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Women's Contribution to Industrial Development in America

Hazel M. Price
Fort Hays State University

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Hazel M. Price

**Women's Contribution
To Industrial Development
In America**

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Fort Hays Kansas State College
Hays, Kansas

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Hazel Marie Quisenberry Price

Biographical Sketch of the Author

Hazel Marie Quisenberry Price was born June 9, 1924, in a rural community in northwestern Texas. She graduated from Henrietta High School, Henrietta, Texas, in May, 1941; worked for two years for Western Union Telegraph Company; and served for sixteen months in the U. S. Navy Waves as Yeoman, Sc.

In August, 1945, she married Gordon Williams Price from Marshalltown, Iowa. There are two children: Danny Lee—born in 1946, and Corine Alice born in 1952.

She received the Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, in May, 1959—having also attended the following schools: North Texas State College, Denton, Texas; The University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri; and New Mexico Western State College, Silver City, New Mexico. In July, 1960, she received the Master of Science degree in Economics from Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hays, Kansas.

At the present time, Mrs. Price is working as a part-time instructor in the English Department, teaching freshman English at Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hays, Kansas.

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Introduction

The effect of changing economic and social conditions under which it has been increasingly customary for women to work has been shown by the growth in the number of women workers. Primary forces which have brought about the increase are the rise in contemporary mass-production, sales techniques, the broadening of educational opportunities, the development of urban centers, the decline in birth rates, and the changes in customs and modes of living. There has also been an increase in the number of female population and a shift in age distribution.

At the same time certain groups have experienced a drop in the proportion of women workers. Women under twenty, and Negro women workers, have decreased in numbers in recent decades. The greatest increases have appeared in the age groups from twenty to sixty-four years, and predominantly among white women and among married women.

Our country's economic structural development has strongly influenced occupational trends. The significance of agricultural and extractive industries in the early history has given place to industrial expansion and the growth of commerce, trade, and service industries. These shifts have greatly enhanced occupational opportunities for women, as well as creating additional types of work in clerical and service fields.

Broadened opportunities for education and training have gone hand-in-hand with the growing demand for women's services. Free education for both boys and girls and equal opportunity for higher learning have been encouragement to women in preparing for and seeking employment.

Technological and scientific improvements simplify and reduce the time required for home duties. Large business organizations and additional consumer demands require new sources of labor, forcing a change in the traditional attitudes concerning women's status in the labor force. As women employees have helped to raise and maintain living standards, American industry has come to recognize woman's abilities. More responsible jobs, higher wages and better working conditions have been opened to women, which in turn have stimulated more women to seek employment. There is now a wide variety of opportunity in business, industry and the

professional world for women of ability who are willing to secure suitable training and experience.

The following report is an attempt to analyze women's participation in the labor force, giving reference to the number and proportion of women employees, the particular industries and occupations where women have worked, and the relative advantages and disadvantages of these jobs among all women workers, and among women in relation to men workers. Part I concerns the development of the participation of women in industry from primitive days through the period of early colonization to the end of the nineteenth century. The years 1900 to 1935 are surveyed in Part II. The discussion in Part III pertains to the last two and a half decades of the twentieth century. A large portion of the Census data used for reference in this study was a comparison of several years, which presented an obstacle to absolute separation of the materials into the three designated time periods. At the end of Part III a brief summarization of the findings has been presented. Bibliographical entries contain only those references used for this report. Several additional sources of information were located but were found to be a duplication of other material.

Part One

From Colonial Days to the Beginning
Of the Twentieth Century

The Development of the Pattern for Participation of Women in Colonial Industry

AN ANALYSIS of modern customs leads to the conclusion that many of our traditional methods of striving for economic welfare have been carried down through the centuries to the present time. More than a few of these customs are harmless and unimportant. Man has been able to change many of these "set" ways of accomplishing things, and yet customary attitude toward working-women has been a difficult one to overcome.

I. PRIMITIVE CULTURE

An individual's real importance is in the percentage of his usefulness to the community. Early mothers of the race have been accredited with contributing supreme value to their fellowmen. The past ancestress was a pioneer and a leader, inventing and progressing, and working as an agent in the process of taming man himself.

