

DECONSTRUCTING RACE, CLASS, AND GENDER INEQUALITY IN PERSONAL EARNINGS

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ABSTRACT

Tilly (1998) and Hogan (2001) argue that race, class, and gender inequality are qualitatively different relations of categorical inequality, established and sustained by the same mechanisms: exploitation, opportunity hoarding, emulation, and accommodation, though which women and blacks are included or excluded from the production and distribution of the necessities of life and work. We use Current Population Survey data to estimate an Ordinary Least Squares regression model predicting logged 2000 earnings for working respondents, using age, educational credentials, family and work status, class, and labor market measures as predictors. Then we use the Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition to test predictions derived from Tilly's (1998) theory, explaining how family, race, class, and gender relations produce distinctive advantages and disadvantages in the pursuit of personal earnings. We find evidence of agency as well as structural constraint in kin, class, occupation, and labor market systems.

Race, class and gender are qualitatively different forms of categorical inequality, produced and sustained by virtually identical processes (or mechanisms): exploitation, opportunity hoarding, emulation, and accommodation (which Tilly 1998 calls "adaptation"). As Tilly (1998) and Hogan (2001) have explained, work and home life are characterized by organizations that use the mechanisms of exploitation and opportunity hoarding to include some and exclude others in the production and distribution of the necessities of life (and work).

Gender is essentially about exploiting the unpaid labor of women (and sometimes children or domestic slaves) in reproductive (family) relations—not just sex and housework, but managing correspondence and community service, caring for the young and old

and sustaining kin and friendship networks that can be a source of opportunity (or a base for opportunity hoarding). Race is mostly about denying blacks (and sometimes other “nonwhites”) access to family relations. Again, this is not about sex and housework but about legitimacy and inheritance of wealth and extensions of patronage in a variety of forms available to sons and daughters and to their mates (assuming that the marriages are legitimate).

Recently repealed miscegenation laws and continued racial endogamy in the U.S. population underline a simple fact. Black men and white women are disadvantaged in distinct ways by their relations with white men. Even as we move toward a multiracial society that celebrates gender equality, the simple fact is that white women suffer from family relations virtually denied to black men and women. Black men lack the kin relations that trap white women in domestic exploitation, while white women lack the labor relations that trap black men in corporate exploitation, where, particularly as core sector union workers, they enjoy a somewhat more secure position than the absent females, as the last hired and first fired or the token black man. Simply stated, exploitative gender relations and exclusionary race relations in family life effectively reproduce class relations and thereby sustain enduring gender and racial inequality. Stated differently, race and gender inequality are rooted in the family but reproduced and institutionalized at work, through emulation and accommodation (Hogan 2001; Tilly 1998).

Of course, the world of life and work has changed since the Birmingham bus boycott (Morris 1984), but gender and race relations of exploitation and opportunity hoarding have become generalized in schools and in the work place. This happened as organizations (including both capitalist firms and unions) attempted to accommodate the racial and gender inequality rooted in family life and emulated (or reproduced) everywhere, particularly in the years before the Civil Rights Movement began to challenge the racial and gendered world of the Fifties. We might conclude that racism and sexism are dysfunctional in the postmodern world, but we should not expect established patterns of exploitation and opportunity hoarding to change unless the coercive power of the state (or an effective labor or consumer boycott) increases the cost of using gender and race as convenient bases for constructing familiar relations of categorical inequality.¹

Consider a familiar example. The relations between faculty and clerical workers (or custodians) and the use of inter-disciplinary programs, diversity offices, and human relations positions, more generally, as good jobs for women and people of color is a case in point. The university is not attempting to promote race and gender

inequality but simply to accommodate or emulate relations that exist at home and in public and private offices outside the university. Until pressure from federal or state governments or from organized constituents promoting equality exceeds the ease of recruiting candidates for subaltern (Spivak 1988) positions from the ranks of qualified women and people of color, we will continue to emulate and accommodate racial and gender inequality by hiring women and people of color in service positions.

There will continue to be good jobs for subalterns in personnel and counseling and in undergraduate student services and, of course, in athletics. As women and people of color move up the career ladders in these departments or divisions, they join the “middle” class of professionals, managers, and supervisors. The expansion of these black and female occupations and industries fosters further segmentation and queuing for the available positions for women in the helping professions, white women in management, and black men in supervision, so long as the customers or the subordinates are women, children, or people of color (England 2010; Reskin and Roos 1990; Stainback and Tomaskovic-Devey 2009; Tomaskovic-Devey, Zimmer, Stainback, Robinson, Taylor, and McTague 2006).

We all know that this is true, but the mainstream sociological literature distracts us on this point, not simply because gender, race, labor-market and class experts tend to ignore each other, but because they tend toward zero-sum games or significant coefficient competitions to demonstrate the superiority of class versus patriarchy, education versus politics, or whatever (Hogan 2001; Hogan 2005; Kaufman 2002; Maume 2011; Morris and Western 1999). Here we follow a different path. Instead of evaluating the relative importance of race, class, gender, and labor markets, we combine various elements of the competing approaches. Class and labor market need not be competing interpretations (Tomaskovic-Devey and Rosigno 1996), and culture, notably family, its association with wealth (Oliver and Shapiro 2006), and norms on the relative value of different tasks (Firestone, Harris, and Lambert 1999) need not be an alternative to class or labor market approaches.

