

FAMILY STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATIONAL POWER

A Multiracial/Ethnic Analysis of Women and Men

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Abstract

This study examines how dimensions of family structure, specifically marriage and parenthood, influence authority attainment among men and women of different racial and ethnic identities. Using survey data from the Multi-City Survey of Urban Inequality, we reach several empirical conclusions. First, the link between family structure and authority attainment is much stronger for women than men, and it revolves more strongly around marriage than parenthood. Second, while marriage decreases White women's odds of holding positions of higher authority, it increases these odds for Black women and Latinas. Third, this "marital bonus" for Black women is most pronounced in predominantly White work settings, allowing them to "play against" stereotypes of group members as single mothers. Fourth, and by contrast, the "marital bonus" for Latinas is strongest in predominantly Latina workplaces, suggesting that Latinas must conform to strong cultural expectations for marriage if they are to gain authority in ingroup work settings. These findings help to illuminate how race, ethnicity, and gender intersect to produce unique linkages between family structure and individual opportunities for organizational power.

Keywords: Race, Gender, Family Structure, Job Power

In *The Philadelphia Negro*, W. E. B. Du Bois (1899) recognized that family structure, as defined by marital status, affected the life chances of Blacks living in Philadelphia's Seventh Ward. This issue is as palpable today as when Du Bois first penned this classic more than a century ago. Since that time, sociological attempts to draw empirical connections between family status and socioeconomic outcomes have been largely, but not exclusively, parochial, focusing on racial comparisons at the exclusion of gender or emphasizing gender differences without regard to race. The chief

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purpose of this study is to address this shortcoming by examining the role that family structure plays in shaping employment outcomes across a multiracial, multiethnic sample of working men and women in today's large metro economies.

Specifically, we analyze the extent to which family structure, defined by marriage and parenthood, influences the authority attainment of Whites, Blacks, and Latinos of both sexes. We conceptualize job authority as a form of legitimate power that serves as a central mechanism by which workplace inequalities along the lines of race, gender, and the intersection of race and gender are maintained (Elliott and Smith, 2004; McGuire and Reskin, 1993; Smith 2002; Tomaskovic-Devey 1993). Job authority is a highly coveted workplace resource that is positively associated with income, status, and intrinsic rewards (Wright et al., 1995). We are particularly interested in the kind of authority that allows incumbents to supervise the work of other employees, to influence the rate of pay received by other employees, and/or to hire and fire subordinates. We frame our analyses around several basic questions. Does having a spouse and/or children in the home correlate with access to higher levels of workplace authority? How do race, ethnicity, and gender intersect to shape this correlation? And, finally, to what extent does the race and sex composition of the job setting influence this intersection? Below we review relevant literature and advance testable hypotheses before discussing our data and results.

BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

Gender and Job-Family Trade-offs

Prior research has portrayed women's labor market experiences as a balancing act between the conflicting demands of child care and household responsibilities, on the one hand, and individual career pursuits, on the other hand (Estes and Glass, 1996; Hinze 2000; Hochschild 1997; Meninno and Brayfield, 2002; Parasuraman and Greenhaus, 1997; Reskin and Padavic, 1994; Schor 1991; Seron and Ferris, 1995). This understanding is reflected not only in feminist scholarship on gendered divisions of labor but also in neoclassic economic models that statistically control for marital status and children in the household under the presumption that women often choose to "self-select" out of more demanding jobs to care for their husbands and children. The underlying argument is that traditional cultural expectations regarding the household division of labor encourages many women to prefer jobs that allow them easy entry and flexible exit from the labor market, which in turn channels them disproportionately into jobs with low pay and few opportunities for advancement into positions of authority. Men, by contrast, are not culturally expected to balance family and employment demands and, therefore, remain freer to invest in their human capital and to work longer hours, which in turn help to maximize earnings and opportunities for advancement into positions of authority.

Collectively these lines of research suggest the following baseline hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: marriage and parenthood will correlate negatively with women's access to higher levels of workplace authority, regardless of race and ethnicity.

Hypothesis 2: marriage and parenthood will have no, or a positive, correlation with men's access to higher levels of workplace authority, regardless of race and ethnicity.

To date, empirical research has lent support to these expectations, generally showing that marriage and parenthood tend to be more beneficial to men's employment outcomes than women's employment outcomes, all else equal. This pattern has been documented in empirical assessments of the gender gap in labor market participation (Spain and Bianchi, 1996; Tienda and Stier, 1996), earnings (Korenman and Neumark, 1991; LeLouarn et al., 1984; Pfeffer and Ross, 1982), managerial careers (Schneer and Reitman, 1993), job autonomy (Adler 1993), and job authority (D'Amico 1986; Hill 1980; Wolf and Fligstein, 1979a, 1979b). Somewhat surprisingly, however, recent research has also begun to show that women, particularly women of color, might now benefit from marriage in pursuit of better employment opportunities, especially in seeking positions with higher levels of workplace authority and pay.

For example, a 1997 study by the research organization Catalyst shows that married women were more likely to hold executive, administrative, managerial, and professional positions than non-married women and that the vast majority of Black women managers in their sample were, in fact, married. This pattern is echoed in Farley and Allen's (1987) analysis of 1980 Census data, which revealed stark differences in the relationship between marital status and labor market outcomes for Black and White women. Specifically, they found that married Black women earned 20% *more* than married White women, but non-married Black women earned far less than non-married White women. Similar studies show that Black women who have attained positions of workplace authority tend to be married, often with children. Hayes (1997), for example, found that more than half of a sample of twenty high-level Black women executives was married and/or mothers. Similarly, a recent report by Korn/Ferry (1998) revealed that 68% of Black women executives were married, and 62% of these women had children.

