, i.e. the expenditures for housing other than rent, heating, and light, and the expenditures for the so-called 'social needs', including leisure time expenditures.

Most sources specify no less than twenty expenditure items, and some more than this. Rarely, however, the expenditures are split up as to be identified with certain household members. As far as income sources are concerned, the surveys are less liberal of information. Generally they list the

income of husband,
income of children (in a sum),
income of wife,
income from subletting/boarding,
garden produce etc.

Irregular receipts and government payments of any sort are mostly totalled without differentiation. The social characteristics of the households were reported with greater accuracy formerly than is done by official statistics nowadays. In nearly every survey we get to know the

place of residence,
number of family members and other inhabitants,
number of children,
occupation of head of the household
and whether they were home owners or renters.

In addition to this, we are sometimes informed of the

age of husband,
age of children,
age of wife,
periods of unemployment of husband,
periods of illness of husband,
properties (land, buildings, livestock, bonds)
and liabilities.

Curiously enough, denomination seems not to have been investigated anywhere. Some further remarks about occupation have to be made. The book-keepers were only asked to give their job or function at that point in time; they were free in naming their occupation. As a consequence, lots of synonyms and semi-synonyms paraphrasing similar occupations appear in the account-books. This makes electronic data processing of the occupation variable impossible. After the first step of standardization, there still remained some 1,600 designations, a number which subsequently was reduced to a half without losing too much information. Some of the original sources are preceded by summaries which contain statistics aggregating the households in broader categories such as skilled/unskilled workers, white-collar employees etc. The aggregations of this sort have no connection, however, with the printed account-books that follow so that the categorization of each household effected by the contemporary statisticians cannot be ascertained. In fact, verifications made sporadically yielded unpalatable results (Triebel Ph.D. thesis, see note 1). The manual re-input of status categories turned out to be most time-consuming.

2.2 The Berlin File

The Berlin File is designed to embrace the most extensive investigations and, at the same time, to be as homogeneous as possible, as far as social composition is concerned. At present, it contains 5,119 cases or, each case counting some 80 variables on an average, 425,000 values. It contains the following sources:

Germany before 1914

Subfile 1 (Erhebung 1909): 852 cases 1907 and 1908, the first official inquiry to meet the standards of modern social statistics though it was carried out with some rashness and carelessness (Flemming/Witt 1981 and Triebel 1982). The inquiry covers the whole Reich. Big cities are overrepresented, the Hamburg budgets forming the largest subsample.

Subfile 2 (Heyde 1916): 125 budgets of lower post-office clerks of the year 1913. The book-keepers lived in small towns or in the country except of 23 households in cities greater than 100,000 inhabitants. The editors of this survey worked unconscientiously although, at first sight, the publication leaves a satisfactory impression. In nearly every budget the computer processing revealed figures being miscalculated or transferred incorrectly. Two budgets had to be omitted because parts of them were mixed up. The averages the editors gave in their summary should not be used.

Subfile 4 (Herbig 1912): 106 budgets of 'reliable' miners in 1910 the managing director of a Saar territory coal mine gathered. The account books may have been checked up against the pay-roll of the enterprise. The book-keepers, many of whom owned their house, may be supposed to have been exceptionally respectable people; it might be argued that for this reason the data are of no value, if the concern is with 'typical' budgets, but the investigation belongs to the best we have as concerns method and consideration of the executives.

Subfiles 7 and 8 (Krziza 1915): 175 budgets of families subscribed to a family magazine which had called for household account-books. Some of the book-keepers joined in the project the following year (1913), as well. The majority of the participants, clustering in western parts of the Reich, lived in small towns and in the country.

Subfile 10 (Haushalt 1903): 33 families of middle-range civil servants in the postal service who kept books during the year 1902/03. They had been investigated by their union.

Germany after 1918

Subfile 3 (Dreihundert Haushaltungsrechnungen 1928): Budgets kept in the year 1925/26 by families of workers in the shoemaking industry, who were trade-unionized.

