

SPECIAL FEATURE

Never Obsolete: Private Household Workers and the Transaction of Domestic Work

Eileen Boris
Email: eboris@ucsb.edu

Introduction

Faced with the most up to date washing machine, the undocumented Rosa, newly arrived from Guatemala to Los Angeles, does what many resourceful Mayan women would: She handwashes clothes and lays them on the lawn to dry.¹ Played for comic relief in the 1983 movie *El Norte*, this confrontation of the domestic worker with the machine represents how, presumably in the face of dirty wars in Latin America and rising labor force participation of mothers with small children in the United States, well-to-do households had it both ways: They purchased the latest appliances *and* relied upon the labor of immigrant women. Recent migrants appeared more tractable than the African Americans who historically had worked in other women's homes. New models superseded old Maytags, but domestic workers never became obsolete, despite the predictions of sociologists and the panicked laments of would-be employers.

From the 1920s into the 1960s, a range of commentators opined that machines would replace domestic servants in what they misidentified as an equalitarian nation freed from the relations of deference plaguing other societies. Expressing this general technological optimism, Sarah Green of the National Women's Trade Union League explained at a 1923 international meeting, "We in America feel that it does not take brains to do washing, so all we have to do now is to turn on the electricity and let that do it for us. If you women in Europe would do that, there would not be so many women in domestic service." With "modern things to do washing, ironing and that sort of thing," industrial and commercial workers like herself could undertake their own household tasks and no working-class women need become a servant.² Reflecting the disdain projected onto domestic workers, this white woman called for training for better jobs with technology taking up the slack. Given its rejection of aristocracy, the American solution to the servant problem, declared white cultural historian Russell Lynes forty years later, was to treat it as "a mechanical one, and by and large we now do pretty well with it on that basis."³ He would replace the "vanishing" servant with reconfiguring the layout of homes, mechanization, and commercialized services, all of which were to make housework simpler and more efficient. Despite asserting that the servant had become an employee, renditions like Lynes's ignored the afterlife of slavery that haunted household employment, maintaining human hands as a cheap alternative to technology and perpetuating racial exploitation. Such claims also ignored the exclusion of these workers from the labor law.⁴

Lynes echoed sociologists and policymakers who after WWII predicted the end of domestic service. They wrote in the context of the Cold War and amid the turn to development that assumed less industrialized areas would modernize just like the West, which presumably moved away from the inequalities embodied in personal service. "The general pattern of private household employment in the United States has been one of decline," asserted white sociologist David Chaplin in 1978. The industrial revolution reduced household labor to personal services; what was sold was personality as well as brawn, Chaplin concluded from a multicountry study that traced the persistence of servants in India, South Africa, and Latin America and their dearth in Spain and the United States.⁵ Already some thirty years before, Katherine Davis, the white chair of the reformist National Committee on Household Employment, announced that "household servants are gone forever."⁶ A shortened workday limited to cleaning, cooking, and washing had replaced the live-in maid. Such changes Davis saw as constituting a transformation in household work and Chaplin found as fragmenting the occupation into professional babysitting, part-time and seasonal employment, and day jobs.⁷ The *New York Times* proclaimed, "Shortage of Maids Has Led to Rise in 'Specialists,'" in noting the growth of employment agencies that sent cooks, cleaners, nursemaids, and others into homes while taking care of background checks, scheduling, payment, and deductions.⁸

Lewis Coser, another white sociologist and modernization theorist, most powerfully crystalized this "obsolescence" narrative in an influential 1972 article that appeared just as actual social trends were emerging that would upend his conclusion. Drawing upon the evolutionary sociological theory of his day, Coser argued: "Even when formally based on contract, it [the servant role] is in essence rooted in ascribed status, particularistic standards, and diffuse obligations. The master's family 'greedily' attempts to absorb the total personality of the servant, and ties him to the household in a totalistic manner. When this is no longer the case, the role becomes obsolescent and the only persons suffering from marked inferiorities and peculiar stigmas can be induced to enter it."⁹ Putting aside his universalizing of the servant through the British butler rather than the washerwoman or ayah (colonial nanny), Coser shared the perception that new technologies had lessened household maintenance, and thus eliminated the need for live-in workers. Yet he rightly predicted, "part-time household work may in the future become a new profession, and the traditional servant's tasks may be provided on a specialized basis by caterers, dog walkers, clean-up services and the like." Unlike the dying role of the servant, these new workers would be free from families who sought "to devour the personality" of the servant, he concluded.¹⁰ They could avoid becoming "like one of the family," the ideology of familism hiding worker exploitation named by the Black writer Alice Childress.¹¹

The live-in servant was rare to begin with. She only predominated among a small stratum of society, estimated in 1955 as some two hundred thousand families. In the mid-1950s, the Household Division of the New York State Employment Services reported a decline in applicants by nearly a quarter and a slightly larger drop in requests for such workers.¹² White women had left the occupation twice as readily as Black ones; the workforce on the whole was aging, with those who remained past their prime child bearing years.¹³ Black women still had few occupational choices, though with migration to cities and movement away from the South as

early as the 1920s they were transferring from live-in to live-out work. In 1965, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics offered evidence for the growth of part-time employment, with three-fifths of jobs lasting a day or less per week. It calculated the existence of twice as many employers than workers. Households with both husband and wife in the labor force were more likely to hire “help” than those with only husbands employed or headed by women, the latter less able to afford the expense.¹⁴ The change in household work—from the largest category of women workers in the 1940 census to a still robust number in 1960, estimated at two million workers to be ten times greater than coal miners, to under 4 percent of the female labor force in 1970—actually obscured the shifting contours of the occupation and its undercounting in official records. Women who combined household with other income earning often failed to define themselves as such.¹⁵ Invisibility thus derived not only from the location of the labor in the home but from its informality outside of the enumerated economy.

