

# ***THE GENDER DIVISION OF LABOR “Keeping House” and Occupational Segregation in the United States***

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*This article explores the effect of women’s movement into the labor market on the gender segregation of work, using the Current Population Survey from 1972 to 1993. The author includes as working those respondents who were “keeping house” and codes keeping house as an occupation. The results show higher estimates of gender segregation, and slightly steeper declines over time, than were seen in previous studies. Analysis of one-year longitudinal changes reveals less movement out of female-dominated occupations when keeping house is included as an occupation. Finally, a decomposition of the segregation trend shows that the movement of women away from keeping house contributed as much to the overall decline in gender segregation as did the desegregation of paid occupations. The author concludes that the movement of women’s work from the household to the labor market has been a driving force in the changing nature of gender inequality.*

**Keywords:** *occupational segregation; housework; gender inequality*

**G**ender segregation in the labor market is high, fueled by gendered and discriminatory practices and assumptions (Baunach 2002; Nelson and Bridges 1999; Reskin 1993). But for reproducing an institutionalized gender division of labor, and devaluing women’s work, the labor market is still no match for the “gender factory” of the married-couple family (Berk 1985). This article explores the effect of women’s labor moving into the paid market on the overall gender segregation of work and therefore on the changing nature of gender inequality.

The gender division of labor is a central feature of gender inequality, both in its economic aspects and in the social construction of gender identities (Huber 1991; Lorber 1994). As Chafetz wrote, “undergirding all systems of gender stratification is a gender-based division of labor, by which women are chiefly responsible for different tasks than are men” (1991, 77). However, the empirical literature on the gender division of labor is uncomfortably divided between those who examine the

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division of household labor and those who study gender segregation in the paid labor market. The overall gender division of labor has not been considered in empirical studies of the United States (Miller and Garrison 1982).

The problem with separate studies of housework versus occupational segregation is that they cannot show the dynamic relation between the two. In this article, I bring together the division of household and labor market work in one, partial attempt to fashion a unified measure of the division of labor for one period of recent history. The results underscore the importance of the movement of women's labor from the household to the labor market in reducing gender inequality.

### HOUSEWORK AND OCCUPATIONS

Research consistently has shown that women do the lion's share of unpaid labor within households (Coltrane 2000). Although this inequality has decreased in recent decades, the household division of labor remains highly gendered (Bianchi et al. 2000). At the same time, gender segregation in the labor market remains high, although after a half century of apparent stability, there were declines in the 1970s and 1980s (Blau, Simpson, and Anderson 1998; Cotter et al. 1995; Reskin 1993; Wells 1999).

Of course, change in these two arenas is linked, but that connection is rarely the subject of direct examination. The entry of greater numbers of women into the labor force occurred as household services, products, and technology reduced women's housework obligations and increased the demand for female labor in the market (Cohen 1998; Cohen and Bianchi 1999; Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2001; Cowan 1983; Presser 1999; Strasser 1982; Uttal 2002). The movement of care work from within the family to the market represents a fundamental shift (Folbre and Nelson 2000). We have not reached the point at which we might "eliminate the home as a place of work and housewives as a functional group of the population" (Durand 1946, 222), but we have unquestionably moved in that direction (Stacey 1993).

With women more likely to be employed, the segregation of paid work has increased in importance as a component of gender inequality. Chang (2000, 1658) argued that "the long-standing presumption has been that occupations are the backbone of the *class* stratification system, but as women enter into the formal economy in ever-increasing numbers, the occupational structure becomes the main locus of *gender* stratification as well." This echoes an earlier body of research on the shift from home to market, which stressed the continuity of gender segregation in the new context of the labor market:

The sexual division of labor reappears in the labor market, where women work at women's jobs, often the very jobs they used to do only at home. . . . As these jobs are low-status and low-paying, patriarchal relations remain intact, though their material

base shifts somewhat from the family to the wage differential, from family-based to industrially-based patriarchy. (Hartmann 1981, 25)

There clearly is a connection between the work women do at home and the occupations that are female dominated in the labor market. However, it is misleading to collapse the two entirely because there are very few paid occupations that are as female dominated as “women’s work” in the home.

