

Born to Care (or Not Care): How Gender Role Attitudes Affect Occupation Choice

DR. CARLIANNE PATRICK

DR. HEATHER STEPHENS

DR. AMANDA WEINSTEIN



YOU MEAN YOU WANT TO BE A NURSE?



Mae Among the Stars

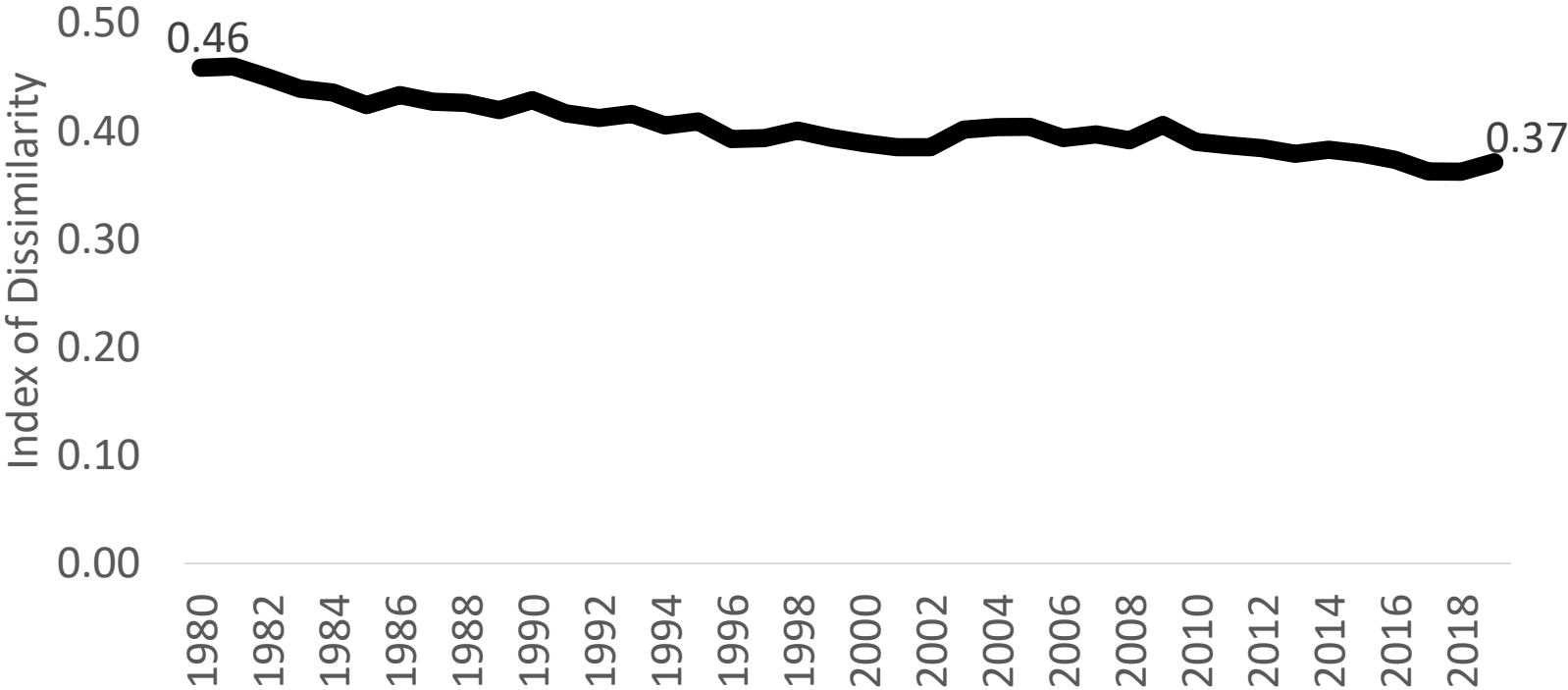
OCCUPATION CHOICE & THE GENDER WAGE GAP

- Occupation segregation explains about half of the gender wage gap (Blau and Kahn, 2017)
- Typically viewed through the lens of optimality rather than discrimination
- For example, choosing lower paying occupations that offer more flexibility to accommodate unpaid care work at home