This article explores the ideology of obsolescence when it comes to paid household labor amidst the shift to a service economy.¹⁶ Decline, after all, is not the same as obsolescence. In much of the world, including Latin America, South Asia, and the Middle East, domestic service never went away; rural as well as transnational migrants continued to labor in the homes of the better-off.¹⁷ The decline in enumerated workers signaled neither the lack of demand nor the withering away of an occupation in the United States that was rooted in slavery and segregation, even after African Americans migrated North with the Great Migration after WWI and again following WWII. Simultaneously, occupational demographics expanded from Irish in the Northeast and Scandinavians in the Midwest to Mexicans in the Southwest and Chinese in the West.¹⁸ With the rights revolution of the 1960s, the story in the United States became more complicated. The old “shame” clung to the work, even as household workers organized for recognition and dignity.¹⁹ Federal immigration policy initially hampered the procuring of immigrant substitutes for Black women who, as one twenty-four-year-old confessed in 1965, would “remain jobless rather than go to work as a ‘kitchen mechanic,’” the term upgraders used to repackage the labor.²⁰ But it also led to procuring immigrant workers despite the law. When inequality in major US urban areas rose with the Reagan Revolution and neoliberal turn, so did the numbers of household workers.²¹

Here I read against, with, and through newspaper articles from major hubs and national venues, as well as mass circulation women’s magazines, to illuminate anxieties and highlight perceptions and conceptions emerging from partial standpoints. I chart the number of workers as recorded at the time, fully aware that such figures obscured as well as revealed—just like the pronouncements of commentators.²² I further draw upon government records first to look at post-WWII assumptions about the nature of the work and who should undertake such labor and then to consider responses of employers in the 1960s and early 1970s. Employment agencies reacted to perceived worker shortages with claims of need among a new generation of white managerial and professional women faced with fulfilling family responsibilities while going out to earn. The agencies anticipated the rise in labor force participation that, by 1976, saw nearly half of mothers with children under eighteen in the labor force, a percentage that rose to nearly 80 percent in 2000, only to slightly dip from the 2008 recession and drop precipitously with lockdowns under the COVID-19 pandemic

in 2020 and 2021.²³ Without adequate child or elder care facilities, with a stretch out of the working day, and the persistent association of housework with women's work, women with children who could sought to hire other women to do the dirty work of the home until fear of contagion led to layoffs during the pandemic.²⁴

Pioneering studies by white feminist scholars that debunked the "mechanization takes command" myth of vanishing housework appeared at precisely the time when professional women's call for household help expanded the service sector in the United States and elsewhere in urban Europe and Asia.²⁵ As Chaplin perceptively noted, "Conflicting attitudes toward whether employment is liberating thus focus on the common ground of who is to care for the children, the aged, and the infirm."²⁶ In the United States, two sets of freedom dreams—women's liberation from the home and Black women's liberation from white women's homes—conflicted.²⁷ Rather than men absorbing the gap, more privileged women turned to a new group of household and care workers from abroad, and thus maintained the sexual division of labor within households.²⁸ The global migration of women from rural to urban and from the Global South has suggested that rather than a relic of the past, household labor was central to post-Fordism and the crisis in social reproduction generated by the redeployment of women's labor power to workplaces out of their own homes.

Housework and Housewives

In highlighting the work of the International Labour Organization (ILO) to improve the status and working conditions of household employment, the *Washington Post* in 1952 enunciated what became the dominant declension narrative: "Faithful retainers, an age-old institution, may become as legendary as Uncle Tom and the slow-witted hired girl have become in this country," the paper announced. "Still, a lot of high-flown folk everywhere are going to have to learn to boil water and sweep floors."²⁹ A recent ILO Meeting of Experts on Women's Work judged domestic work as a job women were fleeing from. This assessment continued observations made during the Great Depression when the ILO reported that women preferred unemployment to the stigmatized social status of the job. It then recommended "extend[ing] the improvements made . . . in the living and working conditions of all workers as far as possible to domestic servants, and thus to do away with the present social difference between them" through special legislation, inclusion in social insurance, vocational training, substitution of living-out for living-in, and worker organization.³⁰ Nearly two decades later in 1951, rather than discuss occupational conditions, the experts considered "practical steps which would lighten the household tasks of women workers"³¹ so they would not succumb to what an earlier generation called "the servant problem." The assumption was that not only would "high-flown folk" undertake essential and quotidian household labors, but women who went out to work in factories, offices, and stores would have to find ways to cope with what became known as the double day. The end of the maid meant that someone had to do the work, and that someone presumably was a woman.

Nonetheless, who exactly would do the labor remained an unsettled question. Some dreamed of robots able "to make beds and clean floors" as well as operate household devices; others recognized that automation already had entered the

home, saving time and energy through computerized controls well before the advent of personal computers. Declared the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in 1955: "New methods of refrigeration have changed shopping habits. New ideas in food preparation are changing eating habits. New controls [in the home] are freeing minds for more important things."³² Mary Roche, the white managing editor of *Charm* magazine, suggested that "half the things that they [employers] used to pay servants for doing no longer have to be done. Not by hand, at least, or not at home." Industry was waiting, with an expansion of packaged and preprepared foods, which led to a boom in frozen food sales. Automatic appliance purchases began to soar, while new fabrics reduced scrubbing and ironing. Specialized housekeeping services would eliminate the headache of hiring and monitoring workers. Roche insisted, "some families have come to the conclusion that paying for both kinds of help is paying twice for the same job." Automation meant that "it does not seem logical to look for the survival of hired labor in the home." With personal service "an anachronism," do-it-yourself beckoned; the elaborate dinner became a relic, lamented by those who missed "the Annies and Hildas, Bridgets and Margarets" who once had immigrated to the nation.³³ Husbands and teenagers could take over some of the work of cooking, cleaning, and childminding.³⁴ Along with dusting, cleaning companies sent men with vacuuming machines.³⁵ Roche expressed two prevalent assumptions: first, that the European immigrant was the preferred live-in worker, compared to African Americans and other women of color, and second, that housework didn't require any "brains," the observation that trade unionist Green had made decades before and white feminist Betty Friedan would reinforce in *The Feminine Mystique* (despite her attack on magazines like Roche's).³⁶

With "the live-in domestic almost as extinct as the buffalo," homemaking was to become a "lifetime job." In a typical naturalizing formulation, the *Hartford Courant* declared, "science . . . will never be able to produce a substitute for women"—someone, after all, had to "push the button"³⁷—even though experts implied that women had trouble reading the manuals that came with top-of-the-line devices.³⁸ Newspapers joined women's magazines in trying to convince that "no other job can be more deeply and thoroughly satisfying and important to a woman," despite admitting that "push-button kitchens, automatic cleaning equipment and easy-to-fix meals," the very advances promoted, "have made mothers feel less important and hence less prideful."³⁹ Who would want to compete with a Frigidaire mobile dishwasher that sanitized dishes and saved "mother enough hand dishwashing time to equal more than 28 full eight-hour work days"? With such a device, the homemaker was no longer a "coolie."⁴⁰