In short, traditional assumptions about job-family tradeoffs may be more relevant for understanding gender inequalities among Whites than Blacks, particularly with respect to accessing higher positions of workplace authority and pay. Evidence and expectations for Latinas are more difficult to come by, but what little we know seems to point to a "marital bonus" for them as well. According to Corcoran et al. (1999, p. 117), married Puerto Rican women are more likely to be employed than their single counterparts, and they also "earned 20 percent (\$1.73) more per hour than employed single (Puerto Rican) women and 33 percent (\$2.56) more per hour than employed single (Puerto Rican) mothers." The same earnings pattern was observed among Mexican women but, in contrast to married Puerto Rican women, married Mexican women were less likely than their married counterparts to be employed in 1990 (Corcoran et al., 1999, p. 131).

This body of literature suggests that race and ethnicity "interact" with family structure to produce different job outcomes for White women and women of color in similar family situations. We operationalize this expectation via the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: marriage and parenthood will correlate positively with minority women's access to higher levels of workplace authority but negatively with White women's access to higher levels of workplace authority.

Race, Gender, and Workplace Stereotypes

In addition to cultural expectations surrounding household divisions of labor, the association between family structure and authority attainment is also likely to be

influenced by group-specific stereotypes held by employers and coworkers. To date, however, relevant studies have largely been mute on this issue, making it difficult to develop informed expectations. Part of this shortcoming arises from the fact that most research on racial stereotypes in the workplace has tended to focus exclusively on men, and most research on gender stereotypes has ignored racial and ethnic variations. Still, the issue remains salient, particularly in light of recent and more direct studies of employers' perceptions of Black women, which show a strong link between images of race and family structure and its implications for employee evaluation.

In one of these studies, Browne and Kennelly (1999) adapted Kirschenman and Neckerman's (1991) interview strategy to encourage Atlanta employers to talk about race and gender using their own frameworks. They found not only that employers differentiated between men and women employees but also that they differentiated between Black and White women employees specifically. In short, employers tend to stereotype White women as mothers, but they tend to stereotype Black women specifically as *single* mothers, who often bring problems related to child-care responsibilities into the workplace. One of the authors' overriding points is that, "employers are apt to focus upon this status as the defining characteristic of Black women, regardless of its accuracy" (Browne and Kennelly, 1999, p. 321). This point is important because it suggests that even married and/or childless Black women will still be viewed through the lens of "single motherhood," and that this lens devalues employers' perceptions of job performance and potential for advancement (see also Kennelly 1999).

In a similar study of employer perceptions in four large metropolitan areas, Moss and Tilly (2001) reached similar conclusions, showing that employers often invoke images of Black women as "single mothers" to explain why their work habits differ from those of Whites generally and Black men specifically. Their study also provided insights into employer stereotypes about Latino workers. In short, employers tend to see Latino men as "proud" or "macho" and to see Latina women as "submissive" and "hard-working," often with a strong commitment to their family. As one employer told them, "... I've noticed that Hispanic women spend more time dealing with personal issues. Their children and their families and stuff like that, and consequently don't get as much production" (Moss and Tilly, 2001, p. 128).

While still emergent, this literature indicates that employers' perceptions, which affect opportunities for promotion and advancement, reflect a complex intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, and family structure, and that the latter is much more important for assessing women's workplace identities than men's. Prior research, however, also suggests that such stereotyping tends to be stronger among outgroup members than ingroup members, whose frequent contact diminishes reliance on the crude screening tools of stereotyping. Indeed, all the employers in Browne and Kennelly's (1999) study, and the majority of those in Moss and Tilly's (2001) study, were White men. It is quite likely that such stereotypes are less prevalent among Black women and Latinas, and this fact might impact how family structure influences access to workplace authority in settings consisting largely of ingroup members.

Again, lacking an established theoretical framework in this area, we advance a final hypothesis that attempts to address these issues with respect to workplace authority. This hypothesis builds from two lines of thought. First, we suspect that marriage and non-parenthood might be beneficial to minority women, particularly Black women, in authority attainment processes because it helps them to "play against" negative employer stereotypes of group members as single mothers and/or "overly" committed parents. Second, we suspect that this benefit of "playing against

stereotype” is stronger in outgroup settings, particularly under White men superiors, than in ingroup settings, because people are generally more likely to rely on stereotypes to evaluate outgroup members than ingroup members. In formal terms, this hypothesis can be expressed as follows:

Hypothesis 4: marriage and non-parenthood will correlate more positively with minority women’s access to higher levels of workplace authority in outgroup settings than in ingroup settings.

Again, the general idea is that a married Black woman can signal that she is different from “most” Black women (and thus more capable) by being married. Similarly, Latinas without kids can signal that they are more career-oriented than “most” Latina women (again, more capable) by foregoing, or at least delaying, this stereotypical role. And finally, this “signaling” is likely to be more meaningful in outgroup settings than ingroup settings.

DATA AND MEASUREMENT

Data for our study come from the Multi-City Survey of Urban Inequality (MCSUI), which is a multistage, stratified, area-probability sample of White and minority respondents in Atlanta, Boston, and Los Angeles conducted between 1992 and 1994, which was a time of local and national economic expansion. Surveys were administered face-to-face and lasted approximately two hours, with the ethnicity of respondents and interviewers matched to minimize well-known race-of-interviewer effects (see Johnson et al., 1994). The MCSUI also includes data from Detroit, which we omit because of a lack of information on key labor market variables (e.g., level of workplace power).

