

This article poses the question: What explains variation in the proportion of the labor force employed in paid domestic labor? In contrast to an older, modernization-theory-based literature that argued that paid domestic labor declines and ultimately disappears in the course of economic development, the authors note the occupation's recent expansion in southern California and the wide variations among rich, developed countries in the proportion of the female workforce employed in it. The authors argue that a crucial, neglected factor in explaining such geographic variations is the extent of economic inequality. This factor is overlooked not only in the modernization-theory-based literature but also in recent microsociological studies of paid domestic labor, which highlight the ways in which race, ethnicity, and citizenship status are implicated in interactions between employers of domestics and the workers themselves, while ignoring the enduring significance of class in the employer/domestic relationship. By analyzing 1990 census data for the 100 largest metropolitan areas in the United States, the authors show that income inequality (as well as, but independent of, the proportion of the female labor force made up of African Americans and Latinas, the proportion of the female labor force that is foreign born, and maternal labor force participation), is a significant predictor of the proportion of the female labor force employed in domestic labor.

The Macrosociology of Paid Domestic Labor

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Domestic labor performed for a wage, or what the U.S. Census Bureau calls "private household service," is among the oldest forms of wage labor. Once the single most common female occupation in the United States,

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it has declined dramatically in economic importance over the past century, and by the early 1970s, some sociologists were writing obituaries for it (Chaplin, 1978; Coser, 1973). Nevertheless, interest in this type of employment was reawakened in the 1980s and 1990s, most notably among gender scholars. As Rollins (1985) has pointed out, domestic service is of particular interest from a feminist perspective because both employer and employee (in the contemporary United States) are typically female.¹ Following Rollins's lead, several important studies have excavated the microsociology of the relationships between women who employ maids and nannies and those who labor in such jobs, analyzing in particular the ways in which interactions between employer and employee are mediated by racial, ethnic, and citizenship-based inequalities among women (e.g., Bakan & Stasiulis, 1995; Glenn, 1986; Romero, 1992; Wrigley, 1995).

This inquiry draws on—and at the same time points to a crucial gap in—recent feminist literature in the social sciences. Our point of departure is the observation that, despite the frequently invoked rubric of “race, class, and gender,” the empirical focus of most recent feminist research on inequalities among women has been limited to racial and ethnic divisions, and to some extent, divisions between native-born and immigrant women. Although this scholarship has added a great deal to sociological understandings of gender and quite properly challenged earlier notions of a universal female (and male) social experience, it has largely ignored the issue of *class* divisions among women. This is especially problematic given the increasing salience of class in the late 20th century, as income inequalities widen among households and individuals of all racial and ethnic groups, and among citizens and noncitizens alike. Without questioning the importance of race, ethnicity, or immigration status, we want to bring class back into the discussion.

At the same time, our analysis highlights the importance of gender in the broader dynamic of widening economic inequality in the contemporary United States. There is now extensive documentation of the recent growth in inequality in income and wealth in this country (and indeed worldwide) over

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recent decades. Yet, this literature focuses almost entirely on growing inequality among households, and among male workers; when women are considered at all, the primary focus is the recent narrowing of the gender gap in earnings. Much attention has been devoted to the precipitous decline in real wages among men, especially less educated men, and indeed this is one major component of the recent reduction in gender inequality in earnings. Few commentators have focused on the fact that inequalities in earnings among women also have grown quite dramatically: Between 1969 and 1989, the Gini coefficient, a standard summary measure of economic inequality, rose from .344 to .386 for women workers ages 25 to 54 (it rose even more for men in this age group, from .316 to .414) (Levy, 1995, pp.13-18).

In fact, the broader increase in economic inequality has occurred in an age of vastly expanded economic opportunities for educated, upper-middle-class women (largely a White group, but now also including significant numbers of women of color)—precisely the population most likely to demand and have the means to purchase paid domestic labor. Meanwhile, the real earnings of less educated, poorer women have been stagnant and, for some subgroups, have declined significantly from what were always relatively low levels. Consider the data for the years between 1979 and 1989 on the real earnings of full-time, year-round, women workers ages 25 to 34—the age group most affected by recent economic restructuring. The real earnings of those with 4 or more years of postsecondary education rose 17% (much more than the 5% increase that males with the same characteristics enjoyed); by contrast, for those with 12 or less years of education, real earnings fell by 2% (compared to a 13% drop for their male counterparts) (Bianchi, 1995, p.133; see also McCall, 1996).

If we turn from individuals to households, the effects of this economic polarization are magnified even further, given the increasing number of professional dual-earner households on one hand, and the longstanding pattern of social class endogamy on the other. Today, many married (or cohabiting) professional/managerial men and women pool their incomes; at the other pole of the income distribution, it is increasingly common for households to be supported solely by a poorly paid female single parent—the much discussed “feminization of poverty” (see Levy, 1995, pp. 20-21). Thus, gender is deeply implicated in the story of growing income inequality in late 20th century America.

Paid domestic labor is in many respects a microcosm of the growing class inequality among women. The elite corps of professional and managerial women, whose ranks have expanded so dramatically in recent years, can now purchase on the market much of the labor of social reproduction traditionally relegated to them as wives and mothers. And, the workers who perform this

labor are typically women on the lower rungs of the economic ladder, often women of color and/or immigrants. It is precisely the interactions between these two groups of women that have stimulated recent scholarship on the microsociology of domestic labor. This literature has produced many valuable insights, yet it has thus far neglected analysis of the *macrosociology* of paid domestic labor, which is our focus here.²

Specifically, we pose the following question: What explains variation in the proportion of the labor force employed in paid domestic labor? Even a casual survey reveals enormous variation over time and space in the extent of employment in this occupation. For example, in contemporary Kuwait, domestic servants are ubiquitous; in Scandinavia, although once numerous, they are exceedingly rare today. And as we shall show, even within the contemporary United States, paid domestic labor is far more widespread in some metropolitan areas than in others.³ The explanation for such inter- and intranational variations is far from obvious. The conventional wisdom among an older generation of commentators who explored this issue was that the occupation's long-term decline in the advanced capitalist world was a product of "modernization;" yet today, the occupation's importance varies substantially even among the rich, developed nations of Europe and North America. Moreover, in some parts of the United States, employment in paid domestic labor has actually increased (as a proportion of the female labor force) recently.

We argue here that a crucial determinant of the extent of employment in paid domestic labor in a given location is the degree of economic inequality there. This largely overlooked factor helps account for variations in the size of the occupation among developed countries, as well as the recent growth of employment in domestic labor in some locations. With the exception of one obscure treatise published in 1946 by economist George Stigler, the relationship between inequality and the dynamics of employment in paid domestic labor has not been explored at all in the literature. Here we make the case for its importance, building on Stigler's previously untested hypothesis from half a century ago. We explore theoretically the mechanism by which greater economic inequality generates greater employment in this occupation, as well as presenting an empirical test of this hypothesis. Although our empirical analysis is limited to the United States (specifically to the nation's hundred largest metropolitan areas in 1990), we believe that our argument has broader applicability.

