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CURRENT LITERATURE ON
WOMEN IN NONTRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS

A Report Prepared under an Interagency Agreement
by the Federal Research Division,
Library of Congress

August 1993

Project Manager: Andrea M. Savada

Analysts: Ly H. Burnham
Rodney P. Kaz

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PREFACE

This annotated bibliography provides coverage of research on women in nontraditional occupations. English-language literature dating from 1988 through the present was searched; the research focused on such topics as statistical trends and the recruitment and training of women in nontraditional occupations.

Chapter 3 describes the great opportunities for women at work today and outlines the new areas where women will venture in the 1990s. Male-dominated occupations, one of the areas listed, is a challenge to women who must make a trade off between sexual harassment and good earnings.

Keyword(s): career choices; trends; earnings


This article reports the increase of the number of women in construction work based on "he American Woman 1988-1989: A Status Report." Women represented only 2 percent of the total construction workers in 1976 but rose to 6 percent by 1986. The reason for the increase was for better earnings. In 1986, 2,600 road construction job trainees were women.

Keyword(s): earnings; occupations


This book examines how racial and sociological biases have affected the occupation choices of American women in the twentieth century. Part One focuses on how both race and gender have limited the choices available to women. Part Two provides historical studies of minority women in the labor market, including Native Americans, Hispanics, Afro-Americans, Puerto Ricans, and women of European and Asian descent. Part Three examines where women work today. The authors conclude that women have more choices available to them, but they are discriminately excluded from some sectors, for example, blue-collar trades. In Chapter Ten the authors note that women have achieved a dominant role in the service industries. Women now hold two-thirds of the jobs available in the service sector, wages are comparable to men, and promotion opportunities are considered good.

Keyword(s): occupations; sociological; trends; statistics; earnings

The author was the first woman to be hired as a firefighter in Fairfax County, Virginia. This article describes the difficulties she faced in overcoming bureaucratic and training obstacles to employment. In 1979, when she applied for employment, she was required to pass a physical agility test that was designed for men. Ater describes the satisfaction she has enjoyed during her twelve years as a professional firefighter.

Keyword(s): career choices; training


This article compared women employed in traditional and nontraditional occupations to determine if the type of employment affected a woman's political views. The authors based their analysis on a 1987 sociological survey conducted in South Bend, Indiana that examined how employment, religious, and social factors influenced women's attitudes on men, politics, and their personal relationships. Only women employed in male dominated occupations were included in the non-traditional category. The authors determined that women employed in nontraditional occupations are more committed to the women's movement than women employed in traditional occupations. It was found that women in nontraditional occupations formed close social networks in the workplace. Women who thought men treated them differently than men on the job were found to be the most active supporters of women's issues.

Keyword(s): psychological; sociological

This paper provides statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Census' Current Population Surveys (CPS) for the years 1972, 1982, and 1989 to determine changes in the earnings of blacks and whites employed in the same occupations. Three categories were established for the years of work experience of female workers: 0-9 years; 10-19 years; and 20-plus years. The study identified a trend unfavorable to black women compared to white women in all three categories. The earnings differential was found to increase slightly between 1981 and 1988. The trend was most noticeable among women with 10-19 years of work experience. The earning differential decreased over the same time period when black women were compared to white men doing the same work, but white women increased their earnings more than black women. The authors conclude that the entry of higher earning black females concomitant with the retirement of older black females will not necessarily result in wage differentials in the 1990s when this group is compared to white females and white males.

Keyword(s): statistics; trends; earnings


This article suggests that the decrease in blue-collar jobs in the United States between 1970 and 1990 concomitant with the entry of larger numbers of women into the expanding sectors of the economy are the factors primarily responsible for reducing the wage gap between women and men in this period. In the 1970s, women entering the labor force generally had fewer skills, less work experience, and limited opportunities in nontraditional occupations compared to men. The recruitment of women in nontraditional industries, and the upward mobility of women in their chosen careers, are viewed as favorable trends likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Keyword(s): training; occupations; trends; earnings

The book focuses primarily on "economic women" as they interact and compete with "economic men." Chapter 4 reviews the trends in labor force participation by sex from 1890 to 1990. Chapter 5 describes the differences in occupations and earnings and discusses the trends in occupational segregation. Chapter 6 examines the role of supply-side factors in producing the gender differences in earnings and occupations while Chapter 7 concentrates on the demand side, specifically on discrimination as a cause of women's lower economic status.

Keyword(s): psychological; sociological; earnings; statistics; trends


The article describes the cases of women who had entered one of the most-entrenched male-dominated occupations—the auto-repair garage. It was very difficult to convince customers of both sexes of their capabilities, to open accounts with parts suppliers in the male-dominated industry, or to get themselves hired by male auto-repair garage owners. To convince teenage girls that mechanics can be feminine was also difficult.

Keyword(s): occupations; sociological; psychological; qualitative


This paper analyzes the effects of psychological and ideological differences among women of divergent occupational and marital status on their prioritizing and structurizing of work and family. The analysis is based on the results of the combined questionnaire and interview of 196 women who represent varying occupational groups—professional, technical or administrative, and low-level clerical, blue-collar, or low-level service. The nonprofessional working women tend to give their families priority over their work and prefer to stay home more with their families. Single mothers are inclined to place their family and work on the same level of importance as the professional group but for some, work means more because
of pure economic needs. Table 1 shows the attitudinal responses by occupational status.