She told man she didn't like living in his wild ways . . . picked out a nice dry cave and instead of the heap of wild leaves to lie down on, strewed clean sand on the floor, lit a nice wood fire at the back of the cave, hung dried wild horse skin, tail down, across the opening of the cave, and said, "Wipe your feet, dear, when you come in. And now we will keep house!"¹

Otis T. Mason's *Woman's Share in Primitive Culture*, published in 1894,² is still referred to as an authority on women in industry.

1. Alice Henry, *Women and the Labor Movement, The Worker's Bookshelf*, Vol. IV (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1923), 34.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-30.

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town records show repeated instances of similar licenses being granted to women—frequently to widows, and occasionally to wives—“provided on condition a careful man to keepe the house.”⁶

Other early occupations of women included shopkeeping and the raising of garden seeds and similar products for sale. Women were known as shrewd traders, and in seaboard towns, a few were sharp speculators. Others kept a “dame’s school,” were nurses, midwives and servants. Certain women were given the responsibility of “sweepe and dresse” the meeting house, as well as ringer of the bell.

Unusual industrial employment in the early history of our country included the occasional reporting of a woman working in a sawmill, or running such a mill, carrying on a distillery, or managing a slaughterhouse. There were a great many women printers, both compositors and workers of the press. Women also published newspapers, printed books and pamphlets, and worked in paper mills.

Minor industrial occupations at home included baking, selling preserves or wine, manufacturing textiles, which included lace-making, knitting, combing cotton and wool, spinning and weaving. Sewing and tailoring were common occupations among colonial women. Because spinning and weaving were considered the most important, being universal and gainful, training in these skills was considered a part of the general education of a young girl.

Early court orders included the Puritan belief that the virtue of industry was the sin of idleness. This factor prompted the desire to promote the manufacturing of cloth and provided for early employment of women and children. “Providence Laws,” stating that self-supporting single women were required to pay poll tax of two shillings each, “except as through age, or extreme poverty” were included in the 1695 Act. Colonial attitude was one of rigid insistence upon women’s employment. However, man collected the wages for the entire family well into the nineteenth century, even after members of the family group had followed their work to the factory.

6. *Ibid.*

The Development of the Factory System

IN THE early stages of the settlement of America by the pioneers, home was the production institution center; the productive industry of the entire community was maintained here. Life was somewhat simple before the Revolution. Similar situations are at the present time occurring in remote mountain regions of Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia and the Carolinas. But year after year, this situation has gradually continued to disappear in America, as better and more schools are built, roads are improved, and better methods of marketing are developed. Home products of these communities are today put on the markets in cities and various communities along the Atlantic Coast, New England, and the Pennsylvania regions. Even so, extremely primitive standards of living have lasted to a much greater period in this country than they did in Great Britain. The following list of situations probably explains this phenomenon:

1. Our country had been more recently settled and lacked many improvements and conventions.
2. Before the machine age, our country was mostly agricultural.
3. Poor transportation and communication systems existed.
4. A country home was a self-contained community in America.
5. After farm needs were met, the women turned to earning extra money by selling the products of their spinning looms to the villages and stores. Many women were weaving cloth or knitting stockings on individual orders.⁷

I. THE BEGINNING OF THE AMERICAN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

The textile industry was the mother industry for machinery. But these early factories didn't open any new occupations to women; they merely transferred from the home to the factory, work

7. Henry, *loc. cit.*, pp. 31-36.

that could now be done more efficiently. Consequently, the introduction of machinery brought the problem of labor, a resource which was scarce and dear. A strong national prejudice against diverting labor from the land existed, so women and children were used to police the new machines. Anyway, women had previously been doing the work of these machines in their homes. Industrially employed women meant a pure economical gain for the policy of maximum utility of the population. This was the economical justification used at that time, and only a minor amount of social prejudice seemed to exist.

