

# Women and gender equity in employment: patterns progress and challenges

Diane Perrons  
Gender Institute  
London School of Economics  
d.perrons@lse.ac.uk

*‘It is through gainful employment that woman has traversed most of the distance that separated her from the male; and nothing else can guarantee her liberty in practice.’*

*(Simone de Beauvoir (1949) 1974:689)*

*‘The social structure has not been much modified by changes in woman’s condition; this world, always belonging to men, still retains the form they have given it.’*

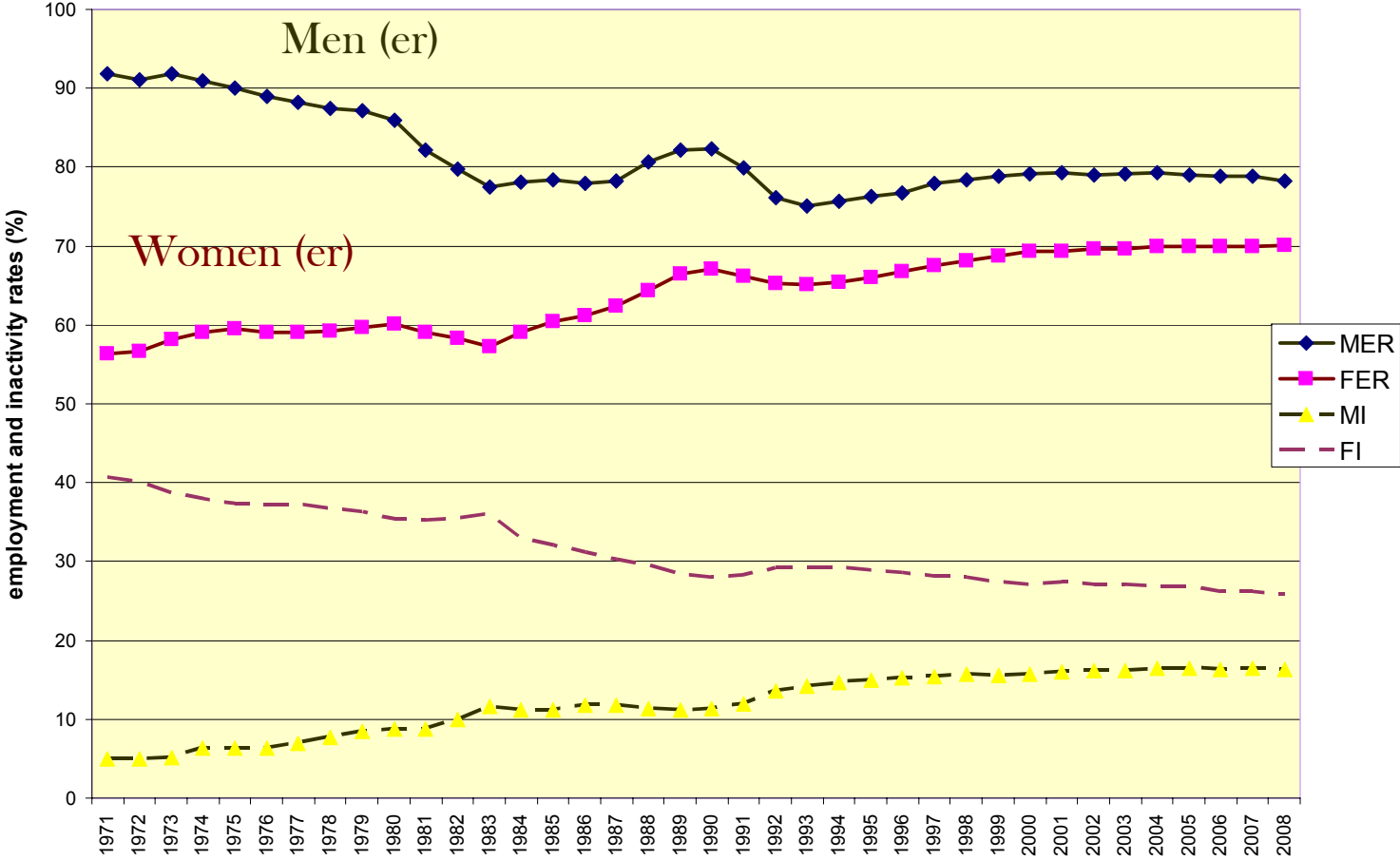
*(Simone de Beauvoir (1949) 1974:689)*

IES 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary -Second Sex - Simone de Beauvoir 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