Keyword(s): lifestyle; sociological; psychological; qualitative


This article focuses on the technical workforce and discusses the extent and sources of education and training for technical workers. There are almost 11.8 million blue-collar technical workers, including in precision production jobs, mechanics, repairers, extractive workers, and craft workers. These workers need only slightly more education and training than the average worker. Their skills get upgraded by on-the-job training. Blue-collar technical workers depend on informal training and upgrading on the job more than workers in other occupations do. Figure 1 compares the qualifying and upgrading training for technical and non-technical workers. Figures 2 and 3 show that female technical workers represented 24.3 percent of all technical workers in 1986 and earned 84 percent of male technical workers’ wages. Figure 4 projects the occupational growth from 1986 to 2000. estimated to increase

Keyword(s): trends; training; statistics; earnings


The authors assess the problems facing American schools and the solutions being implemented in many parts of the United States and prescribe some remedies. Appendix A presents 75 trends in education to the year 2000, among which are the trends of school dropouts (one million youth continue to drop out of school annually), high unemployment among 16-24-years old, growing mismatch between the literacy of the labor force and the competency required by available jobs, decline of employment in agriculture and manufacturing, emerging service industries that will provide jobs for 85 percent of the labor force,
profile of the labor force (52 percent of workers entering between 1988 and 2000 will be women), and the shortage of entry-level workers, especially in the service sector. Business, the military, and the schools of higher education will compete for the youth labor force. The educational and demographic profiles of the fifty states are provided in Appendix B.

Keyword(s): trends; statistics; occupations; military


This book is a guide for job seekers in the new market of the 1990s. It predicts in Chapter 4 the decline of manufacturing and growth of service industries due to the trends of the 1970s and 1980s that will continue in the 1990s and estimates that 90 percent of American workers will hold service jobs. Manufacturers will employ a little less than 5 percent of the labor force, about the same as agriculture. Some 500 fast growing and declining occupations in the new job market of the 1990s are listed in Appendix B. homes.

Keyword(s): trends; statistics; occupations


The authors predict that in the 1990s about 1 million new jobs will be created in the less-skilled and labor categories. This will cause entry-level labor shortages and competition among institutions of higher learning, business, and the military. All these organizations will vie for youths 16 to 24 years old as this group will decrease from 20 percent of the labor force in 1985 to 16 percent in 2000. Some 63 percent of new entrants in the labor force between 1985 and 2000 will be women.

Keyword(s): statistics; occupations; military; trends

This article examines the effects of demographic trends on future employment in the United States. While the authors do not address the issue of women employed in nontraditional occupations, they suggest that women will increasingly be recruited for all types of jobs because of their educational qualifications and the efforts of employers to employ more women. The authors also found that employers are becoming more sensitive to the needs of married women who are the primary caretakers for children. In the future, more of these women will have childcare facilities available at their workplaces. Additionally, women who have computers in their home will spend a lower percentage of their time in the office.

Keyword(s): lifestyle; trends; recruitment


This article addresses the need for better training and education to satisfy the United States economic growth in the 1990s. It projects that by the year 2000, more than half of the new jobs will require a college education but the number of college-age youths will have decreased by 25 percent. At present 30 percent of high-school students do not graduate. The future population will have deficiencies in reading, writing, and computation skills.

Keyword(s): trends; training; statistics


Fifty people were interviewed to address the difficulties of women who have to juggle their time and responsibilities between jobs and families. Some women think of decreasing their commitments to paid jobs while others, especially young women, worry about jeopardizing their careers if they have family lives. How society makes life unnecessarily depressing, stressful, and difficult for employed women is described.

Keyword(s): lifestyle; qualitative; psychological; sociological

According to the statistics of 1988, the composition of the labor force differed greatly from that of 1950. If the 1950 participation rates had continued to prevail, the 1988 labor force would have 22 million less female workers and 8 million more male workers. Chart 1 shows over 55 percent of all women over 16 years old participated in the labor force, 35 percent more than in 1950. The author finds that some prime age women work outside the home only because of financial reasons.

Keyword(s): trends; sociological; statistics


The authors compared unemployment statistics for men and women compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics between 1968 and 1986. The study concludes that the narrowing of the male-female unemployment rate differential during the period can be attributed to the decline of U.S. companies in male-dominated industries--durable manufacturing, mining, construction--concomitant to the increase of service industries. An examination of the statistics also shows fewer women are leaving the workforce during periods of unemployment. The authors' use of transition probabilities suggests this trend will continue in future years.

Keyword(s): statistics; trends; occupations


This study focuses on the impact of the increase in the number of women, teenagers, and immigrants in the U.S. labor force on the black-white wage gap. Based on an empirical analysis of 1980 census data, the findings indicate that immigrants have not produced a negative impact on the relative wages of the blacks but the higher participation rates of female teenagers have. These
findings are contrary to earlier study, which was based on empirical analysis of 1970 census data.

Keyword(s): earnings; sociological; statistics


This is a special compilation of profiles of 99 selected women federal workers including professionals and semi-professionals. Many of these women rose to their present position "from the ground up" through training or an upward mobility program. Examples include a management officer, a procurement analyst, an equal opportunity manager and a position classification specialist who began their careers as a file clerk or clerk typist.

Keyword(s): qualitative; career choices; occupations; training


This study examines the starting wages of women in female and male occupations using data from the National Longitudinal Survey for Mature Women, ages 30-44, for 1967. These data from women with 0 to 5 years of experience are appropriate for predicting wages at the onset of careers in predominantly male occupations (managers, craft, operators, and professionals excluding teachers) and female occupations (clerical, service and teachers). The economic benefits (higher starting wages and lower atrophy rates) that human capital theorists believe would influence most women to enter traditionally female occupations are not found. These occupations are believed to have lower starting wages and higher penalty rates.