DECLINING OCCUPATION SEGREGATION

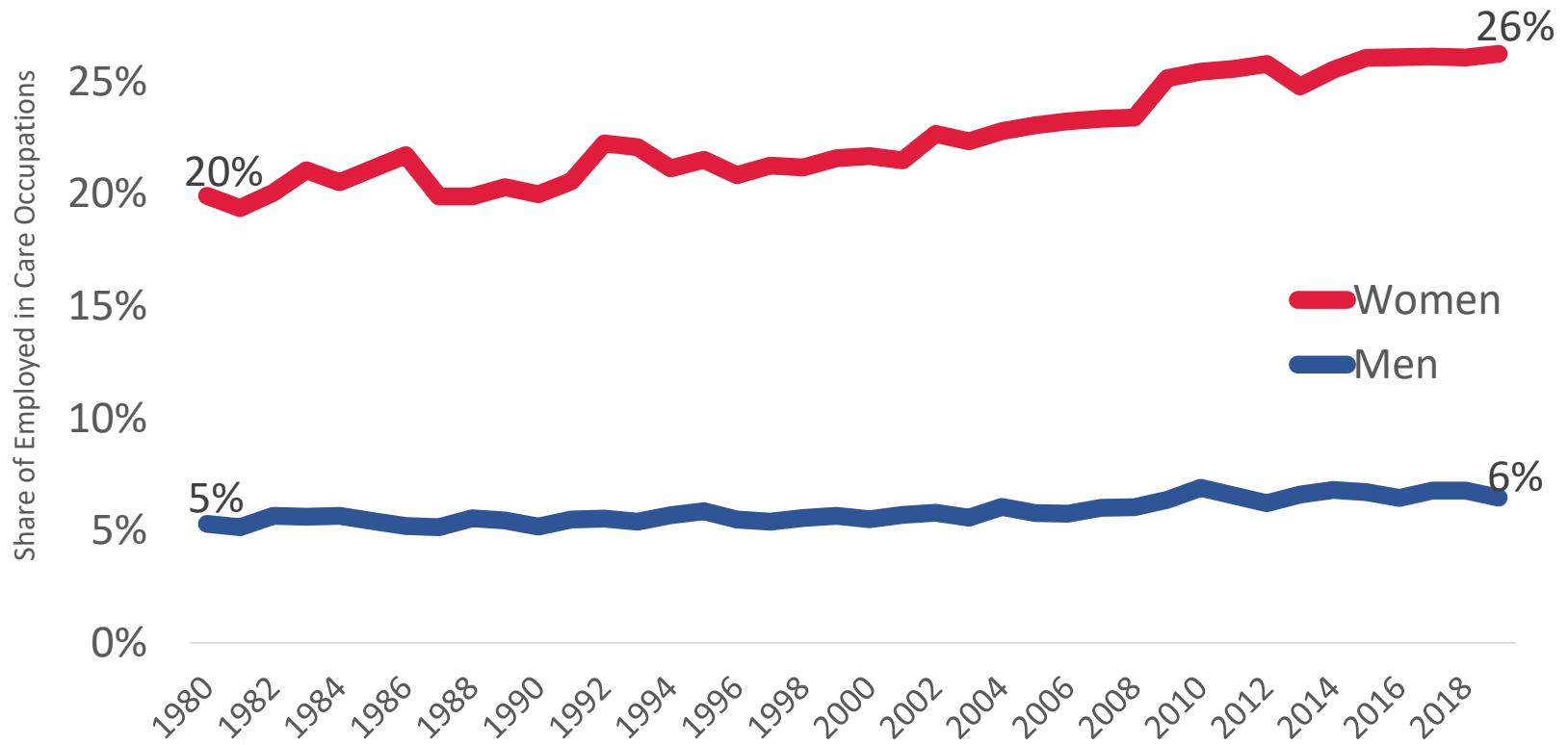
- The gender wage gap closed considerably as women increasingly entered into male-dominated fields (that pay more, on average)