For our analyses, we select only civilian labor force participants between the ages of twenty-one and sixty-four who were not self-employed and who reported having an immediate superior. The latter restriction is imposed to facilitate the examination of how the race and gender of superiors influences access to authority and its connections with family structure. This restriction reduces the original sample by 9%, but we believe this reduction is justified on two accounts. First, supplemental analyses (not shown) indicate that excluded respondents tended, on average, to exhibit the same odds of power attainment as respondents in our sample. So there is no systematic bias introduced. Second, such mid-level positions comprise the overwhelming majority of workplace power positions in the United States and represent jobs where competition for legitimate authority among individuals of different races, ethnicities, and sexes is likely to be most common. The upshot is simply that our results cannot be generalized to the top-most rung of organizational power. Below we discuss our measurement of key variables, starting with the dependent variable: organizational power, or authority. All variables are listed in Appendix 1 with subsample means and standard deviations.

Workplace Power

Employed respondents in the MCSUI were asked three closed-ended questions commonly used in survey research on workplace power: [a] Do you supervise another employee who is directly responsible to you? [b] Do you influence or set the rate of pay received by others? [c] Do you have the authority to hire or fire others? We use

responses to these questions to classify employees into one of three hierarchical levels:

- 0 = laborer (“no” to [a], [b], and [c]);
- 1 = supervisor (“yes” only to [a]);
- 2 = manager (“yes” to [a], and “yes” to [b] or [c]).

We combine questions [b] and [c] to construct a single indicator of managerial status for several reasons: first, all respondents who answered “yes” to [b] or [c] also answered “yes” to [a]; second, the correlation between [b] and [c] in our pooled sample is quite high ($r_\phi = .543$; $p < .0001$), with 70% of respondents answering “yes” to [b] also answering “yes” to [c]; and third, [b] and [c] are conceptually similar in that they connote control over organizational resources, as well as people.

Family Structure

After preliminary analyses with different specifications of family structure, we settled on two simple indicators: *currently married* (yes/no) and presence of *children eighteen years old or younger in the household* (yes/no). We settled on this measurement strategy for several reasons. First, we found that subdividing single workers into singles who were cohabiting with romantic partners and singles who were not cohabiting with romantic partners yielded no significant differences in our analyses. Second, our subdivision of parenthood by age of youngest child in the household (no children [reference category]; less than six years old; seven to twelve years old; thirteen to eighteen years old) yielded no consistent and significant results across our analyses. Finally, interaction terms between marital status (married/single) and parental status (yes/no) yielded no significant differences for any of our analyses. For these reasons, we simplify our operationalization of family structure to these two dummy indicators and report more detailed findings from supplemental analyses when appropriate.

Extended Household

Because prior research suggests that household structure might also influence women and minorities’ relationship to the labor market, we include a dummy indicator for whether there is another *non-spousal adult living in the household*. The general expectation is that an additional adult in the household might relieve some of the domestic responsibilities that traditionally befall wives and mothers, thereby rendering marital status and motherhood either less salient, or possibly an asset, to women’s access to organizational authority. We settled on this simple, uni-dimensional indicator of extended households after exploratory analyses revealed no consistent and significant differences with respect to whether these non-spousal adults were family or non-family members.

Human Capital Controls

To control statistically for other factors associated with workplace power attainment, we include four indicators of human capital in our regression analyses. We measure *education* as the total number of years of formal schooling. We also include three indicators of labor force experience. We control for *total work experience* as defined by the number of years that a respondent has been formally employed since first leaving full-time school. We decided to use total work experience over “age” because the two

variables are highly correlated and because total work experience more accurately captures interrupted work histories. For example, a man and woman may be of the same age but have vastly different work histories. We measure *prior job-specific experience* as a simple dummy indicator (yes/no) based on the question, “Did you have any previous experience in this type of job, excluding schooling, before you were hired?” Finally, we measure *organizational tenure* as the number of years that the respondent reports being employed with his or her respective employer.

Job Context Controls

In our regression analyses, we also include several job-relevant factors identified in prior research as being important covariates of workplace power. One such factor is *establishment size*, which reflects the vertical and horizontal complexity of the organization in question and the number of power positions likely to be available to respective employees. We operationalize this factor as the natural log of the number of employees that the respondent reports working at his or her establishment. We also include a dummy indicator for *public sector* (0 = private sector; 1 = public sector) because prior research indicates that the relative disadvantage that women and minorities face in climbing workplace power hierarchies tends to be lower in public than private settings, owing to more egalitarian hiring practices and bureaucratic protocols for advancement in the former (Fernandez 1975; Reskin and Ross, 1992; Wilson 1997).

Another factor related to workplace power is time spent at work. We operationalize this variable as the natural log of the average number of *hours worked per week*. We log this variable to compress higher values because work hours that extend beyond normal full-time status are more likely to be the result of being a manager than a determinant of becoming a manager.

We also include a four-category indicator of *occupational location* because men and women continue to be highly segregated within and between broad occupational niches. This indicator is based on 1990 Census Occupation Codes and includes the following categories: (1) professional and technical occupations, which include officially titled managers and supervisors; (2) craft and repair occupations; (3) service occupations; and (4) clerical and sales occupations (reference category). While occupational controls can be endogenous in some models of authority attainment, they are not so in our models because of their broad categorization and the fact that most workplace power is achieved outside explicitly titled “manager” and “supervisor” occupations.

To investigate the demographic contexts in which marriage and/or parenthood influence authority attainment, we use two dummy indicators. The first is set to 1 if the respondent works under an *ascriptively similar superior* and 0 if the respondent works under an ascriptively dissimilar superior. This indicator is based on three nested questions in the MCSUI: “Do you have an immediate supervisor on your job to whom you are directly responsible?” “What is your immediate supervisor’s race or ethnic origin?” And, “Is your immediate supervisor a man or a woman?”

