

Gender and Precarious Work in the United States: Evidence from the Contingent Work Supplement 1995- 2017

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Abstract

A central element of the neoliberal phase of capitalism is the flexibilization of labor and the consequent prevalence of precarious work. Here, we discuss flexibilization, develop a definition and measure of precarious work using the Contingent Work Survey (CWS) supplement to the Current Population Survey, and examine the gender composition of precarious work in the United States. We find that gender and racial hierarchies persist in precarious jobs over the 1995-2017 period. Women — and women with children in particular — are overrepresented in precarious jobs compared to men. Our findings call for a consideration of the impact of the changing nature of work on different groups of workers, and a renewed role for policy to ensure equitable terms of social reproduction.

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1. Introduction

The rise of flexible work relations is often considered a central element of the changing relationship between capital and labor in the neoliberal phase of capitalism (Harvey 2005; Hardt and Negri 2009; Fine and Saad-Filho 2016). Flexibilization generally refers to the shift away from the post-WWII (Fordist) standard employment relation (SER) characterized by a long-term relationship with an employer, internal job mobility, and a set of employment-based benefits. In the wake of increased international competition and lagging profits, employers increasingly sought out ways to reduce labor costs. A key strategy involved loosening the parameters of the post-WWII SER, including reducing the number of permanent employees (Stone 2006; Rubery 2015). New, flexible forms of labor—such as part-time, non-benefitted, contracted, and temporary—allowed capital to reorganize the production process. The ability to shed workers more easily when demand was slack gave capital additional control over its labor costs and contributions to the cost of social reproduction in its bid to restore profitability.

Though flexibility might signal an accommodating, desirable, and even *permanent* work arrangement from the employer's perspective, from the worker's perspective it often results in less secure and less desirable arrangements. One key aspect of it is the rise of overall precariousness, broadly associated with jobs that are temporary, have non-standard work arrangements, or offer insufficient hours or wages to generate economic security.

The aspects of precariousness may be variegated depending on the concrete forms of the capital-labor relation as well as welfare state configurations in different national and institutional contexts. Accordingly, precarious work can be conceptualized in many ways. Standing (2011), for instance, considers the “precariat” to be comprised of those who lack labor market security; employment security; job security; skill reproduction security; income security; and representation

security. Oxfam (2003) defines precarious labor as work arrangements that have no job security, no benefits, and no worker protections. More recently, the United Nations Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment (2015) proposed measuring precarious work based on the duration of work (short-term, casual, or seasonal), and the instability of work (i.e. the employer's ability to end a contract on short notice).

Kalleberg (2018) considers precarious work not just to be defined by the conditions of a particular job—short term, low pay, no benefits, for example—but also by the labor market institutions and welfare systems in place. Similarly, Vosko (2009) defines precarious work as “work for remuneration characterized by uncertainty, low income, and limited social benefits and statutory entitlements” (2010: 2). Both Vosko and Kalleberg are wary of the dominant approach of considering non-standard work as synonymous with precarious, insecure, or flexibilized work. Vosko (2009) argues that using the SER as an ideal fails to capture potential precarious aspects of standard employment. For Vosko, precarious work is just as much about the insecurity of a particular job as it about the protections in place for all workers. For example, workers in full-time, standard work arrangements who work at-will (meaning that they can be fired without “just cause” and without warning), face losing health insurance and have limited access to unemployment insurance and should therefore still be considered precarious. Following this, Kalleberg (2018) suggests that low U.S. rates of contingent—or temporary—work fail to capture important aspects of insecurity and that the U.S. SER itself is underlined by precariousness.

The gendered dimensions of precarious work, in particular, are potentially multifold. Some authors have, in fact, referred to flexibilization as a part of a broader “feminization” of the labor force (Hardt and Negri 2009; Standing 1999). Described this way, feminization implies that women's increased participation in the formal economy facilitated capital's flexibilization of all

workers. Moreover, this definition of feminization may suggest parity between men and women in their representation in precarious jobs. However, we argue that the use of this term signals a conceptual gap in the literature in understanding how gender fits into the larger trend of flexibilization, and consequently of precarious work. It implicates women's participation in the formal labor market as a driver in the trend toward flexibilization and ignores, as Vosko (2002) argues, the gendered divisions of labor even *within* precarious work. Further, even as men become more exposed to precarious work relations, this should be understood within a broader context of the distribution of social reproduction work (i.e. the macro- and micro-level mechanisms of caring for and educating workers from cradle to grave).

In this paper, we use the Contingent Work Survey (CWS) supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS) for 1995-2017 to operationalize a definition of precarious work for the United States that includes all work that is uncertain, unprotected, or economically insecure (defined in more detail below and summarized in Table 1).¹ We explore general trends over time, examine the gender and racial division of precarious work, and analyze the degree to which women with children (performing larger amounts of reproductive labor/care work) are more likely to be in precarious jobs. We find that women and Hispanic workers are overrepresented in precarious jobs. While the share of workers in these jobs has not grown over this period, the levels are high and have become a permanent feature for almost half of all workers in the United States. The patterns that emerge are evidence of a gendered process that maintains the sex-segregated (and racialized) division of paid work.

¹ Though the parameters of precarious work in the U.S. and elsewhere are deeply impacted and shaped by increased global competition and outsourcing as a result of neoliberal trade policies, we focus only on the labor conditions within the U.S. in this paper.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 examines the different types of flexibility introduced in the neoliberal period and contrasts the concept of feminization with Vosko's concept of gendered precariousness. Section 3 presents our definition of precarious work, and operationalizes it using the Contingent Worker Supplement to the Current Population Survey. Section 4 discusses our results and Section 5 offers concluding remarks.

2. Neoliberalism, Gender, and Flexibilization of Labor

2.1 Gender and the Move to Flexibilized Labor

In the United States, a standard employment relation (SER) has historically been characterized by having a job with an identifiable employer; a predictable, full-time work schedule; job ladders; employer-based benefits such as pensions, health insurance, paid vacation, and paid sick time; and access to employment-based, government-required social protection programs such as Unemployment Insurance, Workers Compensation Insurance, and Old Age and Disability Insurance. By the 1950s, unions helped extend these relations from professional and managerial workers to include industrial workers. These employment arrangements were considered to be part of the post-WWII social contract between most primary sector workers and capital (Gordon, Edwards, and Reich 1982) and served to stabilize employer/employee relationships while generating a steady and loyal stream of workers.

Importantly, however, the SER did not cover all workers. The gendered and racialized division of labor meant that most women workers and workers of color were excluded from these types of jobs (Albelda and Tilly 1994). Such exclusions in many ways allowed for this particular form of standard employment to work by transforming the ideal notion of a "family" wage into a reality for many white male workers. Workers unencumbered by carework (Williams 2001) in standard employment relations, available for overtime and uninterrupted work, received wages

and benefits sufficient to support a family that was sustained by women's unpaid reproductive labor (Appelbaum, 2003). Often excluded from jobs characterized by the SER, white women and workers of color were instead relegated to low-paid jobs most often as office administrators or in the service, agricultural, or retail sectors. Teenagers, women, and men of color filled the ranks of jobs that had few job ladders, were seemingly less skilled, were less likely to have employer-based benefits, and often did not pay well (Albelda 1985).

An internal labor market effectively arose between (typically) male workers and their lead firm, in which the norm was long-term, full-time positions with upward mobility—including both progression in wages and skills—and pay was sheltered from market pressures and instead linked to job description, including benefits typically provided by the firm. However, this relationship began to change starting as early as the late 1970's when real wages began to fall, challenging the role of the male as the sole breadwinner. The reduction in trade barriers, pushback against organized labor, and a decrease in transport and communication costs all worked together to effectively eat away at the aforementioned internal labor market (Appelbaum 2003; Rosenberg 2010).