Thus, the wife and mother morphed into a manager, even if the only one she supervised was herself. With a flip of a switch even when servantless, she could shift attention to what Black feminist legal scholar Dorothy E. Roberts subsequently called spiritual work (care and sex/affective forms of labor) as opposed to menial housework.⁴¹ As one irked "cleaning lady" complained, "we get all the dirty jobs and jobs you wouldn't do—such as washing venetian blinds, taking off dirty old wax with solvents on floors, cleaning out basements"—a week's worth of cleaning in seven hours.⁴² "A washing machine doesn't sort clothes, pre-treat clothes or measure detergent," reminded a "marketing staff home economist" for Southern

California Edison.⁴³ Still, as one British head of an employment agency noted, the British maid “would like to get her fingers onto the pushbuttons of an American kitchen”—and aid mothers with their “space-age children.”⁴⁴ For employers, rural Southern Black migrants offered a contrasting image: Claimed a Boston director of a domestic training program, “they couldn’t work the appliances because they weren’t used to electricity.”⁴⁵

The New Servant Problem: Demands over Supply

In identifying the rejection of servile status, sociologists captured a working condition that pervaded the occupation. “They called me ‘Queen Esther’ but made me call them ‘Mr. and Mrs.’ I had to go in the back door when I came in the morning. And they didn’t drive me to and from work,” said a disgusted Mrs. Ethel Parker in 1973, which underscored the lack of respect that led younger Black women to flee such jobs.⁴⁶ One such woman admitted a decade earlier, “You can call it dignity or whatever you want to. . . . But when your friends see you getting on that Glen Echo bus at 8 in the morning, they know you’re not going to the amusement park”—rather you are trekking to suburban homes to clean them.⁴⁷ Mrs. Patricia Jones, another African American worker, recalled her experience at a New York City employment agency: “It was like a slave market. . . and being used to the slave-labor practices of the South, I assumed that the way the domestics were being traded and abused was a normal part of getting a job.”⁴⁸ A study of twenty cities in 1971 reported on the difficulty of finding substitutes for a housewife’s labor in light of old expectations for a maid who would get down on her hands and knees to scrub “floors with a rag and soap.”⁴⁹ Auburn, Alabama activist Jessie Williams captured the prevailing worker attitude when she announced, “We won’t go in the back door anymore. We won’t be told to eat scraps in the kitchen and stay out of the living room except when we are sweeping. We feel domestic work is just as professional as any other job.” She warned: “If people go on making it degrading, there won’t be any workers doing it much longer.”⁵⁰ Black women would be “slaves no more;” they were forming mutual aid societies and unions to win better working conditions and changes in the labor law, some through the Household Technicians of America in 1972.⁵¹ In a civil rights milieu, some finally were able to find employment elsewhere.⁵²

If we listen to employers, the demand for workers remained high. It apparently expanded during the 1960s as the percentage of families earning enough (\$10,000 and above) to hire a housekeeper more than doubled. The percentage of potential employers apparently had grown by 50 percent but available live-in workers had dropped by more than a quarter.⁵³ Private employment agencies lamented their inability to meet requests for cleaners, cooks, and day workers, making “live-in help. . . little more than a fond memory.”⁵⁴ Employed mothers also sought care workers. “It’s almost impossible these days for a mother to feel confident about going back to work,” the head of a “strictly nanny” agency reported in 1977. “In a five-month period, I had six different people I tried to work with,” bewailed an employed mother of two. “They would start working for me, then a week later they’d call up with one excuse or another as to why they couldn’t come back.” She was looking for a professional, not “a servant.”⁵⁵

Reflecting normative racism, placement bureaus spoke of the scarcity of “good help.” Prospective white employers complained of women unable to “speak proper English.” Mrs. Jones heard them say, “I don’t want her around my children,’ and, ‘She’s too dirty. I don’t want her in my home.’”⁵⁶ A Maryland woman told the *Washington Post*, “I’ve put ads in the paper and either I get no response or else I get someone so totally out of it I couldn’t see employing them with young children at home.”⁵⁷ A doctor declared that she didn’t want her children watched after school by “some indifferent woman who couldn’t care less about them.”⁵⁸ Whether or not such phrases as “out of it” and other expressions of inappropriateness veiled anti-Blackness when it came to intimate labor, some employers were explicit. Admitted a Coral Gables, Florida, businessman, “in the past few years many of my friends have become apprehensive about employing American black domestic help.”⁵⁹ Employment agencies argued against migration of Southern Blacks to other areas of the country because they would bring families and need housing, thus were “likely to do more to aggravate already existing problems of astounding gravity and complexity, than to supply any appreciable number of able and qualified persons willing to be employed as domestics.”⁶⁰ These statements suggest a gap between labor supply and the expectations of employers, who wanted docile but caring workers and were unprepared to meet demands for respect and higher wages that Black women insisted on.⁶¹

Would-be employers responded by seeking to bring women into the United States. Historians have traced the hiring of noncitizens as an example of ethnic succession with Irish, Scandinavians, and other Europeans replaced by Chinese, Japanese, and migrants from the Caribbean, Mexico, and Latin America. Who came varied by region and changed over time under revised immigration rules.⁶² Before 1965, the Western Hemisphere fell outside of the 1924 Immigration Act, which estimated quotas based on the numbers recorded for each nationality in the 1890 census and barred Asian entry.⁶³ As colonial citizens, Puerto Ricans were able to arrive as domestics under various private and public arrangements, abetted by the Island’s Department of Labor.⁶⁴ In 1964, a year before significant rule changes under the Hart-Celler Immigration and Naturalization Act, 8,451 immigrants entered legally to work as domestics, with a little more than a third from Europe. But the quota system added years to admitting relatives from countries with small allotments, while the wait for domestics from nations with larger number of openings, such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Sweden, and Germany, was measured in weeks or—at worse—months.⁶⁵ The geographies of wait would shift after 1965 legislation. The migrant domestic changed from European to Caribbean. The number of Jamaicans, for example, jumped from under two thousand in 1965 to over eleven thousand in 1967 and seventeen thousand a year later.⁶⁶

The lack of a numerical cap for the Americas never meant open borders or worker control. Nor did it guarantee the acceptance of all applications for permanent entry. During the first six months of 1965, before immigration reform, half of approved service workers from Mexico were maids and over 22 percent were private family housekeepers, two separate categories. For September 1965, of the 374 household workers from Mexico considered by the US Bureau of Employment Security for permanent entry, 36 were approved, consisting of half of overall acceptances.⁶⁷ Even in the