Source: IPUMS Census/ACS

INCREASING SHARE OF WOMEN IN CARE WORK

- Despite declines in occupation segregation, women are increasingly entering into care work while men still avoid these occupations



Source: IPUMS Census/ACS

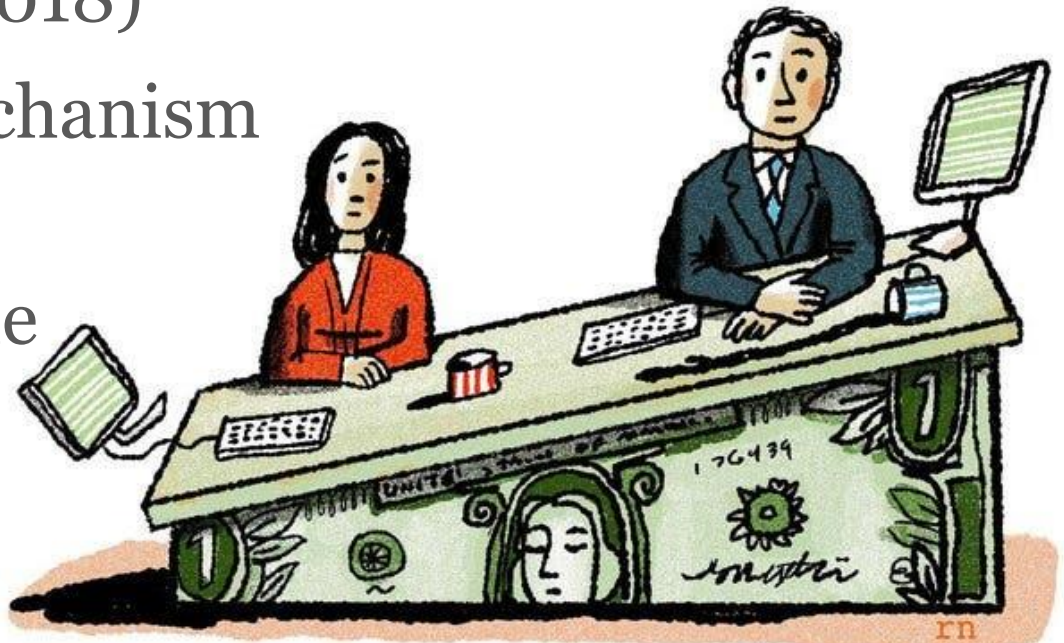
OCCUPATION CHOICE & THE GENDER WAGE GAP

- Female-dominated care work occupations are devalued because of cultural ideas on gender roles and women's work (England, 2005; England, Budig, and Folbre, 2002; Budig and Misra, 2010)
- Inflation adjusted wages for pediatricians and internal medicine doctors (female-dominated) have declined while wages of surgeons (heavily male-dominated) have increased (Hughes, 2020)



GENDER ROLE ATTITUDES & THE GENDER WAGE GAP

- Gender role attitudes in a woman's place of birth, “background sexism” affect her wages (Charles, Guryan, and Pan, 2018)
- Yet, the precise mechanism is not understood
- We consider the role background sexism plays in the care occupation choice