# Patterns, progress and challenges

<b>Patterns &amp; Progress</b>	Employment participation	Gender equality as state policy
<b>Challenges</b>	Context - globalisation, rising inequality, new employment forms and new forms of employment	
Value and pay	Segregation; overvaluation of “men’s” and undervaluation of “women’s” work	
Cultural boundaries gender meanings	Gendered understandings of skills/merit, and of the economy	
Time	Time demands of paid work; uneven gendered domestic division of labour	
Intersectionality	Diversity - analysing complex inequalities	
<b>Recommendations</b>	Long-standing demands, plus engagement with current debates re crisis to promote a new regulatory model: gendering Keynes in a global context.	

# 1.1 Employment and economically inactivity rates (1971-2008)



## 1.2 Equal opportunities policies and equal pay legislation



Fall in gender pay gap

1975: 28.7%

2006: 12.0%

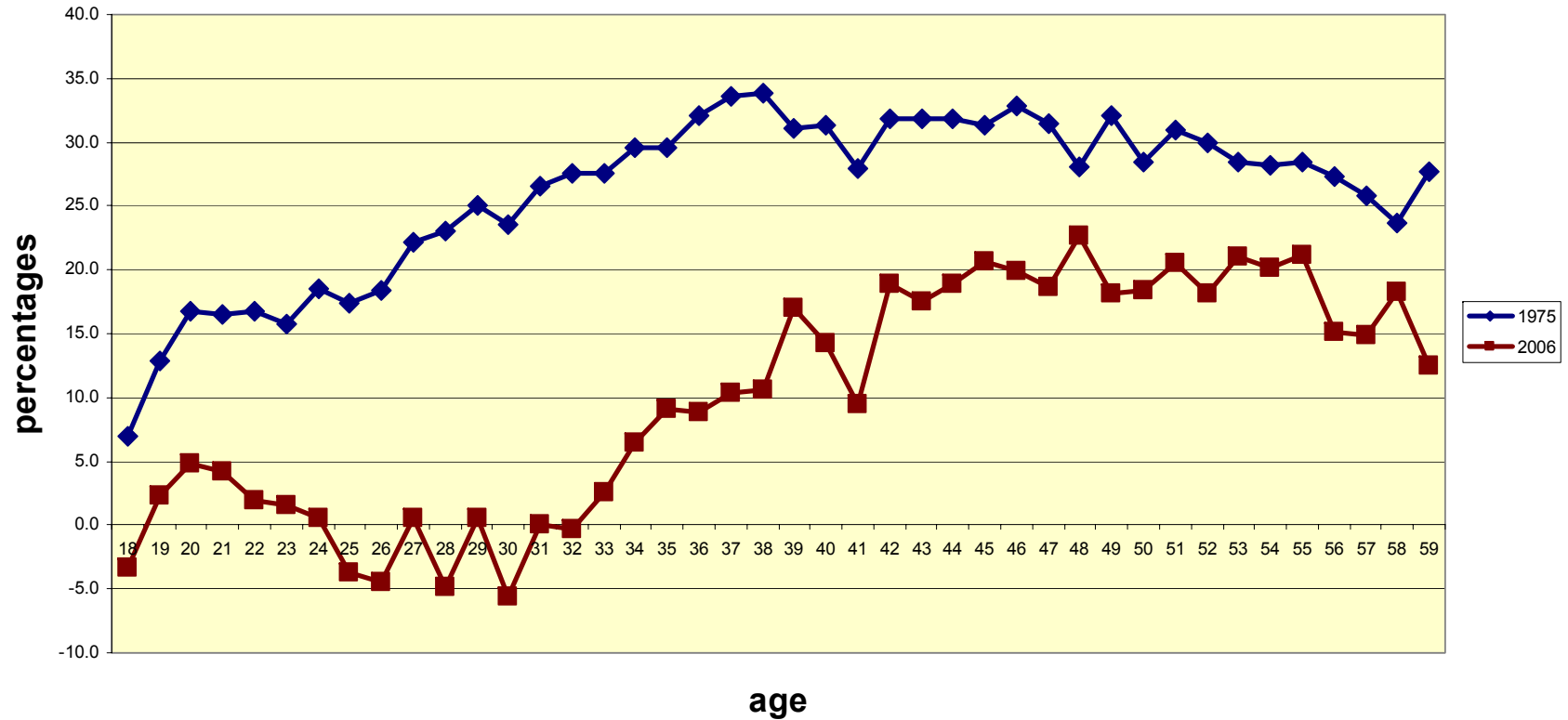
(median-full time employees  
-hourly earnings)