Subfile 5 (Lebenshaltung 1932): The second official inquiry by the authorities of the Reich, comparable to the first one in 1907/08. The editors accurately commented upon almost each of the 1940 individual budgets by separate footnotes. These footnotes have not been taken notice of up to now, although they oblige many figures given in the main tables to be altered (e.g. many book-keepers were house-owners, a fact that is, explicitly, not mentioned anywhere else).

Subfile 6 (Wirtschaftsrechnungen 1960): The third big official inquiry. It was promoted by the Nazi DAF organization in 1937. The composition of this inquiry alone seems not to be lop-sided in favour of well-earning families. Contemporary analyses of the 1,500 records were cut short by the beginning war.

Subfile 9 (Lebenshaltung 1926): An inquiry of the Hamburg Statistical Office into the budgets of 80 families in the year 1925.

2.3 Some Remarks Concerning the Data

As outlined above social categories had to be supplemented by way of historically reconstructing the contemporary meanings of occupational self-rating. Table 1 summarizes the resulting social structure of each source. The last but one column (status unknown) contains those heads of family who cannot be classified either white-collar or blue-collar workers or self-employed of every description. Table 1 makes a distinction among the workers between those who were trained for their job (skilled workers in general) and, more specifically, those who were employed in a trade which is supposed to be a handicraft on tradition such as bakers, even if in industrial surroundings. Both classes overlap, a handicraft worker being necessarily a skilled one, but not the other way round. The middling category of semi-skilled workers cannot be established on the basis of the occupation given. The tiny percentage shares of unskilled workers emphasize the current assertion that in Germany among the workers it was the well-trained ones who responded most freely to budget inquiries. The trifling rates of the self-

employed (factory owners, shop-keepers) throw a light on the recruitment schemes of budget inquiries. Both unions and statistical offices succeeded in soliciting employees in the civil service, white-collar employees, and skilled factory workers, for the most part. The small pre-war number of white-collar employees demonstrates that management jobs in the industrial production were taking shape but gradually.

According to the age distribution (table 2), the majority of the heads of family was between 30 and 50 years old, the percentages outside this range declining sharply. Before the war, the childrens' ages at the most used to be documented. The Kaiserliche Statistical Office (Subfile 1) inquired the husband's age, but did not make it be printed. The organizers of the medium-range civil servants inquiry 1902 inferred, from the income distribution, that primarily young families responded. Nobody seemed very concerned about this point, whereas the number of persons per family was scrutinized.

Some interpreting remarks on the income situation have been made already in a different context (Spree et al. 1985). Tables 3.B-D represent the distribution of sources of income in the Berlin File broken down in income classes and three main periods. The indicator of income is total expenditure. In German consumer economics it has been a commonplace from the first that families tended to understate their incomes; following the idea that the financial means for all expenses of the household must have come in some way or other, income always was measured by expenditure. Consequently the budgets very often show deficits by calculation. 10 to 20 p.c. of all Berlin File families before the Great War (table 3.B) have boarders taken in. Subletting is as frequent as child labour. Children have a constant share in family income all over the income classes, whereas the wives' occupational activities obviously depend on total earnings. The poorer the families the more often wives contribute to family income, the more the families are well-off the greater the number of children working. Taking into consideration that the annual earnings of ordinary workers seldom exceeded 1,200 Marks or so, the pattern of the lowest expenditure class is supposed to be the most representative. In the highest expenditure categories, from 2,000 Marks upwards, the role of the wives definitely loses importance. In the 1920's (table 3.C) different proportions are to be observed. More children and wives contribute to family income, their number declining with total expenditure though. Subletting decreased perhaps as a result of the propaganda against it exerted by spokesmen of trade unions and charity organizations since the times of the Kaiserreich. Let the figures of diverse incomes (produce of small gardens, gifts, winnings, and, above all, public transfers) be looked upon in historical terms, as well - they may indicate the extension of the Weimar social security system. In the 1937 inquiry (table 3.D), i.e. after 4 years of Nazi regime, they drop significantly. Instead, the number of wives working is higher than ever before.