To be sure, the extent of economic inequality is not the only important factor influencing the size of the occupation. Current literature on the United States case highlights the concentration of women of color and immigrant women in paid domestic work, and our analysis confirms the importance of

race and immigration, as well as the rate of labor force participation among mothers of young children (a crucial source of demand for the services of paid domestic laborers). But, our goal here is to highlight the key factor that most other commentators have ignored by demonstrating that the extent of employment in paid domestic labor (as a proportion of the female labor force) varies directly with the level of class inequality (operationalized here using a standard measure of household income inequality)—independent of race, immigration, and maternal labor force participation rates. All else being equal, in locations where income inequality is great, the occupation is relatively large, whereas locations with minimal income inequality are also those where the occupation is of trivial importance or even absent. Before developing this argument in detail, however, we briefly review previous scholarship on the occupation, both to highlight the gaps it contains and to situate our contribution here. We begin with the microsociological work that has dominated the literature for the past two decades and then turn to the earlier, macrosociological literature.

THE MICROSOCIOLOGY OF PAID DOMESTIC LABOR

Several recent studies have analyzed paid domestic labor from the perspective of the women who actually perform it, highlighting the ways in which employee/employer interactions reflect the social hierarchies of race, citizenship, and class. Rollins's (1985) pathbreaking study, for example, focused on the relationships between African American women who cleaned homes in Boston and the White women who employed them. Using participant observation as well as extensive interviewing with both employers and workers, Rollins reported that "all domestics concurred that employers appreciated some forms of deference and outward signs of subservience" and argued that "this formed the essence of the employer/domestic relationship" (p. 147). She analyzed these interactional dynamics in detail, documenting what she calls "maternalism" on the part of the employers and deference and "ressentiment" on the part of the domestic workers. For Rollins (1985), the racial/ethnic dimension of the relationship is particularly salient:

While any employer-employee relationship is by definition unequal, the mistress-servant relationship—with its centuries of conventions of behavior, its historical association with slavery throughout the world, its unusual retention of feudal characteristics, and the tradition of the servant being not only of a lower class but also female, rural, and of a despised ethnic group—provides an extreme and "pure" example of a relationship of domination in close quarters. (pp. 8-9)

Similarly, Romero (1992), in a valuable study of Chicana domestics, stressed the stigma attached to domestic work. She made an important contribution to the discussion by exposing the ways in which domestic workers themselves have sought "to transform and improve the occupation by eliminating the vestiges of servitude." Examples of this include the shift from live-in to day work, from hourly pay to pay by the job, and other efforts to increase workers' autonomy and to resist "personalized and asymmetrical relationships with employers and . . . to establish a businesslike environment" (Romero, 1992, p. 143). Romero also highlighted the importance of race and immigration, commenting that, "As domestic service becomes increasingly dominated by women of color, particularly immigrant women, the occupation . . . is now bringing race relations into the middle-class homemaker's home" (Romero, 1992, p. 69).

Whereas Rollins and Romero focused their research on domestic workers whose main responsibilities involved cleaning and housekeeping, there is also an emerging literature on nannies in the contemporary United States that pursues similar themes. For example, Colon's (1986, 1989, 1995) research on West Indian domestics (both cleaners and nannies) in New York City emphasized the ways that "the ideology of family is used to manipulate the worker. . . . It is used to encourage people who are *not* family members to perform tasks or to tolerate treatment that may be exploitative" (Colon, 1986, p. 60; see also Macdonald, 1996). Colon also highlighted the special vulnerability of undocumented immigrant domestics whose employers agree to sponsor them for legal status as permanent residents, a multiyear process rife with opportunities for superexploitation. And, Wrigley's (1995) study of nannies in Los Angeles and New York stressed the enormous cultural differences between Black or Brown immigrant nannies and their White, native-born, wealthy employers. In one of the few microsociological studies that has explicitly considered class divisions, Wrigley exposed the contrast between the nannies' experience of the job—with its long hours, social isolation, and often extreme demands—and their employers' expectations of subservience on one hand and stimulation for the children on the other. Comparing middle-class European au pairs to working class immigrant nannies, Wrigley also shows that the greater the gap in social class between parents and caregivers, the greater the prevalence of extreme forms of exploitation.

Much of this literature roundly condemns female employers of domestic labor as exploiters of their less fortunate sisters. Indeed, some authors argue that private household workers are more exploited than other kinds of workers. Rollins (1985), for example, states,

What makes domestic service as an occupation more profoundly exploitive than other comparable occupations grows out of the precise element that makes it unique: the personal relationship between employer and employee. What might appear to be the basis of a more human, less alienating work arrangement allows for a level of psychological exploitation unknown in other occupations. (p. 156)

Romero (1992) also claims that domestic employment is more exploitative than other occupations accessible to immigrant women and women of color.

Even though Chicanas and Mexican immigrants are usually hired for low-level and unskilled factory jobs, employers outside domestic service do not demand the same level of deference and servility. Even low-paid service positions do not carry the stigma found in domestic service. (p. 90)

Domestic employment does have some unusual features that allow latitude for superexploitation: social isolation, the unity of workplace and residence for employers (and for live-in domestics, for employees as well) and the intimacy that this implies, as well as an abject lack of state or social regulation. Yet, in comparison to working in a garment sweatshop, in agriculture, or even as a minimum-wage fast-food server, this occupation may be relatively attractive to workers; the above claims to the contrary notwithstanding. Indeed, Romero herself reported that domestics often prefer the occupation to the available alternatives, mostly because of the flexibility with which the work can be scheduled. "On the one hand," she noted, "cleaning houses is degrading and embarrassing; on the other, domestic service can be higher paying, more autonomous and less dehumanizing than other low-status, low-skilled occupations" (Romero, 1992, p. 12; see also Susser, 1991, pp. 217-218). This comparative perspective belies the frequent claims in the microsociological literature on domestic service that this occupation is uniquely exploitative. Indeed, many other types of work are also sites of exploitation, as any sociologist should be well aware.

Another feature of this literature, which is at once a strength and a weakness, is that it calls attention to the salience of race, ethnicity, and immigration status as a marker of difference between employers and employees in the domestic labor relationship. In contemporary North America, this is indeed a critical part of the story, and its salience in this interview-based body of microsociological research is hardly surprising. However, all too often the focus on race, ethnicity, and immigration obscures the enduring significance of social class in the employer/domestic relationship. Romero explicitly argues that whereas social class divisions were important in shaping relations between domestics and their employers in the past, today "we

find the proliferation of master-servant relationships in which race, ethnicity and gender *replace* class as immutable social structures dictating a person's place in the hierarchy" (Romero, 1992, p. 75 [emphasis added]). We question the validity of this view, and argue that (as Wrigley, 1995 stresses) social class persists as a crucial factor shaping the situation of private household workers. But before developing that argument, we briefly review the macrosociological literature on domestic service.

