

Family Structure, Gender, and the Rise in Parental Coresidence Among Prime-Aged Adults

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Abstract

This paper documents two features of the rise in parental coresidence among prime-aged American adults from 1962 to 2023. First, we show how demographic change contributed to the long-run rise in coresidence. Through the early 2000s, rising coresidence was largely compositional: marriage rates declined, and unmarried adults are substantially more likely to live with their parents. Only over the last two decades has coresidence begun to rise *within* marital groups, suggesting that the recent increase reflects changes beyond the decline of marriage alone. Second, parental coresidence is strongly gendered. Prime-aged men are substantially more likely to live with their parents than women, and the gap has widened in recent decades. Differences in marital status and the presence of resident children account for roughly half of the contemporary gender gap. In particular, the growing divergence in residential parenthood between men and women contributes to the disparity by making parental coresidence less feasible for mothers than for otherwise similar fathers. Marriage and resident children emerge as central determinants of parental coresidence, shaping both its aggregate rise and an important share of its differences across the sexes.

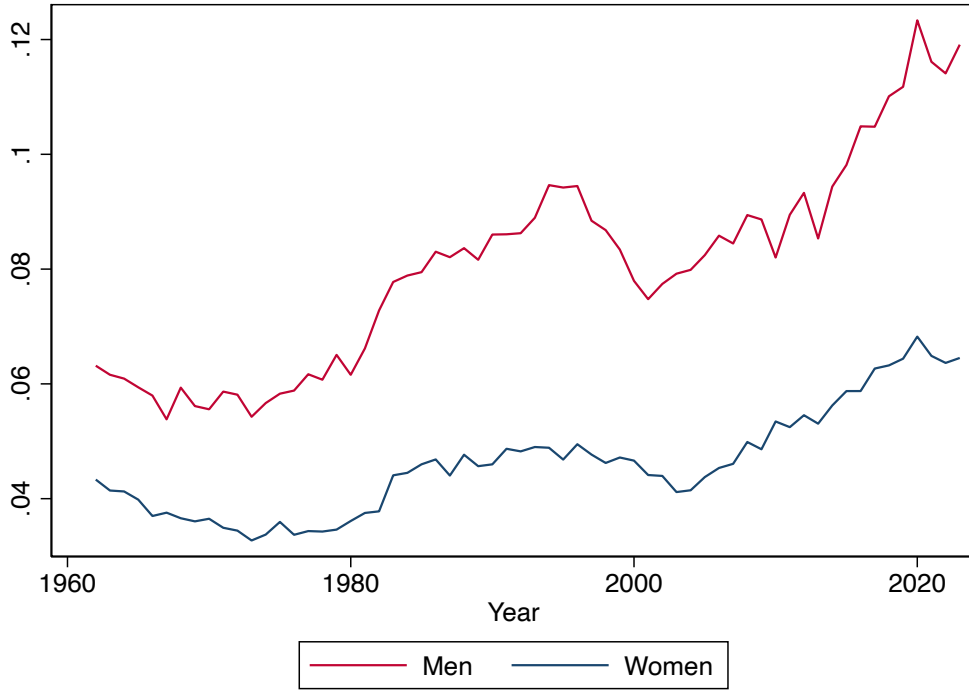
1 Introduction

This paper documents trends in parental coresidence amongst prime-aged (25–54 year old) American adults from the 1960s to the 2020s. Coresidence is an important source of informal insurance for adult children: living with parents lowers housing costs, generates economies of scale in consumption, and can provide a fallback during spells of unemployment, illness, divorce, or other adverse shocks. Coresidence trends can also matter for economic aggregates, as living with parents can have broader consequences for marriage formation and for labor market participation (Chiochio, 2025; Penrose, 2026; Kaplan, 2012).

In Figure 1 we document 60 years of coresidence trends separately for men and women. Over the period rates of prime-aged adults living with their parents have steadily increased, by about 6 percentage points for men and about 3 percentage points for women. The drivers of this aggregate rise have been changing over time. In this paper we show that until the early 2000s, the increase was largely related to declining rates of marriage. Because unmarried individuals coreside at higher rates, the decline in prime-aged marriage rates raised aggregate coresidence. Within the

unmarried population, coresidence was flat or falling over these decades. From the mid-2000s and onward, coresidence began rising within marital groups, not merely across them. The recent rise in coresidence is therefore a new phenomenon, with plausibly new drivers.