There are many other caveats to bear in mind to these sketchy observations. Frequency distributions are only a minor step to a careful examination of the data. Absolute and relative amounts of money spent are to be taken into account. The problem of different sources of income or items of expenditure coinciding had to be touched. And, above all, a multivariate analysis that considers social status and age should give us a more sophisticated picture.

3. Perspectives for Future Research

This general description of the two data sets illustrates well the fascinating variety of research questions arising from rough comparisons between different nations. The authors are presently planning to pursue several

lines of investigation into patterns of family economy and standard of living in cross-national perspective. This leads to the final question, already quoted above: why all the fuss?

The least ambitious interest in historical statistics (though possibly involving considerable effort) is one of conservation: to gather and to preserve documents. It is deplorable that these efforts have not been fully realized in Germany, at least as far as electronic storage is concerned.

More ambitious studies require combining the data from budget surveys with other historical sources. This seems particularly necessary if we ask to what extent the social and economic characteristics of the different countries on the macro-level are mirrored in differential patterns of micro-economic behaviour. Or, to put it in other terms: does the general level of industrial development has direct repercussions on family economy and consumption patterns? Traditionally this question has been raised regarding the supposedly higher 'american standard' of living among workers (cf. the thorough study by Shergold 1982, comparing Birmingham and Pittsburgh). In an exploratory paper, Conrad (1983) combines different types of aggregate data (from household listings, census, labor force statistics, descriptive sources, etc.) in order to get a broad picture of the financial and familial position of older wage earners in different countries. This serves as a background for discussing selected aspects of family budget data. The main interest is in gaining insight into the economic strategies of families over the life-course before and during the emergence of the welfare state. Sources of income are taken as indicators of social relations among family members, with other individuals, and to outside social subsystems (Conrad 1982).

Armin Triebel is, in the long run, mostly interested in changes of socio-cultural behaviour patterns. Consumption being a special type of behaviour, it may be the subject of social history as well as of economics. The first question to be answered is: do consumption patterns correspond to the stratification patterns of German society and do they follow subsequent changes within it? The stratification system of Germany before 1914 was highly differentiated, with nearly every occupational group guarding its own standards of behaviour and self-image. The second question to be raised is: what was the relation between consumption habits seen as the material substratum of life style, and the concomitant aspirations, needs, and expectations concerning a comfortable life. Here lies a vast field of scattered qualitative evidence not easily grasped, though hardly to be dispensed with. Both approaches may be realized either from the national point of view or from a comparative perspective.

While another possible approach consists of comparisons between countries, difficulties matching exchange rates between different currencies and real buying power emerge at once. The role of budgetary data has to be modified in order to carry out a more comprehensive line of research. Instead of comparing household budgets from different countries figure by figure, it might be better to compare systems of earning and spending. Ecological units such as cities, for example, can be described as different variations upon a number of variables (Bargel 1978). Accordingly, a consumption pattern or a pattern of family income characteristic of some social class may be conceived of as a structure of proportions. At this level of understanding, the difference between U.S. interview data and authentic German budgets might not turn out to be as insurmountable as originally thought.

Although limited to active blue or white-collar employees, and mostly to complete families, the data presented here provide a most privileged source for deepening our understanding of the family economy over the life-course. In pointing to the major contributions that the studies of Modell and Hareven (1973), Modell (1978), or Haines (1979a and b, 1981), have made to the study of economic and social dimensions of family life, we also wish to draw attention to the importance of the age factor for German scholarship. In his regression analysis on children's labor force participation, Haines (1979b, 302-304, 307-311) found basically the same pattern in Europe as in the United States. Studies regarding the distribution of income sources in Germany, for example, would benefit from an integration of this perspective (Spree et al. 1985).