Without this binding internal labor market, firms were able and incentivized to take advantage of more flexible labor as a method of cost reduction that prioritizes profitability over long-term employment relationships. Additionally, the breakdown of these internal markets led to the individual worker's responsibility for bearing the cost of their own professional development and skill building (Folbre 2012; Brown 2015). Elsewhere, David Weil (2011) identified within these changing labor conditions the emergence of the “fissured workplace”, in which lead firms increasingly turn to domestic outsourcing by contracting with other firms or individuals for the provision of goods and services instead of hiring internally in order to minimize costs and reduce

risk. The smaller enterprises providing contracted and temporary labor answer to larger firms with greater bargaining power and strict branding needs and thus have little power to control workers' conditions. Fissuring has an important impact on labor conditions as it puts particular pressure on the most vulnerable workers who are often responsible for outsourced and/or contracted labor: they are subject to more frequent labor rights violations in the form of wage violations (no overtime or minimum wage), fewer benefits, and no ability to organize (Bernhardt et al. 2009; Weil 2011). Standard compliance laws fail to capture the fact that leading firms are ultimately responsible for the pressures on vulnerable workers, as these are distancing themselves through a third party (Weil 2011).

Within the larger trend of flexibilization, it is worth noting, the definition of a vulnerable worker is expanded: this begins to include highly skilled workers who take on “gigs”, such as adjunct professors, as well as workers in standard forms of employment with considerable job uncertainty, low wages, few employer-provided benefits, unpredictable hours, and who can be fired at-will. Flexibility in scheduling is another way in which employers reduce labor costs, especially for hourly-wage workers. Lambert et. al. (2019) find that short notice of advance hours and non-voluntary weekly variability in number of hours worked contribute to economic insecurity. Unfortunately, the current scope of work arrangements as defined by the BLS does not measure non-regular work schedules. Nor does it necessarily capture either fissuring or pressures on fully employed, higher paid workers with employer-protections whose at-will employment makes them vulnerable to job loss. As such, our analysis is limited by the inability of the CWS data to measure these forms of employer flexibility and worker precariousness.

Flexible work is also sometimes touted for its potential to close the gender pay gap and as a strategy for gender empowerment. For example, a *New York Times* article, headed with a photo of

a blonde woman working from a home office, her child in the background, touts the potential for flexible work arrangements to close the gender gap and suggests the pressure of care-giving on women's schedules has prevented them from taking on the higher paying full-time inflexible schedules men have traditionally occupied (Miller 2017). Goldin (2014) also argues that the labor market is structured in such a way to penalize those who require flexibility in their schedules and career interruptions, effectively discriminating against women who are more likely to require this time for various caregiving responsibilities generating a "flexibility stigma." Though some forms of non-standard work may allow some workers to perform caregiving responsibilities, this should not overshadow the fact that such forms of labor are overwhelmingly used as firms' strategies of cost minimization, rather than workers' individual empowerment, and often deprive workers of certain protections.

Further, discussion of the role of the state (or firms) in providing adequate resources to allow for the basic social reproduction of workers, let alone the provision of a full suite of worker benefits, are decidedly absent from the conversation surrounding women's empowerment through flexible work. In the absence of universal childcare or paid-family leave policies, workers' uptake of flexible jobs does not necessarily reflect a genuine preference for these jobs but the only way possible to secure social reproduction. In this way, precarious work offloads these responsibilities back onto women: by "freeing up" the time for them to manage a household first, and their livelihood second. This flexibility also allows for workers to be "freed up" from protective laws such as minimum wage, overtime (or in fact any laws pertaining to reasonable schedules or compensation), ability to claim unemployment if they lose their "gig", all the while facing increasing pressure of the lead firm's high stakes branding needs and user-generated reviews (Weil

2011). At the very least, there exists a lack of pressure for either the requirements of mandatory employer- or government-provided benefits such as health insurance, paid leave, and pensions.

2.2 Feminization of labor vs gendered precariousness

Importantly, the transformation of labor in the neoliberal era is often linked with processes of “feminization”. Hardt and Negri (2009), for instance, consider the feminization of labor as one of the main characteristics of the neoliberal era, where flexibilization is understood as an extension of the unstable and precarious arrangements that are historically associated with jobs held by women to a much larger set of jobs once held by men. They attribute this to (i) the higher share of women in the workforce (globally) since the 1980’s, (ii) the increasing importance of qualities traditionally associated with women’s work in all work—in terms of affective and care labor—as well as (iii) the increasing temporal flexibility in the working day often associated with women’s employment prior to the neoliberal period, including more part-time and informal work with irregular hours, and holding multiple jobs (Hardt and Negri 2009: 133). Standing (1999) echoes this linking of feminization to precarious work, implying the increase in women’s labor force participation has not only filled a demand for more flexible labor but has also weakened men’s labor force attachment by oversaturating the supply of labor and facilitating the decline of standard employment.

At the same time, the focus on flexibilization as feminization risks attributing the undoing of the previously implicit contract between the American firm and their workers to the flux of historically less organized, cheaper labor supply (women and people of color) entering into the formal labor force, instead of the cost-cutting strategies of employers. As Appelbaum argues:

On the supply side, the influx of women, single moms, and recent immigrants into the U.S. workforce has made this strategy for intensifying work and driving down compensation feasible [...] Vertically integrated organizations and internal labor markets are being replaced by arm’s

length relationships and subcontracted work designed, in the absence of strong unions, to achieve cost savings not through greater efficiency but [...] through an intensification of work. The dominant actions of employers are behind the aggregate trends in wage and job structures: stagnant wages, rapid growth in contingent and subcontracted jobs, and declining upward mobility (Appelbaum 2003:11).

The emergence of flexibilized labor is facilitated by a *pre-existing* subordination of female, non-white, and immigrant labor, rather than predicated on their entrance into the labor market: “The larger story in the U.S., however, is the general increase in economic insecurity as employers abrogate the social contract implicit in the old employment relationship” (Appelbaum 2003: 9).² To see the increased demand for and prevalence of flexible labor as a result of or evidence of feminization may be seen to imply that the neoliberal re-organization of labor-capital relations approximates for all workers capitalism’s historical super-exploitation of women and people of color. Moreover, this seems to deny or ignore that gender and racial inequalities may also be present and reproduced in the process of flexibilization.

Though all labor may be facing this flexibilization, more independent and permanent flexible arrangements appear to be the domain of more educated, white men, while less desirable and more insecure flexible work tends to be relegated to women and people of color (Polivka 1996; U.S. Department of Labor 2005; Hippie 2001). As such, Vosko (2002) refutes the term feminization and instead refers to a process of gendered precariousness. Vosko argues that the changing parameters of social reproduction cannot be divorced from the growth in precarious labor and that the gender (and racial) inequalities apparent in the Fordist period persist, albeit in different forms, in neoliberalism.

² Flexibilized labor is also facilitated by the subordination of labor in Global South: globalization has radically changed the way in which U.S. firms can outsource their supply chains to precarious workers that are themselves gendered and racialized.