THE MODERNIZATION PARADIGM AND THE MACROSOCIOLOGY OF DOMESTIC LABOR

Whereas the recent sociological literature on domestic service is overwhelmingly micro in focus, an earlier generation of commentators did engage the issue we pursue here, namely, what explains variation in the proportion of the labor force employed in paid domestic labor? That earlier work was conducted mostly within a modernization-theory paradigm. Its general thrust was to note the historical decline of the occupation in Western Europe and the United States and, by the 1970s, to predict its global demise. For example, Collver and Langlois (1962) suggested on the basis of a wide-ranging cross-national analysis of female labor force participation patterns that "in the process of development, employment in private domestic service diminishes with respect to that in other sectors of the female labor force" (p. 380). Similarly, Chaplin (1978), reviewing evidence about the decline of the occupation in several countries, concluded that "the incidence of domestic service is a prime social indicator of the level and quality of industrialization and modernization" (p. 123). And Coser (1973), in a classic article on the occupation published a quarter century ago, argued that domestic service was already "obsolescent" in the highly developed, modern United States. "Domestic employment has lost the shreds of genteel respectability it may once have possessed," declared Coser. "The status is now so stigmatized that it can hardly attract potential recruits among ordinary citizens. . . . When conditions have reached such an impasse, the status and role become obsolescent" (p. 39).

Coser's article did the vitally important work of excavating the historical links between class inequality and domestic servitude. As he noted, in the past, "the master-servant relationship . . . was the prototypical relationship between superior and inferior" (Coser, 1973, p. 31). Similarly, the Norwegian sociologist Vilhelm Aubert (1955-1956) argued that the status of servant was "ascribed," and attributed its decline (a phenomenon that occurred far sooner and more dramatically in post-World War II Scandinavia than elsewhere) to

TABLE 1: Women Employed in Private Household Service in the United States, 1940-1990

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Women</i>	<i>% of All Employed Women</i>
1990	494,920	0.94
1980	562,886	1.4
1970	1,109,855	3.8
1960	1,664,763	7.9
1950	1,337,795	8.5
1940	1,976,078	17.7

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population, various years.

the triumph of universalism over particularism, in an explicitly Parsonsian analysis. The difficulty with these perspectives is that they mistakenly assumed that highly unequal social relationships are incompatible with "modern" social conditions. Coser made a great deal of the argument that once servants enter into impersonal contractual (i.e., modern) relationships with their employers, their role, with its inherent intimacy and lack of specificity ("diffuseness"), is ineluctably undermined. Yet, the microsociological literature reviewed above documents the survival into the late 20th century of precisely the features of domestic service—intimacy, loyalty, as well as stigma and resentment (a term, interestingly, used by both Rollins and Coser)—that Coser viewed as incompatible with modern society.

However, as these commentators would have expected, in the case of the United States, census data suggest that the long-term decline of "private household service" occupations has indeed continued through 1990. In that year, the U.S. Census Bureau found just under half a million women, or 1% of all employed females (along with 26,234 men) in such occupations. This includes all employed persons enumerated in the census who indicated that employment in a private household was their primary occupation. They could be working full- or part-time; living in or outside of the employer's household, working as launderers and ironers, cooks, housekeepers and butlers, child care workers, or cleaners and servants, though the vast majority were in the latter two occupational categories.⁴ As Table 1 shows, the level of employment in these occupations as a share of all female employment in 1990 represents a dramatic decline even relative to the preceding half-century. However, in *contra* Coser, there is evidence that a partial reversal of this trend may be emerging. In contrast to the national trend, as Table 2 shows, in one region of the United States, namely, the three largest metropolitan areas of southern California, both the absolute number of women employed in

TABLE 2: Women Employed in Private Household Service in Southern California, 1980-1990

<i>Metropolitan Area</i>	<i>1980</i>		<i>1990</i>	
	<i>Number of Women</i>	<i>Proportion of All Employed Women</i>	<i>Number of Women</i>	<i>Proportion of All Employed Women</i>
Los Angeles-Long Beach	24,788	1.66	41,988	2.30
San Diego	4,357	1.32	7,193	1.39
Anaheim-Santa Ana ^a	3,543	0.86	7,307	1.30

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, *1980 Census of Population, General Social and Economic Characteristics*, California, Table 121, pp. 6-258; U.S. Census Bureau, *1990 Census of Population and Housing, Social and Economic Characteristics*, Metropolitan Areas, Table 34, pp. 1665, 1705.

a. Also includes Garden Grove in 1980.

private household occupations and the relative size of this group (measured here as the percentage of all employed women in this occupational category) *increased* between 1980 and 1990. Although this does not seem to be the case elsewhere in the nation, this recent development in and around Los Angeles, "the American city the world watches for signs and portents" (Reid, 1992, p. xxxi), directly contradicts Coser's prediction.

The modernization-theory-based explanation for international variation in the size of the domestic labor force is also problematic because it cannot account for differences among nations at comparable levels of economic development. This approach might appear to offer a satisfactory explanation for the fact that paid domestic labor still employs vast numbers of people in the third world even though it has declined dramatically in the first. For example, in Mexico, the 1990 census found 11% of all economically active women employed as domestic servants (Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática [INEGI], 1990), compared to only 1% in the United States. But, this theoretical perspective cannot explain the contrasts apparent today among countries which, by any standard, are highly developed economically. For example, Sweden, which has a far more egalitarian income distribution than the United States and many other highly developed nations, has only minuscule numbers of domestic workers. In Sweden in 1987 the share of income received by the richest tenth of the population was 2.7 times that of the poorest tenth, whereas in the United States in 1986, the richest tenth's share was 5.9 times that of the poorest tenth (Atkinson, Rainwater, & Smeeding, 1994, Table 2; see also Bradsher, 1995). Although, as we have seen, only about 1% of all women workers are employed as paid domestic

TABLE 3: Women Employed in Private Household Service in Selected United States Metropolitan Areas, 1990

<i>Metropolitan Area</i>	<i>Number of Women</i>	<i>Proportion of All Employed Women</i>
Honolulu, HI	611	.32
Milwaukee, WI	1,259	.38
Minneapolis, St. Paul, MN-WI	2,921	.46
Boston, MA	4,076	.56
Detroit, MI	5,105	.57
Chicago, IL	8,025	.59
Philadelphia, PA	6,368	.59
Phoenix, AZ	3,421	.75
Atlanta, GA	5,686	.81
Tulsa, OK	1,626	1.07
Washington, DC-MD-VA	14,439	1.37
New Orleans, LA	3,411	1.41
New York, NY	27,395	1.49
Houston, TX	11,264	1.61
Miami-Hialeah, FL	8,312	2.00
Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	41,998	2.30

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, *1990 Census of Population and Housing, Social and Economic Characteristics*, Metropolitan Areas, Table 34, pp. 1596-1727.

servants in the United States, this is many times the level in Sweden, where the figure is so tiny that it is not even published in the Swedish census.⁵ Of course, there are other differences between Sweden and the United States that are relevant here—most obviously the fact that in Sweden, universal child care and other social services are provided by the state, whereas in the United States such state provision is minimal. By comparing metropolitan areas *within* the United States, however, as we do below, we can hold such factors as state provision constant.