Comparable worth – success?

NHS – Cumbria £300m settlement

(Guardian – 4/03/06)

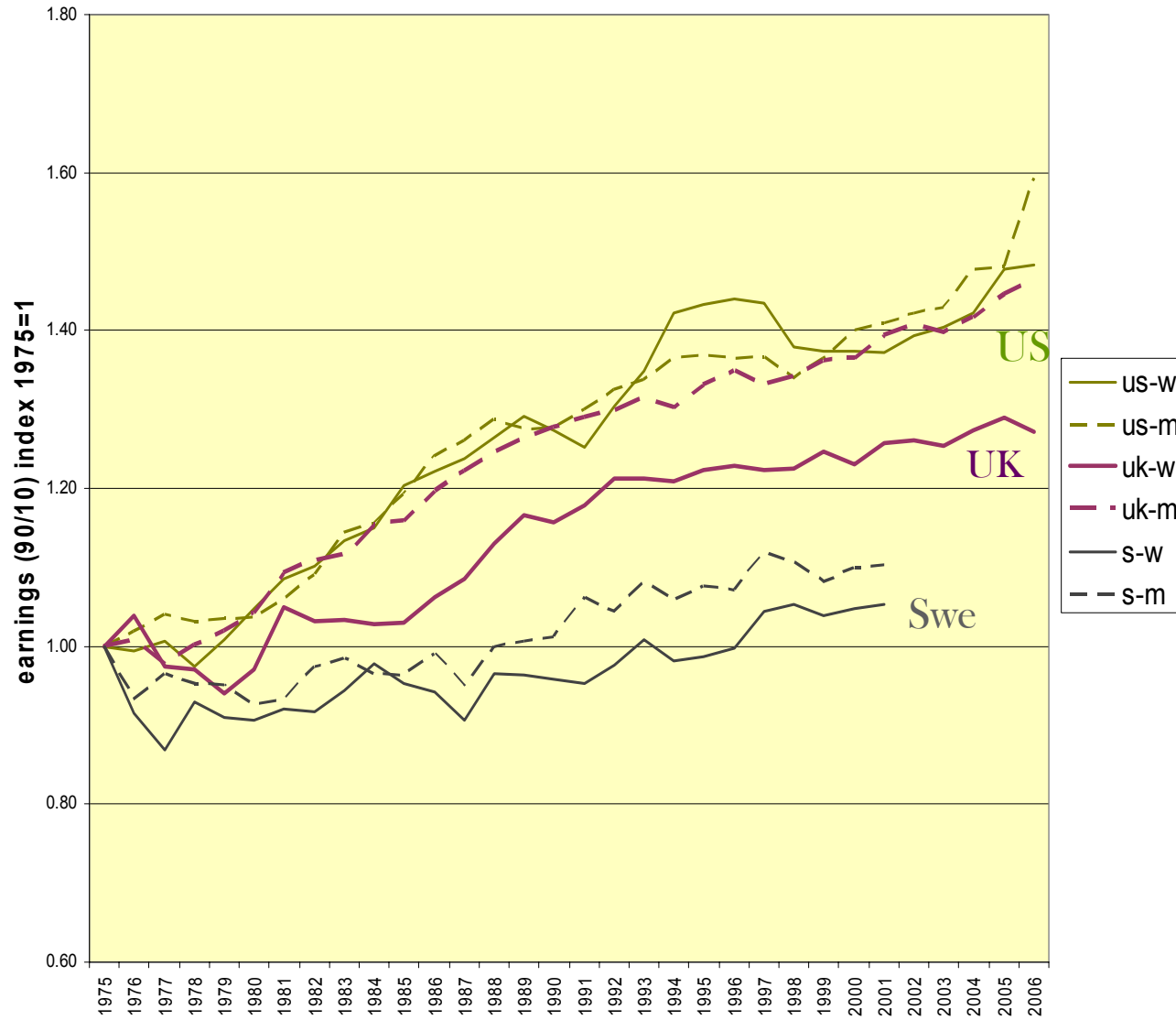
## 1.2 Gender pay gap by age 1975 and 2006 (median full time employees)