Figure 1: Share of Prime-Aged Adults Living with Parents, by Sex



Notes: Sample is civilians aged 25–54, not enrolled full-time in school and not living in group quarters. An adult is coded as living with parents if recorded as the child of the household head or reference person. *Source:* Current Population Survey (IPUMS)

Figure 1 also shows that coresidence is gendered. Prime-aged men are substantially more likely to live with their parents than prime-aged women and the gap has widened over recent decades. In the 1960s, roughly 6 percent of prime-aged men and 4 percent of prime-aged women lived with their parents—a gap of about 2 percentage points. By 2023, that gap had grown to nearly 5 percentage points, with 12 percent of men and 7 percent of women coresiding with parents. We show that observable demographics—marital status and resident children—account for slightly over half of this gender gap.

The growth in the gap is also partly related to trends in marriage and fertility. Men and women with resident children are substantially less likely to live with their parents than their childless counterparts. As children increasingly live in single-parent families, where they are more likely to reside with their mother, residential parenthood becomes increasingly concentrated among women. This shift contributes to the gender gap in coresidence by making parental coresidence less feasible for mothers than for otherwise similar fathers.

This paper complements Penrose (2026), which studies the labor-supply consequences of rising coresidence among non-college men, by examining the demographic forces underlying the increase. This paper disentangles changing demographics from that increase. We show that the long-run growth in coresidence is, in large part, a downstream consequence of changing patterns of family

formation and the divergent paths of residential parenthood for men and women.¹ We show that changing rates of marriage account for much of the early rise in coresidence but little of the increase since the early 2000s—the period in which [Penrose \(2026\)](#) finds rising housing costs increasingly driving adults into the parental home. The takeaway is then that family-formation change underlies the earlier compositional phase, while rising housing costs account for the more recent within-group rise in coresidence, consistent with the findings of [Penrose \(2026\)](#). We also show that living with one’s parents is associated with similar labor force participation levels for both sexes. This is consistent with the mechanism in [Penrose \(2026\)](#) not being explicitly gendered, but affecting men differently due to differences in the presence of children.

2 Literature

This paper contributes to literatures on parental coresidence, family structure, and labor supply among prime-aged Americans.

The first strand studies parental coresidence as a form of informal insurance. [Rosenzweig and Wolpin \(1993\)](#) frame coresidence and intergenerational transfers as mechanisms through which families smooth consumption over the early life cycle, while [Kaplan \(2012\)](#) shows that the parental home insures workers against labor-market risk by providing a fallback following job loss. Consistent with this view, coresidence rises with unemployment and with the cost of independent living ([Wiemers, 2014](#); [Ermisch, 1999](#); [Card and Lemieux, 1997](#); [Matsudaira, 2016](#); [Lee and Painter, 2013](#); [Manacorda and Moretti, 2006](#)). More recent work links the post-2000 rise in coresidence to housing affordability. [Chiocchio \(2025\)](#) and [Penrose \(2026\)](#) show that higher rents push prime-aged adults—particularly less-educated men—back into the parental home, while [Albanesi et al. \(2022\)](#) document a similar pattern among college graduates driven by declining job-match quality. We contribute by distinguishing between two phases of the rise in coresidence. We show that the increase through the early 2000s was largely compositional, reflecting changes in family structure, whereas the subsequent rise occurred within demographic groups and is therefore more consistent with explanations based on housing and labor-market conditions.

The mechanism behind that earlier, compositional rise runs through a second literature on changing family structure. The decline and delay of marriage, together with the rise in cohabitation and non-marital fertility, are well documented ([Stevenson and Wolfers, 2007](#); [Lundberg et al., 2016](#); [Bloome and Ang, 2020](#)). A substantial body of work links these trends to the deteriorating economic position of less-educated men ([Autor et al., 2019](#); [Schneider et al., 2018](#)) and to long-run shifts in the gains from marriage ([Goldin and Katz, 2002](#); [Cherlin, 2004](#); [Fernández and Wong, 2014](#)). Whereas this literature primarily studies family formation as an outcome, we study one of its consequences. Our decomposition shows that changes in marital composition mechanically generated much of the rise in coresidence through the early 2000s, even as within-group coresidence remained flat or declined.

Finally, the paper connects to a literature on gender, parenthood, and inequality. Children

¹Our exercise throughout is descriptive. We decompose the rise in coresidence, and its gender gap, into a part attributable to shifts in observable demographics and an unexplained residual, holding the conditional associations fixed; we do not identify the causal effect of marriage or children on the decision to coreside.

increasingly reside with their mothers following non-marital birth or separation (Akerlof et al., 1996; Cancian et al., 2014), and a large literature documents the resulting penalties borne disproportionately by women (McLanahan, 2004; Kleven et al., 2019; Cortés and Pan, 2023; Goldin, Claudia et al., 2024). We identify a distinct margin through which family structure affects economic outcomes: access to the parental home. The paper is closest to Guzzo (2016), who finds that mothers appear less likely than fathers to return to the parental home because children are more likely to reside with them. We reach a similar conclusion for the broader prime-aged population. The parental home functions as a private safety net (Kaplan, 2012; Schaller and Eck, 2025), but access to that safety net is unequal. Because children disproportionately reside with mothers, women are less able than otherwise similar men to rely on the parental home during periods of economic distress. The widening gender gap in coresidence can therefore be understood as a consequence of diverging residential parenthood.

