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# Whose Sons and Daughters are Treated Differently? (Re)Examining the Child Gender Literature Through the Lens of Race and Ethnicity\*

Bridget Hiedemann<sup>1</sup> & Jutta M. Joesch<sup>2</sup>

## I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years social scientists have accumulated evidence of differences in family structure, labor market outcomes, and child care in response to sons and daughters in the United States. Newspaper headlines such as "It's a Boy! Will You Marry Me?" and "It's a Girl! (Will the Economy Suffer?)"<sup>4</sup> provide the essence of the growing body of literature on the impact of child gender. For ease of exposition, we use the term "child gender literature" to refer to the set of studies that examine the relationship between child gender and family structure, labor market outcomes, or child care. As discussed in detail below, this literature demonstrates that the gender of a particular child or the gender composition of children within a family influences marriage, divorce, child custody, fertility, labor supply, hourly earnings, and the use of non-relative child care. These gender differences may also influence the economic and emotional well-being of girls relative to boys.<sup>5</sup> We examine whether the role of child gender in family structure, labor market outcomes, and child care varies by race and ethnicity in the United States.

One strand of the child gender literature provides evidence that girls face lower chances of living in two-parent families than do boys. For example, mothers of sons are significantly more likely to marry than are mothers of daughters.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, among women who take ultrasound tests during pregnancy, those who are pregnant with boys are more likely to be married when the child is born.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, women who become mothers outside of

marriage remain unmarried longer if the child is a daughter.8 In addition, several studies report lower risks of marital disruption in families with sons than in families with daughters. Furthermore, in the event of divorce, sons are more likely than daughters to live with their fathers. 10

Child gender also influences parents' decisions concerning the number and timing of additional children. For instance, if the first child is a daughter, according to one study, the duration between the first and second birth is longer. 11 Likewise, the gender composition of children influences decisions concerning subsequent fertility. 12

Moreover, child gender affects fathers' labor market outcomes and parents' child care decisions. According to one study, fathers increase their labor supply more in response to the birth of a son than the birth of a daughter, and fathers' hourly earnings increase more following the birth of a son than the birth of a daughter. 13 Moreover, the use of non-relative child care differs for sons and daughters.<sup>14</sup>

Scholars have attributed these gender differences to a variety of possible These causes include social norms that promote greater involvement of fathers in parenting sons than daughters, perceptions among parents concerning the importance of fathers to the social and emotional development of sons relative to daughters, higher marital satisfaction among parents of sons than among parents of daughters, differences in the costs of raising sons versus daughters, and gender bias. 15 Regardless of the cause, the economic and emotional implications of these gender differences are profound.

In a 2003 study, scholars Lundberg and Rose conclude that families with sons enjoy greater paternal earnings, more involved fathers, and greater marital stability than do families with daughters. 16 Higher risks of divorce in families with daughters than in those with sons may put girls at greater risk than boys of growing up in poverty and dropping out of high school.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, there is an alarming possibility that parents' gender bias could lead to unbalanced sex ratios in the United States as sex-selection technology becomes less expensive and more reliable.<sup>18</sup>

But *whose* sons and daughters are treated differently? Given the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States population<sup>19</sup> and differences in gender role ideology, actual gender roles, and gender role socialization by race and ethnicity,<sup>20</sup> the question arises as to whether the observed gender differences apply to all racial and ethnic groups in the United States. Accordingly, we examine the child gender literature through the lens of race and ethnicity. Our review indicates that the child gender literature provides not only extensive evidence of differential treatment of sons and daughters, but it also reveals striking differences by race and ethnicity, despite limited attention to Hispanic, Asian American, and Native American families. Our review thus highlights the importance of data collection efforts and analytical strategies that facilitate intersectional analyses.

We begin our discussion by providing reasons why the role of child gender in family behavior may vary by race and ethnicity. In particular, we discuss differences in gender role ideology, actual gender roles, and gender role socialization by race and ethnicity. Next, we review empirical studies of the relationship between child gender and family structure, labor market outcomes, and child care in the United States through the lens of race and ethnicity. The scope of our review is restricted to studies of marriage, divorce, child custody, fertility, labor market outcomes, and child care published within the last two decades.<sup>21</sup> We focus primarily on statistically significant relationships between child gender and the outcomes of interest. For each dimension of family behavior, we examine which racial and ethnic groups are included in the analysis, how race and ethnicity enter the analysis, how the results differ by race and ethnicity, and what questions remain for future work. Finally, we offer several conclusions. First, child gender influences family structure, fathers' labor market outcomes, and the use of non-relative child care. Second, the effects of child gender on the risk of divorce, subsequent fertility, and the use of non-relative child care vary by race and ethnicity. Third, the child gender literature pays inadequate attention to intersections of race and gender. Most notably, this literature provides limited evidence on the role of child gender in Asian American and Hispanic families and no evidence on the role of child gender in Native American families.