In the early stages of development, the factory system was just the opening of large rooms where business men installed large numbers of hand looms. Spinning schools were organized to teach the women to spin. Historical records show that in the approximate year of 1792 Benjamine Shepard erected a mill for homespun in Wrentham, Massachusetts. His wife also conducted an industry on her own account for some years, taking yarn and waste from her husband's mill and working it into various fabrics. A quaint document is a contract made by her with Stephen Olney of Providence, in which he agreed to furnish her a chaise for the value of a chaise in goods of her own manufacture.⁸

The first power loom was erected in America in 1814, at Waltham, Massachusetts.⁹ Deborah Skinner was in command of the marvelous new invention. During the year of 1817 three of these power looms came to Fall River, Massachusetts, with Sallie Winters, Mary Healy, and Hannah Bordon as expert hand weavers in charge.¹⁰ These women worked from sunrise to "seven or half-past" in the evenings. Some of the women were even weaving by candlelight on winter nights for from \$2.75 to \$3.25 a week.¹¹ In the beginning most of the industrial women laborers were all American born, so there was no jealousy of rival races. Hours in the textile industry ranged from sixty to eighty-four a week, and in the later part of the seventeenth century, women's earnings ranged from \$3.93 a week in Richmond to \$6.91 in San Francisco.¹²

The emancipation of women from the drudgery of the home to the drudgery of the sweatshops soon found discrimination everywhere in industry. It was feared that the employment of women

8. Perry Walton, *The Story of Textiles* (2nd ed.) (Boston: Walton Advertising and Printing Company, 1925), p. 177.

9. Henry, *loc. cit.*, pp. 37-56.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

would furnish competition and ultimately displace men because female labor could be obtained at cheaper rates.

Women were not yet considered equal to men, and they were not given equal pay for equal work. A woman was not permitted to enter the medical or clerical fields. There existed a great amount of legal and political discrimination. When a woman married she had unequal property rights to her husband; marriage and divorce laws worked to a social disadvantage. And women were denied participation in politics to better their situation or status. Social inequalities limited the degree of freedom of women; in many instances the men held double standards of morals.¹³

Women in industry were poorly paid, inefficient and less skilled, because they were excluded from opportunities demanding higher skills, and restrained from the opportunity for proper training. Custom and tradition stated that woman had a "lower standard in life." She was expected to marry; and therefore, she would have a short working life. A very narrow field of employment was open to women, and an oversupply of labor existed in those few fields. Lack of organization was frequently present during this period in history.

II. THE LOWELL SYSTEM

As the number of mills continued to increase, soon the demand for girls was too great for the conditions to accommodate them. An interesting experiment in the employment of women was made by the Lowell Manufacturing Company. Approximately five thousand females between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two lived in boardinghouses under the strict supervision of carefully selected matrons, who saw that the girls went to bed at reasonable hours, attended religious services, and lived according to the strictest Puritan code. In effect, the impression was given that for a young girl to work in the Lowell plant was almost equivalent (from a moral viewpoint at least) to joining a nunnery. However, with the intensification of competition, these high moral and economic standards soon deteriorated. The increased competition of foreign women added to the pressure for low wages and long hours.¹⁴

The Boston Daily Times published an editorial charging that the young girls were working in unhealthy confinement for too many hours every day; that their food was unhealthy and scanty; and they

13. Samuel Eliot Morrison and Henry Steele Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic*, Vol. II (New York: Oxford University Press, 1942), 375-6.

14. Walton, *loc. cit.*, p. 207.

were not allowed enough time to eat. Girls became pale, feeble, and finally broken in constitution. This paper also charged that the girls' morals were being corrupted by a group of young men who methodically enticed them "to infamous places of resort in Lowell and vicinity."¹⁵

In the panic of 1837, the Lowell Factory girls, speeded up by improved machinery, petitioned the Massachusetts Legislature (in vain) to reduce their twelve hour day to ten hours. Immigrants were easily found to take their places, and by 1850 these show workers of America, with their white gowns and literary journal, were no longer found in the cotton mills.¹⁶

III. OTHER EARLY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS

In the shoe manufacturing industry regular cobbler shops divided up work and sent out uppers to be stitched, and shoes to be bound by women workers. This was a well-paid trade, and one that proved to be modern home work for many married women.

Numerous colonial farmers and wives raised crude tobacco on their northern fields. As a result, cigar making was one of the early occupations claimed by women.

Although women were not generally employed in shops or offices until after the Civil War, they were found in more than one hundred different occupations in 1835, and had attained trades such as printing. However, unions soon excluded the female laborer from many of these occupations. And by 1825 the ranks of labor were constantly diluted in significant proportions with immigrants and women.