The paper also relates to work on declining labor force participation among prime-aged men (Krueger, 2017; Binder and Bound, 2019). Penrose (2026) argues that rising housing costs operating through the parental home are a quantitatively important driver of the post-2000 decline in male participation. Our evidence complements that argument by showing how changes in family structure shape access to the parental home itself. We document that the gender gap in coresidence is concentrated among non-college adults—the same group that experienced the largest decline in labor force participation—and show that conditional on coresidence and childlessness, men and women participate at nearly identical rates. The asymmetry in participation outcomes therefore reflects differential access to the parental home rather than a differential response to it once there.

3 Data

The analysis uses the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC), accessed through IPUMS (Flood et al., 2025). The ASEC spans more than six decades and samples over ninety thousand households each year. Its household relationship codes allow us to identify adult children residing in a parent’s home. In addition, it contains detailed demographic information on all members of the household. We use ASEC samples from 1962 to 2023.²

An adult is coded as coresiding with their parents if they are recorded as the child or stepchild of the household head or reference person. This definition captures the case in which the parent is the householder; and it excludes the case in which the adult child is the householder and the parent has moved in. An adult has resident children if any of their own children are present in the household; mothers are women with resident children and fathers are men with resident children.³

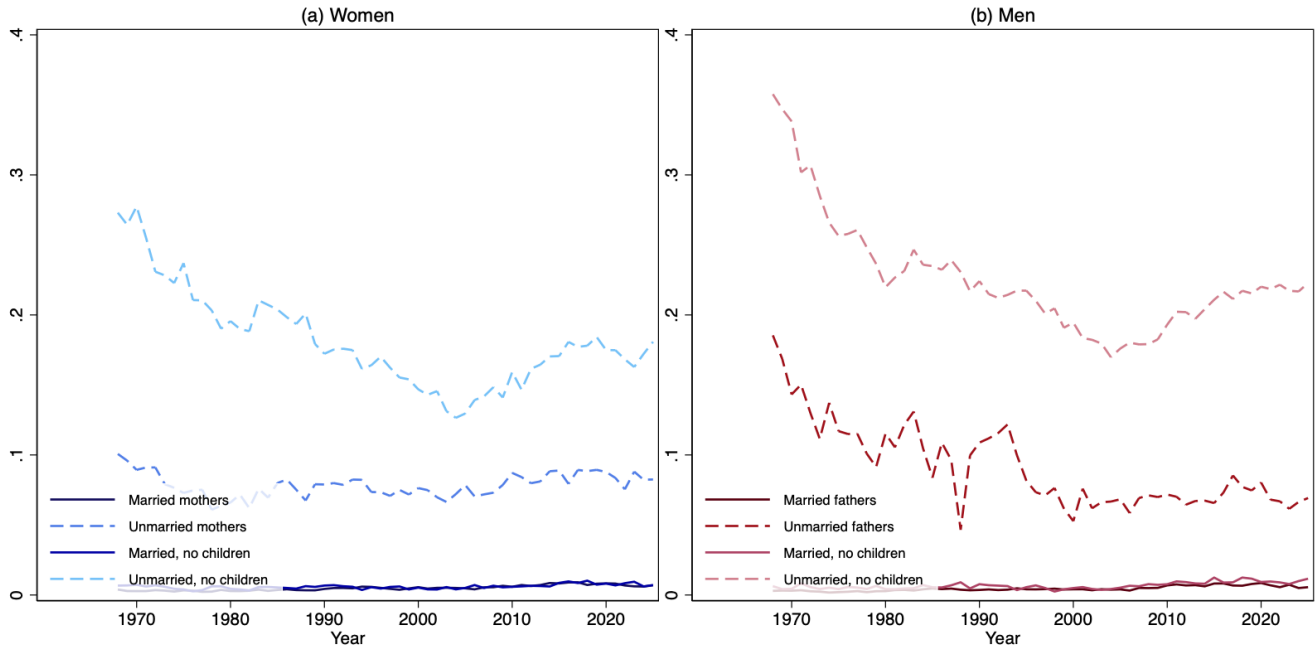
²We keep prime-aged adults, defined as individuals aged 25 to 54. We drop residents of Puerto Rico and retain the 50 states and the District of Columbia; the historical state-group codes used in the 1962–1976 surveys are kept. All statistics and regressions use the ASEC person weight.

