

# **Women and Economic Recovery**

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## **Both good and bad news on women in the economy**

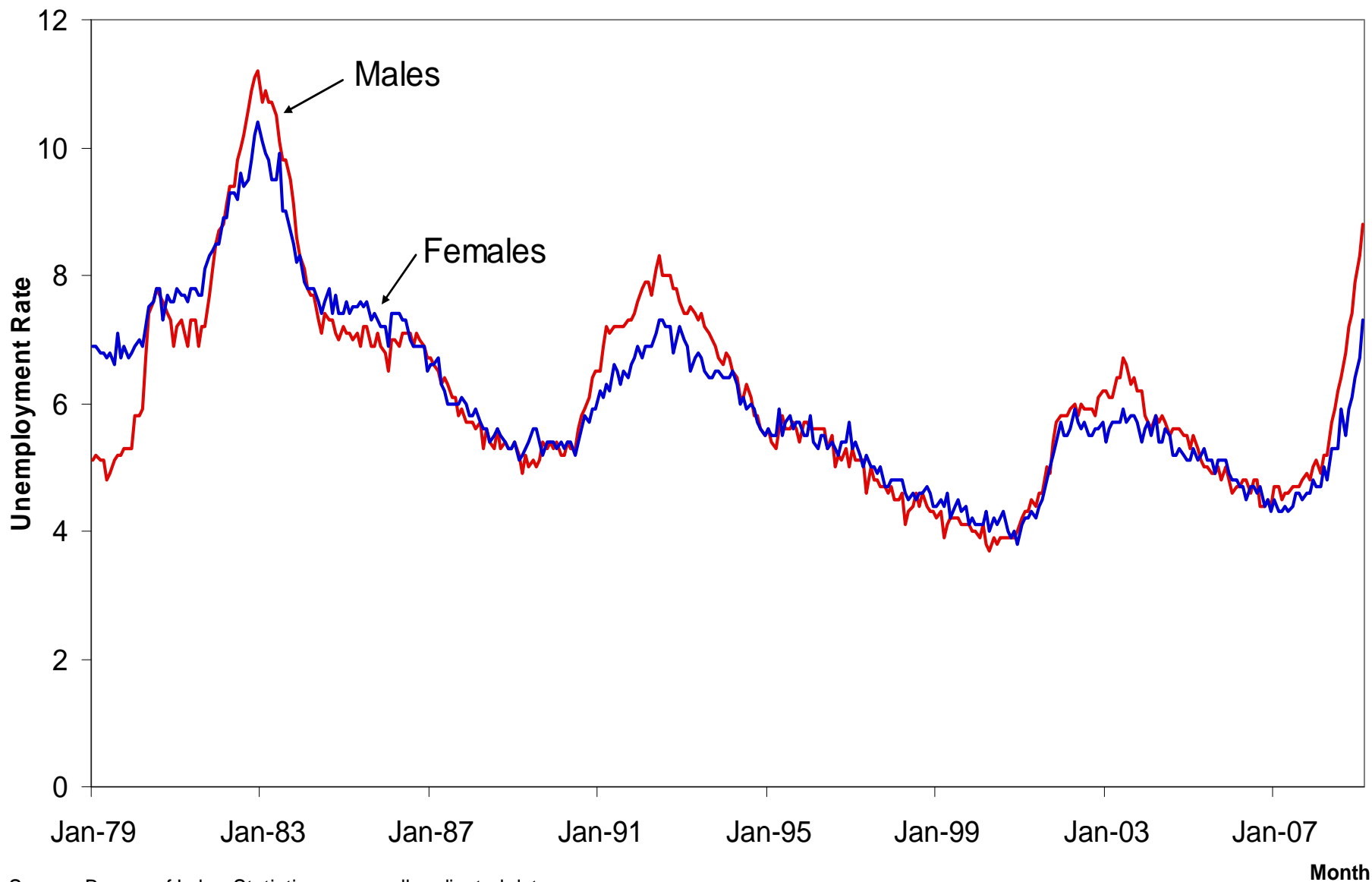
Women are doing better than men in the current recession along some measures...

But they remain behind on a number of issues.

## Unemployment

- Women's unemployment is less cyclical than men's. The current recession shows this pattern, as did previous recessions.

## Unemployment Rates by Gender, 1979-2009



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics seasonally adjusted data.