# Patterns, progress and challenges

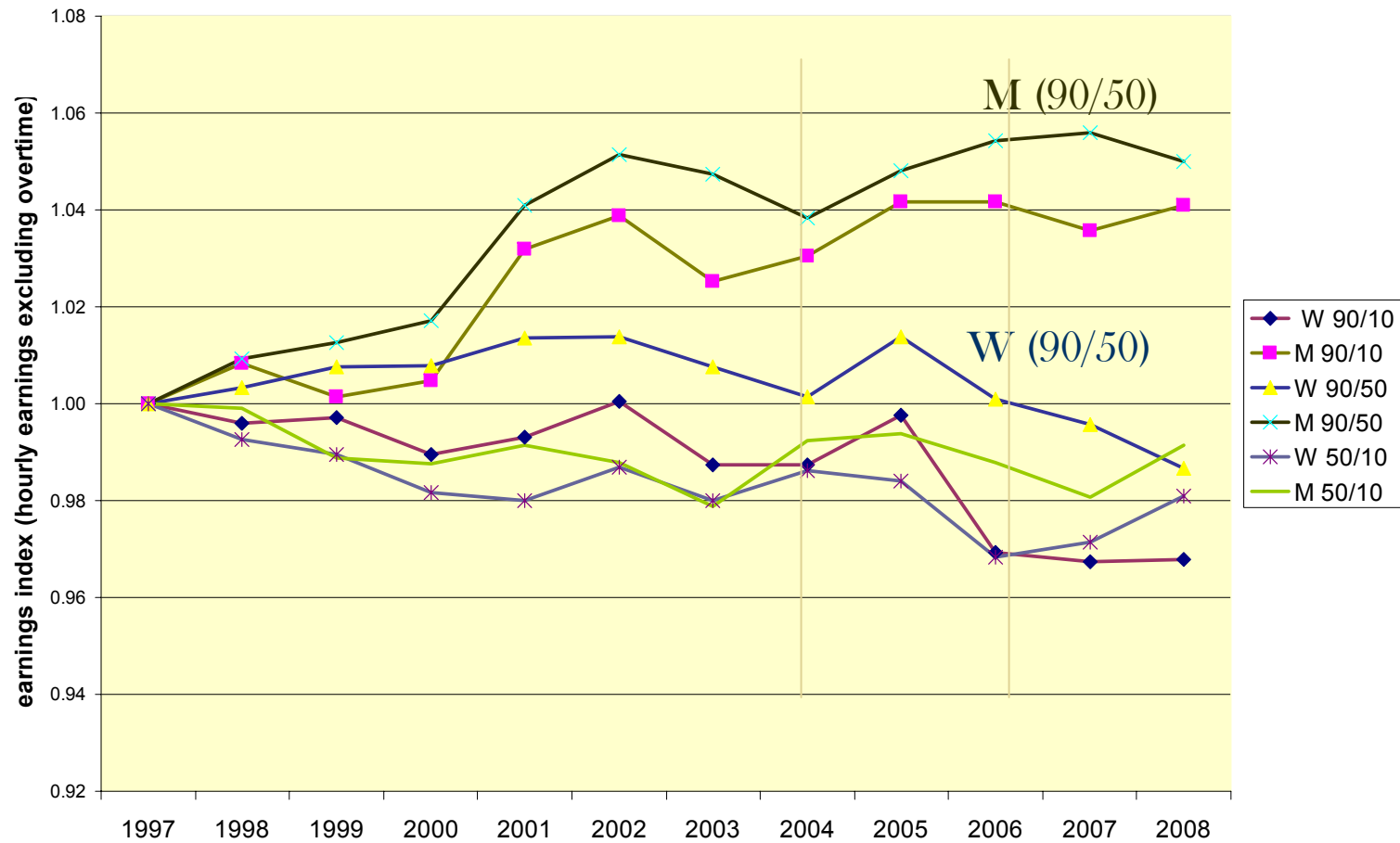
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## 2.1.1 Rising earnings inequalities (women and men 1975-2005 US, UK, Swe)