Keyword(s): statistics; earnings; occupations; career choices

This book provides information on trends in the economy and workplace and lists the 84 fastest growing jobs and some related information in Chapter Two. America's top technical and trade jobs are described in Chapter Three. Information on the 200 most popular jobs and a chart of jobs not listed elsewhere in the book are found in Chapter Four. Appendix A provides information on the trends of 600 occupations which account for about 90 percent of all jobs in the United States. In Appendix B, Table 1 lists the rankings of all occupations by selected characteristics while Table 3 focuses on the occupations for which postsecondary school training, but less than a bachelor's degree, ranks higher than other selected characteristics.

Keyword(s): occupations; trends; statistics


A survey from organizations with 100 employees or more that provide formal training to their employees indicates that the largest group of employees, the nearly 11 million production workers, will receive some training in 1992. In Table 2, basic computer skills is the type of training of greatest interest in 1992. Table 4 lists the general types of training provided by eight different industrial categories. Although the "basic remedial education" with training in the 3R's or English as second language is not considered by various organizations as "training", it is offered by about 1 in 5 organizations with 100 or more employees, and even in smaller companies. Since 1983 many major corporations have paid millions of dollars for remedial training in basic literacy and math skills.

Keyword(s): trends; statistics; training; qualitative; occupations


This book discusses sociological and legal trends that have discouraged women from seeking employment in nontraditional occupations. Chapter two analyzes the occupational choices of women and concludes that a high
percentage of women continue to be attracted to traditionally female-dominated jobs that tend to pay less than nontraditional occupations. Table 2-1 provides statistics for 28 clerical, technical, and professional jobs that illustrate this fact. The nontraditional occupations included in Table 2-1 are machine operators and machinists, electricians and electrical equipment repair personnel, computer system analysts, scientists, lawyers, physicians, and engineers. The author believes too many women establish career goals too low because of family influence, education, and peer pressure. Fitzpatrick suggests that the U.S. government, including the Department of Defense, has been slow to change outdated policies that restrict the career choices of women in the armed forces and federal civil service. Table A-1 includes statistics on the number of women employed in the following occupations: accountant, attorney, chemist, buyer, director of personnel, job analyst, engineering technician, drafter, computer operator, photographer, accounting clerk, purchasing assistant, and messenger.

Keyword(s): career choices; occupations; sociological; earnings; military; recruitment


The authors examined 1980 census statistics to determine if unions had an impact on increasing the wages of women in the United States workforce. The analysis indicated that more women than men work parttime and receive fewer union benefits for that reason. The authors concluded that while unions helped fulltime women increase their earnings, they apparently had little success in increasing wages for women who chose to work parttime.

Keyword(s): earnings


Chapter 5 focuses on working women who are in the middle of the occupational ladder: white- and blue-collar jobs; the top being academic and professional and the bottom
being the poor and the welfare client. Blue-collar women workers are primarily in the unskilled job categories and have little access to the higher-paid skilled craft positions. Equal-employment laws, equal-wage legislation and unions are helpful but slow in their responsiveness to women’s needs because enforcement of the laws is problematic and unions have traditionally been male preserves. Chapter 9 offers some strategies for change including elimination of sex segregation and stereotyping in vocational education and math curriculum; and the introduction of women’s causes to union leadership.

Keyword(s): sociological; occupations


This bibliography lists 267 sources published between 1985 and 1992 focusing on the employment of women in agricultural occupations. About 50 percent of the articles, studies, and books included in the bibliography discuss employment of women in the United States. These articles examine changes in rural America, the impact of training and new technologies on the employment of women in the sector, and trends affecting the employment of women in agriculture.

Keyword(s): training; occupations; sociological; qualitative; earnings; trends; recruitment


This article discusses wages and skills, especially about unskilled and semiskilled labor categories and finds that so far only few businesses incline to create high-skill jobs. Companies that have tried, such as Onan Corporation in Minnesota found that much of their work force were deficient in math and that basic training must be provided. Since 1980, an estimated 2 million high-wage jobs have been eliminated. The occupation that adds most jobs in the year 2005 will be "retail clerk", according to the Department of Labor’s projections.
Keyword(s): training; trends; earnings; occupations


Attitudes on traditional women are changing and leaning more favorably toward nontraditional. The results of the 1991 General Social Survey show that the number of Americans who disagree with the statement "a working mother can establish as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work" have decreased from 50 percent in 1977 to 34 percent in 1991.

Keyword(s): trends; psychological; qualitative; sociological


As more women participate in the labor force, increased attention is given to their earnings and employment opportunities. This paper examines the methodological problems in computing and estimating the components of the male-female earnings gap. The policy responses are outlined. The author concludes that more effort must be placed on program design and implementation issues to help attain the objectives of the legislation with a minimum of adverse consequences.

Keyword(s): earnings; sociological; statistics


A survey was taken to investigate employers' working-time policies in 29 establishments between October 1988 and March 1989. By assessing the diverse factors for extended and variable working times within the survey firms, the authors identify some of the major factors which may result in increased demand for non-standard working times in the future. How future trends in working-time patterns may impact upon male and female labor is examined. Three of the five statistical tables show the extent of
involvement of female workers in the various systems of extended operating hours.

Keyword(s): trends; qualitative; statistics


Examination of the definition, measurement, and trend of the annual earnings differential of women and men reveal that the narrowing of the earnings gap since 1979 was the result of increases in earnings per hour, rather than in hours worked. Table 2 illustrates the differences in women’s and men’s annual hours and earnings in 1987.