## Percent of Employed Persons Working in Selected Industries, by Sex

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	Percent of Male Workers	Percent of Female Workers
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Construction	12.78%	1.57%
Manufacturing	14.52%	6.86%
Wholesale and retail trade	14.62%	13.64%
Professional and business services	11.56%	9.70%
Education and health services	10.07%	34.77%

Data are 2008 annual averages from the BLS

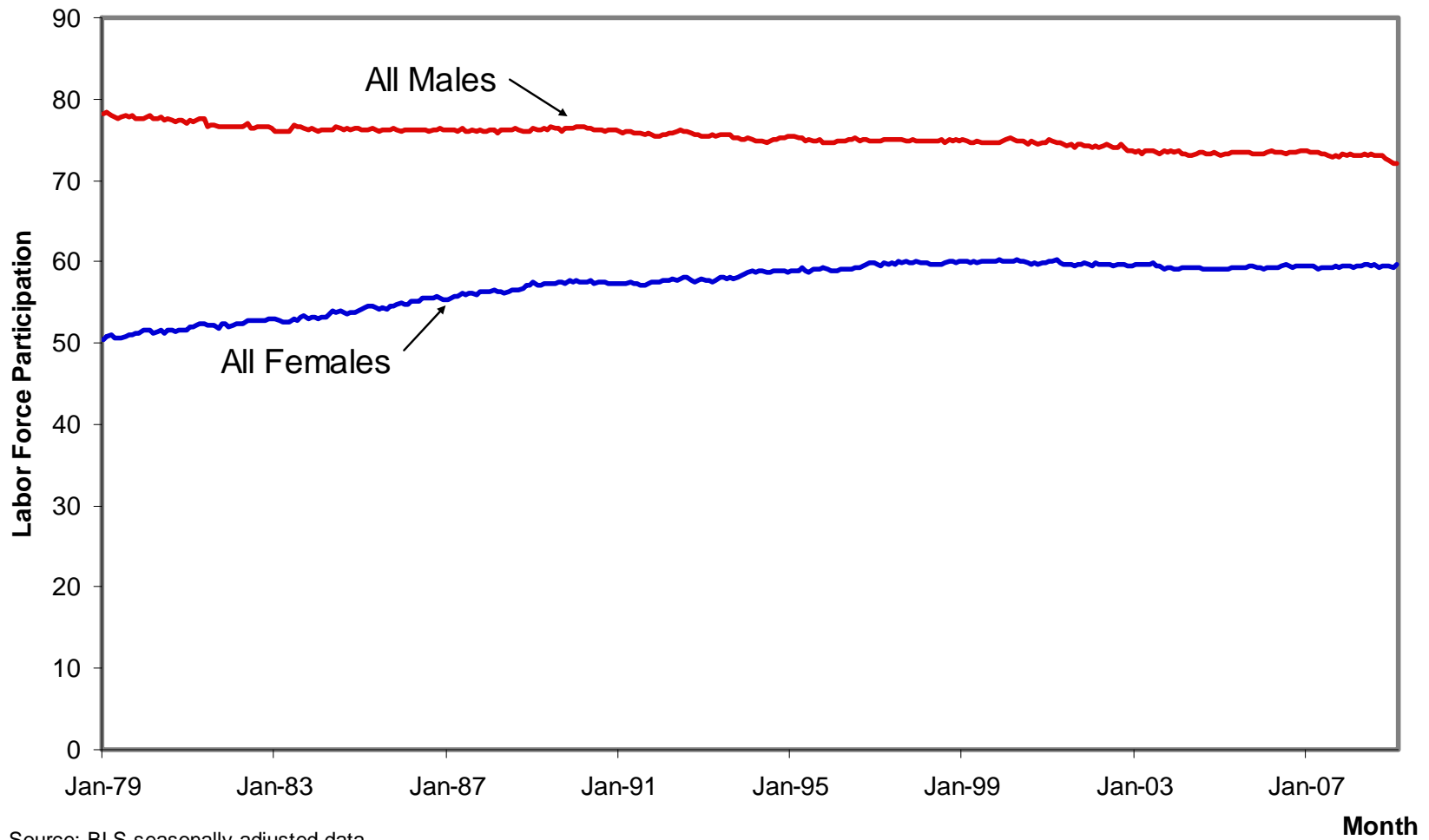
## **These employment shifts have more than economic implications**

- They shift time use in the household, and bargaining power among married couples.
- Male unemployment is also correlated with increases in domestic abuse.