We follow the lead of Tilly (1998), who offers a general theory of enduring inequality, which can guide analysis of class, race, and gender inequality without sacrificing the differences between white women and black men in their institutional relations with white men, both at home and at work (Hogan 2001). Tilly (1998) and Hogan (2001) have developed this theoretical approach and been criticized by class (Wright 2000), gender (Laslett 2000) and race (Morris 2000) scholars, so the interested readers have adequate sources for the theoretical pros and cons (Tilly 2000).

Here we shall focus on empirical evidence to defend this synthetic approach. Thus far, there have been limited efforts to apply Tilly (1998), as Voss (2010) notes. Tomaskovic-Devey, Avent-Holt, Zimmer, and Harding (2009) are exceptional in this regard, but despite their insights they use Tilly (1998), primarily, to promote the use of organizational (as opposed to individual level) data, which facilitates analysis of structure, most notably organizational and occupational structures. We analyze more conventional individual-level data, from the 2001 March Supplement to the Current Population Survey, which allows us to evaluate both structure and agency. We apply Tilly (1998) to argue that exploitation and opportunity hoarding explain or interpret enduring race and gender inequality sustained through three specific mechanisms.

1. Exploitation in gender relations results in accommodation by employers or firms, including
 - a. gender barriers to full-time, year-round employment
 - b. devaluation of women's occupation or firm-specific resources or experience
 - c. gender barriers to union jobs
 - d. gender barriers to jobs in core industrial sectors
2. Gender exploitation and racial opportunity hoarding are emulated and accommodated through
 - a. marriage and parenting bonuses for white men
 - b. race and gender differences in education and its effects on earnings
 - c. race and gender differences in class and occupational segregation
 - d. race and gender differences in regional segregation and its effects
3. Gender exploitation and racial opportunity hoarding inspire various strategies for coping with disadvantage, including
 - a. proprietorship
 - b. union jobs
 - c. jobs in large firms
 - d. jobs in the public sector

In short, the patterns of disadvantage for white and black women and for black men, in comparison with white men, are qualitatively different. Furthermore, only some of these disadvantages

result from discrimination, as that term is normally used (Cancio, Evans, and Maume 1996; Maume 2011). Neither are all clearly rooted in class relations (Wright 1997), in educational or intellectual achievement (Farkas and Vicknair 1996; Sakamoto, Wu, and Tzeng 2000), or in labor markets (Kaufman 2002; Kim and Sakamoto 2010; Leicht 2008; Tomaskovic-Devey and Roscigno 1996; Western and Rosenfeld 2011). Yet all of the advantages and disadvantages are interpretable as exploitation, opportunity hoarding, emulation, and adaptation (as Tilly 1998 defines those terms) in institutionalized race, class, and gender relations in the U.S. at the dawn of the 21st century.

EXPLOITATION IN GENDER RELATIONS

Traditionally, the burden of domesticity, particularly for white “middle class” suburban women was the inability to work fulltime, year-round, outside the home, for pay (Friedan 1963). During World War II, married women with children entered the labor force in unprecedented numbers. Many returned to housework when the men returned from war, but the trend toward increasing gender equality in full-time, year-round employment continued through the second wave of feminism in the Seventies, when women worked because they wanted to. The trend continued into the Eighties, when women worked because they needed to do so in order to sustain their bourgeois lifestyle (Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, and Robinson 2000). Even so, gender inequality in fulltime, year-round employment, particularly among whites, continues to characterize the U.S. (Hogan and Perrucci 2007a).

The second manifestation of enduring gender inequality is the lack of firm or occupation-specific skills—what some have called human capital (Tam 1997). Here we argue that there is, in fact, a general de-valuation of women’s work (Cohen and Huffman 2003; England, Hermsen and Cotter 2000) emulating the exploitation of women in unpaid domestic labor. Quite apart from the burden of housework (Bianchi et al. 2000; Bittman, England, Sayer, Folbre, and Matheson 2003), which tends to reduce hours and weeks of work and thereby accumulate as disadvantage in years of experience, firms tend to discredit the life experience of women because they are presumed to have irregular employment histories, even if they don’t.

In a similar vein, women face barriers to union and core industrial sector jobs, imposed by men who hoard the opportunity for better salaries and benefits in “blue collar” jobs that have been the traditional domain of men (Kim and Sakamoto 2010; Western and Rosenfeld 2011; Wunnava and Peled 1999).