1950s, Juarez women needed papers to stay in El Paso, though they might cross the border daily with permits to go shopping.⁶⁸

The ability to enter never protected such migrants from unscrupulous employment brokers, who after WWII conveyed African Americans from the South, garnishing salaries to reimburse for transport and additional moving expenses.⁶⁹ These agencies acted as intermediaries, sometimes double dipping by charging both workers and receiving households for airfare, passports, and other items. Out of fees from households, they paid worker salaries, ranging from \$65 to \$85 a month in 1962 for positions in suburban New York. Though agency contracts with workers were legal, with women having to post performance bonds and labor “long hours for moderate pay,” critics represented them as a new form of indenture.⁷⁰ Some agencies skirted the law by withholding monies, charging for medical examinations, and collecting bonds from both workers and households. The Intercontinental Maid Service of Yonkers, New York, lost its license to “import” maids to Westchester after flouting state labor laws on minimum wage, weekly wage payments, and record keeping, violating the rights of 120 women brought from Colombia in 1962. As the employer of record, the agency came under labor laws that did not apply to private households. It was not alone.⁷¹

The Fruits of Immigration Reform

Congress sought to modernize the immigration system with the 1965 Hart-Celler Act. It intended to stop the unlimited flow of workers from the Americas by placing all countries under numerical limits, with a ceiling of 120,000 visas for the entire region beginning in 1969. According to Chinese American historian Mae Ngai, this cap led to an explosion of undocumented workers crossing the border.⁷² Known for its family unification provision, Hart-Celler more than eliminated the old quota system. Though 80 percent of visas would go to family members in a designated order of preference, it also established a tiered system for employment in which shortages of labor in a given area could override restrictions. Such rankings expanded possibilities but kept the earlier focus on highly specialized skills or unique talents with the goal of attracting technical and scientific workers. Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz claimed: “No visas would be issued by the Department of State for permanent admission . . . unless the immigrant can satisfactorily demonstrate that he will not become a public charge.” If US workers were able to “perform the work,” if immigrants “would adversely affect the wages and working conditions of our own workers,” then the Department of Labor (DOL) would deny visas. The new law would meet the demands of the AFL-CIO to protect US workers from immigrant competitors.⁷³ For it specified that the secretary of labor had to certify applicants to enter, which caused a bottleneck until administrative procedures eliminated the need for individual certification or job offers prior to migration.⁷⁴

Controversy erupted over visas for domestic workers under the new system of schedules and preferences. In proposing rules on November 19, 1965, just weeks before the law was to become operative that December 1, the DOL offered little room for public comment.⁷⁵ Domestic Day Workers fell under “Schedule B,” occupations without shortages. Live-in maids, however, were left off the lists altogether

even though the Bureau of Employment Security found “a continuing shortage of this type of employee throughout the Nation” in November 1965. Researchers confirmed the “short supply” in “major metropolitan areas” that employment agencies claimed on the basis of government reports, telephone surveys, classified advertisements, and a formal declaration of the New York legislature of “an acute shortage of domestic or household employees.” These agencies pushed for inclusion under “Schedule A,” which would permit entry, though individuals would require certification. Domestic workers could come under the sixth preference, “skilled or unskilled workers in short supply” not temporary or seasonal.⁷⁶

Other employment agencies asked for a national system of automatic approval, as with third preference professional, scientific, and artistic occupations. Some contended that entry of a “foreign” maid brought cultural benefits similar to that of artists and entertainers. The DOL initially rejected this argument because the labor market for domestics was local or regional and not national, while the skills were not unique.⁷⁷ Agencies on both sides of the Atlantic then asked the DOL “for sympathy and expeditious handling” since the new rules delayed the obtaining of visas for their clients “so desirous of coming to your Country for employment.” They particularly found burdensome the requirement of continuous advertising for each placement so as to prove shortages.⁷⁸ In 1966, housekeepers and laundresses would move into the permissible “Schedule A.”⁷⁹

Recognizing a threat to their businesses, employment agencies asserted, “having a live-in maid is now a necessity in modern American life.”⁸⁰ In arguing for greater consideration, one group of agencies offered women’s need to justify a more permissive procedure for granting visas in major metropolitan areas. Their description of the workforce illuminated the proliferation of specializations that had made it so difficult to gage numbers: They asked for admittance of “governesses, nannies and other children’s nurses, companion-attendants for the aged or infirm, housekeepers, housemen, cooks, mothers’ helpers and others, both male and female, performing similar and related domestic functions in the management, operation and maintenance of a family home, for employment on a permanent, full-time basis in private households in which they will dwell with their employers.” Propelling their comment was “the urgent needs of prospective employers” defined as career women who were married with children, such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, and those in business and government—a hodgepodge of professions with a range of salaries.⁸¹

The work schedules of career women necessitated live-in maids because “visiting domestics,” as the agencies named day workers, came too late and left too early, were delayed by transportation breakdowns, bad weather, or the demands of their own “household chores and family cares.” Day workers were “too frequently unable or unwilling to revise her family schedule to allow for . . . contingencies.” In fact, the US Women’s Bureau estimated that only 20 percent of such workers were without direct family responsibilities, either as heads of families or living with husbands. Pitting women against each other, the agencies claimed that such inconsistencies “the career woman necessarily finds wholly incompatible with the demands on her of her professional or business activities.” Moreover, larger families meant women could use greater assistance during times when day workers were not present. That is, the domestic tending to her own household, undertaking its reproductive labor,

interfered with the reproductive needs of her employers, generating uncertainty and limits that a live-in could alleviate. That US workers were overwhelmingly Black and the normative employer white could be left unstated; it was enough to speak of workers traveling to the suburbs from the “city.”⁸²

The US Employment Service issued guidelines for certification for employment. For live-in maids, it noted the existence of worker shortages throughout the country, recommending that regional offices base determinations on the conditions of the job offer: “the emphasis in review is upon adverse effect and upon a protective wage rather than upon a prevailing wage that reflects prior adverse effect.” At a time when the minimum wage under the Fair Labor Standards Act, which did not apply to domestic workers, was at \$1.15, rates for domestic labor stood at least 75 cents an hour nationally, with regional variations. Payments ranged from \$35 weekly in DC with few benefits to \$50 or \$60 a week in the New York region with benefits, including uniforms. For Chicago, job approval required at least \$1.25 hourly for “light housekeeping” and \$1.50 with child care duties. Room and board were “for the convenience of the employer” rather than a monetary value folded into the wage, a calculation that went against the practices of employers who looked at in-kind accommodations as a form of payment. Hours were calibrated with wages, so that \$40 a week would involve 40 hours of work. Such rates were in keeping with assumptions about the skill required. Advised the Employment Service about foreign workers: “Any alien who has lived 16 to 20 years with a family group has learned the duties of a household maid.” It would not “decline certification on the grounds that the alien is over-qualified.” While the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) viewed applications for temporary admission unfavorably, the Employment Service could approve and let the employer convince the INS otherwise of their need.⁸³