## **Changes in Labor Force Participation**

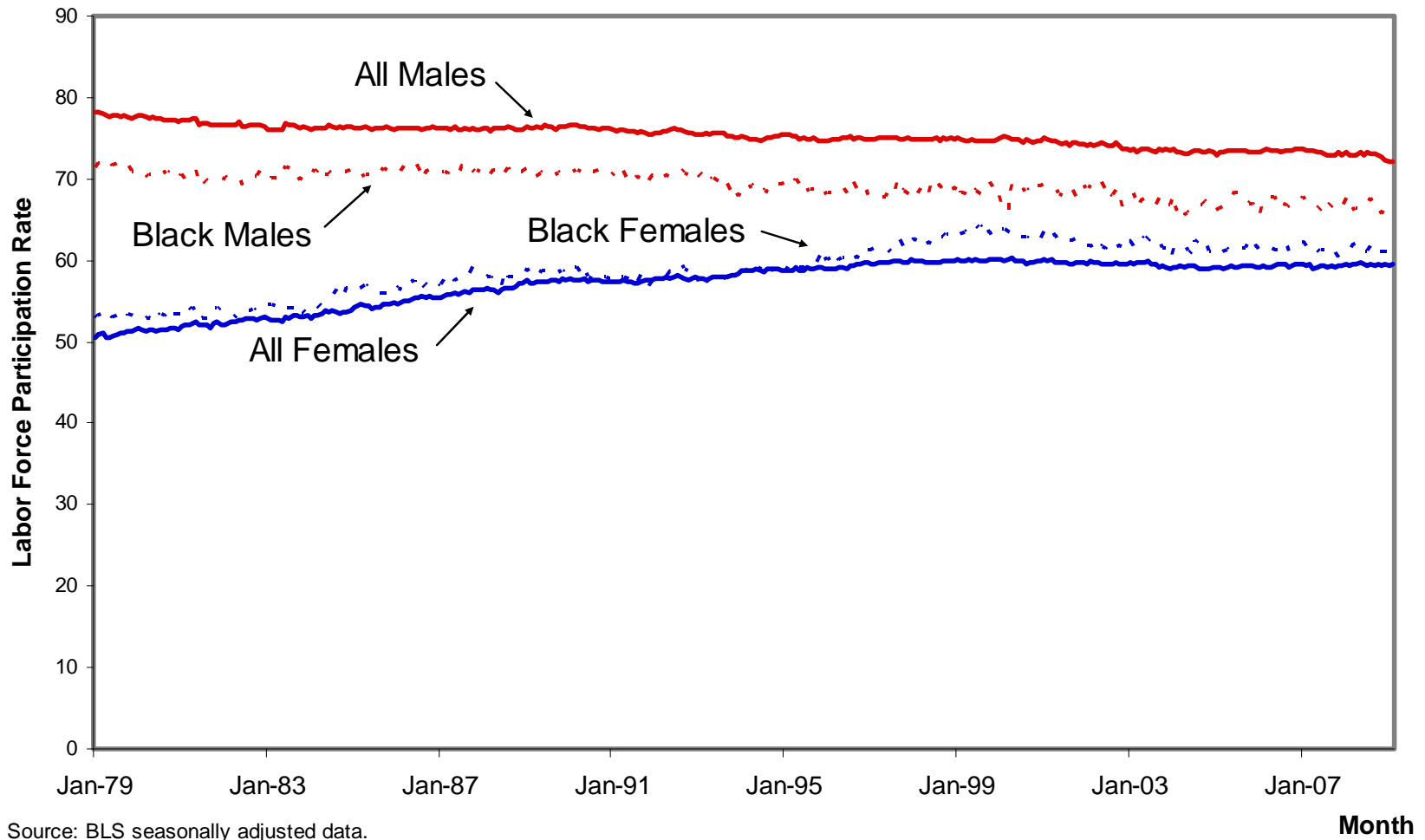
- While labor force participation is falling among both men and women during the recession, the larger long-term trends are unchanged.