#### II. IMPORTANCE OF INTERSECTIONAL ANALYSIS

Before reviewing the child gender literature through the lens of race and ethnicity, we provide reasons why child gender may operate differently across racial and ethnic lines. In particular, we discuss differences in gender role ideology and differences in actual gender roles by race and ethnicity. These attitudinal and behavioral differences shed light on racial and ethnic differences in gender role socialization, the process whereby "individuals observe, imitate, and eventually internalize the specific attitudes and behaviors that the culture defines as gender appropriate by using other males and females as role models."22

According to Kane's review of the literature on racial and ethnic variations in gender-related attitudes, this body of literature provides mixed results concerning differences between black and white Americans.<sup>23</sup> In particular, several studies suggest that African Americans have more egalitarian attitudes toward gender than do whites,<sup>24</sup> while other studies report more traditional attitudes among African Americans, particularly among African American men. For example, one study finds support for the hypothesis that African American men hold more traditional views than do white men concerning the division of labor within the household.<sup>25</sup> However, Kane also notes that many scholars find no significant attitudinal differences between black and white Americans with regard to gender.<sup>26</sup>

With regard to behavioral differences by race, some scholars report more egalitarian gender roles in African American families than in white families.<sup>27</sup> If gender roles are, in fact, more egalitarian in African American families, gender norms may "not play a central role in the socialization of African American children."<sup>28</sup> But here, too, the literature provides mixed evidence. Other scholars argue that "racial discrimination has sometimes encouraged a compensatory emphasis on masculine dominance among men of color . . . in the form of . . . aggressive masculinity among young African-American men . . . or a reassertion of African-American masculinity . . ."<sup>29</sup> If masculine dominance characterizes gender roles in some black families, then gender role socialization may not be neutral in these families.

Relative to whites and African Americans, extant studies suggest that traditional gender role ideology is more prevalent among Hispanics, including Hispanic women.<sup>30</sup> However, the literature provides conflicting evidence concerning actual gender roles within Hispanic families. According to Kane's review, several scholars suggest that gender roles in Hispanic families are at least as egalitarian as those in white families, but others argue that "traditional machismo" sometimes compensates for discrimination experienced by Hispanic men.<sup>31</sup> A recent study of gender role socialization in Latino families suggests that Latino parents tend to promote traditional gender roles and place more restrictions on their daughters than on their sons.<sup>32</sup>

Literature on gender role ideology and actual gender roles is scant for racial and ethnic groups other than African Americans, Hispanics, and Whites. The limited evidence concerning gender attitudes among Asian Americans suggests that this group holds relatively traditional views.<sup>33</sup> One study reports evidence that Native Americans have significantly more egalitarian gender role ideology than their black and Hispanic counterparts.<sup>34</sup>

Despite inconsistencies across studies, this body of literature suggests that gender role socialization varies along racial and ethnic lines. For example, differential treatment of sons and daughters may prevail in Hispanic families,<sup>35</sup> while gender neutrality may typify African American families.<sup>36</sup> Evidence of differences in gender role ideology, actual gender

roles, and gender role socialization by race and ethnicity highlights the importance of examining whether the role of child gender in family decision making varies by race and ethnicity.

Feminist scholars argue that studies that focus exclusively on gender fail to capture the inequities experienced by women of color, while those that take an "additive" approach oversimplify their experiences.<sup>37</sup> In the context of the child gender literature, an empirical approach that relies on samples of white families, or one that relies on a more diverse sample, but fails to incorporate race and ethnicity into the analysis, essentializes gender by masking differences across groups. Empirical models that simply include controls for race and ethnicity impose an additive structure where, for example, the effect of a daughter relative to a son can simply be added to the effect of race or ethnicity such as black versus white. As discussed above, gender role ideology, actual gender roles, and gender role socialization vary in complex ways by race and ethnicity. In empirical studies of the relationship between child gender and family decision making, social scientists can address intersections of race and gender by stratifying their samples by race and ethnicity and estimating separate models for each racial and ethnic group. This approach allows the effects of all demographic and economic characteristics, including child gender, to vary by race and ethnicity.

## III. (RE)EXAMINATION OF THE CHILD GENDER LITERATURE

We turn now to our review of the child gender literature. Here, we examine the evidence concerning the relationship between child gender and several dimensions of family behavior: marriage, divorce, child custody, fertility, labor market outcomes, and child care. For each dimension of family behavior, we reexamine the role of child gender through the lens of race and ethnicity. Specifically, we explore which racial and ethnic groups are included in the analysis, how race and ethnicity enter the analysis, how

the results differ by race and ethnicity, and what questions remain for future work.

Marriage

Economists Dahl and Moretti examine the influence of child gender on a wide range of family outcomes, including several measures of marital status, most notably whether a woman has ever married and shotgun marriage. 38, 39 The authors present the results of a marriage model estimated with data from on all eighteen- to forty-year-old mothers with children under the age of twelve living at home in the 1940–2000 Censuses.<sup>40</sup> The model includes various measures of the gender composition of children within a family. 41 Results indicate, for example, that the probability of marriage is 2.2 percent lower among women whose first child is a daughter than among women whose first child is a son. 42 Similarly, the probability of marriage is 4.9 percent lower among women whose first two children are daughters than among those whose first two children are sons and 4.7 percent lower among women whose first three children are daughters than among those whose first three children are sons.<sup>43</sup> Interestingly, among women with exactly two children, the probability of marriage is higher for families with one son and one daughter than for families with only sons.<sup>44</sup> However, similar patterns do not apply in larger families. For women with three or more children, the presence of at least one daughter is generally associated with a reduced probability of marriage.45 The reported model specifications do not control for any characteristics other than child gender, but the authors report that controlling for maternal characteristics does not have a material effect on the results.<sup>46</sup>