Despite employer fears, live-in workers gained disproportionate entry in the first years of the new system. Between December 1, 1965, and June 30, 1966, such private household workers were the largest single group approved for entry among 23,660 job openings. They were most of the service workers, which constituted 36.1 percent of all approvals, compared to 30.6 percent of skilled and semiskilled and 27.9 percent of professional, technical, and managerial occupations. They were certified to work in New York, California, Pennsylvania, Michigan, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Illinois, and Connecticut.⁸⁴ The number permitted was in keeping with the percentage of requests, estimated at around 30 percent at that time.⁸⁵ In fiscal year 1969, approval went to 15,500 applications, 62 percent of total, with 7 out of 10 accepted in the Washington, DC, area, though 89 percent were rejected for the Atlanta and southern region where the labor supply was presumed to be greater.⁸⁶

Whether these statistics told the entire story was unlikely. One employment agency noted, “We turn down 90 per cent of the people who come to us seeking foreign live-ins. We try to screen only ones we feel have a possibility of acceptance—generally motherless or fatherless homes or where both parents work.”⁸⁷ In Fall 1969, a new rule restricted “importation of live-in domestic help to households in which there are working mothers with children of preschool age,” with invalid care as a possible exception for households with non-employed mothers.⁸⁸ This change responded to a quandary. On the one hand, the DOL was skeptical about household needs, asking, “When is a live-in maid essential and when will a day worker do equally as well?” On

the other, it was unsure whether it could tell employed parents that “a day worker should be sufficient for their needs.”⁸⁹ In turning to a bureaucratic procedure, it reflected the blindness of many men in government over the labor involved in the daily provisioning and caring for people that fell upon the shoulders of women to resolve if not actually perform. But it also responded to the most vocal requesters of household aid.⁹⁰

The gap between demand and availability persisted. In 1968, an official from the INS claimed that at least 5.5 million homes sought “help” but Americans “willing to do such work fill only about one-quarter of the demand.” Officials estimated at least twenty thousand “illegal maids” in just the New York area; half of the women admitted to work as domestics had “fraudulent papers” obtained by agents that fabricated a job offer or claims of prior experience. Would-be migrants continued to experience excessive costs for facilitating applications. Other workers arrived on tourist visas. Adelaida from Cartagena, Colombia, for one, left her husband and children for Miami in 1971; within a week she obtained a position in a household with two school-age children at \$65 a week. She could renew her tourist visa after three months and planned to save \$500 from a half year stay, flying home for a week (at \$100), and then returning to start the cycle again. A woman from Roslyn, Long Island, planned to find a maid on a visitor’s visa because her friends had them; “you hardly have to pay them anything,” she confessed.⁹¹ To make a point, in June 1968, just as the numerical cap for the Americas went into effect, the INS raided New York City, Westchester County, and Long Island homes, arresting 128 workers hired with false papers or laboring under substandard wages. The subsequent narrative dramatized tearful migrant workers desperate to earn dollars and protesting citizen housewives taking advantage of their plight.⁹²

The Return of the Domestic Worker

A decade after passing Convention 189 “Decent Work for Domestic Workers,” the ILO estimated in 2021 the worldwide number of such workers as 75.6 million, 2.3 percent of total employment and 4.5 percent of all employees. Women composed 76.2 percent of them, with domestics 8.8 percent of women employees across the globe. Their presence varied across regions, constituting a third of women’s employment in the Arab States and 11.3 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean. More than half of the workforce resided in upper-middle-income countries. The vast majority of workers were in the informal sector, twice that of other employees, leading to lack of labor protections and failure to enforce existing standards.⁹³

In the United States, after recorded numbers declined, enumerated workers began growing in key metropolitan areas. Armed with new statistical sources and methods, another generation of mostly white feminist sociologists set out to both map and explain the workforce. Ruth Milkman, Ellen Reese, and Benita Roth in 1998 reinforced the claims of employment agencies back in 1965 when they concluded, “The elite corps of professional and managerial women, whose ranks have expanded so dramatically in recent years, can now purchase on the market much of the labor of social reproduction traditionally relegated to them as wives and mothers. And, the workers who perform this labor are typically women on the lower rungs of the

economic ladder, often women of color and/or immigrants.” In short, “paid domestic labor is . . . a microcosm of the growing class inequality among women.” More than any other factor, inequality determined the extent of household workers; immigrant destination cities like Los Angeles, with racialized gaps in wealth, registered a numerical increase between 1980 and 1990. Thus, while the proportions (peaking at 2.3 percent of all employed women in Los Angeles and 2 percent in Miami) were small next to Mexico and large compared to Sweden, Milkman and her collaborators posited that the growing inequality of the Reagan years impacted supply as well as demand—as much as women’s desire for help.⁹⁴ Their emphasis on income inequality as a determining factor would hold across seventy-four countries.⁹⁵

Using recent public microdata samples from the census and the American Community Survey, sociologist Mignon Duffy further described a reversal of decline in the twenty-first century, with major increases between 2000 and 2008 before the “Great Recession.” At 40 percent of this labor force, “Hispanic” women became overrepresented, while Black women became underrepresented except in elder care. The industry had become an immigrant one, even before accounting for the shadow economy of undocumented persons. At 3 percent of the overall female workforce, domestic workers composed a percentage similar to registered nurses (3.5 percent), though again the extent varied with Miami at 4 percent of all women employed surpassing Los Angeles as having proportionately the most workers. In testing for “care needs,” maternal labor force participation, demographics, and household income, Duffy confirmed economic polarization and income inequality as predictors of greater domestic employment. Her macroanalysis stood alongside feminist “scholarship that places domestic work at the nexus of class, gender, race, and global stratification.”⁹⁶ Lesser inequality, then, might help explain the decline in domestic workers during the early postwar years.