³Note that we are unable to determine parent status if children are not residing in the same home.

4 The Decline in Marriage and the Rise of Coresidence

We begin by documenting a basic feature of the long-run rise in parental coresidence: it is closely linked to changing patterns of family formation. Figure 2 plots the share of prime-aged adults living with their parents from the late 1960s to the present, separately by sex and by four categories defined by marital status and the presence of resident children.

Figure 2: Share of Prime-Aged Adults Living with Parents



Source: Current Population Survey

The first insight from these graphs is that coresidence is overwhelmingly a phenomenon of unmarried adults. Married adults both with and without children coreside at rates that remain near zero throughout the period. Essentially all of the level and all of the variation in coresidence comes from the two unmarried groups.

This fact has an immediate implication for the aggregate trend. The share of prime-aged adults who are married has fallen substantially since the 1970s as marriage has been delayed and increasingly forgone (Stevenson and Wolfers, 2007; Lundberg et al., 2016). Because parental coresidence is concentrated among the unmarried, this decline mechanically raises the aggregate coresidence rate.

A second insight is that the increase in coresidence before 2000 differs from the increase after 2000. Through roughly 2000, coresidence among unmarried adults was falling rather than rising. Any increase in aggregate coresidence during this period therefore reflects compositional change: a growing share of adults belonged to demographic groups with high rates of coresidence. Part of the decline within the unmarried group likely reflects the rise of cohabitation, which substitutes for both marriage and parental coresidence.⁴

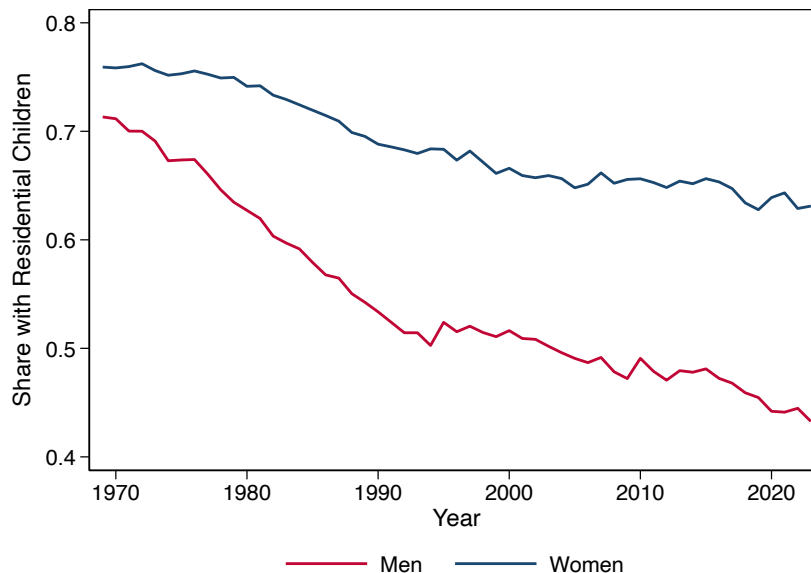
⁴Our marital status measure reflects legal marriage and does not identify cohabitation, which the CPS records only from the mid-1990s onward.

After 2000, the pattern changes. Coresidence rises within the unmarried population, particularly among adults without resident children. This increase occurs for both men and women and cannot be explained by changing marital composition alone. The recent rise therefore reflects a genuine increase in coresidence behavior within demographic groups.

Figure 2 thus points to two distinct phases in the rise of parental coresidence. The increase through the early 2000s was largely compositional, driven by the retreat from marriage and the resulting growth of demographic groups that traditionally coreside at higher rates. Since 2000, however, coresidence has risen within groups, suggesting that additional forces—such as rising housing costs or deteriorating labor-market opportunities—have increased the value of the parental home itself.

A related demographic shift reinforces this picture and motivates the gender decomposition that follows. Figure 3 documents the divergence in residential parenthood among non-college adults since 1970. In 1970, roughly three-quarters of both non-college men and women had own resident children. Since then the series have diverged substantially: women’s residential parenthood rate has declined modestly, to around 63 percent by 2023, while men’s has fallen much more sharply, to roughly 45 percent. As a growing share of children are born outside marriage or experience parental separation (McLanahan, 2004), mothers increasingly remain the residential parent (Cancian et al., 2014). Rising non-marital fertility and parental separation therefore concentrate residential parenthood among women, even as fertility itself does not differ by sex. This divergence shapes who can access the parental home, a point we return to in the decomposition below.