For Vosko, precariousness refers to an insecure labor market only partly characterized by a shift away from standard employment towards non-standard employment. In many industrialized capitalist countries, this happens in the context of labor laws and social policies modeled around traditional work arrangement, with few protections designed to accommodate part-time, casual, or otherwise non-standard work. However, Vosko argues that non-standard work is structurally heterogeneous and therefore cannot tell a complete story about precariousness or gendered work. Vosko's analysis of gendered precariousness goes beyond measures of specific non-standard work arrangements to consider the context of gender inequality already embedded in employment relations such as occupational segregation, wage differentials, and the terms of social reproduction, including unpaid work and social policies. Vosko warns of the "danger that feminization will be equated with precariousness itself—as if women's high labor force participation and employment rates water down the labor supply, thereby fueling popular and scholarly discourses that blame women, immigrants and other marginalized groups for increased labor market insecurity" (2002: 23).³

Further, the gendered and racialized dimensions of precariousness are not limited to the fact that white women and people of color are overrepresented in the least stable of these precarious *jobs*, but are also subject to most precarious *lives*: these groups are most likely to be affected by shrinking government transfers, less affordable health and child care, and disproportionate time spent in underpaid and unpaid work. This is reinforced and exacerbated by the fact that these same workers continue to be over-represented in less permanent and lower-paying jobs.

³ While not the focus here, Vosko's contention of the embeddedness of gender employment inequality is reinforced by another trend in neoliberalism: the successful movement of white women and people of color into standard employment relations has been strongest in sectors that are heavily dependent on state financing—such as public administration and health and education services—and that are the targets of the more severe austerity measures.

The conditions of neoliberalism continue to create a double bind for many women workers: on the one hand earning a wage allows some degree of economic independence; on the other hand, it also entails facing conditions of labor that are underpaid and insecure. By examining the gendered and racial dimensions of the flexibilization of work, we hope to answer Nancy Fraser’s call for feminist critique in the wake of neoliberalism to refocus its analysis on the stratification of gender within the labor market since “unequal power in the economic marketplace [...] reinforces, and exacerbates, unequal power in the family” and that “such market-mediated processes of subordination are the very lifeblood of neoliberal capitalism” (Fraser 2013: 225).

3. Trends in Precarious Labor: 1995-2017

3.1 Measuring Precarious Work

There have been various empirical approaches to measuring precarious and non-standard labor. The most commonly used dataset is the Contingent Work Supplement (CWS) to the Current Population Survey (CPS) of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The CWS was conducted five times over the period of 1995 to 2005, when the CWS was discontinued until May 2017.⁴ In the CWS, the BLS asks questions about alternative and contingent work arrangements. Alternative work arrangements are jobs that fall outside the scope of traditional work in terms of regular scheduling, regular work location, and includes temporary help agency workers, on-call workers, contract company workers, and independent contractors. Contingent work—not mutually exclusive to an alternative work arrangement—is qualified by workers who do not think their job

⁴ Lawrence Katz and Alan Krueger conducted a version of the CWS hosted through the RAND American Life Panel in 2015 and showed a distinct rise in several types of more non-standard jobs in recent years, comprising up to 20 percent of the workforce in alternative arrangements (Katz and Krueger 2016). However, as we will show below, the 2017 BLS data shows lower prevalence of non-standard work arrangements than Katz and Krueger.

will last for more than one year for reasons other than their choosing so (US Department of Labor 2005).

Cohany (1996), released after the first iteration of the CWS, profiles the varying types of alternative work totaling about 10% of all jobs. She highlights the importance of workers' stated preferences for their work conditions⁵: independent contractors are more likely to be older, white, more educated men and less likely to consider their work to be contingent, whereas temporary help agency workers are more likely to be younger, women, of color, less educated and more likely to state a preference for more permanent work. Contract firm employees were slightly more likely to be men with more professional experience and with lower rates of contingency, while on-call workers had a high incidence of female part-time workers who largely reported a stated preference for more permanent work. These levels and trends continue over the course of the CWS's run (Polivka 1996; DiNatale 1999; Hippiie 2001; U.S. Department of Labor 2005). Similarly, the CWS contingent work estimate—characterized by “less job security, limited advancement, lower wage, and fewer benefits” (Hartmann and Callaghan 1991:1)—has historically trended a strong overrepresentation of younger, less educated women and people of color who are more likely to state a preference for more permanent work.

In the literature that has attempted to estimate levels of precarious work, there appears to be somewhat of a consensus surrounding the inadequacy of the BLS's definition in capturing insecure labor. Rosenberg and Lapidus (1999) suggest that BLS's CWS data underestimates measures of contingent and non-standard work, despite accurately presenting the underlying racial and gendered dimensions of this kind of work. Similarly dissatisfied with the available definitions, researchers have built their own variable to estimate levels of precarious work using the BLS data

⁵ While previous data on temporary and contract work had been collected at the firm level, they did not consider worker preferences for different types of work.

supplement data. For example, Carré and Heintz (2009) include involuntary part-time workers, multiple part-time job-holders, and exclude voluntary independent contractors from their definition of precarious work and find women, black workers, Hispanic workers and non-citizens to be over-represented. Where the BLS data has estimated the contingent share of the workforce anywhere between 1.9 and 4.9 percent in 1997, Rosenberg and Lapidus (1999) find that other authors estimate between 9.8 and 30 percent of the workforce was contingent between 1989 and 1999.

Following suit, we devise our own measure guided by Kalleberg's definition of precarious work as "*uncertain, unstable, and insecure and in which employees bear the risks of work (as opposed to businesses or the government) and receive limited social benefits and statutory entitlements*" (2018; 3; his emphasis). We translate this into three main components of a composite measure of precarious work, presented in Table 1. First, uncertain work, that is work that may not continue into the future or jobs without regular hours; second, unprotected work, that is work that lacks standard employment protections; and third, economically insecure work, that provides insufficient hours or pay for social reproduction. These forms can certainly overlap: for example, a job in a temporary agency is uncertain, but could also lack employer-sponsored benefits and pay poorly. Table 1 also presents the ways in which we measure each of these forms using available CWS supplements (February 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2005, and May 2017) and a column that indicates some of the forms of precarious work that cannot be measured using this data source.

Table 1: Measuring Precarious Work

Forms of precarious work	Definition	Operationalized in the CWS	Precarious work we cannot measure
Uncertain	A job with high potential for job loss and/or irregular job schedule	In a job that is not expected to last more than 1 year; temporary help agency work; temporary on-line work; on-call work; contract firm work; part-time work where hours vary	Those fearful of job loss (most U.S. employment is "at-will"); standard jobs in which hours are determined on short notice or vary considerably week to week
Unprotected	A job not covered by all or most employment-based protections (such as Unemployment Insurance, Workers' Compensation Insurance; health insurance; paid time off, paid vacation; and covered by labor law provisions)	Independent contractors (IC); unincorporated self-employed; employer does not offer health insurance	Workers in jobs without paid time off or paid vacations; workers in jobs not covered by labor laws such as minimum wage, overtime provisions, or health and safety standards; undocumented workers and non-citizens
Economically insecure	A job without full-time work or without a living wage	In a part-time job for 20 or fewer hours; earns 2/3rd of state median wage	Workers in jobs with unpredictable earnings

Since we are interested in estimating the percent of workers that are in precarious jobs, we are primarily interested in the quality of the job in relationship to the three key components described above. As such, we do not focus on the motivation for having that job (e.g. voluntarily or involuntarily taking a part-time job), whether a worker has access to benefits outside of that job (e.g. through a spouse or Medicaid) or the income of the worker’s family. Additionally, we note that the CWS focuses on a worker’s main job. As such, our measure does not necessarily capture multiple job-holders.