With data from the 1989–1994 California Birth Statistical Master File, Dahl and Moretti examine the relationship between child gender and shotgun marriage.<sup>47</sup> They estimate models of marital status at the time of delivery using a sample of first-time mothers. In addition to child gender, their most illuminating models account for the use of an ultrasound test during pregnancy. These models enable the authors to examine whether

expecting a son affects the probability of marriage differently than expecting a daughter. Specifically, Dahl and Moretti present models that include child gender, the use of an ultrasound test during pregnancy, and an interaction between child gender and the use of an ultrasound test. 48 They estimate marriage models with and without demographic controls and with and without weights for the predicted probability that the mother was unmarried at conception. The demographic controls include race and Hispanic origin. Likewise, the predicted probabilities of marriage at the time of conception depend on race and ethnicity.<sup>49</sup> Dahl and Moretti's results indicate that sons increase the probability that mothers are married at the time of delivery by 3.6 percent to 5.5 percent.<sup>50</sup>

Using data from the 1985-1993 waves of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, Lundberg and Rose examine the role of child gender in transitions to marriage following a non-marital birth.<sup>51</sup> In particular, they estimate marriage models with the subsample of women who became mothers prior to their first marriage. Controlling for the mother's age, education, and race (white or nonwhite) as well as the child's age and parity, the results indicate that women with sons are more likely to marry than are women with daughters. Relative to daughters, having sons increases the overall probability of marriage by 35-40 percent and the probability of marriage to the child's father by almost 60 percent.<sup>52</sup>

These models do not allow for the possibility that the role of child gender varies by race, although the samples used for these analyses include all mothers regardless of race or ethnicity and the implications hold even after controlling for race and ethnicity. Sons may indeed increase the probability of marriage, shotgun marriage, and marriage following a non-marital birth for women of all races and ethnicities. Alternatively, estimating separate models for each racial and ethnic group might reveal different patterns by race and ethnicity. Presumably, the broad scope of Dahl and Moretti's 2004 study<sup>53</sup> and the relatively small sample used by Lundberg and Rose<sup>54</sup> prevented these authors from examining interactions between race or ethnicity and gender in this context. Thus, whether the mother's race and ethnicity affect the role of child gender in parents' marriage decisions is a question for future work.

Divorce and Child Custody

Morgan, Lye, and Condran examine the relationship between child gender and the risk of marital separation.<sup>55</sup> For this analysis, they use data from the June 1980 Current Population Survey on married couples whose first birth occurred during the marriage.<sup>56</sup> They estimate separate models of marital separation for white and black women. Their results indicate that white women with sons are less likely to experience marital separation than are those with daughters.<sup>57</sup> Although they describe the results for black women as "very similar," they only report the results for white women in light of the limited number of nonwhites in their sample.

In their extensive study of child gender and family structure, Dahl and Moretti also explore the relationship between child gender and the risk of divorce or separation. Again they use data from the 1940-2000 United States Censuses for their analysis of current divorce or separation. 59,60 With the exception of widows, the sample includes all households with eighteento forty-year-old parents who have been married at least once and who have children under the age of twelve living at home. 61 Again, the authors use various measures of the gender composition of children in a family. In general, families whose oldest child is a daughter face significantly higher risks of divorce or separation than those whose oldest child is a son. For example, families whose oldest child is a girl experience a 0.9 percent greater risk of divorce or separation than do families whose first child is a boy. 62 Families whose two oldest children are girls face a 2.3 percent greater risk of divorce or separation than do families whose two oldest children are boys.<sup>63</sup> Families whose first three or four children are girls respectively face 5.4 percent and 7.4 percent greater risks of divorce or separation than those whose first three or four children are boys.<sup>64</sup> When the authors control for demographic characteristics including race (white,

black, or other), the magnitude of these relationships falls, but the overall patterns persist. 65 Similar to the findings for marriage, among families with two children, the risk of divorce or separation is lower for families with one son and one daughter than for families with only sons; this result holds with and without demographic controls such as race. 66 However, similar patterns do not apply in larger families. In fact, in families with at least three children, the presence of at least one daughter is often associated with an increased risk of divorce or separation.<sup>67</sup>

In addition, Dahl and Moretti present separate models of divorce or separation by race.<sup>68</sup> In particular, they present results for white, black, Asian American, and other parents. They only report the differences between families with all daughters and those with all sons. 69 Nevertheless, the results are informative. White parents with daughters face significantly higher risks of divorce or separation than do white parents with sons. 70 For black parents, daughters are also associated with higher risks of divorce or separation. The magnitude of the relationship between child gender and the risk of divorce or separation is larger for black parents than for white parents.<sup>71</sup> However, this relationship is not statistically significant for black families with fewer than three children. Among parents classified as other than white, black, or Asian American, daughters are associated with significantly higher risks of divorce or separation in families with at least one child; however, the relationship is not statistically significant when the analysis is restricted to families with at least two or three children.<sup>72</sup> In contrast to the other three groups, the results for Asian American parents suggest that the presence of daughters relative to sons is associated with lower risks of divorce or separation. However, the relationship is statistically significant only for families with two or more children.<sup>73</sup>

While Morgan, Lye, and Condran 74 and Dahl and Moretti 75 measure the risk of marital disruption in terms of actual separation and/or divorce, Katzev, Warner, and Acock<sup>76</sup> focus on women's perceived risk of separation or divorce. For their analysis, Katzev, Warner, and Acock use a

sample of married women with children between the ages of three and eighteen from the 1987-88 National Survey of Families and Households.<sup>77</sup> Their results indicate that the presence of at least one son reduces women's perceived risk of marital disruption. Although their sample includes white, African American, Hispanic, and other women, race and ethnicity do not enter their analysis.<sup>78</sup>

Mott explores paternal presence rather than legal marital status.<sup>79</sup> He examines the relationship between child gender and the presence of the biological father in the home in 1988 with a sample of five- to nine-year-old children whose mothers participated in the 1979–1988 waves of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth.<sup>80</sup> He estimates separate models for white and black children, and these models involve different configurations of paternal absence. The models control for a wide range of maternal and family characteristics, and the results indicate that white boys face higher probabilities of living with their biological fathers than do white girls.<sup>81</sup> Although the relationship between child gender and the biological father's presence is not statistically significant for black children, the signs of the coefficients suggest the opposite pattern for black households: black girls may face greater probabilities of living with their biological fathers than do black boys.