HOW RACE AND GENDER INEQUALITY ENGENDER INCOME INEQUALITY

White men benefit from the exploitation of wives and the exclusion of blacks from kinship relations that can provide labor and capital, particularly for the self-employed (Bates 1996; Portes 1996; Portes and Zhou 1996; Sanders and Nee 1996). What some have called motherhood and marriage penalties (Budig and England 2001; Budig and Hodges 2010) should really be considered fatherhood and husband benefits, which tend to be limited to white men (Glauber 2008; Hodges and Budig 2010). White men, who sustain the patriarchal family as their traditional domain, exploit white women, who are the major victims of the “marriage penalty.” Blacks, although excluded from the white man’s family, pay a higher relative cost for parenting because they lack the resources associated with the white kinship networks (DiMaggio and Garip 2011; DiPrete, Gelman, McCormick, Teitler, and Zheng 2011; Reardon and Bischoff 2011). Black women appear to be particularly disadvantaged in this regard (Hogan and Perrucci 2007b), although evidence of racial differences in mothering penalties is not very compelling. Budig and England (2001) find no significant racial difference in the effect of number of children and some evidence that black and Latino women with three or more children actually suffer a lesser penalty than do white women.

Marriage and parenting penalties notwithstanding, blacks are doubly disadvantaged in education, lacking access to the better schools in the white suburbs and lacking the resource to finance private alternatives to inferior public schools (Alon 2009; Condrón 2009; Downey, von Hippel, and Broh 2004). Excluding blacks from white families produces a series of disadvantages in both access to education and in the benefits of education received (Farkas and Vicknair 1996). The return on educational credentials is particularly attenuated for black men, first because they achieve less education, and second because they tend to rely on traditional “blue collar” alternatives to the “white collar” jobs that attract upwardly mobile women (Buchmann and DiPrete 2006; Gorman 2005; Morgan 1998; Morgan 2000; Percheski 2008; Sakamoto et al. 2000).

Simply stated, racial exclusion tends to foster class barriers, particularly barriers to “middle class” jobs—managerial jobs for black men and supervisory jobs for black women. Furthermore, lacking inherited or married wealth, blacks are effectively excluded from self-employment, except as small scale proprietors (Oliver and Shapiro 2006; Portes 1996). Gender exploitation, on the other hand, tends to foster status exclusion, particularly exclusion from masculine occupations—construction, manufacturing, and transportation, and

from union jobs. As England (2011) explains, women, particularly white women, move into managerial or professional positions or even into clerical and service positions where they can increase their earnings without having to compete in traditional male blue collar labor markets. Particularly after 1972, as the U.S. service economy expanded, there were increasing opportunities for women, particularly white women, to move into management positions in work settings where virtually all subordinates were female (Stainback and Tomaskovic-Devey 2009; Tomaskovic-Devey et al. 2006).

Unlike the gendered status barriers to blue collar work, regional barriers are more clearly racial. Women tend to follow their husbands (Bielby and Bielby 1992), but white professional women are likely to be following their husbands into regions with greater employment opportunities. Unlike the white women who are stuck in marriage and family responsibilities, many black men and women are trapped in rural Southern or in urban Midwestern poverty (Bound and Freedman 1992; Fuller 2008; McCall 2001; Moore 2010; Mouw 2000). Black women appear to be particularly disadvantaged in this regard (Hogan and Perrucci 2007b).

COPING WITH DISADVANTAGE

Women, particularly older white women (Morgan 1998), adapt their working lives in various ways to accommodate family demands (Bielby and Bielby 1992; Bittman et al. 2003; Percheski 2008), particularly through professional self-employment (or proprietorship) that provides flexible hours and the option of working from home. There is considerable evidence to suggest that women use self-employment to accommodate the demands of home (Budig 2006; Carr 1996) and thereby suffer a considerable earnings disadvantage compared to men, who effectively exploit family in proprietorship (Portes 1996; Portes and Zhou 1996; Sanders and Nee 1996).

Budig (2006:741) finds that self-employment predicts higher earnings for men but lower earnings for women, and finds a similar pattern of marital and motherhood penalties, although this pattern does not obtain for professional women (Budig 2006:744). In contrast, Hogan, Perrucci and Behringer (2005:71) find that self-employed professional white men earn significantly higher employment income, while self-employed professional white women do not. Hogan, Perrucci and Wilmoth (2000:47) report similar gender differences among self-employed whites in core industrial sectors. In both of these analyses, however, the subjects are from the retirement cohort of 1980–1981. Perhaps these gender differences among the self-

employed have diminished in recent years, but we expect that white women still use self-employment to accommodate domestic burdens.

Thus we expect to find that self-employment, like marriage and parenthood, is good for white men but not for their wives. White women may be breaking through class barriers and smashing the glass ceiling to higher management and employer/owner relations (Baxter and Wright 2000; Gorman and Kmec 2009; Wright 1997), but lack of capital and educational and regional disadvantages continue to disadvantage black women, who continue to pay the parenting penalty without the marriage bonus. Black women suffer in comparison to white women, who are more successful in overcoming the traditionally gendered barriers of class (Hogan and Perrucci 2007b).

As already noted, women, both black and white, are not expected to take advantage of union jobs, but black men are expected to turn to unions as an opportunity to obtain higher earnings and job security that are otherwise denied them (Kim and Sakamoto 2010). Gender is viewed as a barrier to the traditionally masculine world of “blue collar” unions, but there is no reason to believe that women who manage to find union jobs would not gain the same benefits (Hartmann, Spalter-Roth, and Collins 1994). In fact, labor union scholars are increasingly arguing that women are the future of unions in the U.S., if only the traditional gendered relations, particularly between members and leaders, can be transcended (Milkman and Voss 2004:6–8).