## Labor Force Participation Rates by Gender, 1979-2009

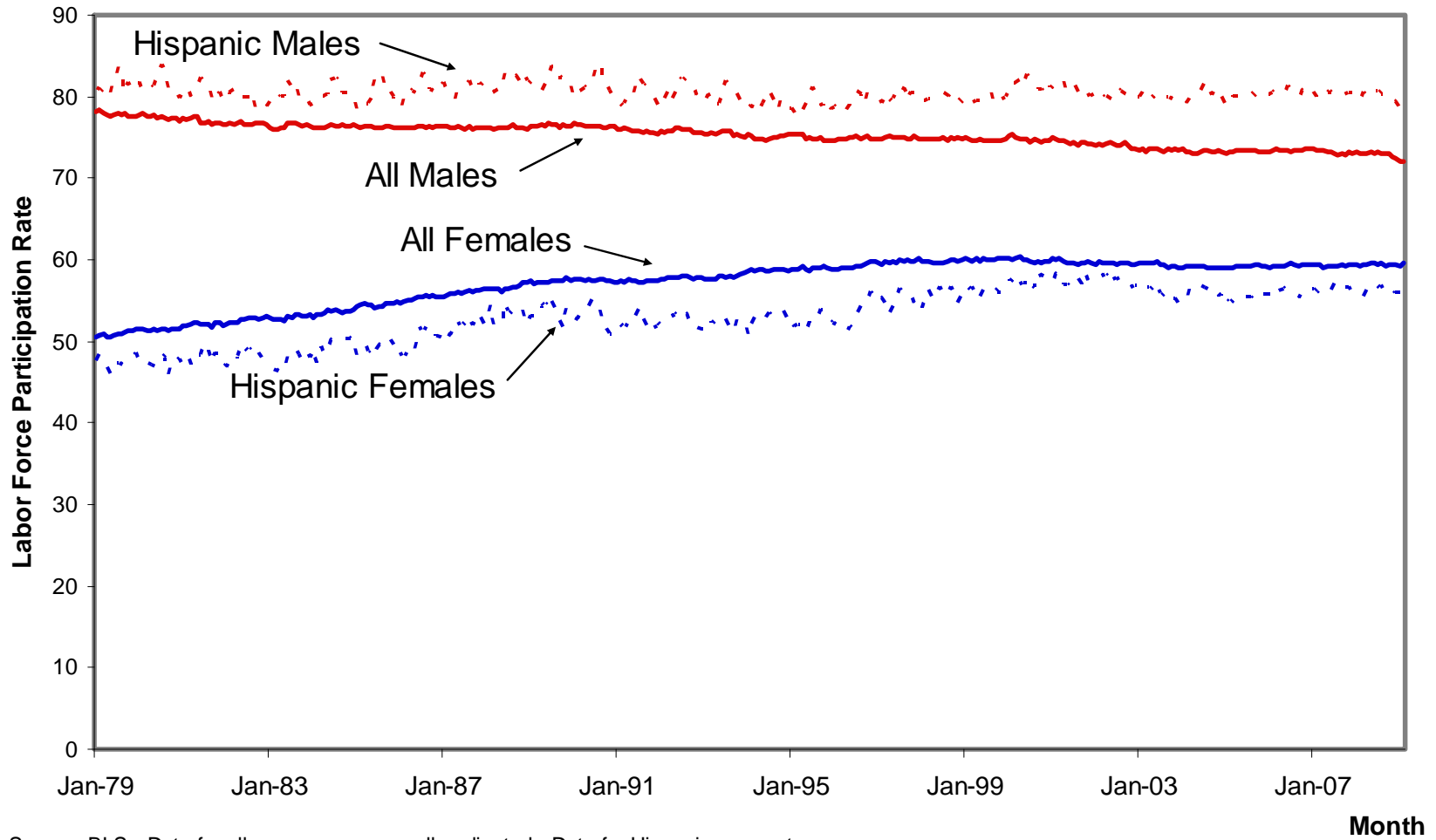


Source: BLS seasonally adjusted data.