The second dummy indicator refers to working alongside, rather than under, ascriptively similar coworkers on the job. We constructed this indicator from two sources of information. First, we identified the racial majority, if one existed, of coworkers from the MCSUI question, “What is the race and ethnicity of most of the employees doing the kind of work you do at the place where you work?” Next, lacking similar information about the sex composition of coworkers, we used metro-level data from the 1990 5% Public Use Micro Samples (PUMS) to identify the

locally dominant sex for each of the roughly 500 detailed Census Occupation Codes in each metro area. We then appended this information to the MCSUI and created an indicator that takes a value of 1 if a respondent works with mostly coethnic coworkers in an occupation that, locally, consists of mostly workers of the same sex; otherwise, the indicator takes a value of 0. We now turn to analyses of these variables.

RESULTS

To evaluate the relationship among family status, authority attainment, and ascriptive identity, we begin by examining basic descriptive statistics for these variables for our sample of active workers. These statistics appear in Table 1 and reveal several preliminary patterns. First, marriage is increasingly common at higher levels of organizational authority. Specifically, results show that although married workers comprise only about a third of all laborers without power, they comprise 40 percent of all supervisors, and half of all managers. Second, the opposite is true of parenthood, although to a lesser extent; instead of rising with organizational power, parenthood steadily decreases from 46% of laborers to 43% of supervisors to 40% of managers. These patterns suggest that of the two major dimensions of family structure—marriage and parenthood—marriage is more strongly linked to authority changes than parenthood, and this link is positive for workers in general.

With respect to race, ethnicity, and gender, results indicate that Black women workers are least likely to be married (21%), followed by Black men workers (33%) and Latina workers (34%). Subdividing these statistics further by parenthood shows that Latinas are the group most likely to be single mothers (44%), in part because they are the most likely to be parents (71%). Black women are the next closest group in both respects, with 51% being parents and 39% being specifically *single* parents. While, on the one hand, these rankings conform to stereotypes about women of color as single mothers, they also challenge them in a couple key respects. First, they show that although Latinas are more likely to be married than Black women, they are also more likely to be single mothers, given their exceptionally high fertility rates. Past surveys on gender, ethnicity, and employer stereotyping have missed this point, as have employers they interview, who still tend to stereotype Black women as single mothers and Latinas as members of strong, traditional nuclear families. Second, although rates of single motherhood are high for Latinas and Black women, relative to other groups, the majorities of these workers are not, in fact, single mothers. So to the extent that employers apply this stereotype to members generally, it does not accurately reflect their experience statistically, as prior research has pointed out for Black women (Browne and Kennelly, 1999; Kennelly 1999) but not for Latinas, until now.

One reason for the apparent “marriage bonus” for workers as a whole might be that marriage provides individuals with more resources at home, which facilitate pursuit of more demanding supervisory and managerial positions at work. Another way to accrue such resources is to have a non-spousal adult living in the household. This possibility suggests that such extended households would also correlate positively, like marriage, with authority attainment. Results, however, indicate that they do not. Simple descriptive statistics show that having a non-spousal adult in the household, whether through cohabitation with a romantic partner, extended family, or other non-family member, is less common among managers (24%) and supervisors (25%) than among laborers without power (29%). These findings suggest that the benefits of marriage in accessing workplace authority has less to do with having

Table 1. Marital and Parental Status by Level of Authority and by Ethnicity and Gender

	Level of Authority			Ethnicity and Gender					
	Laborers	Supervisors	Managers	White Men	Black Men	Latinos	White Women	Black Women	Latinas
<i>Family Status</i>									
Single									
No Children	40.4	39.9	39.5	50.0	58.0	38.3	36.7	40.1	21.5
Children	24.0	20.7	10.9	4.5	9.1	8.4	15.6	38.7	44.1
Married									
No Children	13.2	16.1	20.7	20.0	13.6	14.6	21.1	9.1	7.1
Children	22.4	23.3	28.9	21.5	19.3	38.7	26.6	12.1	27.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>Household Structure</i>									
No Non-spousal Adult in Household	70.6	74.6	76.1	75.1	68.9	55.0	80.7	77.4	68.4
Non-spousal Adult in Household	29.4	25.4	23.9	24.9	31.1	45.0	19.3	22.6	31.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	2,623	511	339	512	452	527	565	882	535

another adult living in the household than it does with procuring the cultural and material advantages of marriage in particular.

These findings encourage us to consider how family structure, especially marriage, correlates with authority attainment within respective ethnic and gender groups. To examine this issue more thoroughly, we use multinomial regression to assess the links between family status and authority attainment while statistically controlling for other factors known to determine success in the labor market, namely education, work experience, and job context. In these analyses, we make two sorts of comparisons: (1) the influence of marriage and parenthood on holding supervisory positions compared with laborer positions (the first step up the metaphorical authority ladder); and (2) the influence of these same factors on holding managerial positions compared with supervisory positions (the second step up the metaphorical ladder). We expect coefficients for marriage and parenthood will become increasingly large and statistically significant as we move from comparison (1) to comparison (2), thus reflecting an increasing salience of these factors with movement up the power hierarchy in American workplaces. Table 2 reports the results of this regression analysis, first for the full sample of workers and next for each group respectively.