Numbers and percentages are only one indicator of private household employment. Affect and attitude, desire and need have shaped its history and these remain tied not only to class or economic inequalities but to those gender, racial, and citizenship statuses that inform such inequalities and take on a life of their own. European welfare states after WWII established public care programs from cradle to grave, but these eroded at the end of the twentieth century to resemble more closely the United States. Privatized solutions to the maintenance of daily life and generational sustenance dominated the United States, which relied more on markets and families than the state. Universal programs, like public schools, existed, along with means-tested social services.⁹⁷ Other policies belonged to a hidden welfare state, as with civil rights laws and immigration reform, that impacted domestic labors.⁹⁸ The pandemic exacerbated the precarity of household laborers even as it exposed their need to maintain the labor force participation of mothers. This is a story, then, not of fall and rise but occupational persistence. Obsolescence was in the eye of the beholder.

Notes

I would like to thank Emma John for research assistance and the Hull Chair for research funds.

1. *El Notre*, director Gregory Nava, at <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0085482/plotsummary>, accessed June 11, 2021.

2. International Congress of Working Women, *Minutes of Sixth Session*, October 21, 1921, Morning, 21, Records of the ICWW, 1919–1923, folder 3, Schlesinger Library, Cambridge, MA.
3. Russell Lynes, “How America ‘Solved’ the Servant Problem,” *Harper’s Magazine*, July 1, 1963, 46, 54.
4. Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York, 2008); Phyllis Palmer, “Outside the Law: Agricultural and Domestic Workers Under the Fair Labor Standards Act,” *Journal of Policy History* 7 (1995): 416–40; Premilla Nadasen, “Citizenship Rights, Domestic Work, and the Fair Labor Standards Act,” *Journal of Policy History* 24 (1, 2012): 74–94.
5. David Chaplin, “Domestic Service and Industrialization,” *Comparative Studies in Sociology* 1 (1978): 97–127, quote at 105.
6. Quoted in Phyllis Palmer, *Domesticity and Dirt: Housewives and Domestic Servants in the United States, 1920–1945* (Philadelphia, PA, 1989), 153.
7. Elizabeth Clark-Lewis, *Living In, Living Out: African American Domesticity in Washington, DC, 1910–1940* (Washington, DC, 1994); Danielle T. Phillips-Cunningham, *Putting Their Hands on Race: Irish Immigrant and Southern Black Domestic Workers* (New Brunswick, NJ, 2020); Vanessa May, *Unprotected Labor: Household Workers, Politics, and Middle-Class Reform in New York, 1870–1940* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2011).
8. Joan Cook, “The Domestic Worker, ’62, Is a Part-Time Helper, a Full-Time . . .,” *The New York Times*, November 22, 1962, 55.
9. Lewis Coser, “Servants: The Obsolescence of an Occupation Role,” *Social Forces* 52 (1973): 31.
10. Coser, “Servants,” 39.
11. Alice Childress, *Like One of the Family* (Boston, 2017 [reprint of 1956 edition]).
12. Mary Roche, “The New ‘Servants’: Machines and Husbands,” *The New York Times*, June 5, 1955, SM19.
13. Alan Erickson Coble, *Cleaning Up: The Transformation of Domestic Service in Twentieth Century New York City* (New York, 2006), 140–42; Roche, “The New ‘Servants,’” 19.
14. Samuel Saben, “Regular Jobs for Household Help,” *Monthly Labor Review* (October 1965): 1228–29.
15. Chaplin, “Domestic Service and Industrialization,” 105; Coble, *Cleaning Up*, 8.
16. Evelyn Nakano Glenn, “From Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive Labor,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 18 (Autumn 1992): 1–43.
17. Sabrina Marchetti, Daniela Cherubini, and Giulia Garofalo Geymonat, *Global Domestic Workers: Intersectional Inequalities and Struggles for Rights* (Bristol, 2021); José Moya, “Domestic Service in Global Perspective: Gender, Migration, and Ethnic Niches,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33 (4, 2007): 559–79; Elsa M. Chaney and Mary Garcia Castro, *Muchachas No More: Household Workers in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Philadelphia, 1988); Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, *Workers Like All the Rest of Them: Domestic Service and the Rights of Labor in Twentieth-Century Chile* (Durham, NC, 2021); Erynn Masi de Casanova, *Dust and Dignity: Domestic Employment in Contemporary Ecuador* (Ithaca, NY, 2019); Raka Ray and Seemin Qayum, *Cultures of Servitude: Modernity, Domesticity, and Class in India* (Stanford, CA, 2009); Shireen Ally, *From Servants to Workers: South African Domestic Workers and the Democratic State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009); Dirk Hoerder, Elise Van Nederveen Meerkerk, and Silke Neunsinger, eds., *Towards A Global History of Domestic and Caregiving Workers* (Leiden, 2015); Helma Lutz, *The New Maids: Transnational Workers and the Care Economy* (London, 2011).
18. Nakano Glenn, “From Servitude to Service Work.”
19. Premilla Nadasen, *Household Workers Unite: The Untold Story of African American Women Who Built A Movement* (Boston, 2015).
20. William J. Raspberry, “Domestic Help Getting Harder to Find,” *The Washington Post*, October 3, 1965, M12; Phyllis Palmer, “Housework and Domestic Labor: Racial and Technological Change,” in *My Trouble Are Going to Have Trouble with Me: Everyday Trials and Triumphs of Women Workers*, ed. Karen Brodtkin Sacks and Dorothy Remy (New Brunswick, NJ, 1984), 80–91.
21. Ruth Milkman, Ellen Reese, and Benita Roth, “The Macrosociology of Paid Domestic Labor,” *Work and Occupations* 25 (November 1998): 483–510; Mignon Duffy, “Driven by Inequalities: Exploring the Resurgence of Domestic Work in U.S. Cities,” *Sociological Forum* 35 (September 2020): 605–27.
22. Preliminary analysis shows that the Black press paid more attention to the conditions of Southern migrants and Northern Black workers than mainstream media.