Finally, there is reason to believe that jobs in large firms or in the public sector are less likely to emulate or accommodate the race and gender inequality that is pervasive in the private sector and in small Mom and Pop firms where blacks are likely to be excluded and women and children are likely to be exploited. Tomaskovic-Devey et al. (2009) offer suggestive evidence on this point in contrasting more bureaucratic or more regulated organizational settings on the degree to which class inequality is exacerbated when superimposed with gender. It seems likely that blacks and women would find large firms and especially public sector firms more likely to be bureaucratic and more likely to have federal contracts or other incentives to conform with Title Seven requirements.

DATA AND METHODS

Data used here are from the Current Population Survey (CPS), obtained online. The March Supplement for 2001 provides annual earnings for persons, including self-employed persons, which are not available in the quarterly reports.² More recent March Supplements do

not include union contract questions, so there was no incentive to use more recent data. Persons (fifteen and over) in the labor force in the preceding year (2000) who reported non-zero (and non-negative) personal earnings from wages or salaries (or from self-employment) were included in the sample. The roughly 250,000 cases in the dataset yielded 50,657 “earners” for whom earnings and a complete set of predictors were available in these data.

Predictors of personal earnings include age (in years), which serves as a surrogate for experience in these data. Also included are dummy variables for sex (“male” coded as female = 0, male = 1), race (“white” coded as black = 0, white = 1), marital status (currently married = 1), number of children under eighteen at home (0–9, in which “9” includes more than 9). Education is coded 0–6, following the general logic of Wright and Perrone (1977)—“3” is high school graduate and “6” is postgraduate degree. Occupational or employment status is represented by continuous variables for hours worked per week, weeks worked in 2000, and firm size (coded categorically in CPS and recoded using midpoints to approximate an interval scale: 5–1250 [representing the range from less than 10 to 1000 or more]).

Beyond these occupational status measures, labor market effects were represented by “core” industrial sector (core = 1, periphery = 0, following Beck, Horan, and Tolbert 1978) and region (dummies for Northeast, Midwest, West—South was excluded/reference category). We also include a dummy variable to indicate public sector (public = 1) employment.

Occupations (or classes) include dummies for professional, managerial, and supervisory workers—coded from occupational codes as surrogates for what some might call skill/credentials and organizational property (or authority). Unlike Wright (1997), these data allow for self-employed professionals but not for self-employed managers or supervisors. The self-employed are identified by the CPS variable “class of worker” (“a_clswkr”)—not by the CPS occupational codes, and the “self employed” code in the CPS occupational measure (based on census classification) was excluded from the managerial classification. There were, in fact, 923 self-employed professionals in this sample but (because of these coding decisions), there were no self-employed managers or supervisors.

The other deviation from Wright (1997) is the use of “union worker,” a dummy, coded “1” when a union member is not self-employed or classified in the occupational listing as a professional, manager, or supervisor. Conceptually, managers and supervisors represent, in theory, classes that effectively exploit workers (or union workers) in the interest of capital accumulation. Both are wage or (more frequently for managers) salaried workers, but their class

relations distinguish them from employers or workers. Wright (1997) would call theirs “contradictory” class circumstances or relations. Professionals, on the other hand, might be employees, proprietors (with less than 10 employees in these data) or salaried workers, but they are distinguished from “workers” as a privileged occupation that effectively monopolizes the production and sale of a specific set of professional services.

Sørensen (1996), Wright (1997), and Abbott (1988) would disagree on the basis for their privilege, but Tilly (1998) would consider professional licensing and credentialing as opportunity hoarding (much like union closed shop contracts). Here we favor Tilly’s (1998) position, but the important implication is that professionals are an occupation and might occupy various classes. “Worker” thus becomes the excluded or reference category for both the class categories of employer, proprietor, manager, supervisor and the occupational categories of professional and union worker. As a practical matter, this would allow us to include the worker dummy in the analysis, but we choose not to do so in order to retain the non-union, non-supervisory worker as a reference point for each of these occupation and class measures.

These variables predict logged personal earnings, using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression. We then decompose the observed race and gender differences using the Blinder-Oaxaca method (Blinder 1973; Jann 2008; Oaxaca 1973). This method compares “groups” (categories) on the dependent variable (logged personal earnings) and decomposes the difference into distributional (“explained”) and other (“unexplained”) effects. The former refers to the effect of the different “group” scores on the predictors (e.g., black versus white male educational achievement). The latter is the residual effects (unexplained) associated with that predictor (the extent to which education predicts higher earnings for white versus black men with the same educational credentials).

EXPECTATIONS

We expect race, class, and gender inequality in personal earnings to be produced and reproduced through three specific mechanisms.