ECONOMIC INEQUALITY AND PAID DOMESTIC LABOR

What accounts for the recent expansion in domestic service employment in southern California? Is this a harbinger that the long-term historical decline of employment in domestic labor could soon be reversed for the nation as a whole? More generally, what explains the geographic variation in the proportion of the female labor force employed in this occupational category? As Table 3 shows, although in 1990 the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area had the nation's highest level of employment in domestic labor, and

although the proportion of all employed women in this occupational group is modest everywhere, there is substantial variation among metropolitan areas. In Honolulu, Milwaukee, and Minneapolis, for example, less than half of 1% of all employed women are in this occupation; at the other extreme, in Miami and Los Angeles-Long Beach, more than 2% of all employed women do this type of work.⁶

Here, we attempt to explain these variations. Although Coser's modernization hypothesis is already invalidated by the very fact of extensive variation within a highly developed and modern economy (as well as the partial reversal of the occupation's decline), we can test other hypotheses that are implicit in the literature reviewed above (despite the fact that the problem is not explicitly posed in that literature). We begin with some key factors that might be expected to affect the supply and demand of paid domestic labor. Historically in the United States, immigrants and women of color have long been important sources of labor supply for this occupation (see Goldin, 1990; Katzman, 1978). Similarly, today, the massive surge of immigration in the past few decades is an obvious source of labor supply—most notably in southern California (by far the most popular destination for recent immigrants) but also for Miami, Houston, and New York. Another factor is the presence of a large population of native-born women of color, who have constituted the bulk of the labor force in this occupation for most of the 20th century. As the microsociological literature (especially Rollins, 1985) stresses, employers often prefer to hire women from a different race or ethnicity as domestic workers, because the status differential helps them negotiate the employment relationship in the intimate setting of the household. Thus, we would expect the proportion of foreign-born women in the labor force in a given metropolitan area, as well as the proportion of African American and Latina women, to influence the size of the occupation. In some of the cities shown in Table 3, like New Orleans and Washington, D.C., domestic workers are numerous and disproportionately African American. However, in other cities (e.g., Boston, Detroit, Philadelphia), where African Americans are the main source of paid domestic labor, employment in this occupation is much smaller. As Table 4 shows, African Americans, Latinas, and the foreign born (who made up 12.2%, 7.3%, and 9.3% of the female labor force in the United States in 1990, respectively) are all overrepresented in this occupation, although African Americans are actually slightly underrepresented among those domestics classified as child care workers.⁷

Both immigrant women and women of color have fewer opportunities in the labor market than their native-born, White counterparts, due to race discrimination and their low ranking on job queues for more desirable jobs

TABLE 4: Female Private Household Workers in the United States, 1990, by Detailed Occupation, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Nativity

	<i>Total Females</i>	<i>% Black</i>	<i>% Hispanic</i>	<i>% Foreign- Born</i>
Launderers and ironers	1,634	16.0	15.0	11.8
Cooks	8,088	30.2	13.8	25.4
Housekeepers and butlers	30,780	33.6	32.5	41.6
Child care workers	144,422	9.8	13.6	18.4
Cleaners and servants	312,884	32.8	26.6	31.2
Total	497,808	26.1	23.0	27.9

SOURCE: Unpublished U.S. Census Data (Public Use Microdata Sample) (1990).

(see Reskin & Roos, 1990). In the case of immigrants, lack of full citizenship rights and limited English proficiency may further limit employment opportunities. Given these disadvantages, immigrants and women of color may be more likely than other women to seek employment as domestics, particularly because their other occupational options are generally inferior to paid domestic labor. Although pay rates and working conditions vary widely within the broad category of paid domestic labor, many maids and nannies earn far more than their counterparts in agriculture, unskilled factory, and service jobs, and working conditions are often far superior as well (see Romero, 1992, p. 12). Often domestic work is compensated on an all-cash, informal basis, so that actual pay rates are effectively far higher than the nominal wages paid; this further enhances the desirability of this type of employment relative to the available alternatives.

On the demand side, one might expect maternal labor force participation to be an important factor. As many commentators (e.g., Hartmann, 1987, and for a more global view, Elfring, 1989) have noted, female labor force participation generally has contributed to the rapid growth of the personal services sector, of which paid domestic labor is one important component. We expect demand for such services to be especially extensive in households with young children where the mother is in the labor force, and indeed, the labor force participation rates of mothers of preschool children have risen dramatically in recent years. Although the availability of group child care has increased, high quality child care remains scarce and is often available for limited hours. As the 1993 Zoe Baird "Nannygate" case illustrated, wealthy households (especially those in which the mothers are elite professionals) today often employ nannies to care for their young children (see Hertz, 1986; Macdonald, 1996; Susser, 1991). More generally, the persistence of the

traditional gender division of household labor (Hochschild, 1989), as well as the increased number of households headed by females, suggest that men have not increased their contributions to domestic labor significantly. For these reasons, we expect that metropolitan areas, with higher maternal labor force participation rates, will have greater demand for domestic servants than other metropolitan areas.

The analysis we present here includes these variables and also highlights a somewhat less obvious factor that, we argue, is critical for explaining variation in the extent of employment in domestic labor; namely, the extent of economic inequality. As is now well documented, in the 1980s there was a sharp increase in inequality in the distribution of both income and wealth in the United States (Levy & Murnane, 1992; Wolff, 1995). Although this is a national trend, the extent of income inequality varies substantially among metropolitan areas. For example, in 1989 (as reported in the 1990 census), the ratio of the income received by the richest 5% of households to that received by the poorest 20% was 3.5% in Honolulu and 3.8% in Minneapolis, compared to 8.4% in New Orleans and 8.6% in New York. Los Angeles was in the middle, with a ratio of 5.6%.

All else being equal, it is logical to expect that the greater the extent of economic inequality in a community—in other words, the greater the disparity in resources between rich and poor households—the more easily rich households can afford to employ less fortunate persons as domestic servants. Demand for assistance with domestic tasks is always present, especially in households with young children.⁸ There is a vast amount of labor required to maintain households, especially in the United States, where quality child care is often difficult to obtain; the desire for domestic help is virtually universal in households with young children where both parents are employed outside the home. In many settings, too, employing domestic help enhances the social status of the employer's family, further contributing to latent demand for such labor. Latent demand becomes effective demand when domestic assistance is easily affordable; this is where the mechanism of economic inequality comes into play. When the gap in incomes between rich and poor is large, the relative cost to the rich of domestic help is correspondingly small. A wide disparity between rich and poor also helps produce a ready supply of domestic laborers, since the greater the extent of inequality in a local labor market, the fewer the opportunities for disadvantaged workers like immigrants and women of color to find desirable jobs. Thus, the greater the level of inequality between classes, the greater the extent of employment in paid domestic labor to be expected.