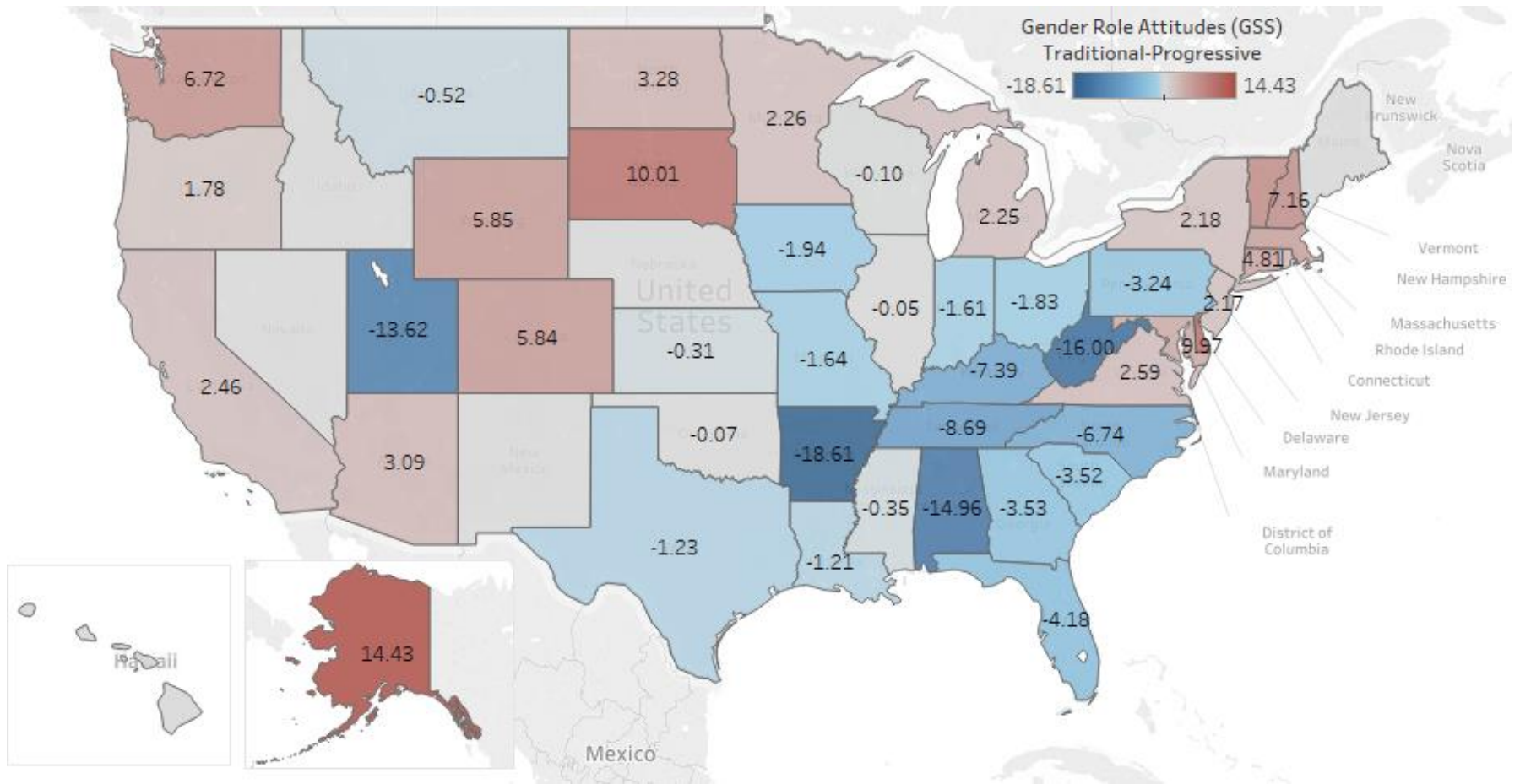
TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLE ATTITUDES

- Traditional gender role attitudes view women as more fit to take on the role of homemaker and caretaker → care work
- Gender role attitudes in society cause biases in parent's perceptions of children which influence children's self-perception and activity choice
(Eccles, Jacobs, Harold, 1990)