Many people who study the segregation of paid occupations are concerned theoretically with the overall gender division of labor. For example, in his international comparison, Jacobs (1989) reviewed data on the gender division of labor, including paid and unpaid work. But in the data analysis, he examined paid work only. Because women tend to move between occupations that are more or less female dominated during the course of their careers, through “revolving doors,” he suggested that gender segregation is continually reproduced through processes of social control that define male- and female-dominated work, rather than women’s “taste” for certain jobs or their human capital assets. The question he examined—how gender segregation is reproduced—is important for all kinds of work, but the labor force data he used restrict his analysis to paid employment.

Similarly, in Valerie Oppenheimer’s (1970) landmark study, she acknowledged that “census statistics best reflect . . . paid employment outside the home, rather than the trends in all kinds of productive work carried out by women.” But she added, “This limitation should not, however, be a serious drawback in the analysis of the labor force of an industrial society” (p. 10). From the perspective of these labor force studies, then, a defining characteristic of industrial society—of modernity, in fact—is that the paid labor market replaces the home as the central site of gender inequality.

Thus, many researchers concerned with gender inequality have moved to focus primarily on occupational inequality, even as most feminists stress the continuity in the division of labor between home and market (Cohen and Huffman 2003; Cotter et al. 1997). But the transition from unpaid labor at home to paid labor in the market is itself a source of change in the gender division of labor. Direct comparisons are difficult to find, but consider the examples of cooking and cleaning. In 1995, women did 74 percent of all unpaid cooking at home, but in the market, only 45 percent of all cooks were women (this category excludes those working in private households, a tiny fraction of the total). Similarly, women did 80 percent of unpaid housecleaning at home, but only 35 percent of janitors and cleaners were women.<sup>1</sup> Insofar as the division of labor is a cornerstone of gender inequality, then, women leaving home and going to work may itself reduce gender inequality. In fact, the market’s ability to pull women from the household (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2001) has been a leading factor in the partial redivision of housework in the past few decades. This may be seen in the many studies that show less gender inequality in couples’ housework when women are employed (Batalova and Cohen 2002; Bianchi et al. 2000; Coltrane 2000).

Existing studies of trends in occupational segregation implicitly treat women who enter the labor market as if they are just beginning to work: The level of gender segregation is assessed only in their paid work capacity.<sup>2</sup> In this analysis, I treat women who leave home for the labor market as if they were exchanging one job for another. This is possible because the Current Population Survey (CPS) until 1993 identified respondents who were “keeping house.” Although this method raises definite problems, as discussed below, it also offers a unique opportunity to see the role of women’s increasing labor force participation in the overall gender division of labor.

### KEEPING HOUSE: COUNTING HOUSEWORK AS WORK

Feminists argue that women’s work is devalued by the failure of mainstream economics to account for unpaid work, both internationally (Waring 1999) and in the United States. As Folbre and Abel (1989, 547) reported, in the nineteenth century, “the census institutionalized a definition of ‘work’ as ‘market work’ that literally devalued women’s unpaid work”—and it still does. Women’s participation in the paid labor force did not reach 50 percent until the late 1970s, even among Black women, whose participation rate was historically higher than white women’s (Goldin 1990, 17). Thus, neither national economic accounts nor labor force statistics take into account the work that for much of American history was the focus of most women.

Similarly, contemporary analyses of occupational segregation do not include the disproportionate share of unpaid labor women perform. Reskin and Hartmann (1986, 7) acknowledged this problem in their study of sex segregation, noting as an aside that “the occupation of most women not in the labor force, homemaker, is one of the most segregated occupations.” That selectivity is appropriate for studying some labor market dynamics, but it precludes us from evaluating the overall division of labor.

The U.S. Census Bureau introduced the term “keeping house” in 1870. In the instructions to assistant marshals for the 1870 census, under “occupation,” the Bureau wrote the following:

The term “housekeeper” will be reserved for such persons as receive distinct wages or salary for the service. Women keeping house for their own families or for themselves, without any other gainful occupation, will be entered as “keeping house.” Grown daughters assisting them will be reported without occupation.<sup>3</sup>

Those women coded as “keeping house” were not included in tabulations of the labor force. British census takers, on the other hand, counted keeping house as an occupation from 1851 to 1881, as did Massachusetts from 1875 to 1905 (Folbre and Abel 1989). In 1910, the U.S. Census Bureau instructed enumerators to count women doing unpaid labor on family farms as “farm laborers,” resulting in an

upward spike in the historical trend for women's labor force participation. They subsequently produced estimates to eliminate this anomaly, and the offending instruction to enumerators was not repeated (Oppenheimer 1970, 2-6). Durand (1946, 221) defended the exclusion of farm wives from the labor force, as "strictly accurate figures would greatly overstate the relative degree of participation of farm women in the labor force because a large percentage of them do very little gainful work," but he provided no evidence to support this conclusion.