Agitation for women's rights culminated in the Seneca Fall Convention of 1848. A Declaration of Sentiments was coached in the phraseology of the Declaration of Independence.¹⁷

15. Paul Sultan, *Labor Economics* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1957), p. 32.

16. Morrison, *loc. cit.*, p. 307.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 509.

The Organization of Unionism

THE IMPORTANT place of occupational women in trade unions among the ranks of organized labor and the American labor movement had its real beginning in 1825. Tailoresses of New York, according to the newspaper records, turned out for higher wages and formed the first recorded union for female laborers.¹⁸ This early history of women in trade unions can easily be divided into four sections.

I. THE FIRST STAGE OF ORGANIZED LABOR 1825 TO 1840

Among the first women in factory employment were New England girls, generally the daughters of farmers. The cotton mill girls at Dover, New Hampshire, were involved in a strike in 1828 which included between three and four hundred women.¹⁹ In 1834, eight hundred women were on strike in the same place, and by means of a trade union, resisted for some time a reduction in wages. There was organized resistance with street parades, protest meetings, placards, and poetry.²⁰

With Miss Louisa M. Mitchell, Secretary of the Tailoresses' Society, and Miss Lavinia Waight as President, sixteen hundred women struck for a wage scale in 1831.²¹ The Lowell strike of 1834 included eight hundred females under the leadership of one of the girls from Dover.²² Mr. Booth, a great actor in this era,

18. John B. Andrews and W. D. P. Bliss, *History of Women in Trade Unions, Senate Documents*, Vol. X (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1911), 9-18.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. Henry, *loc. cit.*, pp. 37-56.

22. *Ibid.*

gave a performance for the benefit of the Seamstresses' Society, causing public attention to be attracted to poor wages and bad working conditions for women.²³

Tailoresses and Seamstresses supported by Journeyman's tailors, formed numerous societies and organized strikes in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. The organization of women workers in the early period was experimental and required the experience and education of later years to furnish the discipline necessary for sustained trade-union activity. A Female Improvement Society, formed in Philadelphia in 1835, was a city federation of working women's organizations, submitting wage scales to employers, securing newspaper publicity, and sending protests to the Secretary of War against lower prices paid for army orders.²⁴

The cotton mills of New England were the center for many of the large strikes during these early years. As strike after strike took place, one organization after another came to life, existing only a little while, and leaving the workers no better off than before.

II. THE SECOND STAGE OF ORGANIZED LABOR 1840 TO 1860

Organization of "labor reform" associations was predominantly among the textile mill workers; however, there were representatives of capmakers and shoemakers industries, tailoresses and seamstresses. Associations were educational in character, and reflected the general tone of humanitarianism which proved to be a strong national feature. Organization of a number of successful strikes increased wages, shortened work days, and were instrumental in agitating for protective legislation. Lowell, Manchester, Dover, Fall River, and New York City seem to be the locations of a great amount of this activity.

Lowell was the center for organized activity. Sarah Bageley, a leader from Lowell, having worked ten years in the cotton mills there, represented her local at several national conventions. In 1845, Miss Bageley organized the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association.²⁵ The New York Female Independent Association was also organized in 1845.²⁶

23. *Ibid.*

24. Andrews, *loc. cit.*, pp. 8-19.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

III. THE THIRD STAGE OF ORGANIZED LABOR 1860 TO 1880

Organization during this period was primarily among cigar makers, tailoresses and seamstresses, umbrella sewers, capmakers, textile workers, printers, laundresses, and shoemakers. There were more than thirty national trade unions, with admittance of women limited to printers and cigar makers. Thousands of "war widows" entered the trade making the supply greater than the demand for tailoresses and seamstresses. As a result, no effective unions could be formed. Large numbers of Irish immigrants of lower standards came in after the industrial depression of 1849, which weakened the co-operative spirit of the textile mill workers. Many special local societies were formed. The only national trade union of women that then existed in this country was called Daughters of St. Crispin.²⁷ This national union was composed of two or three dozen local lodges of shoe workers, from Maine to California.

IV. THE FOURTH STAGE OF ORGANIZED LABOR 1880 TO 1900

This was a period of development and admission of women's local assemblies under the Knights of Labor. For the first time women were encouraged by large general organizations to ally themselves with the movement on an equal footing with men. The first women's local assembly under the Knights of Labor was organized in September, 1881, and declined after 1886.²⁸

Mrs. Josephine Shaw Lowell, as leader, helped organize working women's society in 1886 in New York. Mrs. Shaw and her followers provided backing through all types of methods possible to the workers, pushing legislation in 1890 for appointment of women factory inspectors.²⁹ These women also undertook the support for the public educational consumer's league of New York, which was the beginning of National Consumer's League. There existed a steady forward push for improved standards through legislation.