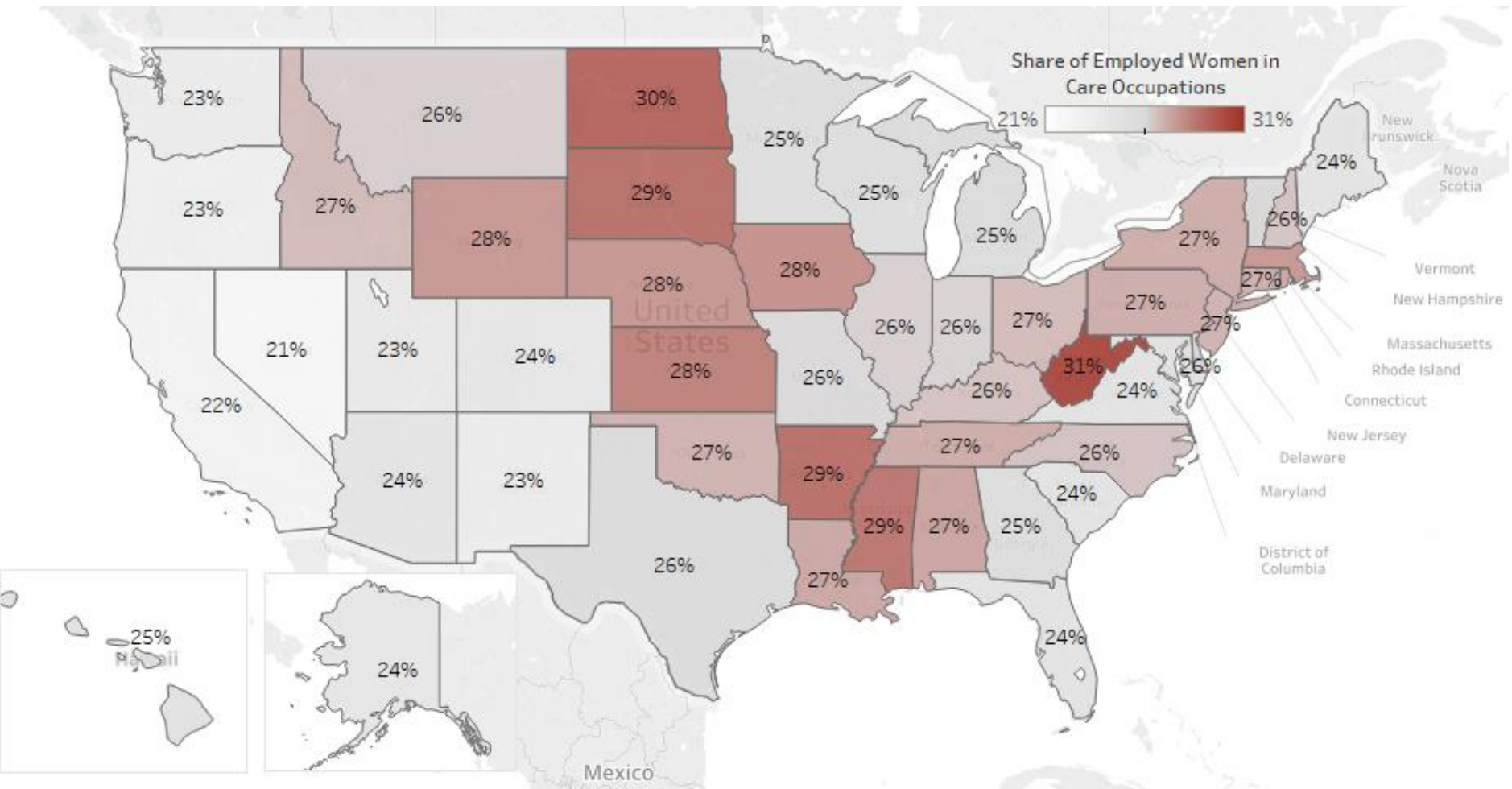


GENDER ROLE ATTITUDES (GSS)