This dynamic is completely ignored in the recent literature. As we noted earlier, commentators like Romero explicitly dismiss the notion that class

might be a factor shaping the dynamics of employment for domestics. Our claim is that in addition to the racial and ethnic factors stressed by Rollins, economic inequality along class lines (i.e., independent of race) is an important predictor of the size of the occupation. That is, in metropolitan areas where income inequality levels are high, we would expect high levels of employment in paid domestic labor. We arrived at the hypothesis independently, but recently learned that economist George S. Stigler proposed it in a long-forgotten treatise on domestic labor published half a century ago. Surveying the cross-national data available at the time, Stigler (1946) noted,

The wealth of a nation has no obvious effect upon the number of servants. . . . A possible explanation of these wide differences among nations is associated with Thorstein Veblen: "The need of vicarious leisure, or conspicuous consumption of service, is a dominant incentive to the keeping of servants." That is, the *equality* of the distribution of income, rather than the amount, may be a factor of considerable importance. A society with relatively many families at both ends of the income scale would provide both a large supply of servants and a large demand. Unfortunately this conjecture cannot be tested either internationally or nationally, because of lack of data on income distributions. (p. 6)

Although, in our analysis, demand for domestic labor is far more complex than Veblen's construction of it as a form of conspicuous consumption (see also note 8 on Stigler's own differences with Veblen), we agree that income inequality is a critical consideration. To our knowledge, besides Stigler's, there is no other published work on paid domestic labor that has pointed this out.

One would think, given the explosion of statistical data collection in the post-World War II period, that lack of data would no longer be an impediment to testing this idea. However, reliable cross-national data on income distribution remain difficult to obtain, and comparable data on employment in domestic service in various nations are also extremely elusive.⁹ Still, there is scattered evidence of the relationship between the size of the domestic labor force and the extent of economic inequality in the available cross-national data. It is striking that in relatively egalitarian societies (recall the Swedish example cited earlier), paid domestic labor barely exists. By contrast, in the third world, the fact that income disparities between rich and poor are so extreme (rather than simply the level of "modernization") may be a crucial reason that extensive use of paid domestic labor remains the norm among the privileged classes.

Here we shift the focus from international to intranational variations, for which comparable data on both income distribution and employment in domestic service do exist (although they are not entirely unproblematic, as

we shall see). Below, we test the hypothesis that greater income inequality is associated with greater prevalence of paid domestic labor, independent of supply and demand factors. We do this by using a cross-sectional analysis of 1990 census data for the 100 largest United States metropolitan areas. We focus on urban areas because of the empirical reality that paid domestic labor is concentrated in cities; by analyzing the 100 largest metropolitan areas, we have a sufficiently large sample to generate statistically significant results. Below, we present a regression model that confirms the independent significance of income inequality (along with other key variables) in predicting the proportion of the labor force employed in private household occupations.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Most of our data are derived from the published 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing. Our data on income inequality and on the proportion of the female labor force that is foreign born (two variables for which published data are not available) draws on the 1990 Census Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS). Our units of analysis are metropolitan areas; our sample includes the nation's hundred largest metropolitan areas.¹⁰ Although recent census data are well known to suffer from undercounting problems (particularly for immigrants and racial minorities, both of which are over-represented among domestic workers), they are the most comprehensive data presently available. Moreover, the likelihood that domestic workers are undercounted makes the analysis below a very strong test of our hypothesis, as more accurate data would increase the range of many of the variables.¹¹

Table 5 shows the variables used in our analysis and the mean, median, range, and standard deviation for each. Our dependent variable is the extent of domestic service employment, measured as the percentage of the female labor force employed in private household service occupations.¹² The independent variables include two proxies for the two most common sources of supply of paid domestic labor: the percentage of the female labor force that is made up of African Americans and Latinas; and the percentage of the female labor force that is foreign born. We also include a proxy for demand, namely, the labor force participation rate for mothers whose youngest child is 6 years old or less. Finally, and most important, we include a measure of household income inequality, namely, the ratio of the household income reported by the top 5% of the income distribution to the household income reported by the bottom 20%. Although many other measures of inequality could have been used here, we chose this one because, in our view, it captures the two most relevant parts of the population: the richest households, who

TABLE 5: Descriptive Statistics for Variables Used in the Analysis (for the 100 largest metropolitan areas in the United States in 1990)

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
Domestic service employment (as a percentage of the female labor force)	0.78	0.70	(0.30, 2.13)	0.35
Percentage African Americans and Latinas in the female labor force	20.77	19.41	(1.34, 70.23)	12.57
Percentage foreign-born in the female labor force	9.44	5.49	(1.56, 52.27)	9.09
Mothers' labor force participation rate (youngest child 6 years old or less)	60.24	60.92	(47.59, 71.53)	5.36
Household income inequality ratio (top 5% divided by bottom 20%)	4.60	4.50	(3.08, 8.55)	0.98

are the most likely to employ domestic labor, and the poorest households, from which the bulk of the supply of workers in this occupation presumably are drawn.¹³ Although individual income inequality has grown as well (among both men and women, as discussed above), for our purposes, the inequality among households remains the most important form of inequality. Not only does the increasing prevalence of dual income households among the upper reaches of the income distribution magnify the effect of growing inequality in individual incomes, but also, it is this stratum of the population where we expect the greatest effective demand for domestic labor. These households can easily afford to employ domestic workers, and in addition, the very presence of husbands in them contributes to demand, both because many men remain reluctant to perform domestic tasks themselves, and because they add to the volume of such work that must be done.

Table 6 shows the results of ordinary least squares regression of domestic service employment on the independent variables. We present a series of models, first to establish inequality as a strong predictor of domestic service employment (Model 1), and then to show that it remains significant when the supply and demand variables described above are included in the model. In all the models shown (except Model 2, which omits the inequality variable), our hypothesis that household income inequality is positively related to domestic service employment is verified, and in each model, this result is statistically significant. Model 5 offers the fullest explanation for the dependent variable and includes all four independent variables discussed above.¹⁴

As Table 6 indicates, the difference in the multiple R^2 between Model 2 and Model 5 is slight. However, an F test shows that the difference is

TABLE 6: Unstandardized Coefficients for Ordinary Least Squares Regressions of Domestic Service Employment on Independent Variables, 100 Largest United States Metropolitan Areas in 1990 (standard errors in parentheses)

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	<i>Model 5</i>
Household income inequality	0.1826*** (0.0304)	—	0.0545** (0.0306)	0.1524*** (0.0265)	0.0742*** (0.0298)
African Americans and Latinas as percentage of female labor force ^a	—	0.0164*** (0.0023)	0.0175*** (0.0024)	—	0.0124*** (0.0028)
Foreign-born as percentage of female labor force ^a	—	0.0089*** (0.0033)	—	0.0190*** (0.0030)	0.0106*** (0.0033)
Maternal labor force participation ^a	—	0.0074* (0.0047)	0.0045 (0.0046)	0.0116** (0.0050)	0.0091** (0.0046)
Intercept	-0.0577 (0.1429)	-0.0879 (0.2910)	-0.1045 (0.3152)	-0.7972** (0.3421)	-0.4631 (0.3211)
Multiple R^2	0.2693	0.5504	0.5322	0.4883	0.5779

a. Expressed in 1% units; for example, in Model 3, for each 1% change in the percentage of the female labor force made up of African Americans or Latinas (PFAL), there was a change of 0.0873% in domestic service employment.