Results for the pooled analysis indicate that even after statistically controlling for education, skills, and job context, marriage still correlates positively with higher positions of workplace power. Specifically, the anti-log of .456 indicates that, on average, married workers are 1.6 times more likely than single workers to hold managerial jobs compared with supervisory jobs, all else equal. By contrast, there is no significant difference between parents and non-parents in making this transition, or in making the transition from laborer to supervisor. As noted in our data discussion above, we also estimated this model and all remaining models with interaction terms for marital and parental statuses to test if single parenthood was more detrimental for authority attainment than single non-parenthood. Results indicated no significant difference between the two groups. The main factor appears to be marital status, not its intersection with parenthood, net of other factors. Also, because younger children may place more constraints on job mobility than older children, we replaced our simple parenthood variable (yes/no) with a variable indicating the age of the youngest child in the household (no children [reference category]; less than six years old; seven to twelve years old; or thirteen to eighteen years old). Again, we found no statistically significant results for this variable.

To determine for whom the “marriage bonus” is most salient, we re-estimated the same multinomial model separately for each group. Interestingly, results show that the “marriage bonus” is limited strictly to women of color. Specifically, the anti-log of .771 indicates that, all else equal, married Black women are 2.2 times more likely than single Black counterparts to hold managerial jobs, compared with supervisory jobs. This finding is consistent with other research on labor force participation and earnings, which shows that Black women generally benefit from marriage, relative to their single counterparts (Catalyst 1997; Farley and Allen, 1987). For Latinas, the same pattern holds, but even more strongly. The anti-log of 1.217 indicates that married Latinas are 3.4 times more likely than single counterparts to hold managerial positions compared with supervisory positions. Among men, by contrast, there is no significant effect of family structure on authority attainment, and among White women the effect is negative. The anti-log of $-.642$ indicates that married White women are only half as likely as single White women to hold supervisory, compared with laborer, positions. This finding is consistent with the argument advanced in some studies that single women can devote themselves more to the demands of (managerial) work than their married counterparts (Hennig and Jardim,

Table 2. Multinomial Regression Coefficients Predicting Successive Levels of Authority, Controlling for Human Capital and Job Context, by Group

	Full Sample		White Men		Black Men		Latinos	
	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor
Married (0:1)	.084	.456**	.156	.163	.556	-.635	.095	-.493
Children (0:1)	.005	-.126	.338	-.158	-.107	.558	.228	.686
Non-spousal Adult in Household (0:1)	-.019	.164	.056	-.069	.475	-.103	-.132	-.513
Pseudo R-squared (df)	.09 (26)		.09 (26)		.10 (26)		.09 (26)	
N	3,473		512		452		527	
			White Women		Black Women		Latinas	
	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor
Married (0:1)			-.642*	.362	.129	.771*	-.039	1.217*
Children (0:1)			.257	-.406	.005	-.400	-.329	.317
Non-spousal Adult in Household (0:1)			-.736	.863	-.065	.321	.139	.897
Pseudo R-squared (df)			.12 (26)		.07 (26)		.15 (26)	
N			565		882		535	

+ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Statistical controls for human capital include years of schooling, years of total work experience since leaving school full-time, years with employers, and prior job-specific experience (0 = no; 1 = yes). Statistical controls for job context include the natural log of the number of workers at the establishment, public sector (0 = no; 1 = yes), occupation (professional/technical; sales/clerical; service; craft/repair), and the natural log of usual number of hours worked per week.

1977). The fact that men, regardless of race and ethnicity, do not tend to receive a marital bonus in access to authority counters the traditional 1950s image of the married male executive and reflects the increasing diversity of today's workforce, not only in ethnic and racial terms but also with respect to family status (Schneer and Reitman, 1993).

Together these findings point to several initial conclusions. First, members of groups least likely to be married—Black and Latina women—are precisely those most likely to benefit from this status as they move up workplace power hierarchies. The opposite, however, is true for White women. This finding suggests that employment tradeoffs that many married women face vary by race and ethnicity. Moreover, results of supplementary interaction analyses (not shown) indicate that this “marital bonus” and its corollary, “single penalty,” are statistically indistinguishable for parents and non-parents. In other words, net of education, work experience, and job context, single women of color without children are no more likely to gain access to managerial positions than single women of color with children. Finally, the presence of non-spousal adults in the household exhibits no statistically significant effect on authority chances at any level for any group.

The finding that women of color benefit from marriage as they move into managerial positions suggests that marriage brings to them more positive work-related resources than it takes away via employment-family trade-offs. One way this “bonus” might work is by providing them with more help around the household. For example, prior research indicates that spouses tend to share housework more equitably when both spouses work in professional and/or managerial occupations and earn similar salaries (Brayfield 1992; Carlisle 1994; Presser 1994). Moreover, the pooling of resources among married couples can increase the opportunity to hire others to cover household chores in the face of family-tradeoffs often associated with managerial work (Carlisle 1994; Mennino and Brayfield, 2002; Risman and Johnson-Sumerford, 1998). Another possibility, however, is that marriage allows women of color, particularly Black women, to play against racially specific stereotypes of single motherhood, that is, to distinguish themselves positively from others they ascriptively resemble. The fact that non-spousal adults in the household do not offer the same “bonus” that husbands appear to do lends some support to this possibility, as does the finding that marriage does not provide the same “bonus” among White women, who do not suffer from the same single (mother) stereotype.

Although we do not have data to examine these issues directly, we can test the “playing-against-stereotype” hypothesis indirectly under the following assumption: “outsiders” are more likely to hold and act upon group stereotypes than ingroup members. As Browne and Kennelly (1999, p. 320) note, this idea is consistent with relevant theories of statistical discrimination, social closure, Black feminism, and stereotyping, which all contend that individuals tend to stereotype dissimilar others more often and more negatively than they stereotype ingroup members (see Bobo and Johnson, 2000, p. 103 for an exception).¹ To the extent that this assumption holds true, we might reasonably expect women of color to experience a greater marital “bonus” in work settings where they are employed under White men and/or alongside mostly dissimilar coworkers than when they are employed under and/or alongside similar others. To investigate this possibility, we first re-estimated our group-specific models separately for workers employed under White men and for workers employed under similar others. Results of these analyses appear in Table 3a for men and in Table 3b for women.