Dahl and Moretti examine the effect of child gender not only on the risk of divorce but also on the likelihood of paternal custody following divorce. Again, their analysis relies on data from the 1940–2000 United States Censuses. The sample includes all households with eighteen- to forty-year-old divorced or separated parents who have children under the age of twelve living at home. Dahl and Moretti measure paternal custody in terms of the children's presence in the father's home at the time of the census. Thus, as they note, their measure of paternal custody may encompass visitation rights and joint custody as well as sole paternal custody. Again, they use various measures of child gender depending on the number of children. Their results indicate that fathers are more likely to

have custody of sons than daughters, and that the effect of child gender is more pronounced for small families. For example, among families with one child, divorced fathers are 22.4 percent more likely to have custody if the child is a son than a daughter.<sup>85</sup> Among families with three children of the same sex, divorced fathers are 11.0 percent more likely to have custody of sons than daughters. 86 Moreover, divorced fathers are more likely to have custody in the case of all sons than in the case of a mix of sons and When the authors control for demographic characteristics including race (white, black, and other), the results are similar.<sup>87</sup>

Additionally, Dahl and Moretti present separate models of paternal custody for white, black, Asian American, and other parents. 88 Here they report only the differences between families with all daughters and those For all races except Asian Americans, fathers are significantly more likely to have custody of sons than daughters. 89 Among Asian Americans, however, the results suggest that fathers are more likely to have custody of sons than daughters in one-child families and more likely to have custody of daughters than sons in larger families. 90 However, none of the results for Asian Americans approaches statistical significance.

Overall, parents of sons experience greater marital stability than do parents of daughters, and boys are more likely than girls to live with their biological fathers. 91 However, careful examination suggests that these patterns do not apply universally. For example, in Asian American families with at least two children, parents of daughters face significantly lower risks of divorce or separation than do parents of sons. 92 According to Dahl and Moretti, in the event of divorce, Asian American fathers with at least two daughters are not significantly more likely to have custody of their children than are their counterparts with sons.<sup>93</sup>

Mott's analysis reveals another possible exception to the overall patterns discussed above. 94 Although the relationship between child gender and the presence of the biological father is not statistically significant in black families, Mott's results suggest that black girls may be more likely than black boys to live with their fathers. As demonstrated by these examples and discussed by Dahl and Moretti, joint analyses of white, black, Asian American, and other households may mask different patterns across racial and ethnic lines. Mott's Mott's and Dahl and Moretti's findings thus highlight the importance of conducting separate analyses by race and ethnicity. However, the role of race and gender in divorce and custody for recent and current cohorts of parents remains a question for further research, because Dahl and Moretti's analyses combine sixty years of data. According to Brewer, Conrad, and King, "[t]he social construction of race, class, and gender occurs in a specific time and place."

## **Fertility**

Teachman and Schollaert examine the relationship between child gender and the timing of second and third births. 101 Using a sample of twenty-fiveto forty-four-year-old mothers from the 1973, 1976, and 1982 waves of the National Survey of Family Growth, they estimate separate models of fertility for white and black women. 102 The authors find that the interval between first and second births is significantly shorter for white and black mothers with sons than for their counterparts with daughters. 103 In light of Morgan, Lye, and Condran's results concerning child gender and marital separation, <sup>104</sup> Teachman and Schollaert speculate that "having a boy may speed the timing of second births by increasing the likelihood of being married." In fact, among mothers with only one child, adding a control for marital status eliminates the gender effect for whites and decreases the gender effect for blacks. 106 For both white and black mothers, the interval between second and third births depends on the gender composition of the first two children. 107 Women with one son and one daughter wait longer to have a third child than do those with only sons or only daughters. 108 Teachman and Schollaert conclude that the effect of gender composition is more pronounced among black women. 109

Angrist and Evans present evidence regarding the relationship between the gender composition of children and subsequent fertility. 110 For this

analysis, they use data on twenty-one- to thirty-five-year-old women with at least two children from the 1980 and 1990 Census Public Use Micro Samples. 111 For each year of data, they estimate the relationship between the gender composition of the first two children and subsequent fertility among all women and among married women. Controlling for demographic characteristics including race and ethnicity (white, black, Hispanic, or other), Angrist and Evans estimate that women with two sons or two daughters are 6 to 7 percent more likely to have a third child than are women with one son and one daughter. 112 Results based on 1980 data further indicate that women with two daughters and no sons are more likely to have a third child than are women with two sons and no daughters. 113