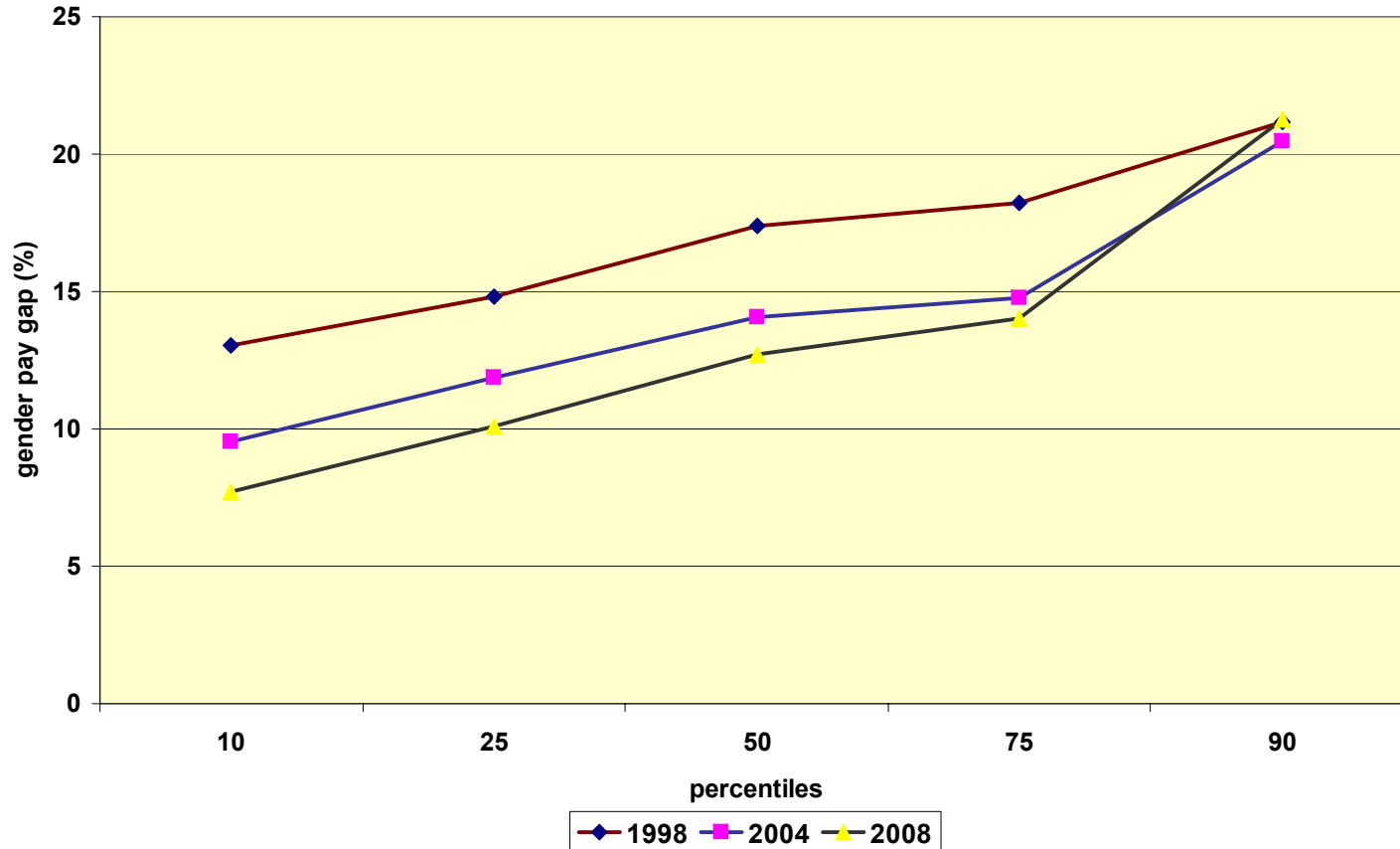


## 2.1.2 Women and men: earnings inequalities

(UK 1997-2005 decile ratios)



## 2.1.3 Variation in decline in the gender pay gap across the distribution (percentiles UK 1998-2008)



## 2.2.1 Challenges – segregation, care and the market

*gender segregation*

*care work - ‘market’  
misrecognition and  
undervaluation*

*finance - ‘market’  
misrecognition and  
overvaluation*

‘prisoners of love’ (Folbre 2008)

“19 per cent of nursery nurse jobs are paid below the adult rate of the National Minimum Wage” (LPC 2008)

‘masters of the universe’

*Richest 0.1% - 47,000 people - pre-tax income - min £350K -average £780K. Likely to be: male 9 in 10, middle-aged, living in London or the South East work in finance, property or the law (Brewer, Sibieta and Wren-Lewis 2008)*

## 2.2.2 Challenges – Cultural boundaries gender meanings

*Gendered understandings of  
skills/merit, appropriate roles  
and rewards and gendered  
understandings of the economy*

## 2.2.3 Time and the uneven gendered distribution of domestic labour

Domestic labour remains:

‘strongly gendered with women undertaking 75% of housework within the family and 38% of hours of paid work’. (Harkness 2008).

Men: little change in paid or unpaid work over the last decade.

Women: increased paid and reduced household work.