To count workers in uncertain jobs, we start with BLS's questions which determine if those surveyed were engaged in contingent work, defined as follows:

Contingent workers are those who do not have an implicit or explicit contract for ongoing employment. Persons who do not expect to continue their jobs for personal reasons such as retirement or returning to school are not considered contingent workers, provided that they would have the option of continuing in the job were it not for these reasons. (Polivka 1996: 4)

We add to this the forms of alternative work arrangements that are do not have a standard workday schedule or a set location. This includes on-call workers, temporary help agency workers, and workers provided by contract firms. For 2017, we also add online workers who don't expect their job to last.

Unprotected workers include independent contractors, unincorporated self-employed, and hourly or salaried workers in jobs whose employers do not offer them health insurance. Most independent contractors and unincorporated self-employed workers do not have employees.⁶ Additionally, while they are required to pay federal old age, disability and survivors insurance contributions, they lack unemployment insurance, workers compensation insurance, access to minimum wage protection, and would have to purchase health insurance in the private market (unless covered say by a spouse or Medicaid). Consequently, companies, such as Uber or Lyft, often fight to classify workers as independent contractors rather than employees, even if these workers perform functions that are central to their operations under direct company control (Scheiber 2019). Estimate range from 10-30% of employers misclassify employees as independent contractor (National Employment Law Project 2017). On the other hand, independent contractors can, in some cases, maintain stable and permanent businesses, and have more control over their work and time. Moreover, previous literature has shown that more educated, white, male workers

⁶ In 2017 only 13.6% of unincorporated self-employed and 16.5% of independent contractors for whom data was available in our sample reporting having any paid employees.

are overrepresented in this category (Polivka 1996; DiNatale 1999; Hippie 2001; U.S. Department of Labor 2005).

Given this tension, independent contractors represent a thorny group for analyses of precariousness. Thus, to evaluate the sensitivity of our results to the inclusion of independent contractors and unincorporated self-employed workers, we also provide estimates of our definition that exclude these workers. Additionally, we provide estimates of our measure of precarious work that exclude (i) high-earning unprotected workers and (ii) all high-earning workers – defined here as workers whose earnings exceed 200% of state median earnings – to examine whether such exclusions significantly alter our measures of precarious workers in the United States. As we will show below, doing so does not significantly change the overall size of our estimate of precarious work. Based on this, and considering that high earnings do not necessarily adequately compensate workers for the lack of protections, such as unemployment insurance or employer-provided health insurance, we continue to include these workers in our measure of unprotected workers.

We define economically insecure jobs as those in which workers usually work half-time (20 hours a week) or less, regardless of worker preference, and those who receive a low wage. We choose to use 20 hours as a cutoff, rather than the voluntary/involuntary distinction made by Carré and Heintz (2009), both due to data availability and because jobs in which workers work at most 20 hours a week do not typically suffice to provide economic security to workers. Turning to identifying low-wage workers: we utilize the questions on usual earnings administered to private-sector and state employees who are in the CPS outgoing rotation group (4th or 8th month in the CPS sample). Since there is no universally accepted definition of low wages, we follow Gauthier and Schmitt (2009) and the International Labor Office (2010) and define low-wage workers as those whose wage is lower than 2/3 of the median state wage. While using a relative measure is not

ideal, we prefer this to using an absolute measure of low-wage workers, especially given that the survey was conducted in years that represent different points in the business cycle. We should also note that in 2001 and 2005 the Contingent Worker Supplement was not administered to any workers who were in an outgoing rotation group. Therefore, it is not possible to calculate the prevalence of economic uncertainty—as defined above—for years 2001 and 2005 using the regular Current Population Survey. Therefore, we exclude these two years from our calculation of a composite measure of precarious work.

While we believe that currently available data can be used to carve out a reasonable measure of precarious work, informed by Vosko and Kalleberg’s theorizations of precarious work, a number of limitations need to be acknowledged. First, it is impossible to develop one measure that entirely captures the subjective experience of precarious work and its accompanying anxieties. Further, we cannot ferret out some workers in the “fissured workplace” nor those with work schedule instability that too would be considered part of a precarious workforce. The CPS also does not allow us to measure the degree to which workers are afforded many employer-based protections, including paid time off, worker tenure on their jobs, or the degree they can access government programs if they lose their job.

3.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents the prevalence of workers in precarious jobs and of each of its components (uncertain, unprotected, and economically insecure work) over time. It also presents different variations of the key measures to illustrate how sensitive they are to the inclusion or exclusion of different categories. The overall measure of precarious work remains high but virtually unchanged from 46.8% of workers in 1995 to 46.2% of workers in 2017: thus, approximately one in two workers is performing work in a job that is uncertain, unprotected, or economically insecure. The

share of workers in uncertain work has hovered between 9.7% in 1995 and 8.4% in 2017. The share of workers in unprotected work fell from 33.9% in 1995 to 30.4% in 2001, increasing to 32.3% in 2017 thereafter. The share of economically insecure workers, on the other hand, has remained fairly stable between 25.8% of workers in 1995 and 27.1% of workers in 2017. Thus, overall, there is little change but rather a crystallization of precarious work—and its components—over time. However, we do notice a slight dip in uncertain and unprotected work in 2001. It could be the case that this dip is due to the point of the business cycle when the CWS was conducted in February 2001, and as the U.S. economy was about to go into a recession. Thus, this drop in uncertain and unprotected work in 2001 may reflect employer’s ability to quickly shed non-standard jobs as the economy was heading towards a recession.

Table 2 also presents how sensitive our measure of precarious work is to the inclusion of various categories. For example, even if we were to exclude independent contractors and the unincorporated self-employed from our measure of precarious work, 39.5% of workers in 2017 would still be characterized as precarious. Interestingly, the exclusion of independent contractors and of the unincorporated self-employed would lead to a small increase in precarious work over time (from 38.7% in 1995). If we were to exclude unprotected workers whose earnings exceed 200% of median state earnings, precarious work would fall to 42.5% in 2017, compared to 46.2% when applying no earnings exclusions. Finally, even if we were to apply earnings cutoffs at 200% of median state earnings for all workers (and not just unprotected workers), there would still be little change to the measure of precarious work we developed above (from 46.2% to 40.9% in 2017).⁷ Hence, while one may potentially argue that some workers are compensated with higher earnings for experiencing a lack of protections, temporal uncertainty, or control over their own

⁷ Results are similar when using a high-earnings cutoff at 300% of median state earnings.

time, these workers are a relatively small proportion of workers that we define as being in precarious jobs in the United States.