Some researchers of national income in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries attempted to estimate the value of this work, before interest apparently waned. Folbre and Wagman (1993, 279) concluded that "what varied across states and over time was women's participation in market work, probably not their productive work in general." If that is the case, we should recognize that the exclusion of houseworkers from existing occupational segregation studies is an artifact of patriarchal assumptions in the conception and collection of labor force data. With the work of Waring (1988, 1999), analysts once again started to factor women's unpaid work into national economic estimates, but this newfound interest still has not reached occupational segregation studies.

## METHOD

The analysis comprises three sections. First, I recode labor force data for respondents in the CPS to include those respondents who were recorded as keeping house, and I code keeping house as an occupation. Then I calculate gender segregation levels with and without the keeping house occupation across the period from 1972 to 1993 (when the question was dropped). Second, using the one-year longitudinal property of the CPS, I broaden Jacobs's (1989) "revolving door"—which reflects the movement of women into and out of female-dominated work—to include the housework occupation. This will enable us to see the gender composition of occupations that women enter when they shift between keeping house and paid work. Finally, I decompose the trend to show the relative contributions to desegregation of women entering paid work versus paid occupations becoming less segregated.

The data are from the CPS Annual Demographic Files (March). The CPS is a large, monthly, nationally representative survey conducted by the Census Bureau to measure attributes of the labor force. During this period, the sample for the March survey consisted of approximately 50,000 households per year. My sample includes noninstitutionalized civilian adults ages 25 to 54, the ages most commonly used in labor force studies (except in the longitudinal analysis, where I include women ages 18 to 64 to increase the sample size). Although these samples are large, I pool several years of data at each point to decrease fluctuations due to random variation. I use the person weights provided by the CPS.

Until 1993, the CPS asked the "major activity" question of each household member: "What was X doing most of last week?" The categories offered were "working," "looking for work," "keeping house," "going to school," "unable to

work,” and “retired.” I code all those who answered “keeping house” as working and include “keeping house” in the new analysis of occupational segregation.

Slightly more than 10 percent of people listed as keeping house in the CPS were also listed as “in the labor force” on the CPS employment status variable. Presumably, these people were keeping house as their major activity but also gave information that led them to be coded as in the labor force. I include all those who chose “keeping house” in this category, regardless of their employment status, as this represents their self-described major activity.

To measure the division of labor, I estimate occupational segregation using the index of dissimilarity (Blau, Simpson, and Anderson 1998). The number reflects the percentage of either men or women who would have to change occupations to achieve an equal distribution of men and women across occupations. Jacobs (1989) and Baunach (2002) made a persuasive case for using more elaborate measures of segregation (indexes of concentration and isolation). However, my objective is less to arrive at the most precise measure of segregation than it is to show the difference once houseworkers are included, which is unlikely to be affected by the choice of index. Because the CPS has smaller samples than the decennial censuses used by others, and small occupations are more likely to be segregated by chance (Cotter et al. 1997; Wells 1999), I limit my analysis to the largest 100 paid occupations at each time point. However, the results were nearly identical when I used 200 occupations instead.

To analyze how the movement of women from housework into paid occupations, and vice versa, affects the gender division of labor, I take advantage of the one-year longitudinal property of the CPS. Each household in the CPS is interviewed for four consecutive months, then misses eight months, and finally is interviewed again for four more months (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). As a result, households interviewed in March are supposed to be interviewed in the following March’s survey. The matching across the two years is not perfect, however. For example, household composition may change, and people may move or die between March surveys; there are also nonresponse and recording errors. Furthermore, it is impossible to know for sure that matches are perfect (for example, if a person is divorced and then marries another spouse of the same age in the intervening year). However, using fairly restrictive criteria, it is possible to achieve most of the eligible matches with a high degree of confidence (Madrian and Lefgren 1999).