- General Social Survey



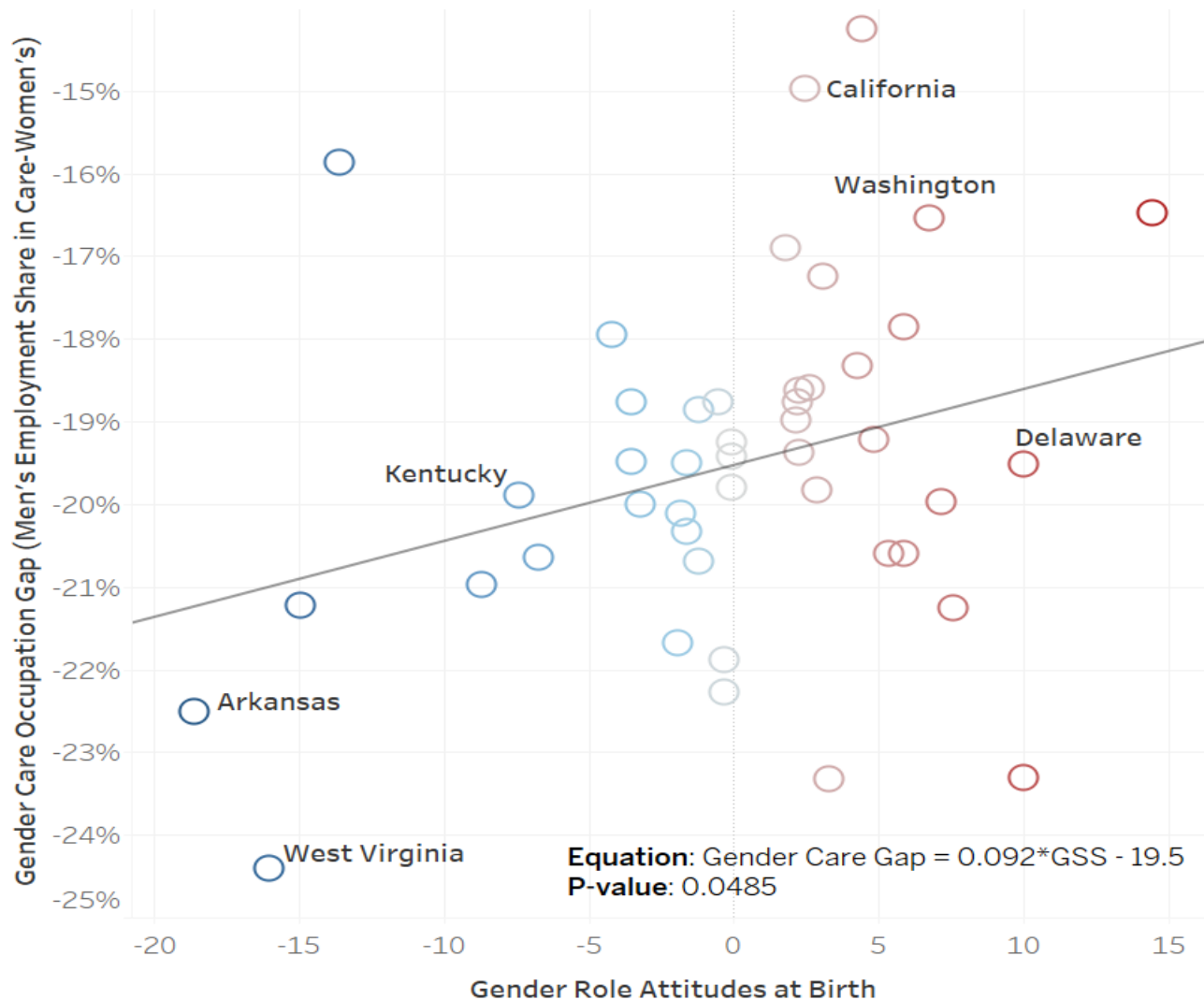
SHARE OF WOMEN IN CARE WORK (2018) BY BIRTH STATE



Source: ACS, 2018

THE GENDER CARE OCCUPATION GAP

- The gender care occupation gap (men-women) is smaller for individuals born in states with more progressive gender role attitudes



Source: General Social Survey, ACS 2000-2018

PROGRESSIVE GENDER ROLE ATTITUDES (MULTINOMIAL LOGIT)

| | Men | Women |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | 623,507 | 629,487 |
| CARE Occupation | 0.0003*** (0.0001) | -0.0004*** (0.0001) |
| NON-CARE Occupation | 0.0017*** (0.0001) | 0.0036*** (0.0001) |
| Not Employed | -0.0020*** (0.0001) | -0.0032*** (0.0001) |