Table 2: Share of workers in precarious work, component items and variations, 1995-2017

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2005	2017
Precarious	46.8%	45.8%	44.4%	-	-	46.2%
Uncertain	9.7%	9.6%	9.0%	8.4%	9.4%	8.4%
Unprotected	33.9%	33.3%	31.8%	30.4%	32.4%	32.3%
Economically insecure	25.8%	26.2%	24.8%	-	-	27.1%
Precarious excluding independent contractors and unincorporated self-employed	38.7%	38.4%	37.3%	-	-	39.5%
Precarious excluding unprotected workers who earn > 2*median state earnings	43.9%	42.4%	41.7%	-	-	42.5%
Precarious excluding all workers who earn > 2*median state earnings	42.9%	41.1%	40.6%	-	-	40.9%

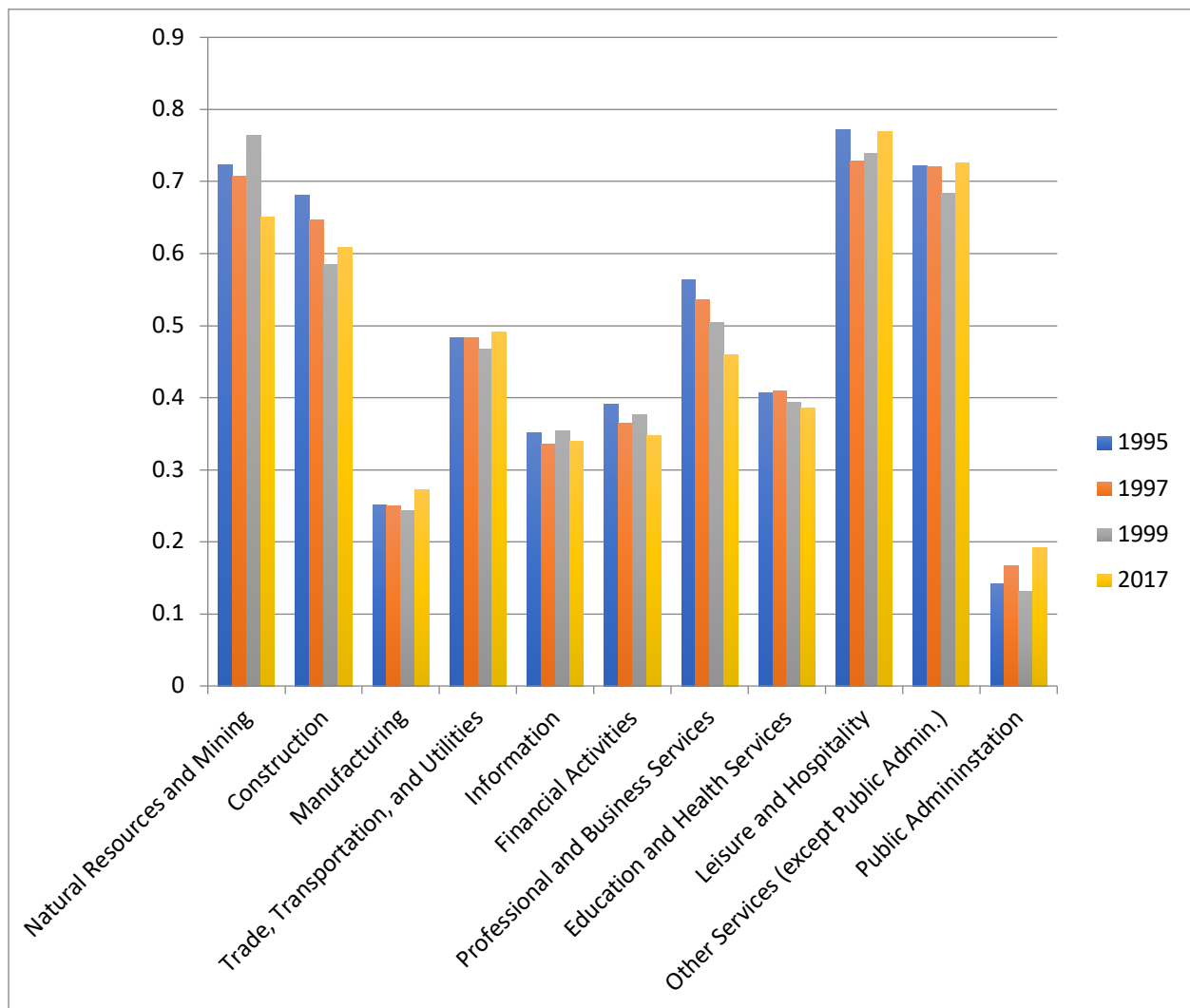
Note: Authors' calculations using the CWS [February 1995-February 2005 CPS, May 2017 CPS]. Definition of precarious work as a composite measure of uncertain, unprotected, and economically insecure work. Economically insecure and precarious work measured only for the outgoing rotation subset of the CWS (4th and 8th month-in-sample).

Figure 1 presents the prevalence of precarious work arrangements by industry supersector. Unsurprisingly, there is considerable variation in the prevalence of precarious work across different supersectors of the economy. In 2017, 76.8% of workers in leisure and hospitality, 72.6% of workers in other services, and 75% in natural resources and mining were in precarious jobs.⁸ On the other hand, 19.2% of workers in public administration and 27.2% of workers in manufacturing were in precarious jobs. While for many supersectors, such as trade, transportation and utilities, information, and education and health services, the share of workers in precarious

⁸ This is primarily due to a high prevalence of uncertain, unprotected or economically insecure work in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (78.9% in 2017)

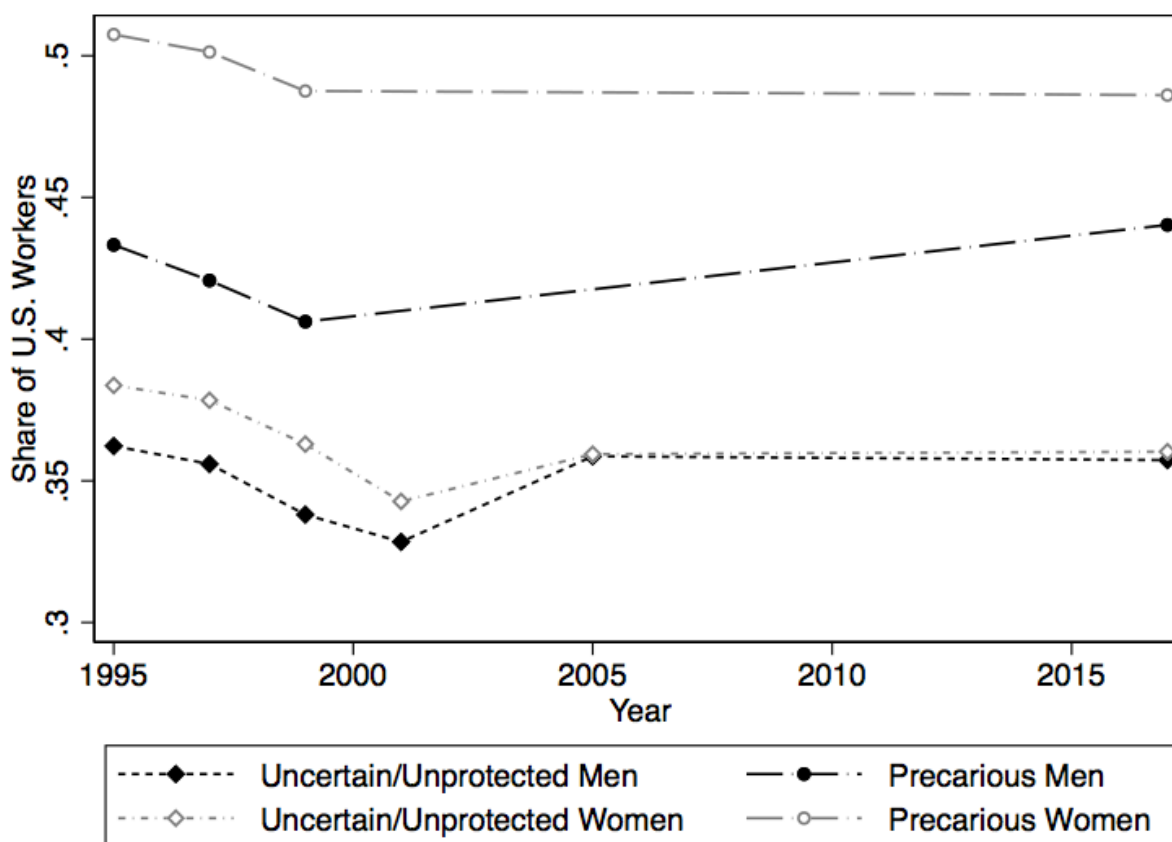
jobs is relatively stable over time, there is an increase in the prevalence of workers in precarious jobs in sectors that were traditionally associated with standard employment, i.e. manufacturing and public administration. On the other hand, the share of workers in precarious jobs has fallen substantially over time in construction (from 68.1% in 1995 to 60.8% in 2017), and in professional and business services (from 56.4% in 1995 to 46% in 2017). Overall, this paints a picture of an overall stable share of precarious work in the U.S. economy over the last three decades.