Figure 3: Share of Non-College Adults with Resident Children, by Sex



Notes: Sample is civilians aged 25–54, not enrolled full-time in school and not living in group quarters. Figure plots the share of prime-aged men and women with own children under 18 resident in the household. *Source:* Current Population Survey (IPUMS).

5 Why Do Women Coreside Less Than Men?

We now turn to more explicitly examining the relationship between demographics and coresidence, and to testing whether demographics can explain differences in coresidence between men and women. Table 1 estimates the gender gap in coresidence separately for non-college and college-educated adults for the pooled years between 2014 and 2023. The raw gap is reported in columns (1) and (4): non-college women are 6.2 percentage points less likely to live with their parents than non-college men, while among the college-educated the gap is only 1.4 percentage points. The gender gap in coresidence is thus largely a non-college phenomenon.⁵

Columns (2) and (5) add controls for the presence of resident children, the presence of a child under five, and single-parent status. For non-college adults, the female coefficient falls from -0.062 to -0.048 , indicating that differences in family structure account for a meaningful share of the raw gender gap. For the college sample, the coefficient changes only slightly, from -0.014 to -0.011 . The larger effect among the non-college suggests that differences in parenthood play a more important role in generating gender differences in living arrangements for this group.

Columns (3) and (6) add centered age, age squared, their interactions with female, foreign-born status, and marital-status fixed effects.⁶ The non-college female coefficient falls further, to -0.026 : the full set of demographic controls reduces the raw gap by more than half. For the college sample, the gap falls to -0.003 , essentially disappearing. The large role played by marital-status controls suggests that differences in the timing of family formation are an important contributor to the observed gender gap in coresidence. Women tend to marry at younger ages than men, and marriage is strongly associated with establishing an independent household (Díaz-Giménez et al., 2008). As a result, part of the raw gender gap reflects women transitioning into marriage and family life earlier than otherwise similar men. Demographic differences therefore account for nearly all of the modest gender gap among college graduates, but leave a meaningful portion of the substantially larger non-college gap unexplained.

Several parenthood coefficients change once marital-status controls are added. In both education groups, having a child under five switches from a positive to a negative association with coresidence, reflecting the fact that young children are concentrated among younger adults who are themselves more likely to live with their parents. Similarly, the positive association between single parenthood and coresidence disappears once marital status is held fixed. Conditional on marital status, parenthood reduces coresidence, suggesting that children are an important constraint on adults' ability to return home.

The full specification also speaks to what drives coresidence in general, not just the gender gap. Marriage is the strongest correlate of living arrangements in the table and suggests that the gender gap in coresidence is closely tied to gender differences in the timing of family formation. Relative to never-married adults, married adults are 26.1 percentage points less likely to live with their parents in the non-college sample and 17.7 percentage points less likely in the college sample.

⁵This is the same population in which coresidence has risen most steeply and in which it has the largest labor force participation consequences (Penrose, 2026).

⁶We interact gender with age to permit the age gradient of coresidence to differ by sex, which is the most empirically relevant dimension of heterogeneity. Robustness checks that additionally allow all demographic characteristics to vary by gender yield similar female coefficients and are available upon request.

Table 1: Determinants of Coresidence by Education

	Non-college			College		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Female	−0.062*** (0.001)	−0.048*** (0.001)	−0.026*** (0.002)	−0.014*** (0.001)	−0.011*** (0.001)	−0.003** (0.001)
Has children		−0.189*** (0.001)	−0.009*** (0.001)		−0.108*** (0.001)	0.009*** (0.001)
Child under 5		0.010*** (0.001)	−0.037*** (0.001)		0.007*** (0.001)	−0.014*** (0.001)
Single parent		0.126*** (0.002)	−0.092*** (0.002)		0.076*** (0.002)	−0.040*** (0.003)
Female × Age			0.001*** (0.000)			−0.000 (0.000)
Female × Age ²			−0.000* (0.000)			−0.000 (0.000)
Age			−0.005*** (0.000)			−0.003*** (0.000)
Age ²			0.000*** (0.000)			0.000*** (0.000)
Foreign born			−0.034*** (0.001)			−0.013*** (0.001)
Married			−0.261*** (0.002)			−0.177*** (0.002)
Separated			−0.094*** (0.004)			−0.065*** (0.007)
Divorced			−0.111*** (0.003)			−0.095*** (0.003)
Widowed			−0.140*** (0.005)			−0.113*** (0.007)
Cohabiting partner			−0.304*** (0.002)			−0.204*** (0.002)
Constant	0.143*** (0.001)	0.219*** (0.001)	0.315*** (0.002)	0.066*** (0.001)	0.116*** (0.001)	0.180*** (0.003)
Observations	493,203	493,203	493,203	306,669	306,669	306,669
Adj. R-squared	0.009	0.082	0.188	0.001	0.049	0.135

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses; sampling weights applied. Single parent is defined as having resident children, not married with spouse present, and not cohabiting. Marital status dummies are relative to never-married adults.