1. Exploitation in gender relations results in accommodation by firms, including
 - a. barriers to full-time, year-round employment, which should significantly increase the gap

- (explained effects) between white male and female earnings
 - b. devaluation of white women's work experience: in these data, represented by significantly higher returns (unexplained effects) on age for white men in contrast to white women
 - c. barriers to union jobs, which should significantly increase the gap (explained effects) between white men and women, black or white
 - d. barriers to core sector "masculine" jobs (explained effects) and lower benefits, in earnings, (unexplained effects) for women in core sector jobs
2. Gender exploitation and racial opportunity hoarding are emulated and accommodated by firms
- a. yielding husband and daddy bonuses (explained and unexplained effects) for working white men, who are significantly more likely to be married, who have more children, and who profit more (in earnings) from marriage and fatherhood
 - b. yielding significant (explained and unexplained) effects of education benefitting white men in contrast to black men, who should have less educational credentials and claim lesser benefits in earnings from education
 - c. yielding significant (explained) effects of racial barriers to "middle class" professional and managerial jobs and gender barriers to "blue collar" supervisory jobs
 - d. yielding significant (explained) effects of geographic (regional) racial barriers
3. Gender exploitation and racial opportunity hoarding will inspire various strategies by blacks and women coping with disadvantage, including
- a. white women turning to low pay but high flexibility through self-employment: earning significantly less than white men (unexplained effects) as proprietors or employers
 - b. black men turning to union jobs with higher earnings and more stable employment opportunities (explained effects)

- c. blacks and white women turning to large firms and public sector employment (explained and unexplained effects) where federal equal opportunity laws are more likely to be enforced

FINDINGS

Table 1 reports the results of Ordinary Least Squares regression predicting logged personal earnings for white and black men and women who reported personal earned income in 2000, when interviewed in the Current Population March Supplement Survey in 2001.

Table 1
Unstandardized Coefficients and Standard Errors for Predictors of Weighted Logged Personal Earnings in 2000, from Ordinary Least Squares Regression (N = 50657)

Predictor	Coefficient	Robust Standard Error
White	.038**	.013
Male	.238***	.010
Age	.007***	.000
Education	.182***	.004
Married	.130***	.010
Kids Under 18	.016***	.004
Hours Worked Per Week	.029***	.001
Weeks Worked Per Year	.040***	.001
Firmsize	.000***	.000
Core Industry	.287***	.009
Public Sector	-.088***	.009
Employer	.204**	.070
Proprietor	-.515***	.040
Professional	.314***	.015
Manager	.321***	.012
Supervisor	.193***	.020
Unionworker	.126***	.019
Northeast	.089***	.012
Midwest	.017	.011
West	.093***	.012
constant	5.400***	.038

$R^2 = .467$ $F = 1650.43$ *** $df = 20, 50636$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Source: Current Populations Survey, March 2001, downloaded, 1/29/2011, from the National Bureau of Economic Research:

<http://www.nber.org/data/current-population-survey-data.html>

As seen in Table 1, there are significant net effects of race (white), gender (male), and class (employer, proprietor, professional, manager, supervisor, and union worker) net of the significant effects of age (a surrogate for experience here), education, marital and family status, hours and weeks worked, firm size, core industry, public sector, and region.³ All of the effects are significant, except for Midwest, where earnings are not significantly higher than in the South. Virtually all (except race and employer) are significant at $p < .001$. All effects are positive—they predict higher personal earnings, except for proprietorship, which predicts lower earnings than an otherwise similar non-union wage worker, and public sector employment, which is associated with lower earnings than in the private sector. Taken together, these variables explain almost 47% of the variance in logged personal earnings (adjusted $R^2 = .467$).

All of these effects are expected, and each is potentially important in interpreting race and gender inequality. A large part of this racial and gender inequality is interpreted or specified in our OLS model by the distribution of men and women, blacks and whites, across these categories of life and work status (or class). Descriptive statistics are in the Appendix, in Table A1. Table 2 presents these distributive effects in the results of the Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition, as the “explained” effects.

As seen in the first panel Table 2, which compares white men and women, there is no significant “explained” effect of age differences (the mean is 40 years of age for white men and women—see Table A1 in Appendix) and no significant “explained” effects of gender representation in managerial positions or in Midwest or Western regions. All of the other “explained” (distributional) effects are significant, as is the “Total” (literally, the sum of these coefficients) explained effect, which represents 52% of the Difference (-.275/-.527) in logged personal earnings for white men and women. This overall explained effect, sometimes called the “achieved” as opposed to the “discrimination” effect (Cancio et al. 1996) is not particularly large, especially when contrasted with the comparison of white and black men, a point to which we shall turn in our discussion section.