23. US Women's Bureau, "Labor force participation rate of mothers by age of own child, March 1976-2012," at https://www.dol.gov/wb/stats/facts_over_time.htm; Kweilin Ellingrud and Liz Hilton Segel, "COVID-19 has driven millions of women out of the workforce," *Fortune*, February 13, 2021, at <https://fortune.com/2021/02/13/covid-19-women-workforce-unemployment-gender-gap-recovery/>, assessed June 28, 2021.
24. "Domestic workers among hardest hit by COVID crisis, says UN labour agency," *UN News*, June 15, 2021 at <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/06/1094022>, accessed June 28, 2021.
25. Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* (New York, 1983); Joann Vanek, "Time Spent in Housework," *Scientific American* 231 (November 1974): 116-21, who found that women employed outside the home spent half as many hours on housework as those not employed, who still spent at least fifty hours a week on such labor.
26. Chaplin, "Domestic Service and Industrialization," 123.
27. Judith Rollins, *Between Women: Domesticity and Their Employers* (Philadelphia, 1985).
28. Kirsten Swinth, *Feminism's Forgotten Fight: The Unfinished Struggle for Work and Family* (Cambridge, MA, 2018).
29. Malvina Lindsay, "Global Kitchen Revolution Who Will Do the Work?," *The Washington Post*, January 23, 1952, 12.
30. Erna Magnus, "The Social, Economic, and Legal Conditions of Domestic Servants: I," *International Labour Review* 30 (2, 1934): 190, 195; Magnus, "The Social, Economic, and Legal Conditions of Domestic Servants: II," *International Labour Review* 30 (3, 1934): 363-4.
31. ILO, "Meeting of Experts on Women's work," Geneva, 11-15 December 1951, 8, WN 1002, 01/1951 to 12/1955, ILO Archives, Geneva.
32. John Davy, "Robot maid to do the housework," *The Observer*, January 13, 1965, 7; "Scientist Sees Invention of Robot for Housework," *The Hartford Courant*, September 22, 1962, 9A; "Simplify Housework with Automation," *Los Angeles Times*, March 17, 1963, SG9A; "Modern Home Appliance Now Really Thinks," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 27, 1955, B6; "Automated Maids," *The Baltimore Sun*, November 25, 1956, A43. On robots, Neda Atanasoski and Kalindi Vora, *Surrogate Humanity: Race, Robots, and the Politics of Technological Futures* (Durham, NC, 2019).
33. Cook, "The Domestic Worker."
34. Roche, "The New 'Servants'," 19, 22.
35. Nadine Ullmann, "He Says House Cleaning Is No Job for a Woman," *Newsday*, September 10, 1965, 93.
36. Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York, 1963), contains the classic critique of women's magazines, but also disparages household labor and domestic workers.
37. Cook, "The Domestic Worker, '62"; Ken Duvall, "Science Cannot Create A Substitute for Women," *Hartford Courant*, April 17, 1960, 9E.
38. "Automated Housewife: Does She Like Push Button Role?" *Los Angeles Times*, December 12, 1963, G1.
39. Rebecca Liswood, "How good a wife will your daughter be," *New York Herald Tribune*, May 8, 1960, SM8.
40. "Takes Toil Out of Yule," *Boston Globe*, December 12, 1965, A44.
41. Harriet Morrison, "When Automation Enters Home: Women's Role Slated To Be More Managerial," *New York Tribune*, July 27, 1955, 12; Dorothy E. Roberts, "Spiritual and Menial Housework," *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism* 9 (1997): 51-80.
42. Jean Larson, "Why (Some) Women Can't Get Household Help," *Chatelaine*, January 1969, 71.
43. "Automated Housewife," G13.
44. "Briton to Visit to Check on Maids Sent to Americans," *The New York Times*, February 16, 1960, 39.
45. Diane White, "New hope for domestics," *Boston Globe*, December 13, 1972, 44.
46. Philip Shabecoff, "To Domesticity, a Minimum Wage Is a Raise," *The New York Times*, June 6, 1973, 30.
47. Raspberry, "Domestic Help Getting Harder to Find."
48. Lacey Fosburgh, "Domestics Called 'Most Exploited,'" *The New York Times*, September 24, 1970, 34.
49. "More Can Afford Domestic Help . . . Fewer Can Afford to Do It," *The New York Times*, March 23, 1971, 32.
50. Shabecoff, "To Domesticity, a Minimum Wage Is a Raise."
51. Eileen Boris and Jennifer Klein, *Caring for America: Home Health Workers in the Shadow of the Welfare State* (New York, 2012), 123-48; Nadasen, *Household Workers Unite!*; Dorothy Sue Cobble,

“A Spontaneous Loss of Enthusiasm’: Workplace Feminism and the Transformation of Women’s Service Jobs in the 1970s,” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 56 (Fall 1999): 33–38.

52. Nancy MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace* (Cambridge, MA, 2006).

53. “More Can Afford Domestic Help;” Elizabeth Gruen, Robert Schuster, Edward Blackoff, George Harper, and E. Richard Ningard, “Comment, Re: Proposed Rules,” November 29, 1965, 9–10, Records of Deputy Under Secretary Millard Case, 1947–1971 (Case Records), RG174, box 37, folder, “Immigration and Nationality Act—Amendments,” National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, Maryland.

54. Raspberry, “Domestic Help Getting Harder to Find.”

55. Diana Shaman, “A Wrinkle In Housework: Wives on Job, Help Scarce: A Premium on Help Around the House,” *The New York Times*, October 30, 1977 27.

56. Fosburgh, “Domestics Called ‘Most Exploited.’”

57. Myra MacPherson, “Quotas Restrict Immigrant ‘Help,’” *The Washington Post*, January 12, 1970, B1.

58. Myra MacPherson, “She Hired a Housekeeper and Cried Over Boiled Steak,” *The Washington Post*, January 11, 1970, K6.

59. Paul L. Montgomery, “Illegal Aliens Pose Ever-Deepening Crisis,” *The New York Times*, October 17, 1971, 58.

60. Gruen et al., “Comment,” 5–6.

61. Boris and Klein, *Caring for America*, 128–9; Nadasen, *Household Workers Unite!*, 71–81.

62. Andrew Urban, *Brokering Servitude: Migration and the Politics of Domestic Labor During the Long Nineteenth Century* (New York, 2018).

63. Aristide Zolberg, *A Nation By Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (Cambridge, MA, 2006).

64. Emma Amador, “Organizing Puerto Rican Domestics: Resistance and Household Labor Reform in the Puerto Rican Diaspora after 1930,” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 88 (Fall 2015): 67–86; “21 Puerto Ricans Here As Domestics,” *The New York Times*, February 28, 1948, 17.

65. W. William Wirtz, Hearing Before Subcommittee No. 1 of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 89th Congress 1st Session on H.R. 2580 *To Amend the Immigration and Nationality Act, and for other Purposes*, March 3 to June 1, 1965 (Washington, DC, 1965), 126–27; Nicolas Katzenbach, Hearing Before Subcommittee No. 1 of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, 89th Congress, 1st Session on S. 500 Part I: Feb 10- March,11 1965 (Washington, DC, 1965), 20.