This preliminary catalogue of research interests, approaches, and open questions is aimed at stimulating discussion. We would welcome reactions from colleagues who are working with similar sources and/or on related issues. We hope that some people share our enthusiasm, which is, however, not completely uncritical, for the possibilities of international comparisons. The building up of a network of interested researchers and a documentation of further relevant source material seem to us the next necessary step in this effort.

NOTES

- 1 For a more comprehensive interpretation, see Armin Triebel: *Differentielle Konsummuster und die soziale Differenzierung von Lebenschancen* (preliminary title), Ph.D. thesis (1986).
- 2 Actually, the three volumes together have only 3,452 pages. Leiby counted Vol. I of the 7th Annual Report twice, and Williamson simply reproduced his figure. Nevertheless, it's still an awful lot!
- 3 A copy of this data file was kindly provided by Michael Haines, Wayne State University, Detroit. C. Conrad would like to thank M. Haines for generously making this data set available for secondary analysis.
- 4 The data file was created at the Max-Planck-Institut für Bildungsforschung thanks to the initiative of Prof. Reinhard Spree to whom A. Triebel is much obliged.

Table 1: Distribution of Households by Occupational Status of the Family Head, USA, Europe, and Germany 1889-90;
Germany 1903-1937. (in Percent)

Sample	Unskilled (& helper, apprentice)	Semi- skilled	Skilled	Crafts- men	White- collar, supervisor	Self- employed, professions	Civil servants	Unknown, other	Total N
<u>1889/90</u>									
<u>Survey</u>									
USA	33.6	28.4	19.5	10.5	3.1	0.0	0.0	4.9	6809
Europe	26.0	33.4	18.6	16.0	2.3	0.0	0.0	3.6	1535
Germany	21.0	23.0	41.5	11.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	2.5	200
<u>Germany</u>									
1907/08	3.8	.	35.8	30.3	4.6	0.7	29.9	6.8	852
1913	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	125
1912	.	.	(100,0) ¹	. ¹	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	105
1912	3.3	.	27.8	21.1	4.4	2.2	5.6	18.9	90
1913	2.4	.	24.7	18.8	7.1	1.2	5.9	18.8	85
1903	0.0	.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	33
1925/26	0.3	.	(81.0) ²	.	0.3	0.0	0.0	18.7 ²	300
1927/28	0.8	.	25.9	19.1	27.8	0.0	25.5	0.0	1940
1937	3.7	.	27.2	16.1	2.5	0.0	0.7	1.3	1509
1925	5.0	.	51.2	41.2	15.0	1.2	2.5	0.0	80

1 Hard-coal miners of whom some may have been unskilled without this having been made clear by the editors.

2 300 workers in the shoe-making industry. We do not know whether all worked in factories. In some cases, the head of the household even was a functionary of the shoe-makers' trade union though he termed himself a worker.

Table 1: Distribution of Households by Occupational Status of the Family Head, USA, Europe, and Germany 1889-90;
Germany 1903-1937 (in Percent)

Sample	Unskilled (& helper, apprentice)	Semi- skilled	Skilled	Crafts- men	White- collar, supervisor	Self- employed, professions	Civil servants	Unknown, other	Total N
<u>1889/90</u>									
<u>Survey</u>									
USA	33.6	28.4	19.5	10.5	3.1	0.0	0.0	4.9	6809
Europe	26.0	33.4	18.6	16.0	2.3	0.0	0.0	3.6	1535
Germany	21.0	23.0	41.5	11.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	2.5	200
<u>Germany</u>									
1907/08	3.8	.	35.6	30.3	4.6	0.7	29.9	6.8	852
1913	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	125
1912	.	.	(100,0) ¹	. ¹	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	105
1912	3.3	.	27.8	21.1	4.4	2.2	5.6	18.9	90
1913	2.4	.	24.7	18.8	7.1	1.2	5.9	18.8	85
1903	0.0	.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	33
1925/26	0.3	.	(81.0) ²	.	0.3	0.0	0.0	18.7 ²	300
1927/28	0.8	.	25.9	19.1	27.8	0.0	25.5	0.0	1940
1937	3.7	.	27.2	16.1	2.5	0.0	0.7	1.3	1509
1925	5.0	.	51.2	41.2	15.0	1.2	2.5	0.0	60