Keyword(s): earnings; statistics; trends


This article identifies unemployment trends in the United States for adult women and men during the 1968 to 1988 period. Unemployment statistics published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that while unemployment rates for women and men increased during that time, by 1988 there was little difference in the percentage of men and women who were unemployed. The author believes that the trend toward equal unemployment rates for women and men can be attributed to the following factors. The increase in the unemployment of men between 1979 and 1988 can be explained by the fact that a high proportion of men were employed in manufacturing industries which downsized because of declining domestic demand and increasing foreign competition. The increase in unemployment for women in the same period was caused by more women entering the labor force and fewer women choosing to leave their jobs when they married or had children. In 1968, 6.4 percent of employed women left the labor force. In 1988, this percentage was down to 3.4 percent. This indicates women are more attached to their permanent full-time jobs. Men who lose their jobs generally take less time to find new jobs than women. In 1988, the percentage of women and men who were unemployed
in January and employed in February was 25 and 31 percent, respectively.

Keyword(s): statistics; lifestyle; trends


This study, based on the 1980 U.S. Census, investigates how gender differences in commuting patterns were related to the spatial distribution of male and female workers and job opportunities in a sex segregated market. Female workers are found working in the central business district (CBD) in larger number than men because CBD probably contains disproportionate numbers of traditional jobs for women (e.g., clerical). Women account for nearly 75 percent of all female workers in both central cities and suburbs. Table 1 presents the occupational distribution of males and females by residence of worker in 1980 while table 2 shows the tendency of certain occupations to be located in certain parts of the metropolitain areas.

Keyword(s): career choices; occupations; lifestyle; statistics


The author reexamines the question of long-term trends in occupational segregation by sex with historical data from the 1900 and 1910 censuses and assesses the implication of his results for different theories of sex segregation. Occupational segregation by sex was found constant from 1900 through 1970 and gradually declined from 1971 through 1986.

Keyword(s): trends; occupation; sociological

James, Chuck. "Women in the Forest Service: The Early Years" Journal of Forestry, [Ithaca, NY], 89, No. 3, March 1991, 14-17. [Call Number: Not in LC]
This article provides a brief history of women who were exceptions to U.S. government regulations that prohibited them from serving as forest rangers before 1945. Hallie Daggett, who was hired by the U.S. Forest Service in 1913 at the age of 30 and served until 1927, was rated as an exceptional candidate for the job because of her knowledge of forestry and her willingness to do the work required of a ranger at that time. This work included patrolling for fire, serving as a game warden, protecting forests from illegal lumbering, and checking on minors. Although Daggett proved that a female ranger could perform as well as a male ranger, only 13 women were hired for the job between 1913 and 1945. The author attributes the discriminatory hiring policies of the U.S. Forest Service before 1945 to the subjective guidelines of bureaucrats and traditional views on the type of occupations that were appropriate for women.

Keyword(s): occupations; recruitment; lifestyles


This article provides a practical guide for managers to identify sex stereotyping in the workplace and discusses its related legal issues. The first section examines the types of behavior that constitute sex stereotyping and the circumstances under which it may occur. The second section discusses the legal issues and the Supreme Court case Price Waterhouse vs. Hopkins. The third section provides measures for practical managers to counter sex stereotyping in the workplace.

Keyword(s): sociological; psychological


Chapters three and ten examine the employment of women by occupation groups in the United States and Arizona, respectively. The author delineates four types of labor markets in Chapter Three: core economy firms (large corporations), peripheral economy firms, public sector, and volunteer or humanitarian organizations. The core economy firms were found to employ a smaller percentage of women than the other labor markets. The percent
distribution of women in the following twelve occupation
groups is as follows: executive (39.3), professional
(49.8), technical (47.), sales (48.9), clerical (80.1),
household (96.3), protective services (14.4), other
services (65.1), craft (8.7), machine operators (40.8),
transportation (9.0), and handlers/laborers (17.2).
Chapter ten provides an in-depth case study of the
employment trends for women in Arizona. The percent of
women and men, respectively, in eleven occupation groups
in 1988 was: executive (12.3/15.7), professional
(14.2/11.7), technician (4.0/3.4), sales (15.0/12.9),
administrative support including clerical (28.1, 5.6),
service (16.5/10.8), precision production and repair
(2.1/21.4), machine operator (4.0/4.5), transportation and
material moving (1.3/5.8), handlers and laborers
(1.4/4.2), and farming, forestry, and fishing (1.1/4.1).

Keyword(s): statistics; occupations; trends

Kimmerling, Gerorge F. "The Future of HRD." Pages 52-57 in
Workforce Trends Affecting HRD. Alexandria, Virginia:
American Society for Training and Development. [Call
Number: HD 5724.B438 1992]

This article predicts the shortage of entry-level workers,
the prospects for increasing work force diversity, and the
aging of babyboomers that characterize the demographic
trends for business in the year 2000. The number of
persons between the ages of 24 to 29 will decrease from
from 41 million in 1980 to 34 million in 2000. The
proportion of young workers aged 16 to 24 will drop to 16
percent of the workforce in 1995 and will be replaced by
women and minority workers aged 25 to 54. Women will
represent about 61 percent of new entrants in the
workforce between 1985 and 2000. By 2000, women will make
up 47 percent of the workforce. Training should be
modified to fit different learning styles, economic
backgrounds, and levels of familiarity with electronic
media.

Keyword(s): trends; training; statistics

Lee, Yong S. "Shaping Judicial Response to Gender Discrimination
in Employment Compensation" Public Administration Review,
A review of 62 lawsuits litigated under Title VII in federal district and circuit courts from 1982 to 1988 suggests that future Title VII claimants will probably challenge their employers on comparable work rather than comparable worth. This probability is based mostly on two U.S. Supreme Court decisions in County of Washington vs Gunther and Bazemore vs Friday. In both cases, claimants must prove equal work, not comparable worth.

Keyword(s): sociological; qualitative


The authors examine the data from 4,490 young women and 4,600 young men (ages 14 and 24) to compare their interim mobility and earnings. Wage differentials between continuously employed men and women was found closing over time for almost every schooling group. In comparing the job turnover behavior of continuously employed men and women, both genders show identical degrees of negative duration dependence. Continuous employment is not the norm among young women but seems to be a growing trend.