66. John Corry, “Immigration Brings a Shift in Maids,” *The New York Times*, June 23, 1968, 1.

67. “Immigrants from Mexico, Public Law 414-Section 212(a)(14), US Employment Service, January-June 1965;” “Tabulation Showing Disposition of Openings By Occupational Grouping and By type of Case of Nonagricultural Clearance Orders,” September 1965, both in Case Records, Box 37, folder, “Immigration and Nationality Act—General.”

68. “Mexican Domestics Problem in El Paso,” *The New York Times*, August 30, 1953, 76.

69. “Javits Raps ‘Slave’ Job Agencies, Urges State Licensing for All,” *New York World-Telegram and Sun*, May 25, 1955, clipping, box 81, folder 6, Herbert Hill Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; “Parley Hits Abuses in Recruiting Maids,” *The New York Times*, May 10, 1962, 34.

70. Merrill Folsom, “Importing Maids Is Called Legal,” *The New York Times*, March 30, 1962, 24.

71. Edith Evans Ashbury, “Agency for Maids Barred by State,” *The New York Times*, May 23, 1962, 22; Memo from Frieda L., “Attention Vera Rony, “Intercontinental Maid Service, 1962-1963,” file 29, box 77, Workers Defense League, Series II; see also case files in Workers Defense League, Series XIII, General Cases, box 218, both in Labor History Archives, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan; Nina Jones, “Maid Agency Is Denied License by Greenburgh,” *The Reporter Dispatch* (White Plains, NY), May 9, 1962, 1–2.

72. Mae M. Ngai, “The Civil Rights Origins of Illegal Immigration,” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 78 (Fall 2010): 93–99.

73. Mae M. Ngai, “Hart-Celler at Fifty: Lessons for Immigration Reform in Our Time,” *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History* 12 (September 2015): 19–22; David Fitzgerald and David Cook-Martin, “The Geopolitical Origins of the 1965 Immigration Act,” in Maddalena Marinari, Madeline Hsu, and Maria

Cristina Garcia, eds., *A Nation of Immigrants Reconsidered* (Urbana, IL, 2018), 94; Wirtz, Senate Hearing, 1965, 85.

74. Richard Eder, "Labor Department Will Ease Immigration Process and Curbs on Unskilled," August 26, 1966, 15.

75. "Proposed Rule Making: Department of Labor, Immigration," *Federal Register* 20, no.224, November 19, 1965, 14494–96.

76. Memo to The Secretary from Robert C. Goodwin, "Problems with Live-in Maids under the New Immigration Act," November 30, 1965, 1–2, in Case Records, Box 38, Folder, "Immigration—Maids;" Gruen et al., "Comment," 1–2, 13; Lawrence S. Lesser to W. Willard Wirtz, November 29, 1965, Case Records, box 37, folder, "Immigration and Nationality Act—Amendments."

77. Memo to The Secretary from Robert C. Goodwin, 1–2.

78. Kenneth Douty to Thomas R. Byrne, December 17, 1965, Eric Terry to Millard Cass, 23 December 1965; both in Cass Records, box 38, folder "Immigration--Maids."

79. US Department of Labor, "New Procedures Set for Admission of Alien Workers," Press Release, November 28, 1965, Case Records, box 37, folder "Immigration and Nationality Act--Amendments;" "Title 29—Labor, Part 60," *Federal Register* 30, no. 233, December 3, 1965, 14979–81; Eder, "Labor Department Will Ease Immigration Process."

80. Douty to Thomas R. Byrne.

81. Gruen et al., "Comment," 1–2.

82. Gruen et al., "Comment," 7–8.

83. "Summary of Conference on Immigration Program Developments," 5–6; "History of Federal Minimum Wage Rates Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, 1938-2009," at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/minimum-wage/history/chart>, accessed June 25, 2021; Memo to The Secretary from Robert C. Goodwin, 2.

84. "Excerpt from BES Weekly Report," January 18, 1967, Case Records, Box 37, Folder, "Immigration and Nationality Act—General;" see also, Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870-1965* (Princeton, NJ, 2005), 103–106

85. "Summary of Conference on Immigration Program Developments," March 21–22, 1966, 5, in Case Records, box 37, folder "immigration and Nationality Act-General."

86. MacPherson, "Quotas Restrict Immigrant 'Help,'" B3.

87. MacPherson, "Quotas Restrict Immigrant 'Help.'"

88. Richard Phalon, "U.S. Limits Entry of Domestic Help," *The New York Times*, September 19, 1969, 1.

89. Memo to The Secretary from Robert C. Goodwin, 2.

90. Myra MacPherson, "Help is Scarce: The Diminishing Domestic," *The Washington Post*, January 13, 1970, B1; Richard L. Ottinger, "Labor Department Approval of Alien Domestic," December 12, 1969, *Congressional Record*, 91st Congress, First Session, House Proceedings, vol.115, part 29 (1969): 38984–85.

91. "Alien 'Maid' Influx Aided by Lawyers, Spurs Inquiry Here," *The New York Times*, November 28, 1967, 49; Tom Crane, "Illegal Traffic in Imported Domestic Help Under Scrutiny," *The Washington Post*, April 25, 1968, K5; Montgomery, "Illegal Aliens Pose Ever-Deepening Crisis;" Corry, "Immigration Brings a Shift in Maids."

92. Charles Grutzner, "Alien Domestic Arrested in Area," *The New York Times*, June, 29, 1968, 17.

93. ILO, *Making decent work a reality for domestic workers* (Geneva, 2021), xviii, xx–xx1.

94. Milkman, Reese, and Roth, "The Macrosociology of Paid Domestic Labor," 485–86, 491, 492–96.

95. Merita Jokela, "Macro-Level Determinants of Paid Domestic Labour Prevalence: A Cross-National Analysis of Seventy-Four Countries," *Social Policy & Society* 14 (3, 2014): 385–405.

96. Duffy, "Driven by Inequalities," 617–18, 622–23.

97. Julia S. O'Connor, Ann Shola Orloff, and Shelia Shaver, *States, Markets, Families: Gender, Liberalism and Social Policy in Australia, Canada, Great Britain and the United States* (New York, 1999); Mary Daly, "Families versus State and Market," *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*, ed. Francis G. Castles et al. (New York, 2010) 139–51.

98. Here I adapt from Christopher Howard, *The Hidden Welfare State* (Princeton, NJ, 1997).