For present purposes, however, we shall focus on the explained and unexplained effects predicted above. First, we expected significant (explained) effects of gender barriers to full-time, year-round employment, which are evident in the large and significant explained effects of hours/week and weeks/year. There are also significant explained effects of these variables in comparing black and white men, but the size of the effects are substantially greater for women, particularly for white women. It is worth noting here that

Table 2
Detailed “Explained” and “Unexplained” Effects on Logged Income Comparing White Men’s Personal Earnings to White Women, Black Men and Black Women, Using the Blinder-Oaxaca Decomposition

Independent Variable	White Men and Women				White and Black Men				White Men and Black Women			
	Explained		Unexplained		Explained		Unexplained		Explained		Unexplained	
	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.
Age	-.001	.001	-.076*	.034	-.012***	.002	-.005	.078	-.014***	.002	-.089	.065
education	.014***	.003	.030	.037	-.039***	.005	-.186**	.068	-.015**	.004	.030	.059
married	-.008***	.001	-.083***	.013	-.028***	.003	-.023	.025	-.055***	.005	-.049**	.015
kids under 18	-.001**	.000	-.022**	.007	-.002*	.001	-.030*	.013	.001*	.001	-.048***	.012
hours/week	-.172***	.005	.360***	.056	-.035***	.006	.102	.128	-.099***	.006	.133	.088
weeks/year	-.067***	.004	-.107	.070	-.032**	.009	.010	.132	-.048***	.009	-.161	.117
firm size	.006***	.001	.004	.008	.017***	.002	.003	.020	.022***	.002	-.030	.020
core industry	-.069***	.003	-.017*	.008	-.007	.004	.003	.021	-.069***	.004	-.023*	.010
public sector	-.006***	.001	.012***	.003	-.005***	.001	.027***	.006	-.014***	.002	.343***	.007
employer	-.002**	.001	-.004*	.002	-.004***	.001	.000	.002	-.005***	.001	.000	.000
proprietor	.019***	.002	-.024***	.007	.023***	.003	-.008	.013	.030***	.004	.002	.006
professional	.015***	.001	.001	.005	-.015***	.002	-.007	.008	.003	.002	-.001	.008
manager	.001	.001	-.001	.003	-.013***	.002	-.002	.005	-.008***	.002	-.010	.006
supervisor	-.003***	.000	-.003	.002	-.002*	.001	.004	.003	-.005***	.001	-.001	.002
union worker	-.002***	.000	.000	.001	.001*	.001	-.002	.002	.000	.000	.001	.002
Northeast	.001*	.000	.001	.005	-.001	.001	-.003	.010	-.000	.001	-.002	.008
Midwest	.000	.000	-.007	.006	-.002	.001	.001	.007	-.002*	.001	.011	.007
West	-.001	.000	-.002	.006	-.011***	.002	-.008	.010	-.014***	.003	.001	.005
Constant			-.313***	.083			.020	.169			-.004	.138
Total	-.275***	.010	-.252***	.010	-.168***	.018	-.088***	.020	-.293***	.017	-.206***	.016

Table 2 (continued)

Independent Variable	White Men and Women				White and Black Men				White Men and Black Women			
	Explained		Unexplained		Explained		Unexplained		Explained		Unexplained	
	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.
	Coefficient		Standard Error		Coefficient		Standard Error		Coefficient		Standard Error	
Predict W Men	10.292***		.009		10.292***		.008		10.292***		.008	
Predict Other	9.766***		.008		10.036***		.025		9.793***		.020	
Difference	-.527***		.013		-.256***		.026		-.499***		.022	

*p < .05
 **p < .01
 ***p < .001

there is also a significant, positive effect of hours per week for white women, indicating that while white women tend to work fewer hours per week, the benefits in earnings for working more is even greater than it is for white men.

We also expected a general devaluation of white women's work experience, indicated here by the significant ($p < .05$) negative unexplained effect of age in comparing white men and women. We expected significant gender barriers to union jobs, which are evidenced in negative explained effects of union worker status, but this effect is significant only for white women. Similarly, we expected significant gender barriers to core sector employment and lower earnings benefits for women. These explained and unexplained effects are significant for white and black women.

Second, we expected distinct racial and gender barriers, beginning with husband and daddy bonuses for white men. White men's advantage in marital and family status is evident in significant explained effects of marriage and number of children under 18. The explained effects of marriage in all three comparisons indicate that white men are most likely to be married. The unexplained effect indicates that white men enjoy a significantly greater earnings advantage from marriage. In this case, that advantage is significant only in comparison to white and black women (who thereby suffer a marriage penalty compared to white men), and it is largest for white women (as expected). The daddy bonus for white men is evidenced in a smaller and less consistent explained effect indicating that white men have somewhat larger families except in comparison to black women. In all comparisons, however, white men claim greater benefits (higher earnings) of large families, particularly in contrast to black women, who suffer the greatest motherhood penalty (in comparison to the daddy bonus for white men).

We also expected racial barriers to education as well as lower benefits from education for black men. These are apparent in both explained and unexplained effects of education in the comparison of white and black men. White women are better educated than white men, while black women suffer a disadvantage that is less substantial than for black men. Furthermore, women, black and white, in contrast to black men, claim the same benefits as white men from the educational credentials that they achieve (no significant unexplained effect of education for women).

We also expected significant racial barriers to professional and managerial positions and gender barriers to supervisory relations. All these effects are apparent. White women are over-represented in professional jobs and not under-represented in managerial positions

but are significantly under-represented in supervisory relations. Black men are under-represented in all three positions, but the effects of managerial and professional barriers are substantially larger. Black women face significant barriers to supervisory and managerial positions but not to professional jobs.