V. A SUMMARY OF UNION ORGANIZATION

Women's unions, ephemeral in character and organized in time of strikes, have had short lives. They are developed and influenced by external leadership to a much greater extent than men's unions.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*

This is logical because of the necessity for initial direction and financial support. It is essential that an induced and sustained movement be present until the growing sense of independence and understanding of personal rights have enabled women wage-earners to act on their own account. One of the major weaknesses shows less emphasis on immediate advantages, and more emphasis on remote, less tangible, schemes for universal reform.

A few of the obstacles to women's trade unions have been as follows: short-sightedness of goals, individual self-interest, ignorance, poverty, indifference, lack of co-operative training, marriage, dropping out of the trade, and dropping out of the union. Occasional strikes have been won for shorter work days, wages have been maintained and even raised at times, and working conditions have been improved. However, the greatest result has been in the direction of a united stand for protective legislation—the education and organization of working women in a campaign for protective legislation.

Early Census Recordings

WHATEVER opinions may have been originally held on the proper sphere of women, the early Census Reports bring out the fact that to a considerable extent, woman's place was no longer restricted to the home. In addition to her social contribution to the preservation and welfare of mankind, the contribution of her sex to economic production in its commercial aspects are of such substantial proportions that not only is it impossible to ignore them as a factor in industrial progress, but they are worthy of serious study, as an important element in this progress.

I. FIRST CENSUS REPORTS

An attempt was made in 1820, and again in 1840 to classify the population into main divisions of industry, distinguishing agriculture, manufacturers and commerce. However, the first complete census of occupations was taken in 1850, when for the first time the name of each person enumerated was recorded on the census schedule, together with sex, age, and other personal data including occupations.³⁰

Earlier census reports had been taken by families, registering the head of the family name, number in the family, classification as to color, sex and age groups. The 1850 census was restricted to adult males; the 1860 scope was expanded to cover each male and female over fifteen years of age; and the 1870 report applied to each person, male or female, without limitation as to age.³¹

The first statistical data on the subject of women was listed in the 1870 Census. The percent of women workers was given for the

30. Joseph A. Hill, *Women in Gainful Occupations, 1870-1920*, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1929), p. 3.

31. *Ibid.*

II. THE CENSUS REPORT OF 1870

total number employed in the following occupations: professional service, 1.6 percent; trade and transportation, 24.8 percent; and manufactures group, 13.0 percent.³²

In the years immediately following, the most striking increase was shown in the fact that both men and women increased in number in trade and transportation. Women in professional service, manufacturing and mechanical pursuits, and domestic and personal service continued to show fairly equal gains, with agriculture not far behind. The number of men going into manufactures and mechanics was greater than the increase in the number of women in these fields.³³

III. THE CENSUS REPORT OF 1900

The 1900 Census Recording was the twelfth report for the United States. The following table shows a comparison of the number and percentage of women employed in particular occupations.

TABLE I. The Number and Percent of Women in Special Occupations: A Comparison of Reports, 1870 and 1900³⁴

OCCUPATIONS	1870		1900	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture.....	396,968	21.6	997,336	18.4
Domestic and personal service..	972,613	52.9	2,095,449	39.4
Manufacturing and mechanics..	354,021	19.3	1,312,668	24.7
Professional service.....	92,303	5.0	430,597	8.1
Trade and transportation.....	20,383	1.1	503,347	9.5

In 1911 a study was made on the criminality of women, and the conclusion drawn from the changes appearing in the twelfth Census was that the more intelligent class female wrong-doers go wrong because of causes operative long before women enter the industrial world. The downfall is due to moral causes, and to inheritance and early training, rather than specific occupations.³⁵

In 1880, the number of breadwinners among women was 2,353,-

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Relationship Between Occupation and Criminality of Women, Report on Conditions of Women and Child Wage Earners in the United States, Senate Documents, XIV (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1911), 1.*

35. *Ibid.*

988. By 1890 this figure had risen to 3,712,144. And in the United States, women sixteen years of age and over, listed as gainfully employed as breadwinners reached 4,833,630 by 1900.³⁶