## Labor Force Participation by Gender and Race, 1979-2009

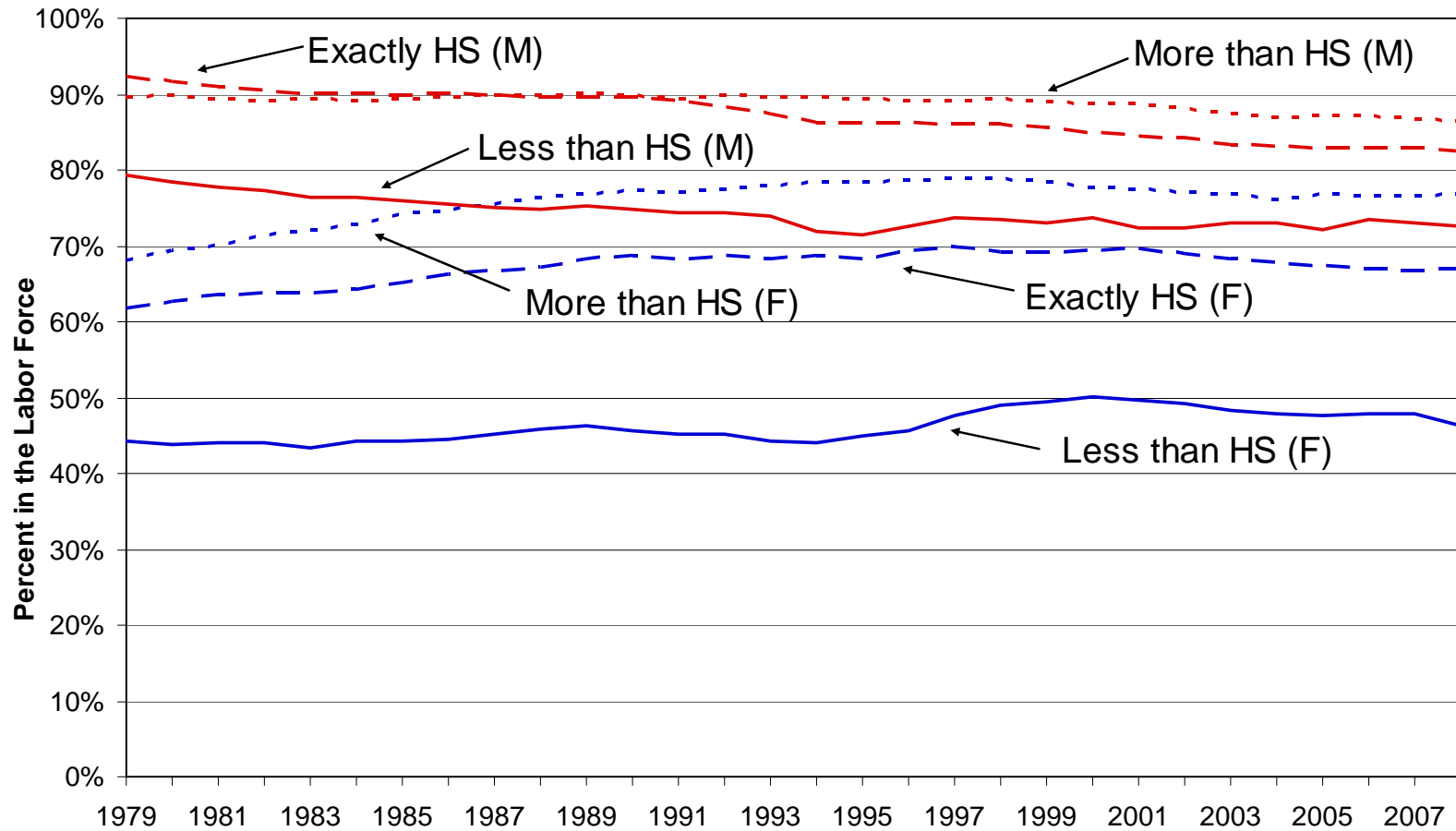


## Labor Force Participation by Gender and Race, 1979-2009



Source: BLS. Data for all races are seasonally adjusted. Data for Hispanics are not.