Dahl and Moretti provide additional evidence concerning the relationship between the gender composition of children and subsequent fertility. 114 As with their marriage, divorce, and custody models, they use data from the 1940-2000 United States Censuses for their analysis of subsequent fertility. 115 The sample includes all households with eighteen- to forty-yearold mothers who are currently married with children under the age of twelve living at home. Their results are consistent with those of Teachman and Schollaert 116 and Angrist and Evans. 117 In particular, Dahl and Moretti report a slight but statistically significantly lower likelihood of additional children among families whose first child is a daughter than among those whose first child is a son. 118 The authors attribute this finding to the higher risk of divorce faced by mothers of daughters than mothers of sons and the overall lower fertility levels among women whose first marriage ends in divorce. 119 In families with at least two children, parents are more likely to have additional children if all of the children are daughters than if all are sons. For example, among families with at least two children, the presence of daughters relative to sons increases the probability of subsequent fertility by over 2 percent. 120 This result stands with and without controls for maternal characteristics such as race, including white, black, or other. 121 Also, like the findings of the study by Teachman and Schollaert and the

study by Angrist and Evans, Dahl and Moretti's findings suggest that a mixed gender composition generally reduces subsequent fertility. 122

Dahl and Moretti also present separate fertility models for white, black, Asian American, and other parents. Here the authors report only the differences between families whose first two children are daughters and those whose first two children are sons. For all four racial and ethnic groups, the estimated effect of child gender on subsequent fertility matches the overall patterns. Specifically, the presence of daughters relative to sons increases the likelihood of subsequent fertility; however, only the results for white and Asian American mothers attain statistical significance. The authors find that the presence of daughters relative to sons increases the probability of subsequent fertility by 2.1 percent for white mothers and by 16.9 percent for Asian American mothers.

Collectively, the results presented by Teachman and Schollaert, Angrist and Evans, and Dahl and Moretti provide two insights concerning fertility in families with at least two children. First, a mixed gender composition reduces the likelihood of subsequent fertility. Second, the presence of daughters relative to sons increases the likelihood of subsequent fertility. Separate analyses by race reveal stronger effects of gender balance among black women than among white women, according to Teachman and Schollaert, and particularly large effects of daughters relative to sons among Asian Americans, according to Dahl and Moretti. Qualitatively, the results are similar for all races examined; however, the quantitative differences highlight the importance of conducting separate analyses by race and ethnicity. Since Dahl and Moretti's separate analyses by race combine sixty years of data, questions remain about recent and current cohorts. For example, among Asian Americans, has the effect of child gender on subsequent fertility diminished over time?

Labor Market Outcomes and Child Care

Using data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) in their 2002 paper, Lundberg and Rose explore the relationship between child

gender and two paternal labor market outcomes: hourly wage rates and annual hours of work. 129 In light of the "significant underreporting of children for nonwhites but not for whites in the PSID retrospective data," Lundberg and Rose restrict their sample to white men between the ages of eighteen and sixty years. 130 Among men born in 1950 or earlier, the authors find that those with sons earn significantly higher wages than those with daughters. In particular, their results suggest that men's wages increase by about 3 percent more for each son than for each daughter. 131 Relative to men who have daughters as eldest children, those who have sons as eldest children earn about 5.3 percent higher wages.<sup>132</sup> However, child gender is not significantly related to wages for men born after 1950. 133

Lundberg and Rose report limited evidence for the older cohort and extensive evidence for the younger cohort that child gender influences fathers' labor supply. 134 For example, among the younger cohort, their results indicate that men's annual labor supply increases by about forty hours more in response to a son than a daughter. 135 For this cohort, men whose oldest child is male work about sixty-nine hours more per year than those whose oldest child is female. 136

In two different studies, Joesch, Hiedemann, and Rose<sup>137</sup> investigate the relationship between child gender and the use of non-relative child care. 138 With data from the main parent study and the low-income substudy of the 1990 National Child Care Survey, they explore whether the use of regularly scheduled, non-relative care for the youngest child in the family depends on the child's gender. In households with non-Hispanic white mothers and a youngest child between three and six years, girls are significantly more likely than boys to attend non-relative care. 139 The magnitude of the gender difference varies by household; among households with average characteristics, daughters are 11 percentage points more likely than sons to attend non-relative care. 140,141 Joesch, Hiedemann, and Rose report the opposite pattern for households with Hispanic mothers and youngest children between three and six years. 142 Specifically, among Hispanic households with average characteristics, sons are 30 percentage points more likely than daughters to attend non-relative care.<sup>143</sup> For households with non-Hispanic black mothers, the relationship between child gender and the use of non-relative care for three- to six-year-old youngest children is not statistically significant.<sup>144</sup> However, in households with children under three years, child gender significantly influences the use of non-relative care in households with black mothers but not in households with white or Hispanic mothers.<sup>145</sup> For the average household with a black mother and a child under three years, sons are 15 percentage points more likely than daughters to attend non-relative care.<sup>146</sup>

In summary, Lundberg and Rose present evidence that white fathers' labor market outcomes depend on child gender. Among men born in 1950 or earlier, fathers of sons earn more per hour than their counterparts with daughters. Among men born after 1950, fathers of sons work more than their counterparts with daughters. Data limitations prevented Lundberg and Rose from examining the relationship between child gender and labor market outcomes for other racial and ethnic groups. 148 Joesch, Hiedemann, and Rose present evidence that the relationship between child gender and the use of non-relative child care varies, depending on the age of the child and the race and ethnicity of the mother. 149 Preschool-aged daughters are more likely than sons to receive non-relative care in households with white mothers, but the opposite pattern prevails in households with Hispanic mothers. 150 Among infants and toddlers, sons are more likely than daughters to attend non-relative care in households with black mothers. In light of the striking differences by race and ethnicity in the effect of child gender on the use of non-relative care, future work may examine whether the role of child gender in fathers' and mothers' labor market outcomes varies by race and ethnicity. 151

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The following discussion summarizes the available evidence concerning the role of child gender in white, black, Asian American, and Hispanic families in the United States and considers the implications, as well as the limitations, of our analysis. Child gender influences family structure, paternal labor market outcomes, and the use of non-relative child care. The role of child gender varies by race and ethnicity. However, in light of the racial and ethnic differences in certain dimensions of family behavior, our review reveals inadequate attention to intersections of race and gender, particularly limited evidence on the role of child gender in Asian American and Hispanic households, and an absence of Native Americans from this literature.