Figure 1: Percent of workers in precarious work arrangements, by supersector: 1995-2017



Note: Authors' calculations using the CWS [February 1995-February 2005 CPS, May 2017 CPS]. Definition of precarious work as a composite measure of uncertain, unprotected, and economically insecure work. Precarious work measured only for the outgoing rotation subset of the CWS (4th and 8th month-in-sample).

Figure 2: Share of workers in precarious work, by gender: 1995-2017



Note: Authors' calculations using the CWS [February 1995-February 2005 CPS, May 2017 CPS]. Definition of precarious work as a composite measure of uncertain, unprotected, and economically insecure work. Precarious work measured only for the outgoing rotation subset of the CWS (4th and 8th month-in-sample).

We present precarious work arrangements for men and women in Figure 2. In addition to showing the prevalence of workers in precarious jobs—defined as the union of uncertain, unprotected, or economically insecure workers—we also present the union of uncertain or unprotected workers (i.e. precarious work, excluding the economically insecure).⁹ First of all, both women and men show a decrease in their participation in uncertain/unprotected work between

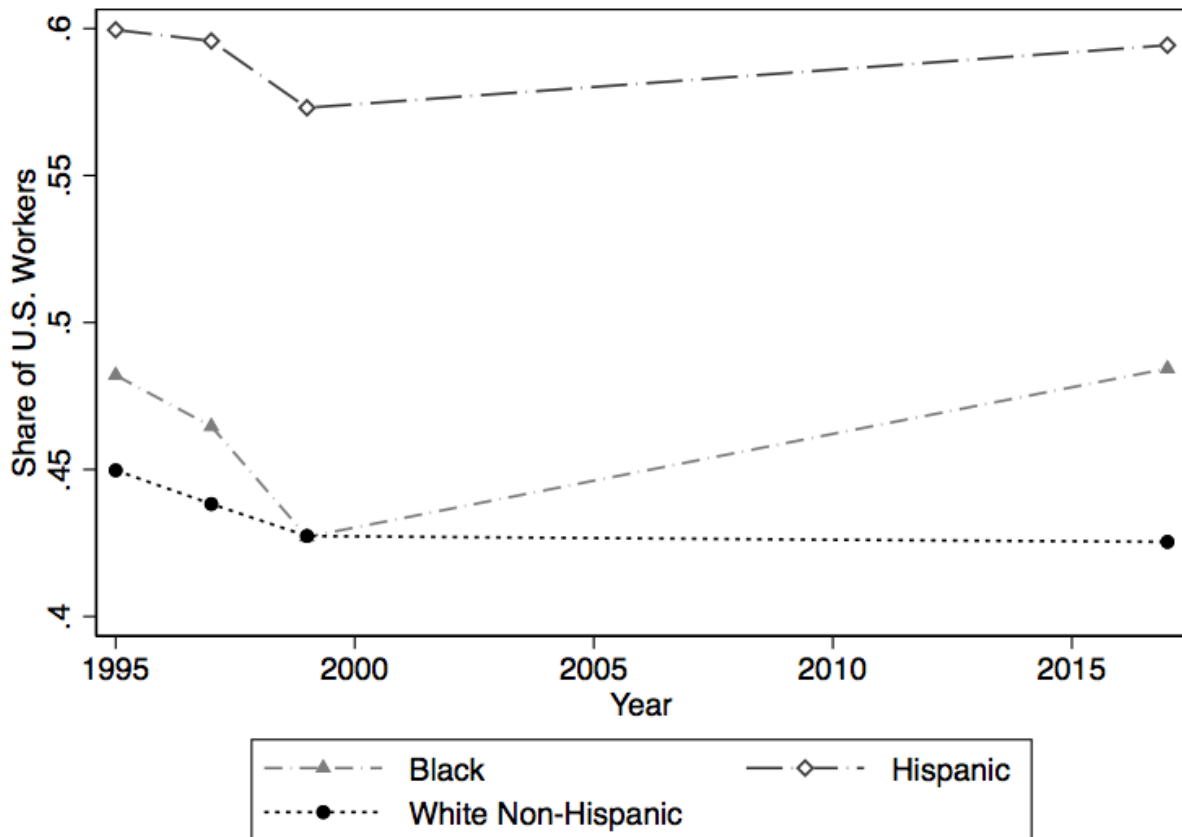
⁹ As this excludes economically insecure workers, it means that our series has data for all years, despite the limitations of the CWS in 2001 and 2005.

1995 and 2001 and an increase thereafter. Second, women are more likely than men to be overrepresented among the uncertain/unprotected workers: in 1995, for instance, 38.4% of women workers are either in uncertain or unprotected work, as opposed to only 36.2% of men workers. However, since 2005 there has been a clear convergence: in 2017, the difference between women and men is negligible (36% vs 35.7%). On the other hand, when we include economically insecure workers back into our definition of precarious workers, the share of both men and women who are in precarious jobs has declined slightly, for both men and women, between 1995 and 2017. In 1995, 50.7% of women and 43.3% of men were in precarious jobs (i.e. uncertain, unprotected, or economically insecure). In 2017, on the other hand, 48.6% of women and 44% of men were in such jobs. Thus, despite a little convergence between men and women, women remain overrepresented among precarious workers.

Figure 3 presents the prevalence of precarious work arrangements for white (non-Hispanic), black, and Hispanic workers. There are marked differences in the prevalence of precarious work by race/ethnic category. Notably, Hispanic workers are much more likely to find themselves in precarious jobs than either black or white workers, while white non-Hispanic workers are generally the least likely workers to be in precarious jobs. Moreover, there is a small decline in the prevalence of precarious work between 1995 and 1999 for black and Hispanic workers and a slight increase thereafter. Overall, though, the data suggests a crystallization of precarious work rather than a significant change in either direction. The prevalence of precarious work overall changes only slightly in the 1995-2017 period: from 45% in 1995 to 42.5% 2017 for white non-Hispanic workers; from 48.2% in 1995 to 48.4% in 2017 for black workers, and from 60% in 1995 to 59.4% on 2017 for Hispanic workers. Moreover, we do not see convergence between precarious white non-Hispanic workers and their black and Hispanic counterparts. The

marked differences between groups likely understates the higher insecurity experienced by black and Hispanic workers given the fact that white non-Hispanic workers are significantly more likely to work as independent contractors and significantly less likely to be economically insecure: in 2017, 18.4% of white non-Hispanic precarious workers were independent contractors, versus 9.4% for Black precarious workers and 13.3% of Hispanic precarious workers. On the other hand, 54.8% of white precarious workers were economically insecure, as opposed to 73.3% of black precarious workers and 60.8% of Hispanic workers.

Figure 3: Share of workers in precarious work, by race and ethnicity: 1995-2017



Note: Authors' calculations using the CWS [February 1995-February 2005 CPS, May 2017 CPS]. Definition of precarious work as a composite measure of uncertain, unprotected, and economically insecure work. Precarious work measured only for the outgoing rotation subset of the CWS (4th and 8th month-in-sample).