mothers adjust their working hours by exiting the labour market or going part time with the associated downward occupational mobility, and steep pay penalty

extent of adjustment influenced by qualifications and ethnicity

(Sigle-Rushton and Perrons 2006)

## 2.2.4 Challenges - intersectionality

*Gender is simultaneously classed and “ethnicised”, and inflected by other lines of difference - all these elements fuse to ‘create unique experiences and opportunities’.*

*(Browne and Misra 2003: 448)*

*In analysis and policy it is necessary to recognise how ‘one form of oppression is influenced by and influences how another form is experienced.*

*... There are no short cuts through women’s lives.’*

*(Spelman 1988:123 and 187)*

## 2.2.4.1 Differentiating gender pay gap

(median (%) full time workers) (Source: Leaker 2008 from LFS data)

No of Children	0	1	2	3	4+
	8	12.3	14.9	19	35.5
Ethnicity	W	M	A/AB	B/BB	Other
	12.4	9.2	12.6	-6.4	9.5
Education	D	HE	A	GCSE	No
	18.6	17.2	19.3	12.7	14.2
Disabled	6.5	Not disabled	12.0		
Married /CH	14.5	NM	-1.1		

## 3.1 Long-standing recommendations

### State level:

Minimum wage as living wage

Implementation and monitoring of  
working time directive

Care provision / leave /flexibility

recognition of diversity and better data  
to facilitate intersectional analysis

### Organisational level:

Mandatory evaluation systems and  
pay audits

Comparative research at macro and  
micro level.