I conduct the longitudinal analysis using the 1991 to 1993 March CPS, combining three years of transitions to increase sample size. Individuals are matched by household number and individual line number and included if they are the same sex and race/ethnicity and have aged between <1 and 3 years in the intervening year. These criteria, developed by Madrian and Lefgren (1999), represent an attempt to balance the tradeoffs of false matches and false rejections.<sup>4</sup> This method yields 2,353 women who were keeping house in one year and were employed the next year.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, I do a simple decomposition of the trend in desegregation. First, I estimate the trend in segregation levels holding constant the proportion of men and

women keeping house, while letting the distribution of men and women over the largest 100 paid occupations change through the period. Second, I repeat the exercise holding constant the distribution of men and women in the 100 largest occupations and letting only the proportion keeping house change over time.

Several caveats are in order. The most obvious problem is the strict assumptions I impose. For everyone to be in one and only one occupation, no one may be both keeping house and in a paid occupation. Thus, this method cannot capture the division of labor within households beyond a simple indicator of whether a respondent is keeping house. Of course, the fact that women shoulder most of the housework even when they do paid work is itself a source of gender inequality (Hochschild and Machung 1989). Women's higher rates of paid employment have in fact contributed to an increase in their share of all work. For example, Sayer (2001) showed that in paid and unpaid work combined, American women worked 11 minutes less per day than men did in 1975, but they worked 26 minutes more in 1998. However, women's housework hours still dropped by 42 percent from 1965 to 1995, as total time spent on housework declined 21 percent. Furthermore, men who work predominantly for pay also contribute some housework, and their housework time doubled from 1965 to 1995 (Bianchi et al. 2000, 208).

Some occupational segregation studies (e.g., Blau, Simpson, and Anderson 1998) make the opposite mistake, including the paid occupations of even part-time workers, most of whom spend more time on housework than on paid work. According to data from the National Survey of Families and Households, women in the labor force part-time (less than 20 hours per week) in the early 1990s averaged more than 35 hours per week of unpaid household work (Liana Sayer, personal communication). In fact, a significant portion (6 percent in 1992-1993) of currently employed workers listed "keeping house" as their major activity. Thus, the assumption in existing occupational segregation studies that labor market occupation overrides houseworker status is questionable as well.

The problem of overlap between keeping house and paid occupations is not different in principle from the problem of people working in multiple paid jobs, who have been coded into one occupation in previous segregation studies. I conclude that identifying some houseworkers is better than excluding all of them from the analysis. While imperfect, this method may still serve as a corrective to existing occupational segregation studies—moving us in the direction of an estimate of the overall gender division of labor.

An additional problem could result from social desirability in the identification with keeping house. Folbre and Abel (1989, 548), in a review of data before 1940, noted that some women may have self-identified as housewives because "traditional patriarchal norms attached some stigma to married women who relinquished their primary identity as housewife." However, they did not present evidence confirming this suspicion of overreported housewife status, so it is impossible to evaluate. Furthermore, it is reasonable to expect that the stigma of not being a housewife diminished in subsequent decades as women's employment became more normative. One woman interviewed in 2002 for a separate study on women's work/family

histories said of her decision to enter the labor force years earlier, "I did feel that it was very important that you stay home with your kids. But there is the outside pressure to be productive. You're not productive if you are a housewife."

## RESULTS

Table 1 shows the percentage of working women and men who were keeping house from 1972 to 1993, at approximately 10-year intervals. Because the CPS changed occupation coding schemes in 1983, and I include pairs of years that use the same schemes, I had to use 1981-1982 instead of 1982-1983. For comparison, Folbre and Nelson (2000, 125-26), under the assumption that 85 percent of women age 16 or older without paid jobs are full-time homemakers, arrived at an estimate for 1990 that is within 5 percentage points of the CPS figure (33 percent versus 38 percent) when I use the same age range (16 and older).

Table 2 shows the 15 occupations with the largest number of women in 1992-1993, ranked by percentage female in the occupation. Clearly, keeping house was the largest occupation for women as late as the early 1990s, and it was also among the most segregated, at 96.5 percent female. Note that even when women in the paid labor market work in "reproductive labor" occupations (Glenn 1992)—such as waitresses, nurses' aides, cooks, or teachers of young children—their occupations are less segregated than household labor.