TABLE II. Number and Percent of Breadwinners in Female Population Sixteen Years and Over, Classified by Marital Condition, for the Continental U. S., 1900³⁷

MARITAL CONDITION	Total number of women	Breadwinners	
		Number	Percent
Total.....	23,485,559	4,833,630	20.6
Single women.....	6,843,140	3,143,712	45.9
Married women.....	13,810,059	769,477	5.6
Widows.....	2,717,715	857,005	31.5
Divorcees.....	114,647	63,436	55.3

Of the total number of women in the United States, a ratio of one to five, or twenty percent, were gainfully employed as breadwinners in 1900. The adoption of an occupation for women, although not unusual, was far from being customary, especially in well-to-do classes. This was the exception, and was generally more of a temporary situation than a permanent one.

The proportion of women listed as breadwinners was greatest among Negro women, and least among native white women of native parentage. Native white women of foreign born parents, or children of immigrants, were more often listed as breadwinners than foreign born white or immigrant women. The difference seemed to equal economic welfare, in varying degrees, and depended largely upon the standard of living in the social class in which the woman belonged.³⁸

If a woman was engaged in teaching or literary work, or one of the so-called liberal professions, her occupation was considered a form of ambition or love of activity, or a desire for social usefulness. In general, opportunity was more abundant in the cities. Young women were found in the early days in industry to a much greater extent than older women. Marriage brought about lack of incentive, as well as lack of opportunity.

36. *Statistics of Women at Work, 1900*, Special Reports of the Census Office, Department of Labor and Commerce (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1907), p. 9.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*

Part Two

From the Beginning of the Twentieth
Century to the Great Depression

The Machine Age

POWERFUL machinery was introduced into the United States over one hundred years ago. And women were haphazardly drawn into the service of the machine industry with no anticipation on the part of the employer, the fellow worker, or the community, of what this factor would mean to the women themselves, or to the men beside whom these women worked. Spinning and weaving were taken from the home traditional trades and ceased to be handwork, but were now operated on a machine basis. New trades in office work and paper box making developed with the growth of communications and transportation, especially with improved railway systems for distribution of the manufactured goods.

I. DIRECT EFFECTS UPON WOMEN WORKERS

Health Conditions. Studies on causes for infant mortality among children whose mothers were absent from home because of outside employment, showed strikingly fatal effects from lack of mother's care and nursing.³⁹ Causes of death among cotton mill operators indicated that female operators had decidedly higher death rates than non-operatives, and that female death rates exceeded male death rates by thirty-three percent.⁴⁰ There seemed to be no lack of evidence as to the overwork of women, and the underpay which was a direct cause of both loss of lives of babies and the death of mothers in the act of giving life. A comparison in the 1920 Census

39. *Infant Mortality and Its Relationship to Employment of Mothers*, Report on Conditions of Women and Child Wage Earners in United States, *Senate Documents*, XIII (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1912), 168.

40. *Causes of Death Among Women and Child Cotton-Mill Operatives*, Report on Conditions of Women and Child Wage Earners in United States, *Senate Documents*, XIV (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1912), 31.

Reporting brought to light the fact that at this time, twenty-three percent of the women in industry were married women; in 1910 this figure was twenty-four percent, having risen from thirteen percent in 1890, and fifteen percent in 1900.⁴¹

Working Conditions. Even though women had just acquired the power to vote, the colored woman was still voteless in many states. And yet women were entering industry in large numbers, into many new trades. For the most part, work was too often done under inhuman and disorganized conditions. Women suffered from overwork and underpay, which was such a disadvantage that it was necessary for them to become underbidders of men, and this seriously weakened what ought to have been a solid front of organized labor. The greater development of industry had a tendency to draw women into occupations previously considered the domain of men.

New Occupations for Women. Accelerated by the exigencies of war, arsenals and machine plants were filled with women and girls; elevators were run by women; railroad cars were washed by women. Each year teachers formed an increasingly larger percent of the women work force. By 1920 the Teachers' Association was affiliated with the A. F. L. and several locals of hospital attendants and large organizations of telephone operators. Nurses and attendants, actresses, telephone and telegraph girls were increasing in numbers.