Affirming results in Tables 1 and 2, results in Table 3a indicate no statistically significant effect of family structure on men's authority outcomes, regardless of the

Table 3a. Men's Multinomial Regression Coefficients Predicting Successive Levels of Authority, Controlling for Human Capital and Job Context, by Group and Supervisor's Ethnicity and Gender

	Working under White Male Superiors					
	White Men		Black Men		Latinos	
	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor
Married (0:1)	.249	.142	.316	-.581	-.144	-.583
Children (0:1)	-.167	.212	.398	.295	.103	.946
Non-spousal Adult in Household (0:1)	-.067	.078	.723	.178	.090	.355
Pseudo R-squared (df)	.10 (26)		.16 (26)		.12 (26)	
N	364		200		218	
	Working under Superiors of Same Ethnicity and Gender					
	White Men		Black Men		Latinos	
	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor
Married (0:1)			.699	.413	.793	-2.022
Children (0:1)	See above		-.499	.759	.728	1.908
Non-spousal Adult in Household (0:1)			-.626	.501	.057	-.694
Pseudo R-squared (df)			.26 (26)		.16 (26)	
N			116		178	

+ p < .10; *p < .05; **p < .01

Statistical controls for human capital include years of schooling, years of total work experience since leaving full-time school, years with employers, and prior job-specific experience (0 = no; 1 = yes). Statistical controls for job context include the natural log of the number of workers at the establishment, public sector (0 = no; 1 = yes), occupation (professional/technical; sales/clerical; service; craft/repair), and the natural log of usual number of hours worked per week.

Table 3b. Women's Multinomial Regression Coefficients Predicting Successive Levels of Authority, Controlling for Human Capital and Job Context, by Group and Supervisor's Ethnicity and Gender

	Working under White Male Superiors					
	White Women		Black Women		Latinas	
	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor
Married (0:1)	.028	-.336	-.258	1.312+	.583	1.283
Children (0:1)	-.234	-.407	-.206	.025	-.034	.678
Non-spousal Adult in Household (0:1)	-.405	1.293	.304	-1.423	-3.692*	1.878
Pseudo R-squared (df)	.11 (26)		.12 (26)		.43 (26)	
N	234		214		127	
	Working under Superiors of Same Ethnicity and Gender					
	White Women		Black Women		Latinas	
	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor
Married (0:1)	-.397	.409	.377	1.438+	Insufficient cases (n = 76; none with managerial status)	
Children (0:1)	.468	.365	.422	-1.886*		
Non-spousal Adult in Household (0:1)	-.911	-.081	.285	1.740+		
Pseudo R-squared (df)	.23 (26)		.20 (26)			
N	250		232			

+ p < .10; *p < .05; **p < .01

Statistical controls for human capital include years of schooling, years of total work experience since leaving full-time school, years with employers, and prior job-specific experience (0 = no; 1 = yes). Statistical controls for job context include the natural log of the number of workers at the establishment, public sector (0 = no; 1 = yes), occupation (professional/technical; sales/clerical; service; craft/repair), and the natural log of usual number of hours worked per week.

ascriptive characteristics of their immediate superiors. Results in Table 3b, however, indicate a variety of patterns for women. For White women, although none of the marriage coefficients is statistically significant, their signs shift frequently, indicating no clear pattern of association with authority attainment, regardless of whom they work under. These results indicate that the marriage “penalty” that White women tend to face, net of other factors, is highly variable, suggesting that it might be more a function of individual and family trade-offs than employer stereotyping.

By contrast, results for Black women differ. In both types of work settings—under White male superiors and under Black female superiors—there is a strong, positive correlation between marriage and access to managerial authority, with little comparative effect on access to supervisory authority. The fact that the relevant coefficients from these two settings are so close in size and direction (1.312 under White men and 1.438 under Black women) suggests that “playing against stereotype” may be equally important for accessing managerial authority in each setting. This possibility could arise for several, potentially overlapping reasons.

First, Black women superiors who oversee managerial positions may not exercise complete control over the promotion and/or hiring for positions they immediately oversee; instead, this control may, in fact, lie with a “dissimilar other” in the human resources department or a “dissimilar other” further up the organizational chain of command. Second, it could be that women and minorities are not as immune to negative stereotypes of ingroup members as commonly assumed. In fact, recent research on managers of color indicates that they, like White men, often find fault with their own ethnic group. Moss and Tilly (2001, p. 131) explain that this occurs in part from the influence of dominant White attitudes and from attempts by managers of color “to distance themselves psychologically from their co-ethnics.” Finally, it could also be that Black women who rise to positions of power, as indicated by holding authority over managerial positions, make significant family-tradeoffs that they do not wish to see other group members repeat.

This latter possibility might help to explain why Black mothers, regardless of marital status, fare more poorly in attaining managerial positions under Black women superiors than they do under White men superiors. Specifically, the anti-log of -1.886 indicates that, under self-similar superiors, Black mothers are only 0.2 times as likely as Black women without kids to achieve managerial status, compared with supervisory status. Under White men, on the other hand, the managerial attainment of Black mothers and Black women without kids is statistically indistinguishable (.025, non-significant at the 0.1-level).