The basic results are presented in Table 3, which shows the index of dissimilarity, or gender segregation, with and without including keeping house as an occupation.<sup>6</sup> First, segregation is more pronounced when keeping house is included as an occupation, dropping only to 62.6 by the end of the period. Second, because the proportion of women keeping house declines during the period, its inclusion in the calculation makes less difference in later years. Finally, the decline in segregation is somewhat steeper—19.7 points versus 16.1—when keeping house is included.

### Revolving Doors

Where are the former houseworkers going when they enter paid work? Women's mobility into and out of female-dominated occupations is an important measure of barriers upholding segregation over time. Including houseworkers in an occupational analysis broadens the picture of women's mobility with regard to the segregation of work. Researchers from the 1940s (Kyrk 1947) to the present (Budig and England 2001) have analyzed the effect of women's spells outside the paid labor force, but the data used for such studies count houseworking women as out of the labor force. We can address this question by using the longitudinal property of the CPS to track women from one year to the next.

For all women workers, and those who changed occupations from one year to the next, I show the distribution across male-dominated, balanced, and female-dominated occupations in Table 4.<sup>7</sup> For occupation changers, the table shows the

**TABLE 1: Percentage of Women and Men Keeping House, 1972 to 1993**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
1972-1973	52.8	0.2
1981-1982	38.9	0.4
1992-1993	26.2	1.0

NOTE: Civilian adults ages 25 to 54 (weighted), either employed or "keeping house."

**TABLE 2: Occupations with 1 Percent or More of All Women, 1992/1993**

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Percentage Female</i>	<i>Percentage of All Working Women</i>
Secretaries	99.0	5.2
Receptionists	97.9	1.0
<b>Keeping house</b>	<b>96.5</b>	<b>26.2</b>
Registered nurses	94.5	2.6
Bookkeepers, accounting, and auditing clerks	91.7	2.3
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	91.1	2.0
Teachers, elementary school	86.7	2.4
Cashiers	79.8	1.7
Waiters and waitresses	79.4	1.1
Administrative support occupations, n.e.c.	74.8	1.5
Teachers, secondary school	57.2	1.1
Cooks (not private household)	51.1	1.1
Accountants and auditors	50.6	1.1
Supervisors and proprietors, sales occupations	34.4	2.1
Managers and administrators, n.e.c.	31.2	3.0

NOTE: Women, ages 25 to 54 weighted. n.e.c. = not elsewhere classified.

**TABLE 3: Occupational Gender Segregation, with and without Keeping House**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Without Keeping House</i>	<i>With Keeping House</i>	<i>Difference</i>
1972-1973	70.2	82.3	12.1
1981-1982	63.1	73.5	10.4
1992-1993	54.1	62.6	8.5
Total change	-16.1	-19.7	-3.6

NOTE: Civilians ages 25 to 54 (weighted), calculated from the 100 largest paid occupations.

composition of their destination occupations. As expected, the female workforce is more skewed toward female-dominated occupations when houseworkers are included. Whether houseworkers are included or not, the table also shows that women who change occupations end up in less segregated occupations than the

**TABLE 4: Percentage Female in Current Occupation, 1991 to 1993**

	<i>Male Dominated,</i>		<i>Female Dominated,</i>	
	<i>&lt;30%</i>	<i>30%-69%</i>	<i>70+%</i>	<i>Mean</i>
All women				
Excluding houseworkers	9.9	37.4	52.7	66.4
Including houseworkers	7.2	27.1	65.7	74.7
Occupation changers				
Nonhouseworkers	11.7	42.0	46.3	63.3
Houseworkers and nonhouseworkers	10.2	35.3	62.7	69.5
Former houseworkers	11.4	31.7	56.9	68.1

NOTE: Civilians ages 18 to 64 (weighted).

general population of women workers. That is, excluding houseworkers, 52.7 percent of all women are in female-dominated occupations, compared to 46.3 percent of those who changed occupations. When houseworkers are included, 65.7 percent of all women are in female-dominated occupations, compared to 62.7 percent of those who changed occupations.

The most important row of Table 4, however, shows the distribution of former houseworkers in their new occupations. Although less heavily skewed toward female-dominated occupations than all women workers, they are more concentrated in segregated occupations than women who moved between paid occupations (56.9 percent versus 46.3 percent), and their occupations average 68.1 percent female, compared to 63.3 percent for women who changed paid occupations. The former houseworkers are also somewhat more segregated than the total population of nonhouseworkers. Thus, women leaving the keeping house occupation are more concentrated in female-dominated occupations than other women in the paid labor force.