* $p \leq .10$ (one-tailed tests). ** $p \leq .05$ (one-tailed tests). *** $p \leq .01$ (one-tailed tests).

statistically significant. In any case, Model 5 is the best model for predicting the extent of domestic service employment, because it alone contains all of the important causal variables.¹⁵ Also note that adding household income inequality (in Model 5) changes all the coefficients shown in Model 2. Most notably, the coefficient for the percentage of the female labor force that is African American or Latina is much lower in Model 5. This suggests that part of the effect of this variable on domestic service employment shown in Model 2 is spurious, due to the high correlation between this variable and household income inequality (the correlation coefficient is 0.591).¹⁶

One finding from this analysis is that maternal labor force participation is not statistically significant in Model 3 and barely significant in Model 2. We believe that this is because maternal labor force participation is negatively correlated with the other variables, and especially because of the strong negative correlation between it and the percentage of the female labor force that is foreign born. The effect of maternal labor force participation on the

dependent variable is thus obscured by the omission of other relevant variables from the model.

The results also show, as expected, that a large supply of women of color (our variable actually includes only African American and Latina women because Asian Americans are seldom employed in this occupation today) is positively related to domestic service employment. Because this variable, as well as the percentage of the female labor force that is foreign born, both provide both partial proxies for labor supply, we ran regressions with each of these variables separately (Models 3 and 4) in addition to Model 5, which includes both.¹⁷ The supply variables are statistically significant in all the models.¹⁸

DISCUSSION

Our regression analysis of the United States's 100 largest metropolitan areas was designed to test a series of hypotheses about the factors explaining variability in the extent of employment in paid domestic labor. We criticized the earlier literature on this issue, grounded in modernization theory, and claimed that the level of economic development in a given society is the key to predicting the proportion of the female workforce engaged in this occupation (see Chaplin, 1978; Collver & Langlois, 1962; Coser, 1973). Although we could not directly test the development hypothesis with our data, the very fact of extensive variability across metropolitan areas within a single, highly developed nation reveals the inadequacy of that approach. Instead, we have focused on household income inequality as one critical influence on the size of this occupation. The greater the disparity in resources between rich and poor households, the more easily the former can employ members of the latter as domestic laborers.

We do not claim that household income inequality is the only important predictor of the size of the domestic labor occupation; on the contrary, the availability of a labor supply composed of women disadvantaged by race and/or citizenship status—itsself an index of a different type of social inequality—is also important in the U.S. case. Indeed, we draw on the recent microsociological scholarship on domestic servants (Colon, 1986, 1989, 1995; Rollins, 1985; Romero, 1992; Wrigley, 1995), much of it preoccupied with precisely these forms of social inequality as they are played out in interactional settings involving domestics and their employers, to generate hypotheses about race and immigration. As our regression analysis showed, the proportion of the female labor force made up of African Americans and Latinas is a significant predictor of the extent of employment in paid domestic

labor. Similarly, the proportion of the female labor force that is foreign born is also a significant factor. Both women of color and foreign-born women workers have relatively few labor market options compared to their White, native born counterparts, and thus, offer a ready labor supply in this occupation. However, in contrast to Romero's claim that class is no longer an important factor in the dynamics of paid domestic labor, we have shown that income inequality is a significant predictor *independent of* factors like race and citizenship.

We have also argued that *demand* for domestic services is especially present in households where mothers are gainfully employed outside the home. Our regression analysis supports our contention that maternal labor force participation is positively related to the size of the occupation; however, this variable is significant only when the supply and inequality variables are included in the model. Although this is somewhat speculative and not shown by the regression analysis, we believe that although households with young children and mothers in the labor force may wish to have help with domestic tasks, it would be more difficult for them to find or afford such help in the absence of these other conditions. Most important for our argument, they are much more likely to be able to employ domestic servants if there is a wide gap between their own household income and that of the persons potentially available to perform such work.

CONCLUSION

It follows that if the recent growth of income inequality in the United States continues, leading to a more polarized class structure, the growth of the domestic service occupation (thus far evident only in southern California) may well become a national phenomenon. We would expect similar developments in the many other countries where household income inequality levels are increasing, and we hope that future researchers will explore these issues in other national (and regional) settings. Another area ripe for more investigation is the extent to which our argument here would also apply to the wide range of personal service occupations (from catering to personal shopping to home health care) which, like paid domestic work, are primarily marketed to individuals and households with high incomes and which have grown significantly in recent years.

If inequality continues to grow, as the most affluent households become relatively richer and as real wages for the rest of the population decline, it will become easier for the wealthy to afford the personal services provided in private homes by maids and nannies. As journalist Nicholas Lemann

(1996) prognosticated recently, it is possible to envision an America a century from now in which "the work force [had] evolved to the point where about a quarter of it was made up of domestic servants—closer to what the situation in America had been before World War II" (p. 102).¹⁹ In short, thanks to the recent growth of economic inequality in the United States generally (and inequality among women in particular), Coser's (1973) report of the death of this ancient occupation may yet prove to have been grossly exaggerated.

NOTES

1. Historically, and in some countries in Africa and Asia today, males have also been extensively employed in this occupation. See Hansen (1989) for an excellent discussion of this.

2. Exceptions include parts of Hansen (1989) and Gregson and Lowe (1994)—neither of which, however, deals with the case of the United States. Salzinger (1991) and Repak (1994) are among the few U.S.-focused studies to touch on these issues, although they are not the main concern in either article.

3. However, such geographical variation apparently does not exist in England, as geographers Nicky Gregson and Michelle Lowe (1994, pp. 42-43) were surprised to find in one of the few place-sensitive studies of paid domestic work to appear in recent years.

4. This does not include employees of organized firms that offer cleaning services; such workers would be classified as service workers rather than in private household service. The extent to which private household workers caring for elderly or sick people are included in this category is unclear. The 1990 Census does not have a separate occupational category for home health workers. There is a category for home care aides in the occupational group "welfare service aides," but this probably only includes those paid from public funds. The occupational codes for private household cleaners and servants do include the category companion, and some privately paid home health workers may have been enumerated into this classification, whereas others might be classified as health or nursing workers despite the fact that their work takes place in private households. (U.S. Census Bureau, Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division, private communication).

5. We made some efforts to obtain data on the Swedish case and had some fascinating correspondence with the government agency Statistics Sweden that provided us with unpublished data on the number of domestic servants employed in private homes from 1960 to 1990. They reported that the number fell from 68,800 in 1960 to 1,364 in 1980 and to 2 in 1990. In 1990, about 4.5 million people were economically active in Sweden, including about 2.2 million women. When we wrote back to Statistics Sweden, questioning whether the 1990 data they had provided could possibly be accurate, our correspondent agreed that there were probably more than 2 servants in the country, but added,

It is very seldom that a family have domestic servants [in Sweden] because it is very expensive to pay them a fair salary. . . . It is just a few families in the very high upper class that have such help these days. I know for instance, no family in my neighborhood or of my relatives or of my colleagues who have or have had any domestic servants in the last 10 years. That was much more common in the 1960s and 1970s.