Keyword(s): earnings; trends; statistics; qualitative


This book provides profiles of 26 pioneer women in non-traditional work. The interviewees relate their stories to what motivated them to these jobs (better wages), where they received their training, and how they endured jealousy and harassment from male coworkers. One of the women, a rural contractor, opened a rural retreat called Women Empowering Women (WE Women) in Humbolt County, California to teach women how to use power tools and basic building skills. Ten percent of women from WE Women have become union apprentices.

Keyword(s): occupations; career choices; sociological; training; qualitative

Chapter 5 examines the labor changes in the United States: female labor force participation which has steadily increased since the turn of the century. The increase was most dramatic during the 1960s through 1980 leaping from 34.8 percent in 1960 to 51.1 percent in 1980. Table 2 shows that female participation in the labor force increased from 31.4 percent in 1950 to 54.5 percent in 1985. Working women do not earn as much as working men as highlighted in Table 1. The aggregate male-female earnings differential was due to the male-female occupational differences since women were overrepresented in low-paying areas and underrepresented in high-paying areas.

Keyword(s): occupations; earnings; trends; statistics; sociological


The article provides an overview of the changes in vocational schools and community colleges. To encourage women into taking nontraditional vocational courses, vocational educators are working toward helping students to realize one's full potential regardless of gender. Area colleges in various states sponsored seminars and conferences for high school girls to learn about nontraditional high-tech careers and to meet role models and prospective employers. High-tech careers require taking nontraditional courses in technical fields, math, and science. A program ASETS (Achieving Sex Equity Through Students) is set in New Jersey to deal with sex bias and stereotyping encountered by girls who want to pursue high-tech careers.

Keyword(s): nontraditional; occupations; recruiting; trends


This article assesses the consequences of women's participation in the labor force and provides an overview
of the employment forecast. The trend of women's entering parts of the labor market that were traditionally male dominated will continue with more role models for girls and more financial and educational resources for their use. The forecast shortage of skilled staff will favor women's employment if women can acquire technical skills, especially information technologies. Even though women can dispel prejudices with their competent performances at work, some men will still try to contain their activities, for fear of threats to their masculine ego in both home and workplace.

Keyword(s): trends; sociological; psychological; occupations


This study examines the impact of displacement upon male and female workers. Data from the Displaced Workers Survey show the rate of female labor force withdrawal after displacement is higher than that of male displacement. This may be explained by traditional family roles that lower the search costs of women (Hamermesh, 1989).

Keyword(s): sociological; qualitative; statistics


This article compares the employment trends of two groups: young men and women aged 16-19; and adult women aged 25 and over. An examination of data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that the percentage of women in this age group seeking employment for the first time is increasing at a faster rate than men. Adult women over 25 have also been entering the labor force in increasing numbers. Between 1979 and 1989 the adult female labor force increased by 12.5 million. This is compared to a decline of 3.3 million in the number of young men and women aged 16-19 entering the labor force in the same period. The earning differential between the sexes decreased significantly in both categories. Young women earn about 62 percent of what is paid the average worker and adult women 25 and over earn 88 percent of the average
workers' wage. Labor shortages were found to be severe in several low-paying jobs where the workforce is predominantly women. These industries are: apparel manufacturing; resorts; fast food; retail trade; household domestic contractors; health services; business services; and professional services.

Keyword(s): occupations; trends; earnings


This chapter is organized into three sections: Section One discusses the differences between traditional and nontraditional work done by women; Section Two analyzes the progress and problems involved in integrating women into nontraditional occupations; and Section Three evaluates whether government and business leaders are doing enough to recruit and train women for nontraditional occupations. The majority of women working in blue-collar industries have worked as machine operators. The highest percentage of female machine operators work in small non-union firms, which pay low wages, and have a high turnover rate. The percentage of women in selected nontraditional categories increased at the following rates between 1970 and 1980: 3.3 to 6 percent in skilled crafts; 0.9 to 1.9 percent in mechanic and repair jobs; 1.4 to 3.9 percent in metalworking; 4 to 8.7 percent in motor vehicle operator occupations; 0.5 to 2.5 percent in construction; 5.9 to 15.7 percent in manufacturing; and 3.9 to 12.7 percent in other industries. The author believes that progress has slowed since 1980. O'Farrell identifies the following problem areas in the recruitment of women for nontraditional occupations: educational institutions and job training counselors provide too little assistance to women interested in nontraditional occupations; women are reluctant to use equal employment laws to force employers to hire them; corporations and unions often do not utilize their own outreach programs to recruit women unless they are pressured by government agencies; cutbacks in the funding of equal opportunity programs have reduced the effectiveness of government to monitor the hiring practices of employers; the financial incentives for entry-level positions in many nontraditional industries
often are less attractive than entry-level traditional jobs; and many of the low level positions with high percentages of women are being eliminated as industries incorporate new technologies that require fewer workers for operation and maintenance.

Keyword(s): career choices; occupations; training; earnings; recruitment


The fact that more women in the United States are seeking college degrees and technical training indicates that many are seeking careers for life. These careers often are interrupted during the childbearing years, but more women are returning to the workforce. The professions and white-collar work are preferred by women. Only 10 percent of working women are employed in blue-collar jobs.

Keyword(s): career choices; trends; earnings


Examination of data on 325 women transferred to and hired for blue-collar jobs in Urban Utility Company reveals that economic need was the main factor that led women, especially black, to consider transferring to traditionally male blue-collar jobs. Harsh working conditions in the plant were less of a deterrent to black women who tolerated them in order to earn higher wages. Women, more so than men, disliked jobs requiring shift work. The only other preference for blue-collar jobs that influenced women was a preference for working with their hands. Some of these women have had exposure to typically male tasks in childhood. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, women’s representation in traditionally blue-collar jobs grew slowly from 2 percent in 1940 to 8.7 percent in 1989. A study by Jacobs 1989 finds that one of the reasons for this slow growth was the disinclination of women to take and remain in blue collar jobs.