For Latinas the lack of group members overseeing positions of workplace authority complicates analysis (as well as Latinas’ chances of attaining such positions). However, for those working under White men superiors we do see a strong positive effect of marriage on access to supervisory and managerial positions. Although there are insufficient cases to establish the statistical significance of these patterns, the magnitude of respective coefficients does increase with movement up the authority hierarchy, from .583 for the laborer-supervisor comparison to 1.283 for the supervisor-manager comparison. To probe these patterns further, we re-estimated the model for Latinas working under coethnics versus non-coethnics generally. Results (not shown) indicated that marriage had a much stronger, positive effect on Latinas working under other coethnics than it did under non-coethnics. For example, results indicated that under coethnic superiors, married Latinas are an astonishing thirty-four times more likely to hold managerial positions than single Latinas, all else equal. Under non-coethnics, commonly White women, the effects are much smaller by comparison. These findings suggest that while marriage might help Latinas “play

against stereotype” under White superiors, it plays a much stronger role in determining success under ethnically similar (and often male) superiors, who appear to place an extremely strong emphasis on traditional norms of “women as wives” and men as authority figures.

To determine further the impact that normative role expectations play in the authority attainment process, in our final analysis, we stratified our sample by the ethnic and gender composition of coworkers, rather than superiors. Results for men appear in Table 4a, and results for women appear in Table 4b. Most of the “action” appears in our results for women. Thus, for the sake of parsimony and continuity we focus only on Table 4b.

Here, again, results indicate an extremely strong, positive effect of marriage on access to managerial positions among Latinas, especially in jobs where they comprise the majority. Effectively, the coefficient of 28.0 indicates that Latinas almost never hold managerial positions in predominantly “Latina” jobs unless they are married. For Black women, by contrast, the marriage “bonus” is stronger and statistically significant in outgroup settings, that is, in jobs where they do not comprise the majority, than in ingroup settings where they do comprise the majority. Specifically, results indicate that in predominantly “outgroup” jobs, married Black women are ($e^{1.014}$) 2.8 times more likely than single Black women to hold managerial positions, compared with supervisory positions. Interestingly, the negative effect of parenthood among Black women evident in Table 3b is much smaller and statistically non-significant in Table 4b. However, to the extent that parenthood negatively affects Black women, it does so more in jobs dominated by “similar others” than in jobs dominated by “dissimilar others.” This pattern shows that to the extent that there is a negative effect of parenthood among Black women, it is stronger when they work among mostly other Black women than when they work in outgroup settings. The same, interestingly, is true among White mothers, who experience the largest barrier to managerial positions (relative to their non-parental counterparts) when working mostly among their own kind. Specifically, results indicate that, in predominantly “White female” jobs, White mothers are only 0.2 times as likely as White women who have no children to hold managerial positions, compared with supervisory positions. The same effect is absent in predominantly “outgroup” jobs.

CONCLUSION

The relationship among ethnicity, gender, family status, and authority attainment is a complex one. In this study we tried to make sense of this complexity by taking multiple cuts at the problem and by adding Latinos and Latinas to research analyses that, in the past, have limited themselves to Whites and Blacks. The results are illuminating. First, and contrary to conventional wisdom, they show that women of color, not men or White women, are the ones most likely to benefit from marriage when it comes to moving up authority hierarchies into positions of managerial power. The corollary is that single Black and Latina women remain particularly disadvantaged with respect to workplace power. Second, reported and supplemental analyses indicate that this “marital bonus” (or “single penalty”) is much more salient for understanding inequalities in workplace power than parenthood, regardless of whether parenthood occurs in wedlock or not. This means that although employers will often talk about women in general as mothers and talk of Black women in particular as *single* mothers, it is marital, more than parental, status that matters most for opening doors to workplace authority.

Table 4a. Men's Multinomial Regression Coefficients Predicting Successive Levels of Authority, Controlling for Human Capital and Job Context, by Group and Coworkers' Ethnicity and Gender

	Working in a Majority-Male Occupation with Mostly Coethnic Coworkers					
	White Men		Black Men		Latinos	
	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor
Married (0:1)	.396	.266	.367	-1.639	.007	-.590
Children (0:1)	-.196	-.111	.499	.465	-.364	1.007
Non-spousal Adult in Household (0:1)	-.230	.271	-.304	1.189	-.635	-.180
Pseudo R-squared (df)	.13 (26)		.25 (26)		.11 (26)	
N	271		137		294	
	Working in a Different Occupational-Job Setting					
	White Men		Black Men		Latinos	
	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor
Married (0:1)	.017	-.292	.688+	-.480	.360	-.282
Children (0:1)	.917+	-.167	-.484	.911	.814+	.389
Non-spousal Adult in Household (0:1)	.524	-.578	1.025**	-.798	.621	-1.286
Pseudo R-squared (df)	.10 (26)		.11 (26)		.16 (26)	
N	241		315		233	

+ p < .10; *p < .05; **p < .01

Statistical controls for human capital include years of schooling, years of total work experience since leaving full-time school, years with employers, and prior job-specific experience (0 = no; 1 = yes). Statistical controls for job context include the natural log of the number of workers at the establishment, public sector (0 = no; 1 = yes), occupation (professional/technical; sales/clerical; service; craft/repair), and the natural log of usual number of hours worked per week.

