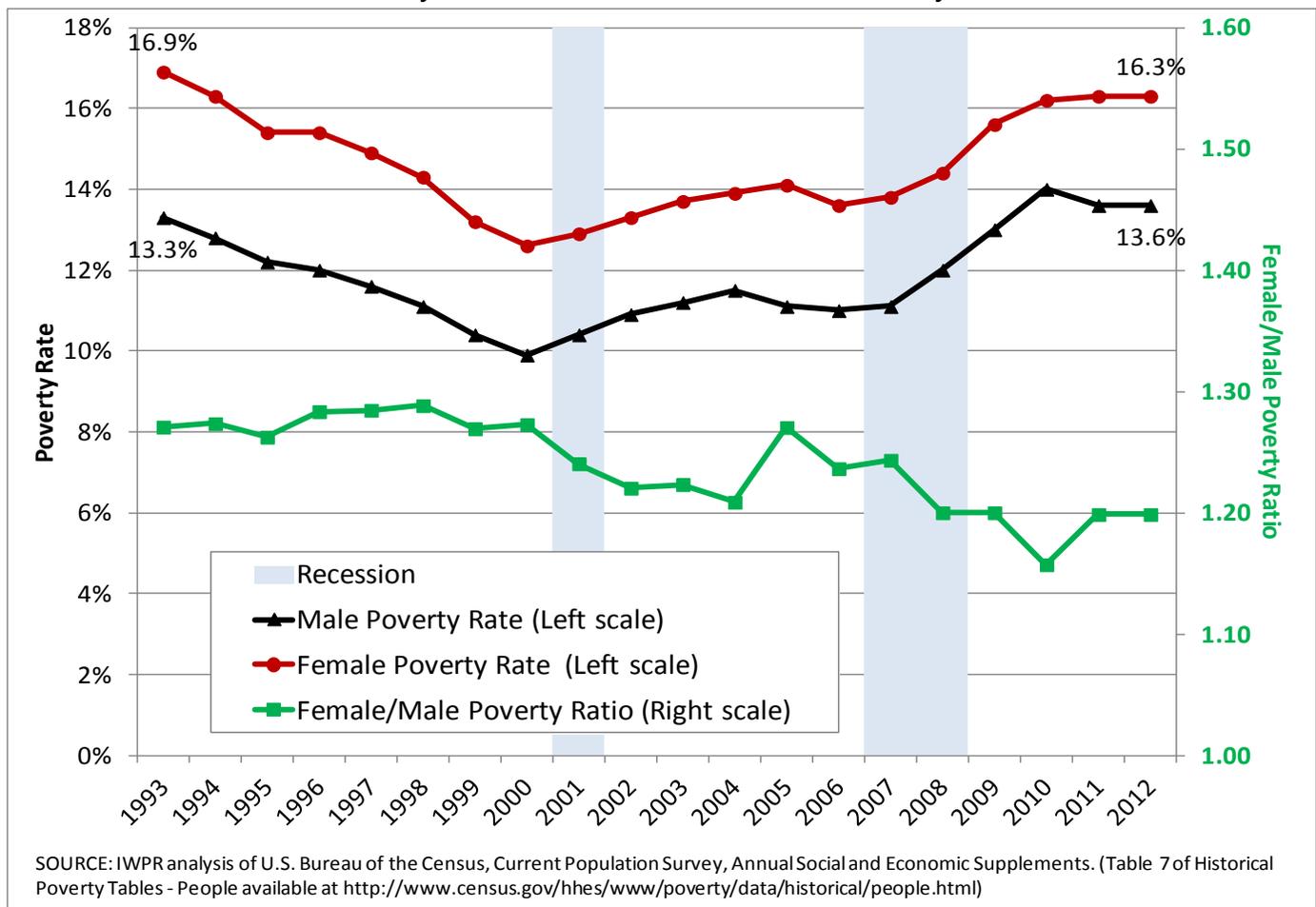


Gender Poverty Gap Grows in Recovery: Men's Poverty Dropped Since Recession, Women's Poverty Stagnates

The persistent gap in male and female poverty has been growing during the economic recovery, with 16.3 percent of females, and 13.6 percent of males living in poverty in 2012. The gender poverty gap reached an historic low in 2010 just after the official end of the recession, when 16.2 percent of females, and 14.0 percent of males lived in poverty (Figure 1).

Female and Male Poverty Rates and Male/Female Poverty Ratio, 1993-2012



This was largely due to sharp year-to-year increases in male poverty, which in 2010 was at its highest level in more than four decades. Since 2010, male poverty has significantly declined, while women's poverty levels have stayed steady, leading to the growing gender poverty gap. This pattern may be due in part to continuing high unemployment rates among single mothers, whereas unemployment among men and married mothers has declined during the recovery.

Policymakers must consider the wisdom of proposals to cut supports to the poor at a time when the chasm between male and female poverty is widening, meaning that women and girls will disproportionately suffer as a result of such cuts.

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