Keyword(s): occupations; trends; qualitative

Temporal change in occupational earnings attainment was studied. As expected, economic stagnation affected more women than men. Incomes increased less for occupations where concentrations of women were high. Female earnings were more sensitive than male earnings to workers' status characteristics.

Keyword(s): earnings; trends; statistics


This paper examines some of the important questions and issues raised in the debate of comparable worth that are overlooked. Comparable worth challenges the assumption that women's work is worth less that men's, the belief that it is natural for women's wages to be lower than men's, and the notion that women should be dependent on men. Comparable worth has the potential to substantially increase the wages of many women workers.

Keyword(s): earnings; sociological


This article examines court interpretations of equal pay for equal or similar work under the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If a woman hired for a job in a nontraditional occupation is paid less than the male who was her predecessor, the Equal Pay Act and Title VII require the employer to prove that sexual bias is not the reason for the pay differential. If the employer can show that a seniority, merit, or measure of production system is applied equally to both sexes, then the courts consider it acceptable for a new female employee to be paid less than her male predecessor.

Keyword(s): occupations; earnings

The author's research indicates that sociological factors and the poor enforcement of equal opportunity laws are responsible for two trends unfavorable to women. First, women have been unsuccessful in overcoming employer discrimination in most skilled trades. Rhode believes that parental influence, traditional educational practices, and the recruitment policies of companies continue to discriminate against women in most blue-collar occupations. Second, employers often use subjective measures to establish pay scales and these measures often discriminate against women. For example, in one factory women were hired as assemblers but not as packagers. Although the difficulty of work was comparable, assemblers received less pay than packagers. Rhode believes that few employers of skilled laborers have demonstrated the willingness to hire women.

Keyword(s): career choices; trends; earnings; sociological


This study examines the percentage of women working in various occupations in the United States focusing on the southern states. The percentage of women in the labor forces of eight of the twelve southern states are higher than the national rate of 45.3 percent. Women comprise the following percentage of workers in selected occupations: retail sales (66.7); waitress (81.6); janitor/cleaning (94.8); cashiers (80.9); office clerks (80.9); nursing aides (89.2); secretaries (99); guards (21.6); technicians (3.5); high-skilled blue-collar (9); low-skilled blue-collar (21.8); construction (2); mechanics/repair (3); and precision machine operators (24). The statistics for southern states show that women generally dominate low paying jobs such as textile machine operators, cashiers, retail sales, teachers, and health services. The author describes several training programs designed to increase the employment of women in nontraditional occupations in southern states. The occupations involved include electronics, engineering, machine trades, industrial maintenance, motor vehicle operator, construction, drafting, and chemical instrumentation.
Keyword(s): statistics; occupations; career choices; trends; case studies


This book is a guide for coordinators and planners of non traditional occupations (NTO) programs for women in a public postsecondary vocational-technical school. It provides helpful techniques for recruitment, career exploration, and placement.

Keyword(s): occupations; training; recruitment; qualitative


This study analyzes the impact of the past 25 years after Title VII that prohibited sex discrimination in employment. Arguments that will enable the courts to follow the intent of Title VII are proposed. The author examines the courts' interpretations of sex discrimination cases attributing to women's job preferences and suggests that judges should approach the question of women's interest in nontraditional work. Powerful disincentives for women to move into and to remain in nontraditional occupations were noted.

Keyword(s): sociological; occupations


This book focuses on the problems that are preventing some women from being hired in traditional and nontraditional occupations, and causing other women to leave their chosen careers before they want to. Young women often are intimidated by interviewers who want to know how they will balance job and home responsibilities. In many companies
supervisors continue to treat women poorly when they return to work from maternity leave and request more leave and perform less work. Another problem includes organizational biases against promoting qualified women. Schwartz believes that these factors are becoming more prevalent and U.S. companies are becoming less productive as a result. The need to change biases against hiring and promoting women will increase due to two demographic factors. First, between 1992 and sometime after the year 2000 fewer Americans, male and female, will be entering the workforce because of low birth rates 20 to 30 years ago. Second, the percentage of working age women active in the U.S. labor market is expected to increase from 57 percent in 1991 to 63 percent in the year 2000. In her conclusions the author urges corporate policymakers to recognize that more families in the future will opt to have both spouses working. Schwartz believes progressive companies that concurrently promote work and family, and concomitantly change recruitment policies to eliminate sex discrimination, will eliminate human resource problems and remain financially viable.

Keyword(s): recruitment; lifestyle; trends; occupations; sociological


Women and minorities will comprise 80 percent of the total labor force by the year 2000 as predicted by the U.S. Department of Labor. Three companies in the utility industry have begun to open their door to this group through diversity training. They aim to recruit and promote more women and minorities with a focus in nontraditional jobs. Their goal have been successful with small problems remaining to be resolved: "a lot of managers in the traditional male environments resent having females come into their workplace".

Keyword(s): nontraditional; trends; sociological; qualitative

The authors studied the wage gap between men and women for the period 1920-1980 and found that women had lower relative wages in 1980 than in 1920. This is because women's education and experience had not been increasing over that time relative to that of men. But, in the 60-year period, women's wages increased 20 percent faster than men's wages.