3.3 Regression analysis

We perform several descriptive regressions in order to examine the likelihood of different demographic groups finding themselves in precarious work arrangements. We use linear regression models to explore the likelihood of performing precarious work—as well as each of its three components (uncertain, unprotected, and economically insecure work)—controlling for a series of individual characteristics.¹⁰ The general regression used is as follows:

$$PrecariousWork_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Gender_i + \beta_2 RaceEthnicity_i + \beta_3 Married_i + \beta X_i + \gamma_k + \delta_t + \epsilon_i$$

where i denotes individual, k denotes state, and t denotes the year of the survey. Precarious work is equal to 1 if worker i is in one or more of the three measures at time t and is equal to 0 otherwise. Gender is a dummy variable equal to 1 if a worker is female and 0 otherwise. We also have dummies for five race and ethnic categories (with the omitted category being white non-Hispanic), and being married. X_i represents other individual controls, which include age of the worker and educational attainment; γ_k represents state and δ_t represents time fixed effects. In a second regression, we add a dummy variable for the presence of own child (under 18) in a household and an interaction term of gender and child present to examine the degree to which care work responsibilities have a differential effect on women's and men's relationship to precarious work.

Table 3 presents the findings from our regression with the three components of precarious work as the dependent variables: Columns 1, 3, 5, 7 present the findings of the basic model, while columns 2, 4, 6, and 8 present the model which includes questions on the presence of children and

¹⁰ Since the probabilities we estimate are not extreme, linear regressions do not predict significantly different results than a logistic model. We opt for OLS due to its interpretability.

the gender-child interaction.¹¹ Column 1 reveals that, not controlling for children, the expected mean of women being in work that is uncertain is 1.2 percentage points higher than for men, holding all other predictor variables constant. Similarly, column 3 reveals that women are 2.4 percentage points more likely to find themselves in unprotected work than men. Looking at the presence of a child (our proxy for need for care work in the home) in columns 2 and 4, we find that women with children (mothers) are more likely to find themselves in uncertain and unprotected work than are men with children (fathers). For uncertain and unprotected work, we do not see any large difference between white and Hispanic workers, once we take other characteristics into consideration. Similarly, we do not see a statistical difference between white and black workers in uncertain work, though we do find that black workers are 8.4 percentage points *less* likely than white non-Hispanic workers to find themselves in unprotected work. This trend (confirmed in Table 4 below) is largely driven by the overrepresentation of white workers among independent contractors and the self-employed, who tend to enjoy higher paid, more long-term professional work, despite not having access to worker protections when they are injured at work or lose their work.

Turning to the economically insecure, in column 5, we see that the expected mean of being in insecure work is 14.7 percentage points higher for women than men, 3.1 percentage points higher for black workers than white, and 3.6 percentage points higher for Hispanic worker than white workers. The group differences in our economically insecure variable suggest that wage gaps may play a key role in relegating women, black, and Hispanic workers to precarious work. When controlling for children (column 6), we see that women with this added care responsibility are 17.9 percentage points more likely than their male counterparts to find themselves in

¹¹Our sample for estimating the second model is restricted to the period after 2001, since the question on presence of children in the household was first included in the CPS in November 1999.

economically insecure work, while women overall remain 12.9 percentage points more likely than men to find themselves in economically insecure work. This difference magnifies yet another pressure on women caregivers who, in addition to the increased likelihood of facing more uncertain and less protected work in the labor market, face lower wages and less economic security.

When we combine all three components of our precarious work definition, we continue to see marked differences. Holding other variables constant, we see in column 7 that women are 7.7 percentage points more likely than men to be in a precarious work arrangement. Black workers are 2.4 percentage points less likely than white workers to be in a precarious work arrangement and Hispanic workers are 3.9 percentage points more likely than white workers to be in precarious jobs. Once we include child care responsibilities (column 8), the difference in prevalence of precarious work arrangement between black and white workers reduces sharply. Hispanic workers, on the other hand, remain much more likely to be in precarious jobs than white workers (5.6 percentage points difference). Moreover, gender differences persist and are quite revealing: women are still 6.9 percentage points more likely than men to be in precarious jobs. Furthermore, while men with children are 8.6 percentage points less likely to find themselves in precarious jobs than men without children, women with children are only 1.2 percentage points less likely to be in precarious work than women without children. Thus, women with children are 12 percentage points more likely to be in precarious jobs than men with children (49% compared to 37%) revealing double pressure on women, both from child care responsibilities and precariousness in the workplace.

Table 3: Regression Estimates for Precarious Work and its Components

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Uncertain	Uncertain	Unprotected	Unprotected	Insecure	Insecure	Precarious	Precarious
Female	0.012***	0.002	0.024***	-0.004	0.147***	0.107***	0.077***	0.046***
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.011)	(0.005)	(0.012)
Black	-0.004	0.000	-0.084***	-0.081***	0.031***	0.059***	-0.024**	-0.001
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.008)	(0.017)	(0.009)	(0.018)
Asian	0.009*	0.003	-0.005	-0.006	0.038***	0.030	0.026*	0.007
	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.011)	(0.018)	(0.013)	(0.021)
Hispanic	-0.003	0.003	0.001	0.011*	0.036***	0.023	0.039***	0.056***
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.008)	(0.015)	(0.009)	(0.016)
Other race/ethnicity	0.011	0.010	-0.019*	-0.009	0.028	0.040	0.047*	0.054
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.021)	(0.031)	(0.023)	(0.034)
Married	-0.034***	-0.019***	-0.054***	-0.031***	0.090***	-0.048***	-0.081***	-0.047***
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.010)	(0.005)	(0.012)
Child present		-0.030***		-0.070***		-0.113***		-0.086***
		(0.003)		(0.004)		(0.012)		(0.015)
Female x child present		0.023***		0.071***		0.072***		0.074***
		(0.004)		(0.006)		(0.018)		(0.021)
N	293679	131505	293679	131505	53652	12171	53652	12171
R-squared	0.013	0.013	0.059	0.064	0.156	0.155	0.095	0.115

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses, * p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001. All regressions include education and age controls. Data from 1995-2017 for regressions 1 and 3, 2001-2017 for regressions 2 and 4, 1995-1999 & 2017 for regressions 5 and 7, and 2017 for regressions 6 and 8. All regressions include state-effects and year-effects as appropriate.

Finally, table 4 presents how participation in precarious work changes when excluding from our definition certain categories of workers: (a) independent contractors and the unincorporated self-employed, (b) unprotected workers whose earnings exceed 200% of state median earnings and (c) all workers whose earnings exceed 200% of state median earnings. Comparing columns 1 and 2, which utilize the previous definition of precarious workers, to columns 3-8 we see that our results are largely unchanged (in terms of statistical significance and the direction of the effect) when employing these additional cutoffs, the only exception being that black workers no longer appear less likely to be in precarious jobs than white workers. When employing these additional cutoffs, women workers appear even more likely than men to be in precarious jobs (10.8-12.7% higher), as compared to 7.7% in our previous definition. The same is true for Hispanic workers, who now appear 4.7-5.8% more likely than white workers to be in

precarious jobs (as opposed to 3.9% in the previous definition). Thus, if anything, excluding independent contractors or high-earning workers shows the increased representation of women and Hispanic workers in those precarious jobs that offer lower earnings and fewer opportunities for control over one's time or work.