When houseworkers are included, there are also a substantial number of women who moved from paid occupations back to keeping house (for example, women who have married or had children). In previous analyses of occupational segregation, they are counted as having left the workforce. I find that when only paid work is counted, 25.3 percent of women who left male-dominated occupations moved into female-dominated occupations the next year—what Jacobs (1989) called the “revolving door.” However, when houseworkers are counted, the number rises to 36.4 percent, a significant increase in the rate at which women move back into segregated work (not shown).

Another useful indicator of mobility is the correlation between the gender composition of women’s former versus current occupations after they change jobs. Jacobs (1989) argued that a low correlation is one indication of potential openness in the labor market, showing that women may move in and out of female-dominated occupations. I find that without keeping house included as an occupation, the correlation between the percentage female in women’s previous occupation and their

**TABLE 5: Decomposition of Occupational Segregation Trends**

	1972-1973	1981-1982	1992-1993
Observed labor market trend	70.2	63.1	54.1
Observed trend including keeping house	82.3	73.5	62.6
Change in paid work only	NA	78.3	74.5
Change in keeping house only	NA	78.0	74.7

NOTE: NA = not applicable.

current occupation is .21. Once keeping house is included, the correlation rises to .28. Thus, the inclusion of women as unpaid houseworkers in the labor force reveals greater barriers to women's mobility.<sup>8</sup>

### Two Paths to Desegregation

If entering the paid labor market and moving out of female-dominated occupations both contribute to declines in the overall gender division of labor, what are the relative contributions of these two paths to desegregation? The results of the decomposition analysis are shown in Table 5.

Table 5 shows that for each 10-year interval, women leaving the keeping house occupation and the desegregation of paid occupations contributed equally to the overall erosion of the gender division of labor. Thus, although the level of segregation remains high at the end of the period, by these measures, women achieved as much desegregation of work from entering the paid labor force as they did from the changing composition of paid occupations. This contribution has not been captured in previous studies of occupational segregation.

## CONCLUSION

I have argued that we need to take housework into account when tracking the overall gender division of labor—including both paid and unpaid work. This analysis is a first attempt to do that. The results show that the inclusion of houseworkers as an occupation affects measures of gender segregation in two ways. First, because the houseworker occupation is large and predominantly female, estimates of gender segregation are higher when these women are included. Second, because women entering the formal labor force are on average entering occupations that are less segregated than housework, the rate of decline in gender segregation is somewhat steeper over the period once houseworkers are included. However, the outcome is not a simple one, because former houseworkers move into more segregated occupations than women who are already in the labor market and because some women reenter the houseworker occupation when they leave the paid labor force. Finally, a decomposition of the trends shows that, over time, women leaving

housework as an occupation contributed as much to the overall decline in gender segregation as did the desegregation of paid occupations.

Although we have many studies of trends in the gender segregation of occupations (e.g., Blau, Simpson, and Anderson 1998; Cotter et al. 1995; Reskin 1993; Wells 1999), we do not have empirical assessments of the overall gender division of labor in the United States or other industrial societies. This is disappointing considering the importance of the division of labor to theories of gender inequality (Chafetz 1991). Not only do existing occupational segregation studies of paid work understate the overall gender division of labor; they also cannot capture how the shifting location of women's work contributes to the trend in the division of labor. If, as Reskin argued, segregation is "a fundamental process in social inequality" (1993, 241), then some of its decline should be credited to the movement of women into paid work.

### NOTES

1. Housework figures are calculated from 1995, as reported by Bianchi et al. (2000, Table 1); labor market figures are my calculations from the 1995 March Current Population Survey.

2. A similar situation exists in studies of occupational prestige, which generally exclude housework. In one exception, Bose and Rossi (1983) showed that when "housewife" was included among 110 occupations in a 1972 survey, housewives' prestige scores (51) were lower than some female-dominated occupations not associated with housework, such as practical nurse (56.4) and private secretary (60.9), but much higher than some female-dominated occupations doing similar work, such as waitress (24.4), short order cook (21.5), and babysitter (18.3).

3. The instructions to enumerators for each census have been compiled by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (<http://www.ipums.org>).

4. Jacobs (1989) used a simpler method, which relies on a retrospective question about occupation in the previous year, which he compared with respondents' occupation in the previous week. However, because the "keeping house" occupation is derived from the current "major activity" question, there are no retrospective data on this occupation in the cross-sectional data.