Keyword(s): earnings; statistics; sociological; trends


Two-thirds of the 1.5 million workers in the United States who began to work two or more jobs between 1985 and 1989 were women. In 1980 women comprised 33 percent of the working population holding multiple jobs. This percentage increased to 43 percent in 1989. An estimated 3.1 million women in the United States worked at least two jobs in 1989. Fifty percent of the women worked a second job to help meet household expenses. Sixteen percent wanted experience in a new occupation. The ages of women having multiple jobs in 1989 were: 16-19 (132,000); 20-24 (399,000); 25-34 (957,000); 35-44 (914,000); 45-54 (494,000); 55-64 (181,000); and 65 or older (33,000). The marital status of women working two jobs in 1989 was as follows: married (1,524,000); single (837,000); widowed, divorced, or separated (749,000).

Keyword(s): statistics; lifestyle; trends


This article assesses the possible position of women and minority workers in the "new economy"--industrial transformation of the labor force and adoption of new technology. Three predictions on the number of jobs in the "new economy" and on the composition of the employed are derived from two hypothetical scenarios, one optimistic and one pessimistic. Both scenarios predict overrepresentation of women in fast-growing jobs but differ on types of occupations. The optimistic scenario predicted high-tech occupations while the pessimistic scenario pointed to low-tech or no-tech service jobs.

This article reports the results of a survey conducted by the National Alliance of Business on youth apprenticeship. Almost all school principals surveyed believed in employers' involvement in a youth apprenticeship system while 96 percent of the employers agreed that they should participate in such system.


This study highlights several points about occupational change, two of which are: 1) most occupations grow at rates close to that of the total labor force employment; and 2) most occupations show brief periods of both growth and decline. A list of consistently increasing or decreasing occupations is provided in Table 2.


In this survey of the empirical evidence on the relative earnings position of women and men around the world, table 2 lists the survey of empirical findings on sources of earnings differentials in the United States by sex for the years 1970, 1980, and 1981. Table 3 lists the representation of women in 8 high-paying and 8 low-paying occupations in the United States for 1970 and 1982. Female-male differentials had narrowed substantially by 1990, according to the study by Goldwin, Blau and O'Neil who claimed that "sex segregation by occupation, which hadn't budged for a century, is beginning to break down."

Keyword(s): trends; occupations; statistics; qualitative

Keyword(s): training; qualitative

Keyword(s): occupations; tends

Keyword(s): statistics; earnings; trends
Townsend, Bickley, and O’Neil, Kathleen. "Women Get Mad" American Demographics, [Ithaca, NY], 12, No. 8, August 1990, 26, 29, 32. [Call Number: HB3505.A66]

Statistics from the 1990 Virginia Slims survey on the attitudes of women about work and family life are analyzed in this article. The statistics indicate that more women are working to help support their families. Fifty-five percent work because they need the money to support themselves and their families, up from 46 percent in 1980. More women are planning careers as an integral part of their lives. Forty-five percent of the women polled had careers, while fifty-three percent still viewed work as "just a job." A comparison of statistics from the 1985 and 1990 Virginia Slims surveys suggests that the percentage of women who want to work and raise a family at the same time dropped four percentage points during the period. However, for the majority of women the ideal marriage is one of shared responsibility, in which both partners work and do household chores.

Keyword(s): statistics; lifestyle; trends


This report examines trends in the recruitment, training, and promotion of women in 90,000 U.S. companies that are legally obligated to follow federal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) guidelines. The U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs found that the percentage of women in managerial positions in companies it monitored increased from 18 to 25 percent between 1981 and 1991. The four industries which had the best compliance records with EEO guidelines were finance and real estate, retail trade, communications, and nondurable manufacturing. The study found that smaller companies generally have done more for women than larger companies. However, some Fortune 500 companies have in recent years adopted progressive strategic plans intended to promote opportunities for women and minorities. The report lists the following as general concerns that U.S. companies must address in the future to ensure women are provided equal opportunities in their careers: recruitment programs for women; performance measures; and the commitment of top-level company executives.

Keyword(s): statistics; training; trends; recruitment

This report contains data on the income of households, families, and persons in the United States in 1991. The median earnings of female workers remained unchanged between 1990 and 1991 while the income of their male counterparts increased by 2 percent. Table 24 shows the strong relationship between educational attainment and median income. Women with post-secondary school degree earned more than high school graduates. Table 24 also shows that women earned less than men in all same occupations.

Keyword(s): occupations; earnings; trends; statistics


This report provides data from the 1990 census relevant to Equal Employment Opportunity and affirmative action uses. It includes detailed occupations and educational attainment data by age, sex, and race.

Keyword(s): statistics; occupations


This directory provides listings of 125 programs and services that focus on blue-collar jobs in trades and technology. It includes training or employment assistance to women seeking jobs in technical fields, which are projected to be the fastest growing employment area. Selected models of training programs are listed separately, at the beginning of the section on training. Supplemental data are provided in 21 appendixes. Selected nontraditional occupations for women are shown in the table on page 139 and are defined as those in which women comprise 25 percent or less of the workers in a particular occupation, professional or nonprofessional. Statistics on women in the trades are shown in tables on pages 141-143.
Keyword(s): statistics; training; nontraditional


This volume provides data on civilian employment and earnings in the U.S. from 1960 to February 1993. It includes labor force data by occupation, sex, age, and race. For regional, state, and selected metropolitan area, only labor force data from January 1992 to January 1993 are provided.

Keyword(s): trends; occupations; earnings; statistics


This report provides detailed data on employment and earnings as of April 1993. Table A-1 shows the historical data on employment of people 16 years and over from 1960 to 1992. Employment by sex in April 1993 is tabulated in Table A-4 and by occupations in Table A-31. Women employees by occupations in January 1992 are compared to those employed in January 1993 in Table B-3. Data on earnings are provided in section C and data on the labor force by state, in section D.