Columns (3) and (6) additionally control for centered age, foreign-born status, and marital status fixed effects.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Separated, divorced, widowed, and cohabiting adults are also substantially less likely to coreside than the never-married. No other variable has a comparable association with living arrangements. Coresidence is therefore concentrated among adults who have not yet formed an independent family and household of their own.

The results in Table 1 suggest that the gender gap in coresidence is primarily a non-college gap and that it is largely accounted for by differences in family structure and other demographic characteristics between men and women. In particular, marriage and parenthood explain a substantial share of the raw disparity. Yet a meaningful residual gap remains among non-college adults even after conditioning on age, fertility, marital status, and nativity. Non-college women remain 2.6 percentage points less likely to live with their parents than observationally similar non-college men, implying that roughly forty percent of the original gap remains unexplained. The persistence of this gap suggests that demographic differences alone cannot fully explain why men are more likely to coreside. Potential explanations include differences in labor market opportunities, earnings, caregiving responsibilities, family expectations, and parental responses to adult sons and daughters that are not captured by observed family structure. Distinguishing among these mechanisms lies beyond the scope of the present analysis. While the results establish that family formation is an important part of the story, they also indicate that the rise of male coresidence cannot be understood solely as a consequence of changing demographic composition.

6 Decomposing Coresidence and its Gender Gap

The preceding sections suggest that changing demographics, particularly marriage and parenthood, play an important role in both the long-run rise in coresidence and the gender gap. In this section, we quantify those contributions in two ways. First, we examine how the aggregate trend in coresidence changes once demographic composition is held fixed. Second, we decompose the gender gap into portions attributable to differences in residential parenthood, other demographic characteristics, and an unexplained residual.

To quantify the contribution of these demographic factors, one approach would be to add controls sequentially and examine how the estimated trend or gender gap changes. However, because demographic characteristics such as marriage, parenthood, and age are correlated, the contribution attributed to any particular factor depends on the order in which controls are introduced. To avoid this arbitrariness, we use the decomposition method of Gelbach (2016), which provides an exact, order-invariant decomposition of the difference between a baseline estimate and a fully controlled estimate.

Let b_{raw} denote the estimated female coefficient from a specification with limited controls and b_{full} the corresponding female coefficient from the fully controlled specification. Gelbach’s decomposition partitions the difference between the two according to

$$b_{\text{raw}} - b_{\text{full}} = \sum_k \delta_k, \tag{1}$$

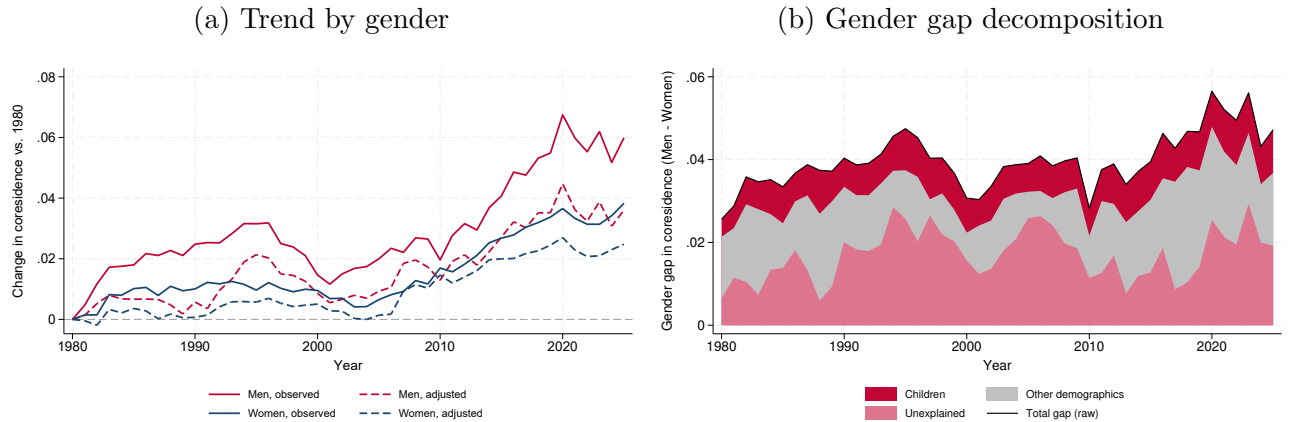
where δ_k is the contribution of explanatory variable k to the change in the female coefficient