Collectively, the literature provides extensive evidence concerning gender differences in white families. Boys are more likely than girls to live in two-parent households and paternal earnings are higher in families with sons than in families with daughters. 152 Given the increased risk of poverty faced by children of divorced parents, 153 these findings suggest that white girls may face higher risks of poverty than do white boys. Moreover, children in divorced families face higher risks of dropping out of high school than do children who grow up with intact families. 154 Thus, not only may differential treatment of sons and daughters in white families lead to differences in childhood poverty rates, but it may also contribute to gender differences in human capital and, in turn, labor market opportunities later in life.

Other gender differences observed in white families relate to paternal custody and the use of non-relative child care. Perhaps not surprisingly, paternal custody following divorce is more likely in families with sons than in families with daughters. 155 This result may reflect gender bias on the part of parents or a desire to provide male role models for sons. With regard to child care, boys are more likely than girls to receive all of their care from relatives during the preschool years. 156 This gender difference is large and statistically significant, but the causes and the implications of this difference are unclear. While the finding may indicate gender bias, it may also reflect parents' responses to their children's developmental needs. For example, the child development literature provides evidence of developmental differences between boys and girls. Data limitations prevented the authors from examining the quality of care received by children. Thus, their findings do not indicate whether gender differences in the use of non-relative care put boys or girls at a disadvantage.

Child gender also influences behavior in black families. As in white families, the presence of sons relative to daughters reduces the risk of divorce or separation.<sup>159</sup> Thus, African American girls may face higher risks of growing up in poverty and dropping out of high school than their male counterparts. The finding, albeit statistically insignificant, that paternal presence is more likely in black families with daughters than in black families with sons weakens these conclusions.<sup>160</sup> Additionally, scholars have not yet explored whether paternal earnings depend on child gender in black families.

Black families exhibit different child care patterns than white families. As discussed above, white girls are more likely than their male counterparts to attend non-relative care during the preschool years. <sup>161</sup> As infants and toddlers, black boys are more likely than their female counterparts to attend non-relative care. <sup>162</sup> Again, data limitations prevented the authors from concluding whether this gender difference puts boys or girls at a disadvantage.

The literature reviewed here sheds little light on the role of child gender for other racial and ethnic groups. In contrast to white and black families, the presence of daughters may reduce the risk of divorce or separation in Asian American families. While white parents are more likely to rely exclusively on relative care for their sons than for their daughters during the preschool years, the opposite pattern holds in Hispanic families. The limited evidence concerning the role of child gender in Asian American and

Hispanic families prevents us from drawing strong conclusions concerning these racial and ethnic groups.

Although the role of child gender varies by race and ethnicity, the presence of two daughters relative to two sons consistently increases the likelihood of subsequent fertility. 165 The magnitude and the statistical significance of this relationship differ by race, but the consistency of the pattern suggests a widespread preference for sons. Similarly, data from 2000 and 2003 Gallup Poll surveys reveal "a slight preference for a daughter" among women and "an overwhelming preference for a son" among men. 166 Thus, Dahl and Moretti attribute some of their findings to gender bias on the part of fathers. However, the prevalence of this bias varies by race and ethnicity. For example, blacks and Hispanics are significantly more likely than whites to state a preference for a son.<sup>168</sup> Gender bias on the part of parents could lead to unbalanced sex ratios in the United States as sex-selection technology becomes less expensive and more reliable. 169 If gender bias is, in fact, more pronounced among blacks and Hispanics, these racial and ethnic groups may ultimately face higher risks than whites of unbalanced sex ratios.

The complex interactions between race or ethnicity and gender discussed in this review highlight not only the importance of using empirical methods that capture differences by race or ethnicity, but also the need to examine further the role of child gender in minority populations. Small sample sizes for nonwhites have limited the opportunities for intersectional analysis. For example, after restricting the 1990 National Child Care Survey data to households meeting reasonable criteria based on the age of the child, the identity of the survey respondent, and the availability of information, Hiedemann, Joesch, and Rose obtained a sample with relatively few black and Hispanic households. Thus, their working paper<sup>170</sup> reports results for white, black, and Hispanic mothers but their published paper<sup>171</sup> reports only the results for white mothers. Data limitations prevented the authors from examining the role of child gender in, say, Asian American families' child care decisions.

The importance of intersectional analysis combined with the limited data for Hispanic, Asian American, and Native American families underscores the need to over-sample individuals from these minority populations when collecting survey data. The U.S. population includes almost thirty-three million individuals who identify themselves as Hispanic, almost eleven million individuals who identify themselves as Asian American or Pacific Islander, and over four million individuals who identify themselves as American Indian or Alaska Native. Certainly more data from these underrepresented groups can be obtained using appropriate probabilistic sampling methods.