6. The actual range may be greater than these data indicate, and the extent of employment in this occupation generally may be higher than they suggest due to census undercounting, a problem we explore more fully below. Indeed, undocumented immigrants are a large part of the workforce in this occupation in many areas. Live-in domestics are particularly likely to be undercounted. See note 18 for more discussion of the undercount issue.

7. The occupational categories shown in Table 4 are archaic ones, more suitable to analysis of domestic labor a century ago. We suspect that many of those classified here as cleaners and servants perform child care duties as well.

8. Stigler noted this too in commenting on Veblen's suggestion (cited in the excerpt from Stigler reproduced in the text) that domestic service was mainly a case of "conspicuous consumption." Stigler (1946, p. 6) comments in a footnote:

Only the childless Veblen would write: "In the modern [1899] industrial communities the mechanical contrivances available for the comfort and convenience of everyday life are highly developed. So much so that body servants, or indeed, domestic servants of any kind, would now scarcely be employed by anybody except on the ground of a canon or reputability carried over by tradition from earlier usage."

A century later, despite the invention of disposable diapers and other household conveniences, the notion that households with young children have minimal labor requirements remains absurd.

9. Stigler (1946) noted that "A large scale survey of the number of domestic servants in other countries is not feasible because of the baffling differences in classifications of occupations between both countries and censuses" (p. 3). This problem has actually been aggravated by the occupation's decline in the decades since. The Luxembourg Income Study is beginning to generate comparable data on income distribution for selected countries, but this has only become available in the last couple of years.

10. We used the hundred largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) or primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs) for analysis; in other words, we broke down all consolidated metropolitan statistical areas (CMSAs) into their subcomponents and then selected the 100 most populated MSAs or PMSAs for use in our analysis.

11. Virtually all available estimates of the number of private household workers in the United States indicate that the 1990 Census figures substantially understate the actual extent of employment in paid domestic labor. The widely respected Current Population Survey, for example, found 753,066 women (and 28,934 men) employed as private household workers in 1990 (these figures are the annual averages), more than 1½ times the number enumerated by the 1990 Census (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991, p. 187). And, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) received tax forms for approximately 435,500 household employees in 1990—accounting for about 80% of the employed private household workers counted by the U.S. Census, according to unpublished data we obtained from the IRS. In 1990, the agency received a total of 1,524,481 Forms 942, *Employer's Quarterly Tax Return for Household Employees*. We were advised by IRS Statistics Office Section Chief Russell Geiman to divide this figure by 3.5 to estimate the number of domestic workers reported to the IRS. His rationale for this procedure was that whereas, on one hand, a household reporting employment of more than one domestic worker in a quarter files only one form (thus the numerator may underestimate the true number of workers), some households do not file the forms in all four quarters of the year (thus the denominator should be less than 4).

The IRS figures are widely acknowledged to represent only a fraction (though no one knows how small a fraction) of actual employment of private household workers, due to widespread noncompliance with the law (see Morrow, 1996). Indeed, in 1990, before the 1992 Nannygate

episode drew so much public attention to the existence of the legal requirements, noncompliance was presumably even higher than it is today.

Additional indications that the 1990 Census figures fail to capture the full extent of employment in private household occupations come from estimates of the number of persons employed as nannies. Whereas the 1990 Census counted 144,000 in-home child care workers among the larger population of private household workers (see Table 4), other estimates are considerably larger. On the high end, the International Nanny Association claims that there are between 1 and 3 million full-time nannies in the United States (Johnson, 1996). We contacted Wendy Sachs, President of the International Nanny Association, who indicated that this figure is an estimate based on an unscientific poll of about 200 people affiliated with the organization, including many owners of employment agencies that place nannies in private households.

A more conservative estimate is derived from the 1993 Survey of Income and Program Participation, which found about 385,000 in-home baby-sitters (nonrelatives who provide care within the child's home), nearly triple the figure in the 1990 Census. This survey (reported in Casper, 1995) focuses on child care arrangements for preschoolers. Because children are the unit of analysis, not caregivers, some adjustments were necessary to the published data, which indicated that 621,000 preschool children were cared for in their own homes by nonrelative baby-sitters in fall 1993. Of these, 246,000 were found to be making separate payments to the caregivers. An additional 278,000 were found to be making shared payments, indicating that the caregiver was caring for more than one family's children. On the advice of Lynne Casper of the U.S. Census Bureau, who supervised the study (private communication), we arrived at our estimate of 385,000 in-home baby-sitters by adding 246,000 to half the 278,000 shared in-home baby-sitters. We ignored the additional 97,000 in-home baby-sitters (nonrelatives) to whom, according to the survey, no payments were made. Casper was unable to explain this anomaly, but believes that our estimate of 385,000 is conservative.

12. Note that this is slightly different from the data shown in Tables 1 to 3, where the denominator is *employed* women rather than all women in the labor force. The latter category also includes those who are unemployed and actively seeking employment.

13. The top 5% of households may seem too small a portion of the population for the employer group in cities like Los Angeles and Miami, where domestic service is more extensive; but for the nation as a whole this appears to be the relevant employer group—though there are no reliable data available on the employer population. We did test some other measures of household income inequality, as well as income inequality among women, as discussed in note 14.

14. We tested a number of other models, not shown here. Regression results for the full model using a different measure of household income inequality—the ratio of the household income reported by the top 20% to the household income reported by the bottom 20%—yielded similar results to those shown in the text. Using this measure, household income inequality had a positive (unstandardized coefficient = 0.0280) and statistically significant relationship to domestic service employment. However, a third measure of household income inequality, the ratio of the top 10% to the bottom 20%, although positively related to domestic service employment, did not have a statistically significant relationship to domestic service employment in Model 5 but did in Model 4. Regression results for full models using a variety of measures of personal income inequality among women (as opposed to the household income inequality measures discussed above and in the text) indicated that this type of inequality had no relationship to our dependent variable, whether the measure was inequality in personal income among all women or among all women older than age 29. Here, the coefficients were negligible and not statistically significant. In addition, regression results for models including the average welfare payment per person in each metropolitan area, those including 1990 unemployment rates for each metropoli-

tan area, and those including median household income for each metropolitan area, yielded no statistically significant results for any of these variables. In addition, we ran the regressions omitting Los Angeles and New York, to test the possibility that these were extreme outliers, but found that the results were still in the expected direction and still statistically significant.

Finally, we ran the analysis adding interaction terms, to rule out the possibility that it was an interaction between race or immigration and inequality that was the key to the story here. We ran the full model including (a) the interaction of household income inequality and percentage of the female labor force that is African American or Latina; (b) the interaction of household income inequality and the percentage of the female labor force that is foreignborn; and (c) the full model with both the interactions listed in a and b above. In all three of these models, the interaction terms were not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, and in all of them, household income inequality remained statistically significant.