5. The Current Population Survey changed the occupation coding scheme in 1992. I recode a small number of occupations to allow occupation matching across the years 1991 to 1993.

6. For comparison, using detailed occupations in the decennial census, Blau, Simpson, and Anderson (1998) found segregation indexes of 67.7 in 1970, 59.3 in 1980, and 53.0 in 1990; Baunach (2002) found indexes of 60.8 in 1980 and 50.0 in 1990.

7. For a discussion of these cut-points in occupation percentage female, see Jacobs (1989).

8. The correlation Jacobs (1989) found using 1981 Current Population Survey data is only .11. But in addition to the time period difference, his method is not comparable (see note 4).

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### **Unpublished Conclusion: Family and market**

*These passages were deleted from the article "The Gender Division of Labor: "Keeping House" and Occupational Segregation in the United States" (Gender & Society 18[2]:239-252) at the request of the editor.*

*--Philip N. Cohen*

The movement of care work from within the family to the market represents a fundamental shift (Folbre and Nelson 2000:138). In order to understand modern changes in the nature of gender inequality, therefore, we need to consider the dynamic interaction of the family and market. This shift was made possible in part by new technology that radically increased the productivity of houseworkers (Cowan 1983), and later by the growth of the childcare market (Uttal 2002). We have not reached the point at which we might "eliminate the home as a place of work and housewives as a functional group of the population" (Durand 1946:222), but we have unquestionably moved in that direction.

Prevailing theories of gender inequality emphasize the division of labor associated with the dichotomies of private versus public, production versus reproduction, and household versus enterprise (Stockman, Bonney, and Sheng 1995:7). If this gender distinction is central, it should be no surprise that its decline is associated with reduced gender inequality. This study is one attempt to assess that claim empirically. The point for gender inequality is the movement away from the household as the site of primary economic importance, in essence moving gender inequality (at least as regards labor) from the home toward the labor market.

The shift from unpaid to paid work is seen by some as proletarianization, with household production replaced by waged work (Stockman et al. 1995:15) and women "progressively transformed in ever larger numbers from housewives into workers" (Braverman 1974:275). Marxists have been of two minds about this transformation. With the growth of capitalism, Marx and Engels argued, "by the action of modern industry, all family ties among proletarians are torn asunder" (Marx, Engels, and Hobsbawm 1998:57). The predicted result was a decline in gender inequality as class inequality increased. On the other hand, socialist countries promoted women's public-sphere employment as the main approach to combating gender inequality, with China as perhaps the most prominent example (for a review, see Stockman et al. 1995).

At the same time, of course, all this has caused consternation among social conservatives, as it undermines specialization by husband and wife, presumably weakening family solidarity in the process (Parsons 1954:80). With the "economic rationale" of the family thus reduced, Carlson (1996:150) concludes, "family living based on marriage would be displaced by mounting divorce, a greater number of out-of-wedlock births, declining marriage rates, later mar-

riages, and more permanent singlehood and cohabitation."<sup>1</sup> The trends that concern Carlson are indeed apparent in recent decades, to varying degrees (Seltzer 2000). And, since accompanying them also has been a decrease in gender inequality, they have captured the imagination of feminists as well. "[S]ince the 1950s, the Ozzie and Harriet form of family structure and ideology has suffered irremediable defeats," writes Judith Stacey (1993:546), who does not mourn the loss.

These results serve to remind us that one significant impact of the economic decentering of the family is a decline in gender segregation -- one key component of gender inequality. As social scientists weigh the changes in the role and structure of modern families, we should not lose sight of this important outcome. If, as Reskin argues, segregation is "a fundamental process in social inequality" (1993:241), then some of its decline should be credited to the movement of women into the labor market.

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<sup>1</sup> This conservative view contrasts sharply with some optimists of modernity, including Barrington Moore (1958:164).

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#### **CORRECTION**

On page 246 of the article "The Gender Division of Labor: "Keeping House" and Occupational Segregation in the United States" (*Gender & Society* 18[2]:239-252) I misstated the assumptions used by Folbre & Nelson (2000). They assumed that 85% of women age 16 or older either worked for pay or were full-time home-workers, while I reported that they assumed 85% of women not in paid employment were full-time home-workers.