We also expected significant racial geographic barriers, which are apparent for black men and women who are more likely to live and work in the South rather than the West. There are also smaller “explained” or distributional effects of living in the Midwest, for black women, and, for white women, living in the Northeast—which is associated with higher earnings.

Third, we expected that structural barriers would inspire various strategies for white women, black men, and black women in their efforts to overcome their disadvantages in access to more favorable, class, occupation, and industrial opportunities. We expected white women to sacrifice earnings for flexibility in choosing self-employment. For the effect of being an employer (with ten or more employees) we find significant negative explained effects, which are substantially larger for blacks, indicating that they are even less likely to be employers (compared to white men). We also find a significant negative unexplained effect for white women (but not for blacks), indicating that they gain less benefit from being an employer than comparable white men.

The effects of proprietorship are more confusing, perhaps, since proprietors tend to earn less than non-union workers. Thus under-representation among proprietors (which is at least modestly greater for blacks) is associated with an earnings advantage. At the same time we find white women suffering the same disadvantage from proprietorship as from employment of ten or more workers—the earnings disadvantage, in this case, is greater than for white men.

We also expected to find black men taking advantage of union jobs, which we see in the modest but significant ($p < .05$) positive explained effect, which indicates that black men are over-represented among union workers (in marked contrast to white women, as noted above).

Finally, we expected that black men and women, white and black, would take advantage of the more heavily sanctioned or regulated labor markets in large firms and in the public sector, where one should expect anti-discrimination law to be most effective. Both effects obtain. For firm size there are significant, positive, explained effects indicating that blacks and white women are over-represented in large firms (which significantly reduces race and gender earnings gaps). In public sector employment, the results are a little more confusing because public sector jobs tend to pay less. Thus the

significant over-representation of white women and blacks is indicated by significant negative explained effects. At the same time, however, there are significant positive unexplained effects, which indicate that white women, black men, and especially black women get greater benefits (or less penalty) in public sector earnings, in comparison to white men.

DISCUSSION

Here we tend to minimize the micro-level effects of attitudes (Maume 2011) and behaviors that some have attributed to “discrimination” versus “achievement” (Cancio et al 1996). We do hypothesize both structural constraint and agency, but we do not assume that employers or supervisors are the agents or gatekeepers whose “irrational” discrimination is evidenced by “unexplained” effects of the variables associated with achievement (and “explained” effects). Sakamoto et al. (2000) provide a detailed review of the evidence and a thorough critique of Farkas and Vicknair (1996), but they share with Farkas and Vicknair (1996) a general skepticism of research that associates unexplained effects with discrimination.

We concur. Comparing our models for white women and blacks it is clear that white gender earnings differences are greatest. This is clear in the OLS model, where the gender effect is larger and more stable (the coefficient is larger and the standard error is smaller). This is also clear in the larger unexplained effects in the white decomposition model. The relatively larger unexplained gender differences among whites is captured in the larger and more stable intercept (constant) differences. Does this mean that there is more gender than racial discrimination in employment earnings?

We think not. We are willing to concede that the model works better for men, but that is largely due to the fact that black and white men are not married to each other, do not pay child support to each other, and do not otherwise confound their work lives with the joy/burden of family life. Much of the unexplained effects, for blacks and for women, are associated with the effects of family life on work. Here we find structural constraints emulating or accommodating the gendered or racial inequality that is rooted in the family. We also find evidence of agency, as black men and white and black women attempt to accommodate their disadvantaged position in the labor market.

While remaining skeptical of “total” unexplained effects we are inclined to interpret those effects that are large and stable, particularly when they tend to be meaningful, or compatible with Tilly (1998). These unexplained effects include marriage and children,

where women are relatively disadvantaged. As expected, white women suffer larger and more stable marriage penalties, while black women suffer greater parenthood (or motherhood) penalties—in comparison to the marriage and daddy bonuses enjoyed by white men.

The burden of domesticity for white women is further evidenced in the effect of hours worked per week. White women tend to work fewer hours (negative explained effect), but when they work more they earn even greater benefits than their male counterparts. We see a similar pattern for whites in public sector employment. Women are more likely to work in the more lowly paid public sector (negative explained effects), but they do not suffer the same wage penalty as public sector men. In this case, we see a similar pattern for black men and women. Self-employment, however, seems to distinguish the white female, particularly with regard to proprietorship, where we see substantial significant negative unexplained effects, indicating that white female proprietors sacrifice significantly more, in earnings, compared to their male counterparts.

Blacks in general and black men in particular do not exhibit the same pattern of unexplained effects. Although virtually always under-represented in the higher wage positions (the exceptions being union jobs for black men and large firms and non-proprietorship for black men and women) these distributional (explained) effects overwhelm the relatively few and more modest unexplained effects. Black men suffer a substantial lack of education and a significant lack of earnings advantage when they do manage to secure educational credentials. Black women, as already noted, suffer a corresponding disadvantage in marriage and parenting penalties. Furthermore, as already noted, black men and women are over-represented in lower paid public sector jobs but suffer a lesser earnings penalty for public sector employment.