Our review emphasizes the importance of data collection efforts and analytical strategies that facilitate intersectional analysis. In particular, we urge survey researchers to over-sample racial and ethnic minorities in order to obtain large samples of African American, Asian American, Native American, and Hispanic households. In addition, we urge social scientists to use empirical methods that allow the role of child gender to vary by race and ethnicity. However, we recognize that separate analyses by race and ethnicity cannot capture the cultural differences within each racial or ethnic group. For example, one study of attitudes among Hispanic Americans reveals more traditional gender role ideology among Cubans than among Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans, <sup>174</sup> but another analysis uncovers no significant differences in attitudes toward gender among these three groups. <sup>175</sup>

Gender may also interact with race and ethnicity as well as with social class. Within the African American community, for example, traditional gender role ideology may be positively related to social class identity.<sup>176</sup> Traditional gender roles often signify "respectability, heterosexuality, and success" among African Americans, particularly among those who have recently joined the middle class.<sup>177</sup> These caveats concerning heterogeneity

within racial and ethnic groups notwithstanding, greater attention to intersections of race and gender will enhance our understanding of the role of child gender in family decision making.

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<sup>11</sup> Jay D. Teachman & Paul T. Schollaert, *Gender of Children and Birth Timing*, 26 DEMOGRAPHY 411, 411 (1989).

<sup>12</sup> Id.; Joshua D. Angrist & William N. Evans, Children and Their Parents' Labor Supply: Evidence from Exogenous Variation in Family Size, 88 Am. ECON. REV. 450 (1998); Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5, at 3.

<sup>13</sup> Shelly Lundberg & Elaina Rose, *The Effects of Sons and Daughters on Men's Labor Supply and Wages*, 84 REV. ECON. & STAT. 251, 251 (2002).

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<sup>20</sup> Kathleen M. Blee & Ann R. Tickamyer, *Racial Differences in Men's Attitudes About Women's Gender Roles*, 57 J. OF MARRIAGE & FAM. 21 (1995); Richard J. Harris & Juanita M. Firestone, *Changes in Predictors of Gender Role Ideologies Among Women: A Multivariate Analysis*, 38 SEX ROLES 239 (1998); SHIRLEY A. HILL, AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN: SOCIALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN FAMILIES (1999); Shirley A. Hill & Joey Sprague, *Parenting in Black and White Families: The Interaction of Gender with Race and Class*, 13 GENDER & SOC'Y 480 (1999); Emily W. Kane, *Racial and Ethnic Variations in Gender-Related Attitudes*, 26 ANN. REV. SOC. 419 (2000); Marcela Raffaelli & Lenna L. Ontai, *Gender Socialization in Latino/a Families: Results from Two Retrospective Studies*, 50 SEX ROLES 287 (2004); Richard J. Harris, Juanita M. Firestone & Mary Bollinger, *Gender Role Attitudes: Native Americans in Comparative Perspective*, 28 FREE INQUIRY IN CREATIVE SOC. 63 (2000).

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- Kane, supra note 20, at 419, 422, 424.
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- <sup>26</sup> Kane, *supra* note 20, at 424.
- Hill & Sprague, supra note 20, at 481.
- Hill, supra note 20, at 108.
- Kane, supra note 20, at 422.
- Kane. supra note 20, at 424: Harris & Firestone. supra note 20, at 245.
- Kane, supra note 20, at 422.
- <sup>32</sup> Raffaelli & Ontai, *supra* note 20.
- <sup>33</sup> Kane, *supra* note 20, at 420 n.1.
- <sup>34</sup> Harris, Firestone, & Bollinger, *supra* note 20, at 63.
- <sup>35</sup> Raffaelli & Ontai, *supra* note 20.
- <sup>36</sup> Hill, *supra* note 20.
- <sup>37</sup> Kimberle Crenshaw, Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color, 43 STAN. L. REV. 1241, 1242-44 (1991); Rose M. Brewer, Cecilia A. Conrad & Mary C. King, The Complexities and Potential of Theorizing Gender, Caste, Race, and Class, 8 FEMINIST ECON. 3 (2002).
- In this context, the term shotgun marriage refers to a marriage that occurs between the conception and delivery of a woman's first child. Dahl and Moretti also examine the relationship between child gender and women's likelihood of remarriage, but the effects are small and mostly insignificant.

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<sup>39</sup> Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5, at 2.
40 Id. at 2, 18.
<sup>41</sup> Id.
<sup>42</sup> Id. at 18.
<sup>43</sup> Id. at 18–19.
Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
<sup>45</sup> Id.
<sup>46</sup> Id.
<sup>47</sup> Id. at 19.
<sup>48</sup> Id.
<sup>49</sup> Id.
<sup>51</sup> Lundberg & Rose, supra note 5.
Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5, at 1.
<sup>54</sup> Lundberg & Rose, supra note 5.
   Morgan, Lye & Condran, supra note 9, at 110.
   Id. at 113.
<sup>57</sup> Id. at 110.
<sup>58</sup> Id. at 119.
<sup>59</sup> For this analysis, Dahl and Moretti measure divorce or separation in terms of current
marital status. With data from the 1940-1980 Censuses and the 1980, 1985, 1990, and
1995 Current Population Survey Marriage and Fertility Supplements, Dahl and Moretti
explore two alternative measures of divorce, namely whether a respondent's first
marriage ended in divorce and whether a remarried respondent's second marriage ended
in divorce. Their results are similar for all data sources and definitions of divorce. Thus,
in the interest of space, we restrict our attention to the measure of divorce based on
current marital status.
   Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5, at 9.
61 Id. at 10.
<sup>62</sup> Id. at 11.
<sup>63</sup> Id.
<sup>64</sup> Id.
<sup>65</sup> Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
<sup>66</sup> Id.
<sup>67</sup> Id.
^{68} Id. at 12.
Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
<sup>71</sup> Id.
<sup>72</sup> Id.
<sup>74</sup> Morgan, Lye & Condran, supra note 9.
Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5, at 1.
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<sup>76</sup> Katzev, Warner, & Acock, *supra* note 9.