## Labor Force Participation by Skill Level, by Gender, 1979 to 2008



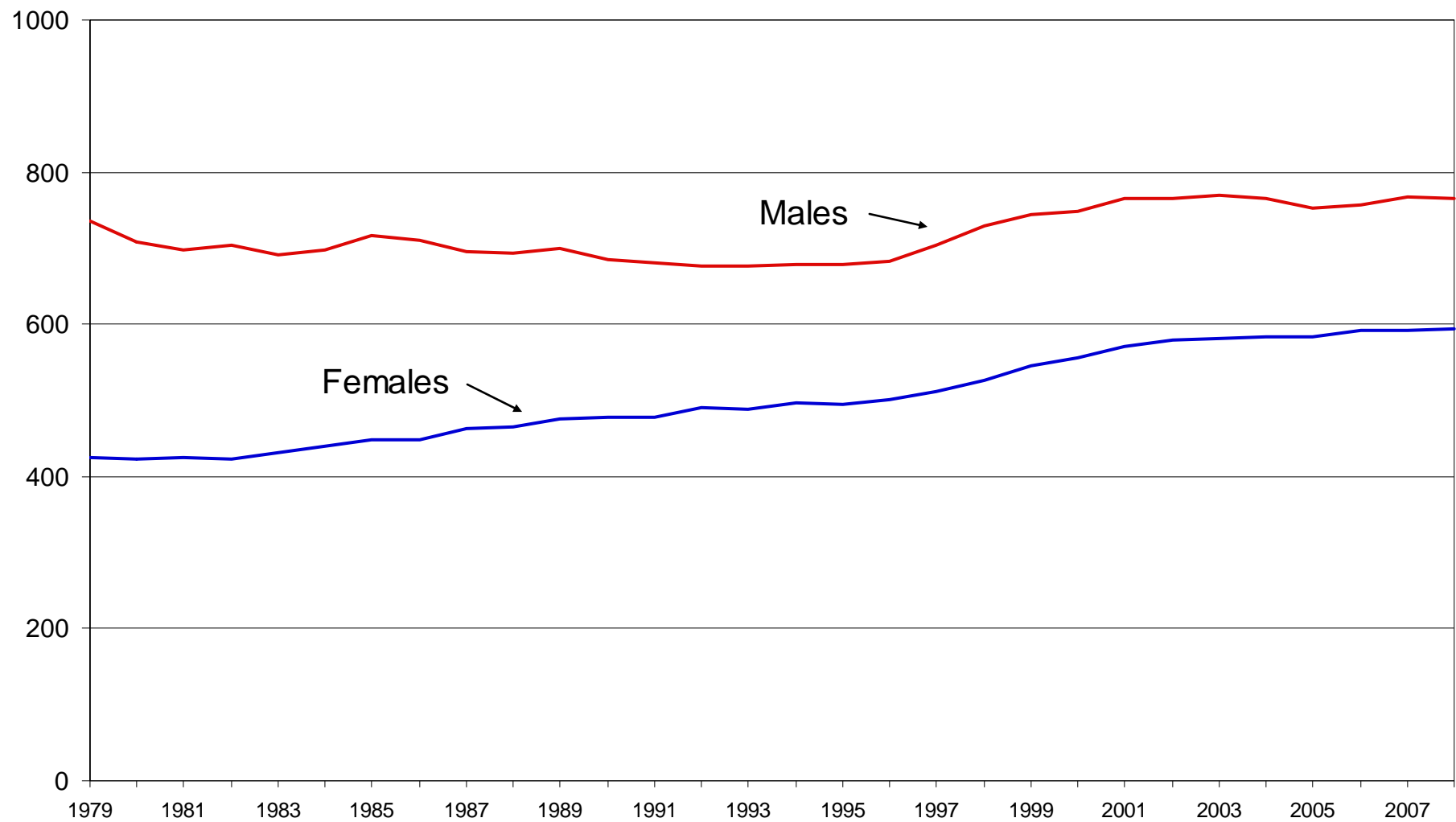
Source: Authors' tabulations from Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group data, 1979 to 2008.  
Based on all noninstitutionalized civilian adults aged 18-64.