PROGRESSIVE GENDER ROLE ATTITUDES (MULTINOMIAL LOGIT)

| | Men | Women |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | 623,507 | 629,487 |
| CARE Occupation | 0.0003*** (0.0001) | -0.0004*** (0.0001) |
| NON-CARE Occupation | 0.0017*** (0.0001) | 0.0036*** (0.0001) |
| Not Employed | -0.0020*** (0.0001) | -0.0032*** (0.0001) |

DECOMPOSING THE CARE OCCUPATION CHOICE

- Decompose the relative effects of childhood exposure to gender role attitudes on occupational choice
 - Through the channels of post-secondary education and major choices
 - Following Arcidiacono and Koedel (AEJ: Applied 2014)
- Data: Restricted-use NLSY 79 and 97



DECOMPOSITION

We can define the probability that an individual of gender g with individual characteristics x chooses a CARE occupation as

$$\begin{aligned}\Pr(y = 1|g, a) &= \sum_{x \in X} \sum_{m \in M} \sum_{c \in C} \Pr(y = 1|c, m, x, g, a) \Pr(c, m, x, g, a) \\ &= \sum_{x \in X} \sum_{m \in M} \sum_{c \in C} \Pr(y = 1|c, m, x, g, a) \Pr(c|m, x, g, a) \Pr(m|x, g, a) \Pr(x|g, a),\end{aligned}$$

where g is gender, a is a binary measure of gender roles in location at birth, x are individual characteristics, c is post-secondary education, and m is post-secondary major

DECOMPOSITION

- Suggests a natural way of decomposing the effects of college (c), major (m), and individual characteristics (x) on occupational choice:
 - Conditional on college major and individual background, **how much does the different way** that (men and) women in locations with more progressive gender role attitudes or more traditional gender role attitudes **choose post-secondary education** account for differences in occupational choice?
 - Conditional on individual background, **how much does the different way** that (men and) women in locations with more progressive gender role attitudes or more traditional gender role attitudes **choose their post-secondary major account** for differences in occupational choice?

DECOMPOSITION

- Step 1: Estimate the Probability of Choosing a CARE occupation
- Step 2: Multinomial logit estimation of post-secondary education choice (conditional on background, gender, attitudes, and major)
- Step 3: Estimate probability of choosing a CARE major (conditional on background, gender, and major)

DECOMPOSITION

- Step 4: Predict counterfactual occupational choices for individuals with childhood exposure to more traditional gender role attitudes based upon the (conditional) choices of those individuals with childhood exposure to more progressive gender role attitudes
 - Post-secondary choice
 - Post-secondary choice and major

THE GENDER CARE OCCUPATION GAP

Place of Birth, GSS

| | 1979 | | | 1997 | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| | Men | Women | Gap | Men | Women | Gap |
| | 3,084 | 3,072 | | 1,704 | 1,593 | |
| Actual CARE occupational choice | 0.034 | 0.160 | -0.126 | 0.039 | 0.151 | -0.111 |
| Predicted CARE occupational choice | 0.036 | 0.159 | -0.123 | 0.037 | 0.150 | -0.114 |
| Predicted counterfactual CARE occupational choices with alternative post-secondary sorting | 0.036 | 0.157 | -0.121 | 0.021 | 0.138 | -0.117 |
| <i>Predicted - Counterfactual</i> | 0.000 | 0.002 | -0.002 | 0.015 | 0.012 | 0.003 |
| Predicted counterfactual CARE occupational choices with alternative post-secondary and major sorting | 0.129 | 0.186 | -0.057 | 0.007 | 0.144 | -0.137 |
| <i>Predicted - Counterfactual</i> | -0.093 | -0.027 | -0.066 | 0.030 | 0.006 | 0.023 |