between the baseline and fully controlled specifications.⁷ We group explanatory variables into a children component, consisting of indicators for resident children, young children, and single parenthood, and an other-demographics component, consisting of marital status, age, and nativity. We assign marital status to the other-demographics component rather than treating it as a standalone group; although marriage is the strongest individual predictor of coresidence, its timing is closely linked to age, and grouping these together preserves a clean conceptual distinction between the child-custody constraints captured by the children component and the broader demographic shifters captured by other demographics. An alternative decomposition that isolates marriage as a separate component yields a quantitatively similar children contribution and does not affect the main conclusions. Aggregating the individual δ_k terms within each group allows us to quantify the share of the gender gap attributable to children, other demographic characteristics, and a residual unexplained component.

We first examine the aggregate rise in coresidence. Figure 4a compares the observed increase in coresidence since 1980 with the increase that remains after demographic composition is held fixed. The adjusted series traces the evolution of coresidence after controlling for age, fertility, marital status, and nativity, so the distance between the observed and adjusted lines measures the contribution of changing demographics.

Changing demographics account for a substantial share of the overall rise. By 2023, coresidence is approximately 6.2 percentage points above its 1980 level for men and 3.1 points above its 1980 level for women. Holding demographics fixed reduces these increases to roughly 3.9 and 2.1 percentage points, respectively, implying that demographic change accounts for about one-third of the increase for both sexes.

Figure 4: Decomposing Coresidence and its Gender Gap



Source: CPS ASEC. Prime-aged adults (25–54), excluding full-time students and group quarters.

More importantly, the contribution of changing demographics to the aggregate trend is most

⁷Unlike sequentially adding controls to a regression, which can produce different results depending on the order in which correlated covariates are introduced, Gelbach’s decomposition provides an exact and order-invariant allocation of the difference between the baseline and fully controlled estimates. The contribution of each variable reflects both its association with the coefficient of interest and its relationship with the outcome in the fully controlled specification.

visible in the 1980s and 1990s. The observed and adjusted series diverge substantially through roughly 2000; from approximately 2005 onward the two series move more closely in parallel, with the gap between them changing little in subsequent decades. This pattern reinforces the evidence from Figure 2: changing demographics, particularly the decline in marriage, account for much of the early rise in coresidence, but relatively little of the increase since 2000. The post-2000 rise largely survives after demographic composition is held fixed, suggesting that forces operating within demographic groups became increasingly important.

Figure 4b turns to the gender gap in coresidence. The figure decomposes the gap into three components: a children component, an other-demographics component, and an unexplained residual. The gender gap rises from roughly 2.6 percentage points in 1980 to 5.6 percentage points in 2023, more than doubling over the period.

In 1980, observable demographic characteristics account for most of the gap. The children component contributes roughly 0.004 and the other-demographics component about 0.015, leaving an unexplained residual of only 0.006. By the end of the sample, however, the composition of the gap has changed substantially. The other-demographics component remains important, rising modestly to around 0.022, while the children component increases from roughly 0.004 to 0.009. The largest change is in the residual component, which grows to approximately 0.025 and accounts for nearly half of the total gap.

The children component measures the portion of the gender gap attributable to differences in residential parenthood between men and women. It can be interpreted as the amount by which the gap would shrink if men and women had identical distributions of resident children, young children, and single-parent status, holding fixed the estimated relationship between those characteristics and coresidence. Although smaller than both the other-demographics and residual components throughout the sample, the children component grows steadily over time, consistent with increasing divergence in residential parenthood between men and women.

Taken together, the decompositions suggest that demographic change played a substantial role in the historical rise in coresidence, particularly through the decline of marriage. At the same time, demographic factors cannot fully account for either the post-2000 rise in coresidence or the growth of the gender gap. By the end of the sample, roughly half of the gender gap remains unexplained by observed demographic characteristics, indicating that men and women continue to differ in their propensity to live with parents even after conditioning on age, marital status, fertility, and nativity.

The children component's steady growth is directly linked to the divergence in residential parenthood documented in Figure 3. Table 1 showed that resident children reduce coresidence for both men and women: the barrier itself is not gendered. What has changed is the distribution of that barrier. As residential parenthood becomes increasingly concentrated among women, a growing share of women face constraints that make returning to the parental home more difficult. The gender gap widens not because children affect mothers differently than fathers, but because mothers are increasingly the parents who have children living at home. While Figure 4b shows that this mechanism accounts for only part of the overall increase in the gender gap, it identifies an important channel through which changing family structure affects access to the parental home.