1 Hard-coal miners of whom some may have been unskilled without this having been made clear by the editors.

2 300 workers in the shoe-making industry. We do not know whether all worked in factories. In some cases, the head of the household even was a functionary of the shoe-makers' trade union though he termed himself a worker.

Table 2: Distribution of Households by Age Group of the Family Head, USA, Europe, and Germany 1889/90; Germany 1903-1937 (in Percent)

Sample	Age of Family Head							Unknown	Total N
	≤ 19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	≥ 70		
<u>1889/90 Survey</u>									
USA	0.1	19.0	34.5	27.3	13.8	4.5	0.5	0.4	6,809
Europe	0.1	16.0	35.5	26.6	15.4	4.4	0.3	1.7	1,535
Germany	.	17.0	33.0	30.5	12.0	5.0	1.5	1.0	200
<u>Germany</u>									
1907/08	.	(0.1)	(1.3)	(0.2)	(0.1)	.	.	98.3	852
1913	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100.0	125
1912	0.0	4.8	51.4	40.0	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	105
1912	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100.0	90
1913	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100.0	85
1903	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100.0	33
1925/26	0.0	17.0	45.3	28.3	8.0	1.0	0.0	0.4	300
1927/28	0.0	9.2	46.0	35.9	8.0	0.8	0.0	0.2	1940
1937	0.0	11.4	58.8	24.4	5.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	1509
1925	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100.0	80

Table 2: Distribution of Households by Age Group of the Family Head, USA, Europe, and Germany 1889/90;
Germany 1903-1937 (in Percent)

Sample	Age of Family Head								Total N
	≤ 19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	≥ 70	Unknown	
<u>1889/90</u>									
<u>Survey</u>									
USA	0.1	19.0	34.5	27.3	13.8	4.5	0.5	0.4	6,809
Europe	0.1	16.0	35.5	26.6	15.4	4.4	0.3	1.7	1,535
Germany	.	17.0	33.0	30.5	12.0	5.0	1.5	1.0	200
<u>Germany</u>									
1907/08	.	(0.1)	(1.3)	(0.2)	(0.1)	.	.	98.3	852
1913	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100.0	125
1912	0.0	4.8	51.4	40.0	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	105
1912	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100.0	90
1913	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100.0	85
1903	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100.0	33
1925/26	0.0	17.0	45.3	28.3	8.0	1.0	0.0	0.4	300
1927/28	0.0	9.2	46.0	35.9	8.0	0.8	0.0	0.2	1940
1937	0.0	11.4	58.8	24.4	5.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	1509
1925	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100.0	80

Table 3.A: Sources of Family Income: Proportion with some Income in 9 Total Expenditure Classes,
USA, Europe, and Germany, 1889/90 (in Percent)