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<sup>77</sup> Id.
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80 Id. at 98.
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<sup>82</sup> Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5, at 2.
83 Id. at 9.
84 Id. at 13.
85 Id. at 14.
<sup>86</sup> Id.
<sup>87</sup> Id.
<sup>88</sup> Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5, at Appendix Table 4.
<sup>90</sup> Id.
91 Morgan, Lye & Condran, supra note 9, at 110; Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5, at 2;
Katzev, Warner & Acock, supra note 9; Mott, supra note 79, at 98.
   Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
93 Id., at Appendix Table 4.
<sup>94</sup> Mott, supra note 79.
<sup>95</sup> See id. at 122.
<sup>96</sup> Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
97 Mott, supra note 77.
98 Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
Brewer, Conrad, & King, supra note 37, at 6.
Teachman & Schollaert, supra note 11.
<sup>102</sup> Id. at 413.
<sup>103</sup> Id. at 420.
<sup>104</sup> Morgan, Lye & Condran, supra note 9.
Teachman & Schollaert, supra note 11, at 416.
Teachman & Schollaert, supra note 11.
<sup>107</sup> Id.
108 Id.
109 Id. at 416.
Angrist & Evans, supra note 12.
<sup>111</sup> Id. at 457.
<sup>112</sup> Angrist & Evans, supra note 12.
113 Id. at 457.
Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
Dahl and Moretti, perform the same analysis in their 2004 study using mothers from
the 1989-2001 California Birth Statistical Master Files. Most of the women in this
sample have completed fertility by the end of the period of observation. The results
based on these data are similar to those based on United States Census data.
<sup>116</sup> Teachman & Schollaert, supra note 11, at 419.
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<sup>117</sup> Angrist & Evans, supra note 12.
Dahl & Moretti, supra note 3.5.
<sup>120</sup> Id.
121 Id.
122 Id.
<sup>123</sup> Id.
124 Id.
125 Id.
<sup>126</sup> Teachman & Schollaert, supra note 11.
<sup>127</sup> Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
129 Id.
129 Lundberg & Rose, supra note 13.
130 Id.
131 Id.
132 Id.
133 Id.
134 Id.
<sup>134</sup> Id.
135 Id.
136 Id.
The earlier version of this paper reports results for white, black, and Hispanic mothers.
The later version reports results for white mothers only.
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Arrangements for Preschoolers in the U.S. (University of Washington, Center for Studies
in Demography and Ecology, Working Paper No. 98-12, 1998).
 <sup>139</sup> Hiedemann, Joesch & Rose, supra note 14.
^{140} The model controls for the child's age, the mother's age, the mother's education, and
the number of siblings. For the overall sample, the average household includes a twenty-
seven-month old child with about one older sibling and a thirty-year-old mother who has
completed some college. These means vary somewhat by the mother's race and ethnicity
and the youngest child's age.
<sup>141</sup> Hiedemann, Joesch & Rose, supra note 14.
<sup>142</sup> Joesch, Hiedemann & Rose, supra note138.
143 Id.
144 Id.
145 Id.
146 Id.
147 Lundberg & Rose, supra note 13.
<sup>149</sup> Joesch, Hiedemann & Rose, supra note 138.
150 Id.
<sup>151</sup> Id.
Lundberg & Rose, supra note 5.
<sup>153</sup> Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
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    154 Id.
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    156 Hiedemann, Joesch & Rose, supra note 14.

157 Sandra Scarr & Marlene Eisenberg, Child Care Research: Issues, Perspectives, and
Results, 44 ANN. REV. PSYCH. 613, 624 (1993).
<sup>158</sup> Joesch, Hiedemann, & Rose, supra note 138.
Morgan, Lye & Condran, supra note 9, at 119; Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
160 Mott, supra note 79.
<sup>161</sup> Joesch, Hiedemann & Rose, supra note 138.
<sup>163</sup> Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
<sup>164</sup> Joesch, Hiedemann & Rose, supra note 138.
Angrist & Evans, supra note 12; Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
<sup>166</sup> Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5, at 29.
Dahl & Moretti, supra note 5.
<sup>168</sup> Id.
<sup>169</sup> Id.
<sup>170</sup> Joesch, Hiedemann & Rose, supra note 138.
<sup>171</sup> Hiedemann, Joesch & Rose, supra note 14.
<sup>172</sup> Individuals may identify as Hispanic origin and any race. The figure reported for
American Indian or Alaska Native includes approximately 2.5 million individuals who do
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<sup>173</sup> U.S. Census Bureau statistics, supra note 19.
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Latino National Political Survey, 18 HISPANIC J. BEHAV. SCI. 255, 273 (1996). <sup>175</sup> Harris & Firestone, supra note 20, at 243 n.2. <sup>176</sup> Kane, supra note 20, at 432; Hill, supra note 20, at 106.
<sup>177</sup> Hill, supra note 20, at 106.
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