Table 4b. Women's Multinomial Regression Coefficients Predicting Successive Levels of Authority, Controlling for Human Capital and Job Context, by Group and Coworkers' Ethnicity and Gender

	Working in a Majority-Female Occupation with Mostly Coethnic Coworkers					
	White Women		Black Women		Latinas	
	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor
Married (0:1)	-.498	.551	.447	.109	.877	28.00***
Children (0:1)	.431	-1.591*	-.087	-.959	-.527	1.910
Non-spousal Adult in Household (0:1)	-.447	.482	.382	-.624	.713	.595
Pseudo R-squared (df)	.16 (26)		.16 (26)		.37 (26)	
N	303		311		200	
	Working in a Different Occupational-Job Setting					
	White Women		Black Women		Latinas	
	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor	Supervisor <i>vs.</i> Laborer	Manager <i>vs.</i> Supervisor
Married (0:1)	-.748+	.307	-.060	1.014*	-.393	.748
Children (0:1)	-.015	.458	.009	-.319	-.209	.774
Non-spousal Adult in Household (0:1)	-.989+	1.317+	-.236	.497	-.273	1.195
Pseudo R-squared (df)	.13 (26)		.08 (26)		.17 (26)	
N	262		571		335	

+ p < .10; *p < .05; **p < .01

Statistical controls for human capital include years of schooling, years of total work experience since leaving full-time school, years with employers, and prior job-specific experience (0 = no; 1 = yes). Statistical controls for job context include the natural log of the number of workers at the establishment, public sector (0 = no; 1 = yes), occupation (professional/technical; sales/clerical; service; craft/repair), and the natural log of usual number of hours worked per week.

Our analyses of these correlations across different ascriptive work settings suggests why this might be the case. First, marriage matters most for Latinas' access to authority in self-similar settings, specifically under coethnic superiors and alongside predominantly self-similar coworkers. These patterns suggest that married Latinas are not "playing against stereotyping," but rather conforming to strong cultural expectations that serve as prerequisites for holding power over and alongside group members. In such "protected niches" Latinas may be sheltered from the kind of statistical discrimination that is often found in the mainstream sector of the economy (Hum 2000). Second, and by contrast, marriage matters more consistently for Black women's access to authority in "outgroup" settings than it does in "ingroup" settings. This pattern suggests a different mechanism linking marriage and authority attainment than the one operating for Latinas. Specifically, it suggests that marriage allows Black women to play against common stereotypes of themselves as single (mothers), thereby distinguishing themselves as exceptions to the oppositional norms typically associated with Black women by dominant American culture.

Results for White women are instructive in their contrast to both Latinas and Black women. The main finding for White women is that they experience a marriage "penalty" rather than a marriage "bonus" with respect to positions of workplace power. The fact that this "penalty" is inconsistent, however, across work settings and levels of authority supports the idea that, unlike for women of color, the relationship between marriage and authority attainment for White women derives more from work-family tradeoffs than from employer stereotypes and coethnic expectations. More research, however, is clearly needed before we accept these inferences completely. In the meantime, our findings suggest that it might be more fruitful to focus on the symbolic, rather than material, importance of marriage among minority women who continue to struggle for equal opportunities in today's workplaces.

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NOTE

1. Bobo and Johnson (2000, p. 103) found evidence that Blacks rate themselves less favorably than Whites, Asians, and Latinos on the propensity to be on welfare and to have involvement with drugs and gangs.

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Appendix 1. Means and Standard Deviations (in Parentheses) for Variables Used in Analysis

	White Men (N = 512)	Black Men (N = 452)	Latinos (N = 527)	White Women (N = 565)	Black Women (N = 882)	Latinas (N = 535)
Managerial Status (0:1)	.203 (.403)	.101 (.302)	.102 (.304)	.120 (.325)	.053 (.224)	.037 (.190)
Supervisory Status (0:1)	.163 (.370)	.181 (.385)	.142 (.350)	.147 (.354)	.154 (.361)	.095 (.294)
Ascriptively Similar Superior (0:1)	.712 (.454)	.258 (.438)	.338 (.473)	.443 (.497)	.262 (.440)	.142 (.349)
Network Assistance (0:1)	.596 (.491)	.646 (.479)	.726 (.426)	.574 (.495)	.601 (.490)	.715 (.452)
Years of Education	14.3 (2.44)	13.2 (2.18)	10.2 (3.74)	13.9 (2.23)	13.2 (1.98)	10.5 (3.70)
Total Work Experience (years)	17.0 (11.0)	17.1 (10.4)	15.6 (10.8)	15.3 (10.1)	15.5 (10.8)	13.0 (10.6)
Prior Job-specific Experience (0:1)	.589 (.493)	.529 (.499)	.421 (.494)	.581 (.494)	.421 (.494)	.394 (.489)
Years with Employer	6.86 (8.17)	6.03 (6.99)	4.22 (4.45)	5.71 (6.30)	6.28 (7.37)	3.82 (4.71)
Ln (# of Workers in Establishment)	4.29 (1.97)	4.45 (2.00)	3.71 (1.66)	4.35 (1.88)	4.61 (2.00)	3.94 (1.69)
Public Sector (0:1)	.166 (.372)	.240 (.428)	.076 (.265)	.184 (.387)	.266 (.442)	.136 (.344)
Ln (Hours Worked per Week)	3.72 (.332)	3.66 (.306)	3.67 (.263)	3.54 (.409)	3.59 (.310)	3.58 (.340)
Professional/Technical Occup. (0:1)	.489 (.500)	.222 (.416)	.102 (.303)	.431 (.495)	.270 (.442)	.127 (.333)
Craft/Repair Occup. (0:1)	.261 (.439)	.366 (.482)	.582 (.493)	.075 (.265)	.097 (.296)	.370 (.483)
Service Occup. (0:1)	.099 (.300)	.268 (.433)	.211 (.408)	.133 (.339)	.238 (.426)	.254 (.435)
Sales and Clerical Occup. (0:1)	.144 (.351)	.138 (.346)	.104 (.306)	.355 (.478)	.388 (.488)	.248 (.432)
Married (0:1)	.455 (.498)	.329 (.471)	.533 (.499)	.476 (.500)	.212 (.409)	.344 (.475)
Children in Household (0:1)	.255 (.436)	.273 (.446)	.463 (.499)	.410 (.492)	.490 (.500)	.703 (.476)