15. Our methodological premise here is that obtaining unbiased parameter estimates through a correctly specified model is the most important task for social scientists, and performing well on goodness-of-fit tests, such as those based on the amount of variance explained, is secondary. Omitting relevant variables from a causal model leads to biased estimates and/or a misrepresentation of the causal relations between variables. There are at least two reasons not to reject a fuller model because of a small incremental change in multiple R^2 . First, the variance explained by any one independent variable depends in part on the range and variance of the other variables in the model and so may not provide an accurate indication of the causal importance of that variable. Second, multiple R^2 measures the fit of the entire model, and cannot be divided up into unique causal components. The multiple R^2 of a nested model can be affected by the covariance between an included variable and an omitted variable (e.g., percentage of the female labor force that is African American or Latina, and household income inequality, respectively, in Model 2), and therefore many do not vary much from the fuller model. (See Berk, 1988, pp. 161-170; Duncan, 1975, pp. 55-66; Lieberman, 1985, p. 117.)

16. Although this correlation is relatively high, it is not high enough to preclude including both variables in the same model. By contrast, the correlation coefficient between household income inequality and the percentage of the female labor force that is foreign born is a much lower .228. Below is the full correlation matrix for the variables used in the analysis:

	<i>HII</i>	<i>ALFLF</i>	<i>FBFLF</i>	<i>MLFP</i>
<i>HII</i>	1.000	0.591	0.228	-0.159
<i>ALFLF</i>		1.000	0.576	-0.147
<i>FBFLF</i>			1.000	-0.316
<i>MLFP</i>				1.000

17. We also ran all the models using percentage population foreign born (instead of percentage of employed females who are foreign born) as a proxy for this component of supply. Although the coefficients (not shown) change slightly, the results are virtually identical to those in Table 6 in terms of which variables prove significant. Because domestic laborers are overwhelmingly female, and the foreign-born population includes large numbers of children (as well as men) who are not part of the labor supply we are interested in here, we feel that the variable we use in the analysis is the best available for this purpose.

18. In an effort to adjust for the probable undercounting of domestic workers, we reran our regression analysis after making some adjustments based on the U.S. Census Bureau's Post-Enumeration Survey (PES), part of a settlement agreement of a lawsuit filed by several major city governments. The Bureau surveyed 165,000 housing units, matching their answers

to the original census records to see if they were either uncounted or erroneously enumerated and based on this, issued the corrected PES data. (For details about the undercount debates and a useful assessment of the validity of the Census data and of the PES, see Choldin, 1994, especially pp. 206-226. See also California Legislature, 1990; U.S. Department of Commerce, 1991; U.S. Congress, 1987.)

Unfortunately, for the variables of interest to us, the PES-adjusted data are only slightly better than those originally reported. When we reran our regression analysis after making some adjustments based on the PES, we got virtually identical results. Unfortunately, the PES allowed us to make adjustments for only two of the variables used in our analysis. We were able to adjust our dependent variable, domestic service employment, and one of our independent variables, the percentage of the female labor force made up of African Americans and Latinas. The mean, median, range, and standard deviation for the adjusted variable "domestic service employment" are unchanged from those shown in Table 5, although some of the data do change slightly. However, the adjustment does change the descriptive statistics for the percentage of the female labor force that is African American or Latina, as shown below. The changes are marginal but in the expected direction: they result in a greater range and standard deviation and higher means and medians.

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
Unadjusted	20.77	19.41	(1.34, 70.23)	12.57
Adjusted	21.39	19.99	(1.38, 72.48)	12.96

We adjusted our data by applying the undercount rate reported in the PES for Hispanic females, Black females, and all females to the dependent variable (domestic service employment) and one of our independent variables (percentage of the female labor force made up of African Americans and Latinas). Using unpublished undercount rates for all females, Black females, and Hispanic females, obtained directly from Greg Robinson at the U.S. Census Bureau (following his advice, we used the July 1992 "357 PES," the last in a series of three PES estimates), we computed the adjustments as follows:

$$\text{Adjusted Count} = \frac{\text{Unadjusted Count}}{1 - \text{Undercount Rate}}$$

For example, the original census count for the number of Hispanic females in the United States was 10,966,000. The "357 PES" revised estimate for this population is 11,468,942, and the undercount rate for Hispanic females was .00438525. This can be expressed as follows:

$$11,468,942 = \frac{10,966,000}{1 - .00438525}$$

By applying this formula to the data for each of the 100 metropolitan areas in our sample, we were able to derive revised estimates for domestic service employment. We applied the formula to each ethnic component of the numerator (female domestic servants [divided into Hispanic, Black, and non-Black female domestic servants]) and to the denominator (the female labor force [again adding the revised estimates for each ethnic group]). Similarly, we applied the formula to the Hispanic and Black female labor force in each metropolitan area, summing the two to derive the adjusted counts for our variable, percentage of the female labor force that is African

American or Latina. (Because the PES unfortunately did not attempt to estimate the degree to which the foreign born were undercounted, we were unable to adjust our variable, percentage of the female labor force that is foreign born.)

Regression results using the PES-adjusted data are available from the authors. The changes from Table 6 are marginal at best, which is not surprising given the minimal adjustments made possible by the PES. But if, as most experts contend, the undercount is disproportionately high for African Americans, Latinas, the foreign born, and the poor, then accurate data would spread out the range of all our variables except maternal labor force participation. This might yield stronger results. Metropolitan areas with populations that include large numbers of uncoun- ted poor persons would have higher household income inequality ratios; those with large under- counts of African Americans and Latinas would have a higher proportion of the female labor force from these groups; and those with large undercounts of the foreign born would also have a higher proportion of the female labor force that is foreign born than enumerated in the 1990 Census and even than shown in our adjusted data. The dependent variable, similarly, would show a greater range among metropolitan areas. Thus the 1990 Census data, and even the PES-adjusted data, offer a very strong test of our hypothesis. More accurate data—unfortunately not avail- able—might offer stronger results.

19. This is drawn from a brilliant dystopian essay, purportedly written by the daughter of Michael Young (author of the 1958 sociological classic *The Rise of the Meritocracy*) at the age of 100, in the year 2096. It is worth citing the passage from which the sentence quoted in the text is extracted in full (Lemann, 1996, p. 102):

During the period in the late 20th century when the American welfare system was being abolished, there was a lot of talk (from both sides of the political debate, paradoxically) about how the society was moving toward masses of hungry children roaming the streets while the rich took refuge inside walled compounds. In the event, there was relatively little of that sort of thing. Instead, the work force evolved to the point where about a quarter of it was made up of domestic servants—closer to what the situation in American had been before World War II. They lived in the attics and basements of other people's houses or in clusters of huts at the edges of towns, and did not send their children to school, to spare everyone embarrassment. People had a sense that the servants, while pleasant and deferential enough face to face, were only barely under control, and that unspeakable things went on in the huts. All of the "troubled" schools that had once occasioned so much hand-wringing were shut down.

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