Year

## **Wages shifts also reflect long-term trends more than short-term economic effects**

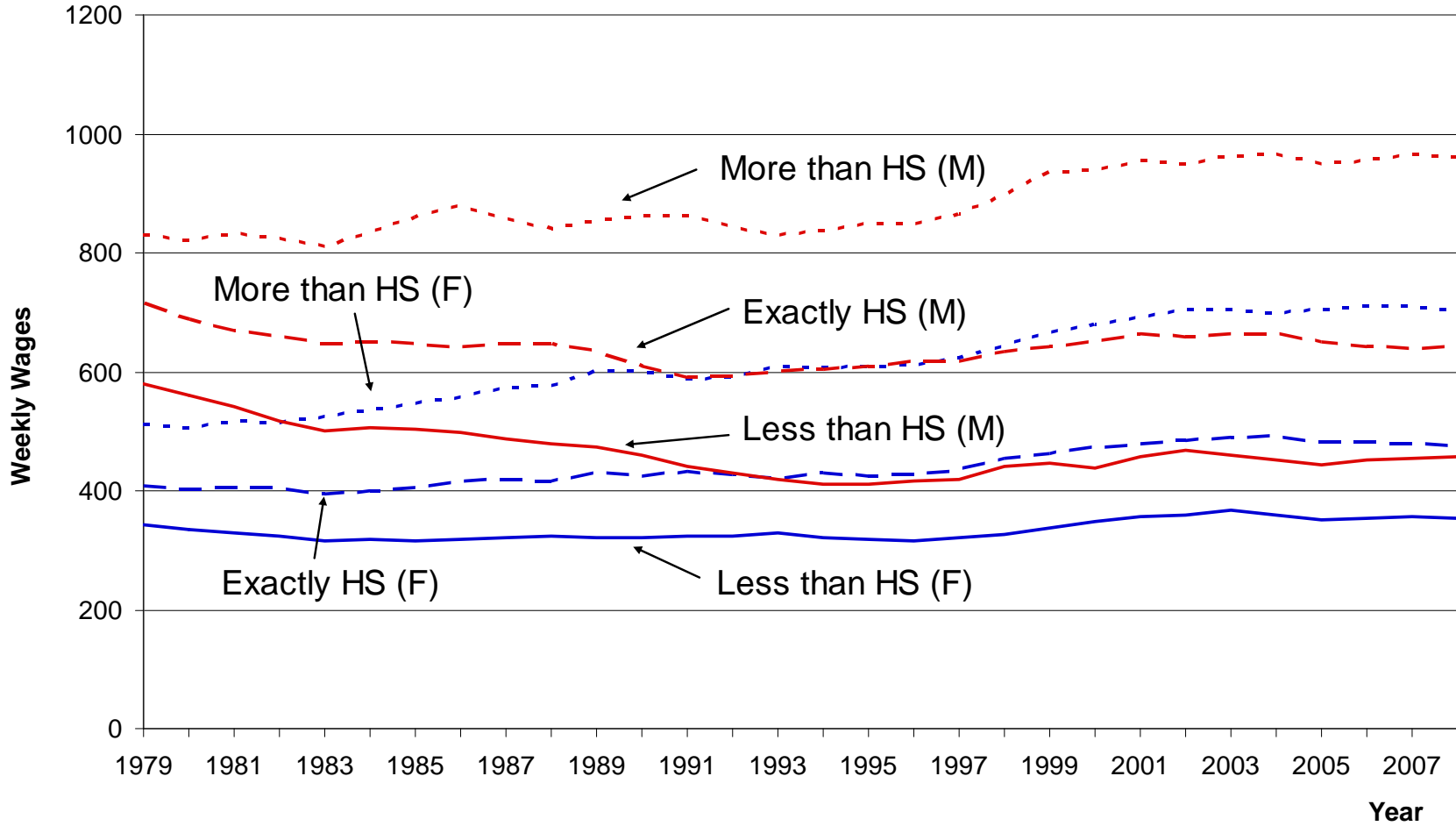
- Women's relative wages are rising, but for very different reasons among more and less-skilled workers.

## Median Weekly Wage, by Gender



Source: Authors' tabulations from Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group data, 1979 to 2008. Based on all noninstitutionalized civilian workers aged 18-64. Inflation adjusted to 2008 dollars.

## Real Median Weekly Wage Rates by Skill Level, by Gender, 1979 to 2008



Source: Authors' tabulations from Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group data, 1979 to 2008. Based on all noninstitutionalized civilian workers aged 18-64. Inflation adjusted to 2008 dollars.

## **In short-run, current stimulus efforts are doing all the right things**

- Fiscal stimulus bill provides a stronger safety net for those most hurt by the recession (expanding access to TANF, Food stamps, Medicaid, Unemployment Insurance, etc.)
- Strong efforts to increase credit and assist those facing mortgage problems
- Large aggregate stimulus is the right thing to do to jump-start economy...and we'll start to see effects in the next few months

## **In the longer-run, some key agenda items for women's economic well-being:**

- Unemployment insurance reform that provides UI to more workers when they lose jobs.
- Expanded preschool options, which is both good for children and good for working moms.
- Extending EITC benefits among those without children...many of whom support children!
- For some women, anti-discrimination efforts remain important.