Keyword(s): earnings; occupations; statistics


This bulletin provides 1991 data by selected demographic and economic characteristics on the labor force in 50 states and the District of Columbia, 50 large metropolitan areas, and 17 central cities. The data were derived from the Current Population Surveys (CPS) and the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program. Tables 12-22 present 1991 annual average labor force estimates for all states and the District of Columbia.

Keyword(s): occupations; statistics

This report examines trends in the recruitment, training, and promotion of women in 90,000 U.S. companies that are legally obligated to follow federal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) guidelines. The U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs found that the percentage of women in managerial positions in companies it monitored increased from 18 to 25 percent between 1981 and 1991. The four industries which had the best compliance records with EEO guidelines were finance and real estate, retail trade, communications, and nondurable manufacturing. The study found that smaller companies generally have done more for women than larger companies. However, some Fortune 500 companies have in recent years adopted progressive strategic plans intended to promote opportunities for women and minorities. The report lists the following as general concerns that U.S. companies must address in the future to ensure women are provided equal opportunities in their careers: recruitment programs for women; performance measures; and the commitment of top-level company executives.

Keyword(s): statistics; training; trends; recruitment


This report provides data on occupational employment in private industry by race/ethnic group, sex and by industry in the U.S. in 1990. All occupations are grouped into 9 categories: officials and managers, professionals, technicians, sales, official and clerical, craft (skilled), operatives (semiskilled), laborers (unskilled), and service. Definitions of each category are provided.

Keyword(s): occupations; statistics


This study reviews literature on predictions of labor shortages, skill gaps, and demographic changes in the 21st century and finds that some experts disagreed with such
predictions. These experts argued that labor shortages will be confined to certain industries, occupations, and locations and that skill requirements will be in fast-growing/high-skill technical jobs. These jobs will comprise only 4 percent of all jobs in the year 2000. Only 15 percent of the employers interviewed by the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce reported that they had shortages in chronically underpaid "women's" occupations and traditional craft trades. When 80 percent of the employers complained about "skills" shortage, they meant good work ethic (reliable) and appropriate social behavior (good attitude). In Figure 2.1 the female labor force participation rate was shown at about one third of all women in 1950 and almost 60 percent in 1990. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicted that the rising trend will continue, reaching a high of 66.1 percent by the year 2005.

Keyword(s): trends; occupations; statistics; qualitative


This report assesses the operation of the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training to determine the use of apprenticeship to train workers and the representation of minorities and women in apprenticeship. The report finds that U.S. employers seldom use apprenticeship, the number of workers receiving training as registered apprentices declined over the past decade, and women's participation in the program continues to lag. Women registered in apprenticeship programs grew rapidly in the 1970s and early 1980's but has slowed considerably since 1983. Numerous barriers caused women's apprenticeship to slow—including the upper age limits for some apprenticeship programs, the ratings given to education and background factors (algebra, physics, or blueprint reading) for entry programs, and many women's lack of routine physical conditioning. They are concentrated in apprenticeships for occupations with lower median earnings. Appendices III to V list the number of women apprentices by occupation and by earnings.

Keyword(s): training; occupations; trends; statistics

The authors compared how men and women were portrayed in 116 television programs broadcast to the American public during primetime in 1986 and 1987. Key findings of this content analysis were: there were twice as many males in "foreground" roles; few women were portrayed as bosses; and the proportion of women shown in nontraditional occupations was very low. The authors were critical of the television industry for presenting an inaccurate representation of employment trends in the U.S. labor market.

Keyword(s): career choices; sociological; trends; occupations


This article analyzes data from a sample survey of 452 married couples to explore how a wife’s employment affect perceptions of the quality of marriages. The difference in perception of the quality of a marital relationship between an employed and unemployed woman is the level of education of her husbands. Education helps prepare husbands for egalitarian marriages, especially those with a successful and employed wife. Table 3 shows the relative effects of socioeconomic, life cycle, and attitudinal variables on marital quality.

Keyword(s): sociological; statistics; qualitative; psychological


The authors studied the career choices of female high school graduates between 1979 and 1983 to identify factors affecting the choice of nontraditional occupations. The women who sought nontraditional unemployment typically were from middle income homes, had better than average
academic abilities, and were more interested in establishing themselves in a career than in getting married. A study based on interviews of 6,000 women in nontraditional civilian occupations and 457 women in military nontraditional occupations found that 44 percent of the women in the civilian sector left their jobs while only 20 percent of the women in the military changed occupations. However, women in the civilian sector often found employment in the same or a similar occupation during the period. The authors concluded that the low rate of women leaving nontraditional military occupations suggests that more of these jobs should be made available to women who express an interest in the work.

Keyword(s): career choices; lifestyle; sociological; military


This study examines gender segregation trends within and across employment settings in private sector, public sector, and self-employed occupations during the period of rising female employment (1950-81). Gender segregation has declined more rapidly in the public sector than the private sector but slightly in the self-employed sector. Statistics for occupational groups by employment settings in Table 2 show the greatest gender segregation decline in private sector service occupations and the smallest in private sector operative, craft, and sales occupations. Conversely, public sector operatives experienced the sharpest decline followed by professionals then sales. Among the self-employed occupational groups, the greatest decline was found in the semiprofessionals/technicians group.

Keyword(s): trends; statistics; sociological


This book lists and profiles the companies selected as the best workplaces for women based on the results of interviews with women workers. The criteria for selection include salient facts and good company policies that
include programs for recruiting and hiring women. AT&T actively recruits women at all graduate business and technical schools and conducts prerecruitment programs such as information nights and career fairs; the Denver Post recruits with focus on nontraditional jobs for women; and Digital Equipment Corporation actively advertises its hiring in minority and women's publications.

Keyword(s): occupations; qualitative; recruitment