7 Conclusion

This paper documents two features of the long rise in parental coresidence among prime-aged American adults. The first concerns its trajectory. Through the early 2000s, the rise was largely compositional: coresidence increased as a growing share of adults remained unmarried, and unmarried adults coreside at substantially higher rates. Only over the last two decades has coresidence begun to rise within marital groups—a pattern that the decline of marriage alone cannot account for, and one that coincides with the period in which [Penrose \(2026\)](#) finds rising housing costs increasingly driving adults into the parental home.

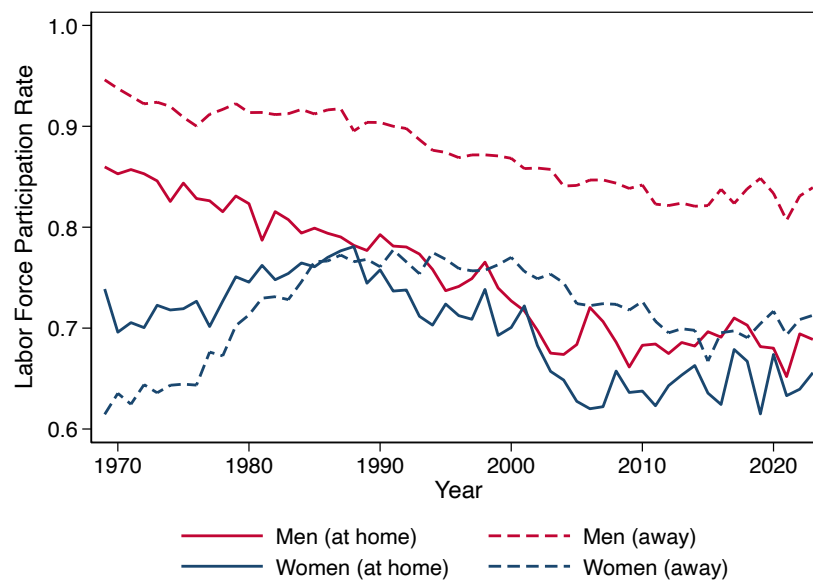
The second feature is gender. Men are substantially more likely than women to live with their parents, and the gap has widened over time. Roughly half of this difference is accounted for by observable demographics, particularly marital status and resident children. The growing concentration of resident children among women contributes to this disparity by making parental coresidence less feasible for mothers than for otherwise similar fathers. The two findings rest on the same foundation: marriage and children are central determinants of who lives with their parents, shaping both the aggregate evolution of coresidence and an important portion of its differences across the sexes.

The parental home may provide an important source of economic support during periods of joblessness or financial distress. A key insight of [Penrose \(2026\)](#) is that coresidence can lower the cost of non-employment by providing housing and shared consumption. The results in this paper suggest that access to this arrangement may differ systematically by gender. Because children disproportionately reside with their mothers, women are less likely than men to be in circumstances that permit a return to the parental home. This difference provides one possible explanation for why the coresidence margin identified by [Penrose \(2026\)](#) appears more relevant for men than for women, although establishing this mechanism directly is beyond the scope of the present paper.

Figure 5 is consistent with this interpretation. Conditional on childlessness, men and women living with their parents and those living independently participate in the labor force at nearly identical rates throughout the sample period. The asymmetry in participation outcomes between men and women therefore reflects differential access to the parental home rather than a differential response to it once there. This pattern also supports the characterization of the parental home as a tenure-neutral arrangement: it is associated with lower participation for both sexes, not a uniquely male retreat from the labor market.

The paper documents an important demographic asymmetry in parental coresidence, but does not explore all of its consequences. We do not estimate the causal effect of coresidence on labor supply, distinguish between the mechanisms through which children constrain coresidence, or model how anticipated access to the parental home feeds back into fertility and household formation decisions. These remain important directions for future research. What this paper establishes is that parental coresidence is increasingly concentrated among men, and that a meaningful portion of this disparity reflects differences in residential parenthood. As family structures have changed, mothers have become more likely than fathers to have children living with them, making parental coresidence less feasible for women. Understanding how this divergence affects labor supply, household formation, and the role of families as providers of economic support remains an important

Figure 5: Labor Force Participation by Living Arrangement, Non-College Childless Adults



Notes: Sample is civilians aged 25–54, not enrolled full-time in school and not living in group quarters. Figure plots labor force participation rates for childless prime-aged adults by living arrangement. *Source:* Current Population Survey (IPUMS).

task for future work.

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