Beyond these substantial, stable unexplained effects there are suggestive effects of age, for white women. Perhaps if we could control for actual work experience we could get a more stable estimate of this “discrimination” effect indicating that white women do not claim wage benefits with aging. Similarly, the modest size and stability of the core sector unexplained effects suggest “discrimination” in the masculine world of transportation, construction, and manufacturing jobs, where women are decidedly under-represented (negative explained effects).

Beyond this, the explained effects exhibit a clear pattern of racial and gender segmentation, generally to the disadvantage of blacks and women. The exceptions were largely anticipated. Black men are over-represented in large firms, the public sector, and union jobs. White women claim higher educational credentials, more

professional jobs, and slightly more jobs in the Northeast. This regional effect is in sharp contrast to the negative (explained) effect of region for black men and women, who suffer significantly from being more likely to be working in the South, as opposed to the West, or, for black women, in the Midwest. In this case it might be that black women in the Midwest are particularly disadvantaged, compared to black men who might not suffer as much in the deteriorating labor market, which still sustains some modicum of manufacturing jobs.

CONCLUSION

Rather than abandoning race, class and gender as bases of income inequality, or providing critical tests of competing models, we have attempted to operationalize Tilly (1998) as a model of enduring inequality. Race and gender inequality are rooted in family life but emulated and accommodated in the world of work, yielding patterns of race, class and gender differences that can be interpreted as examples of exploitation and opportunity hoarding.

In some cases, these are structural constraints or barriers that might be associated with class and labor market closure. The gendered and racial effects of patriarchal family structure are clear in these data in the marriage and daddy bonuses reserved for white men, which disadvantage women in particular, especially white women who provide the marital bonus for their husbands and black women who suffer the motherhood penalty without the marriage bonus. Racial endogamy confers a set of disadvantages that include barriers to quality education and wealth that might be parlayed into good jobs or investment opportunities (as employers). Here the educational disadvantage is most marked for black men, who tend to find greater benefits for union or core sector jobs, as opposed to the professional positions that white and even black women occupy.

Clearly, we might argue that race and gender differences are more or less structure or agency driven, but it is clear that while status attainment tended to exaggerate agency and ignore structure we may now be approaching the opposite extreme. It appears that both structure and agency combine to impose disadvantages and create opportunities for professional women and working class men. It seems reasonable to argue that white women are choosing to sacrifice earnings to accommodate family obligations, particularly in professional employment and proprietorship, where they tend to earn less than their male counterparts but probably do not spend as many hours in the office. When they do “work like a man” (especially over-

achieving proprietors and professionals) they earn more, but they generally work less.

At the opposite extreme of the class/earnings pyramid, blacks and women tend to take advantage of employment opportunities in large firms and in the public sector, where Title 7 of the 1964 Civil Rights law is more likely to be enforced. The public sector, in particular, appears to be a sheltered labor market for those disadvantaged in the private sector competition for windfall profits (or extravagant salaries).

There are, of course, alternative interpretations of how agency and structure operate in producing racial and gender inequality in employment earnings, but Tilly (1998) and Hogan (2001) offer a simple and compelling account of the findings presented here. They also suggest a future path toward specification of the intersection of marital, family, and employment relations. Here the work of England (2010), Glauber (2008), Hodges and Budig (2010) suggest how we might yet specify the gender effects. Also, the work of Tomaskovic-Devey et al. (2006), Western and Rosenfeld (2011), Kim and Sakamoto (2010) suggest a path toward specifying change in the occupational and industrial structure over time. Most important, we suggest that these are complementary paths that might also benefit from further theoretical and empirical analysis of class relations (Wright 1997) and changes in class structure over time (Wright and Dwyer 2006).

NOTES

- * Conversations with the Purdue Sociology Department's Social Inequality section, discussions with students in my social inequality seminar and, in particular, Bob Perrucci's comments and reactions from reviewers were most helpful in revising an earlier draft of this paper.
- 1. Piven and Cloward ([1977] 1979:252) make the same point with reference to the Southern Civil Rights Movement, arguing that the defeat of Jim Crow law was made possible by "political forces set in motion by economic change. Still, it took a long, arduous, and courageous struggle to force the political transformation which economic conditions had made ready."
- 2. March Supplemental reports provide annual earnings and include the self-employed, both critical in this analysis. Annual earnings are a better indication of racial and gender inequality because of the irregular employment records of

women, particularly wives and mothers, and the higher unemployment rates for black men. There are also class differences in work and leisure schedules. Employers and professionals tend to report unreasonably high hours per week (they think they are always working because they are always thinking about work). Skilled trades, particularly construction, enjoy high hourly wages but irregular, often seasonal, work.

3. Income inequality in the U.S. has increased dramatically in the last forty years, and some scholars have argued that the difference within occupation (Kim and Sakamoto 2008), race, and gender (Western and Rosenfeld 2011) categories overwhelms the difference between categories. Some (Leicht 2008) have questioned why should we care about race, class, and gender inequality, since the within group differences (education and labor market differences) explain the growing inequality that is the real news. We question all of these assertions, except for the fact that inequality is increasing, and we think our data support our claims that race, class, and gender are still important and that, in the immortal words of pop culture icon, Ricky Ricardo, we still have some “splaining to do.”

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