THE GENDER CARE OCCUPATION GAP

Place of Birth, GSS

| | 1979 | | | 1997 | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| | Men | Women | Gap | Men | Women | Gap |
| | 3,084 | 3,072 | | 1,704 | 1,593 | |
| Actual CARE occupational choice | 0.034 | 0.160 | -0.126 | 0.039 | 0.151 | -0.111 |
| Predicted CARE occupational choice | 0.036 | 0.159 | -0.123 | 0.037 | 0.150 | -0.114 |
| Predicted counterfactual CARE occupational choices with alternative post-secondary sorting | 0.036 | 0.157 | -0.121 | 0.021 | 0.138 | -0.117 |
| <i>Predicted - Counterfactual</i> | 0.000 | 0.002 | -0.002 | 0.015 | 0.012 | 0.003 |
| Predicted counterfactual CARE occupational choices with alternative post-secondary and major sorting | 0.129 | 0.186 | -0.057 | 0.007 | 0.144 | -0.137 |
| <i>Predicted - Counterfactual</i> | -0.093 | -0.027 | -0.066 | 0.030 | 0.006 | 0.023 |

THE GENDER CARE OCCUPATION GAP

Place of Birth, GSS

| | 1979 | | | 1997 | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| | Men | Women | Gap | Men | Women | Gap |
| | 3,084 | 3,072 | | 1,704 | 1,593 | |
| Actual CARE occupational choice | 0.034 | 0.160 | -0.126 | 0.039 | 0.151 | -0.111 |
| Predicted CARE occupational choice | 0.036 | 0.159 | -0.123 | 0.037 | 0.150 | -0.114 |
| Predicted counterfactual CARE occupational choices with alternative post-secondary sorting | 0.036 | 0.157 | -0.121 | 0.021 | 0.138 | -0.117 |
| Predicted - Counterfactual | 0.000 | 0.002 | -0.002 | 0.015 | 0.012 | 0.003 |
| Predicted counterfactual CARE occupational choices with alternative post-secondary and major sorting | 0.129 | 0.186 | -0.057 | 0.007 | 0.144 | -0.137 |
| Predicted - Counterfactual | -0.093 | -0.027 | -0.066 | 0.030 | 0.006 | 0.023 |

THE GENDER CARE OCCUPATION GAP

Place of Birth, GSS

| | 1979 | | | 1997 | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| | Men | Women | Gap | Men | Women | Gap |
| | 3,084 | 3,072 | | 1,704 | 1,593 | |
| Actual CARE occupational choice | 0.034 | 0.160 | -0.126 | 0.039 | 0.151 | -0.111 |
| Predicted CARE occupational choice | 0.036 | 0.159 | -0.123 | 0.037 | 0.150 | -0.114 |
| Predicted counterfactual CARE occupational choices with alternative post-secondary sorting | 0.036 | 0.157 | -0.121 | 0.021 | 0.138 | -0.117 |
| Predicted - Counterfactual | 0.000 | 0.002 | -0.002 | 0.015 | 0.012 | 0.003 |
| Predicted counterfactual CARE occupational choices with alternative post-secondary and major sorting | 0.129 | 0.186 | -0.057 | 0.007 | 0.144 | -0.137 |
| Predicted - Counterfactual | -0.093 | -0.027 | -0.066 | 0.030 | 0.006 | 0.023 |

DISCUSSION

- Progressive gender attitudes (1979 cohort) affected *major choice* such that more men (and women) entered care occupations *shrinking the gender care occupation gap*
 - Recently (1997 cohort), trends reversed as progressive gender attitudes affected *major choice* such that fewer men (and women) entered care occupations *widening the gap*
 - Men especially benefit from progressive gender attitudes with higher AFQT → higher likelihood of entering a non-care occupation
 - Over time, the care occupation gap has widened
-

AND THE GENDER WAGE GAP PERSISTS

Nevertheless,
~~She~~ ^{It} Persisted



CONCLUSION

- Background sexism - gender role attitudes that view women's role as caretakers - affect men and women's care occupation choice
- Over time, the gender care occupation gap has widened
- The choice of major seems to play a role in the gender care occupation gap

NEXT STEPS

- Other occupational groups with persistent segregation (e.g. the tech sector)
- Examine the intersectionality of race and gender in occupation choice
- The impact of care on the gender wage gap over time





THANK YOU

Dr. Carlianne Patrick, cpatrick@gsu.edu

Dr. Heather Stephens, heather.stephens@mail.wvu.edu

Dr. Amanda Weinstein, aweinstein@uakron.edu