## 3.2 New institutional arrangements: Keynes in a global and gendered context

*the existing high levels of inequality in market societies cannot be sustained economically and in fact form one element of the current crisis.*

*carework, its gendered composition and low market recognition and valuation forms one aspect of rising inequality by social class and enduring gender inequality.*

*valuing care differently, widening the understanding of the economy to include the reproductive sector and to recognise care as a crucial social investment represents one way of moving towards a more inclusive and sustainable society in which both inequality and gendered inequality would be lower. Such revaluation would assist in changing the contemporary masculinised and unequal 'form of the world' of work and the uneven domestic division of labour.*

*(de Beauvoir)*

# Notes to slides

- Slide 1.1 Note: Source: data from ONS. Figures relate to total employees in employment 16-59/64. Since 1992 – the % of female employees who work part time has remained fairly stable hovering between 41 and 43% while the male figure has almost doubled from 5.6% in 1992 to 10.7% towards the end of 2008.
- Slide 1.2 Source: NES panel data. Presented as Figure 6 in Leaker (2008). I am grateful to ONS who supplied me with the data so I could reproduce the diagram. Hourly earnings (gross).
- Slide 2.1 Source: OECD data base..Rising earnings inequalities (women and men 1975-2005 US, UK, Swe, P90/P10) as an index 1975 =1. Note each country should be read only in relation to itself – i.e. it is the trend that is important not the level as the measure of earnings differs – US and UK gross weekly earnings; Sweden gross annual earnings
- Slide 2.1.2 Note: Source Ashe Tables 1.6a 1998, 2004, 2008 – vertical line indicates a break in the data series
- Gender wage gap calculated as  $100 - (f/m \text{ (decile) ratio}) * 100$ . Data relate to men and women aged 16-65m and 16-60f and for hourly earnings excluding overtime. ASHE replaced the New Earnings Survey (NES) in 2004. Main differences are improvements to the coverage of employees. ASHE data source has reworked the NES using the ASHE imputation and weighting methodology to create a continuous time series. ASHE methodology improved in 2005 and 2006. The Time series does not take account of the improved coverage but this is not thought to lead to major inaccuracies.(ONS 2008) <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=13102>. ASHE is workplace data – to be included firms must reach the VAT threshold or employees under the PAYE threshold. See Leaker (2008) for a further discussion of ASHE and NES.
- Slide 2.1.3 Note: Source Ashe Tables 1.6a 1998, 2004, 2008. Gender wage gap calculated as  $100 - (f/m \text{ (decile) ratio}) * 100$  Data relate to men and women aged 16-65m and 16-60f and for hourly earnings excluding overtime
- Slide 2.4.1 Married / CH = Married and Co-habiting NM = Non married includes single and separated = 1.1%W = White, M = Mixed, A/AB = Asian/ Asian British, B/BB = Black/Black British, D = Degree, HE = Higher Education, A = A level of equivalent, GCSE = grades A-C or equivalent, No = No qualification, Full time workers – gender wage gap estimated at the median (Source: Leaker 2008 from LFS data)
- Slide 2.4.2 Measure: Hourly earnings excluding overtime. ASHE data Table 20 (6a) 1998 and 2008

# References

Please note - the slides in this presentation are purely illustrative - to follow the argument the paper needs to be read. In this regard the references below include only those that are specifically referred to in the presentation. The ideas in the presentation/paper have built upon those of many scholars working on these issues over the last 30 years

- Brewer, M., Sibieta, L., Wren-Lewis, L (2008) Racing away? Income inequality and the evolution of high incomes. IFS Briefing note 76, London: Institute of Fiscal Studies <http://www.ifs.org.uk/bns/bn76.pdf>
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- Folbre, N (2008) Reforming Care, *Politics and Society* 36 (3): 373-387
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- Leaker, D (2008) The gender pay gap in the uk, *Economic and Labour Market Review* 2 (4): 19-24
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- Spelman, E. V. 1988 *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought*. Boston: Beacon.
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<http://www.tuc.org.uk/equality/tuc-14435-f0.pdf>