Income Sources	Total Expenditure (US-Dollars)								
	≤200	201-300	301-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-850	851-1000	≥1001
<u>USA</u>									
Husband	85.7	93.6	95.3	96.3	96.7	96.4	97.4	96.5	97.4
Wife	14.3	9.0	7.5	7.5	9.5	7.0	6.4	3.6	1.4
Children	9.5	11.5	11.0	15.7	23.9	37.3	46.7	49.1	54.9
Boarders	0.0	6.8	6.9	10.9	14.7	22.1	23.7	26.9	27.4
Other	28.6	23.1	15.5	14.0	15.4	13.7	15.5	17.3	14.9
Total N	21	234	866	1,563	1,242	922	870	521	570
<u>Europe</u>									
Husband	77.8	96.4	98.9	98.7	99.5	100.0	99.1	97.6	100.0
Wife	44.4	21.0	10.1	10.9	7.5	2.8	1.8	2.4	0.0
Children	26.7	11.9	23.1	46.0	67.9	79.8	85.0	95.1	90.0
Boarders	4.4	2.4	3.1	5.4	1.6	8.3	9.7	9.8	10.0
Other	2.2	8.3	12.5	9.9	15.5	11.9	10.6	17.1	40.0
Total N	45	252	455	313	187	109	113	41	20
<u>Germany</u>									
Husband	92.3	98.9	100.0	100.0	85.7	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Wife	11.5	14.9	3.9	6.3	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Children	15.4	14.9	49.0	87.5	71.4	60.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Boarders	3.8	17.0	17.6	37.5	28.6	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	15.4	10.6	31.4	25.0	28.6	60.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Total N	26	94	51	16	7	5	1	0	0

Table 3.B: Sources of Family Income: Proportion with some Income in 8 Total Expenditure Classes, Germany, 1903-1912
(in Percent)

Income sources	Total expenditure ¹ (Mark)							
	< 1200	1200-1599	1600-1999	2000-2499	2500-2999	3000-3999	4000-4999	≥ 5000
Husband ²	92.9 (2.4)	89.3 (10.7)	79.8 (20.2)	74.4 (25.6)	70.4 (28.9)	78.9 (21.1)	78.3 (19.6)	66.7 (33.3)
Wife	64.3	41.9	32.3	33.3	14.5	9.0	2.2	0.0
Children	11.9	6.4	8.1	21.5	19.5	21.1	26.1	33.3
Boarders	14.3	12.0	29.2	30.8	20.1	16.5	19.6	11.1
Other	66.7	64.5	72.8	77.6	80.5	79.7	78.3	100.0
Total N ³	42	234	356	312	159	133	46	9

1 These expenditure classes were established by the governmental authorities according to the taxation system and widely used by all budget surveyors.

2 In many cases, the sources do not inform us of total income of husband giving only his main income explicitly; in brackets, the percent figures of the respective cases.

3 Total number of pre-war budgets: 1,291.

Table 3.C: Sources of Family Income: Proportion with some Income in 9 Total Expenditure Classes, Germany, 1925-1928
(in Percent)

Income sources	Total Expenditure ¹ (Reichsmark)								
	< 2500	2500-2999	3000-3599	3600-4299	4300-5099	5100-6099	6100-7299	7300-9999	≥10,000
Husband	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Wife	53.4	44.8	42.0	34.3	22.7	10.5	6.8	6.7	0.0
Children	14.2	17.1	20.7	29.0	25.2	21.6	19.5	16.7	11.8
Boarders	4.7	3.1	2.0	0.2	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	94.3	96.9	95.7	97.7	97.8	98.9	99.2	100.0	100.0
Total N ²	296	391	507	431	278	190	133	60	34

1 Cf. table 3.B, footnote 1.

2 Total number of budgets: 2,320.

3

Table 3.D: Sources of Family Income: Proportion with some Income in 6 Total Expenditure Classes,
Germany 1937 (in Percent)

Income sources	Total expenditure ¹ (Reichsmark)					
	< 2500	2500-2999	3000-3599	3600-4299	4300-5099	5100-6099
Husband	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Wife	42.5	43.5	43.6	54.8	66.7	33.3
Children ²	.	.	.	.	.	.
Boarders ²	.	.	.	.	.	.
Other	94.1	92.1	93.3	92.9	83.3	100.0
Total N ³	970	317	165	42	12	3

1 Cf. table 3.B, footnote 1. The income classes 6,100 RM and more are empty.

2 The source has no explicit entry for this variable.

3 Total number of budgets: 1,509.

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