Table 4: Regression Estimates: Precarious Work – Variations, different exclusion criteria

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Precarious	Precarious	Precarious excluding ind. contractors and self-employed	Precarious excluding ind. contractors and self-employed	Precarious excluding unprotected workers with >200% median state earnings	Precarious excluding unprotected workers with >200% median state earnings	Precarious excluding workers with >200% median state earnings	Precarious excluding workers with >200% median state earnings
Female	0.077*** (0.005)	0.046*** (0.012)	0.127*** (0.005)	0.086*** (0.012)	0.108*** (0.005)	0.070*** (0.012)	0.115*** (0.005)	0.076*** (0.012)
Black	-0.024** (0.009)	-0.001 (0.018)	0.008 (0.008)	0.027 (0.018)	-0.007 (0.009)	0.014 (0.018)	-0.004 (0.008)	0.016 (0.018)
Asian	0.026* (0.013)	0.007 (0.021)	0.049*** (0.013)	0.029 (0.021)	0.039** (0.013)	0.015 (0.021)	0.036** (0.013)	0.005 (0.020)
Hispanic	0.039*** (0.009)	0.056*** (0.016)	0.058*** (0.009)	0.052*** (0.016)	0.047*** (0.009)	0.053*** (0.016)	0.050*** (0.009)	0.053*** (0.016)
Other race/ethnicity	0.047* (0.023)	0.054 (0.034)	0.053* (0.022)	0.051 (0.033)	0.058* (0.023)	0.075* (0.033)	0.055* (0.023)	0.072* (0.033)
Married	-0.081*** (0.005)	-0.047*** (0.012)	-0.094*** (0.005)	-0.051*** (0.011)	-0.090*** (0.005)	-0.053*** (0.012)	-0.092*** (0.005)	-0.055*** (0.011)
Child present		-0.086*** (0.015)		-0.106*** (0.014)		-0.099*** (0.015)		-0.102*** (0.014)
Female x child present		0.074*** (0.021)		0.074*** (0.020)		0.075*** (0.020)		0.070*** (0.020)
N	53652	12171	53652	12171	53652	12171	53652	12171
R -squared	0.095	0.115	0.132	0.133	0.119	0.134	0.131	0.148

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses, * p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001. All regressions include education and age controls. Data from 1995-1999 & 2017 for odd-number regressions, 2017 for even-number regressions. Regressions include state-effects and year-effects as appropriate.

Moreover, we notice the persistence of the differential effect of children on women's participation in precarious work, as compared to men. While men with children are now 9.9-10.6% less likely to be in precarious jobs than men without children, women with children are only 2.4-3.2% less likely to be in precarious jobs than women without children. Thus, as with our definition of precarious work that does not utilize the cutoffs described above, child care and precariousness in the workplace go hand-in-hand for women but not for men.

4. Discussion

As evidenced above, precarious jobs are a large and enduring feature of the US labor market. In 2017, 8.4 % of workers find themselves in uncertain work arrangements; 32.3% of workers are in unprotected jobs; 27.1% of workers are in economically insecure jobs; and 46.2% of workers are in at least one of these three categories, constituting what we define as precarious work. All these measures show little change since 1995, indicating a crystallization of precarious work in the U.S. economy. At the same time, there exist stark gender and race patterns in the U.S. labor force. Despite some indications of convergence, women are overrepresented in precarious jobs compared to men. Women with children, in particular, are much more likely to be in precarious jobs compared to their male counterparts. Black and Hispanic workers are much more likely to be in economically insecure jobs than white non-Hispanic workers, while white non-Hispanic workers are much more likely to be in unprotected jobs than black workers. When it comes to the composite definition of precarious work, and controlling for a series of other characteristics, Hispanic workers remain more likely to be in precarious jobs than white non-Hispanic workers.

This examination of precarious work, however, is limited in scope. First, since the BLS only started measuring contingent and alternative work in 1995, we do not have good indicators

of precarious jobs before the mid-1990s: thus, the BLS data cannot capture the emergence of non-standard arrangements. Second, the data is limited to survey respondents' main jobs, and as such does not capture multiple jobholders as precarious workers, even if they maintain "gig" work to supplement standard work that does not provide an adequate living wage. Third, though the 2017 CWS did include new questions about online-mediated work, the new survey ran into many measurement problems (US Department of Labor 2018) and as such might not comprehensively capture the extent of online work. It is possible that we are only just catching up to measuring this type of work and can expect larger results as the survey is fine-tuned. Similarly, the existing questions on the CWS (and our construct of a precarious work variable) might not capture the full extent of precarious work. Fourth, our measure does not capture workers who are in jobs that are precarious (or more accurately unsustainable) due to pressure to work long hours, unpredictable hours, unsafe working conditions, or harassment in the workplace. Finally, our analysis is only a best estimate of precarious *work* and not of precarious *lives*: though work is intimately tied up with the provision of social reproduction, it is not the final measure. For example, our measure of precarious jobs looks only at those who are employed, and not the conditions of those who have recently lost work or of discouraged workers.

5. Conclusion

A full analysis of gender, precariousness, and neoliberalism would go beyond the scope of this project. However, our analysis offers a framework to examine gender and precariousness supported by empirical evidence. The shifting work structures characteristic of the neoliberal era have transferred power away from workers who find themselves in uncertain, unprotected, and economically insecure, i.e. precarious work conditions. Using the CWS data, we do not see a secular rise in precarious jobs. On the other hand, we show that precarious jobs are crystallizing at

a time when employment to population ratios are mostly falling and new forms of work are emerging. Alongside the receding role of the state in the provision of social services, this puts pressure on workers in precarious arrangements to access these social resources, whether through private debt or through a new and contradictory pressure on the family unit. Additionally, forms of precariousness matter, as underlined by the finding that women and people of color are more likely to be in more insecure work conditions, and overrepresented among precarious jobs that offer lower earnings and less control. Finally, women with care responsibilities are the most likely to find themselves in all of our measures of precarious work, indicating that in the neoliberal period the sexual division of unpaid labor continues to help explain women's over-representation in precarious employment.

As such, precarious work conditions do have particular implications for women and people of color, who continue to face depressed wages in the marketplace due to discrimination, continue to face uneven pressure in the provision of social reproductive work in families, and find themselves more concentrated in the more insecure forms of flexible work that offer less bargaining power vis-a-vis their employer. For this reason, we must proceed with caution as mainstream economists and popular media herald the benefits of flexible and gig work for women and people of color, groups that have been historically subordinated in the labor market.

What does this suggest for combatting the flexibilization of labor? One idea gaining popularity on the left and the right is the notion of universal basic income (UBI). As labor becomes redundant or workers can only be employed in bits and pieces, there is appeal in dismantling bureaucratic, uncoordinated government support programs and giving everyone a lump sum of cash. However, UBI will not likely solve the problem facing workers in precarious jobs. First, UBI levels must be sufficiently high to afford all the necessities and appropriately adjust for the

disproportionate amount of care work women do. Second, UBI does not deal with the crystallization and high levels of precarious jobs or the lack of jobs disproportionately faced by people of color at a time where there is high and growing need for both physical and social infrastructure to ensure social reproduction. While we do need some form of basic income supports to assure meeting a standard of living, especially for low-income and low-wage parents, they alone are not sufficient and implicitly accept the erosion of the standard employment relation. The United States needs to create non-employment-based social protections such as universal health care and childcare; provide job guarantees so that all that who want to be employed can be; and all jobs regardless of employer (especially non-standard ones) must generate ways to assure basic minimum work supports and protections. These employment floors include paid and family medical leave; paid sick days; unemployment insurance; minimum hours; right to bargain for a flexible schedule; and just cause job protections.

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