More and more women were coming together and realizing the injury to one was the concern of all. They began to recognize their cause as one with that of the poorest paid and the most unskilled worker.

II. CENSUS REPORTS

The ratio of women population to the number of women employed increased from one in seven to one in four from 1870 to 1910. Census Reports in 1920 indicate a slight drop which was questionable as to the actual decrease. The 1910 Census was taken on April 15, and the 1920 Census Report was taken on January 1. This would have considerable effect on the number of women reported in agriculture. In January, farm work was at a standstill, while in April and May the crops were being planted and the farmer's wife and children helped with the work. A second reason for this discrepancy was that the 1910 instructions to the Census enumerators contained the words "a woman *regularly* working at

41. Mary Phegar Smith, "Restrictions Affecting the Rights of Married Women to Work" (*The Annuals*, May 1929), pp. 255-64.

outdoor farm work, even though on her husband's farm." The 1920 instructions excluded "only occasionally or for short time each day." A third influencing factor was the decrease in the percentage of young women to the total female population.⁴²

Nonagricultural pursuits of women increased from twenty percent to almost twenty-two percent in 1922, while servants, dress-makers or seamstresses, laundresses, milliners, boarding or lodging housekeepers reported a decrease of three and two-tenths percentage in this period of time.⁴³ The Census of Manufacturing taken about 1905 reported more than one million women in the factory system, including the following five industries: ⁴⁴

Textile industries	298,910	women employees
Clothing industries	147,710	women employees
Tobacco and Cigar industries	57,174	women employees
Boots and Shoes industries	49,535	women employees
Printing and Publishing	37,503	women employees

The next 14,844 women were employed in bread and baking products. Textile industries, particularly the cotton mills, belonged to the history of women, and were now being displaced by men. Boots and shoes industries contained a history of trade for men; however, in the last one hundred years, women were becoming more important as workers in these fields. Cigar making was not a woman's historical industry. This production had originally begun in the nineteenth century as by-employment for the farmer's wife. It was then transferred to immigrant men, and later to immigrant women.⁴⁵

The Nineteenth Amendment, passed in 1920, granted to women suffrage, equality in schools, and in some professions, legislation regulating hours and conditions of working hours, and development of prenatal care and maternity care. Women's clubs which were outlets for energies and talents had brought their influence to bear on public affairs.⁴⁶

42. Hill, *loc. cit.*, pp. 16-28.

43. *Ibid.*

44. Abbott, *loc. cit.*, p. 61.

45. Morrison, *loc. cit.*, p. 376.

46. *Ibid.*

The Development of Particular Occupations in the Early 1900's

I. WOMEN AT WORK

THE REPORT on occupations found in the twelfth Census in 1900 contained a complete classification of all females over ten years of age employed in each occupation. Women were found in all except nine of the 303 occupations listed.⁴⁷ The exceptions were as follows: soldiers-sailors-marines, firemen, streetcar drivers, telephone and telegraph linemen, apprentices or helpers to roofers and slaters, or helpers to steam boilermakers or brassworkers. Several of the unusual occupations, with the number of women employed, were as follows:⁴⁸

5 pilots	185 blacksmiths
10 baggagemen	508 machinists
31 brakemen	8 boilermakers
7 conductors	31 charcoal, lime burners, coal
45 engineers and firemen	11 well borers
26 switchmen, yardmen, flagmen	

It can easily be seen that there was little social significance beyond the indication that few kinds of work existed from which the female sex was absolutely barred, by nature, law, or custom. In 1900, sixteen percent of the women were employed in agriculture, nine percent were in professional service, forty percent were in domestic and personal service, ten percent were in trade and transportation, and the remaining one-fourth of the women workers were employed in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits.⁴⁹

47. *Statistics of Women at Work, 1900*, Special Reports of the Census Office, Department of Labor and Commerce (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1907), pp. 31-3.

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*

Of the agricultural workers, ninety-eight and six-tenths percent were from the southern farm states, and almost eighty percent were Negro women, which also included the Indian and Mongolian. And more than one-half of the total number were members of a farmer's family.⁵⁰

II. UNSATISFACTORY CONDITIONS

Personal Characteristics of the Workers. Research conducted for the Senate Documents brought to light the fact that in the early 1900's from fifty to sixty thousand female employees were working in twenty-three different manufacturing industries in seventeen states.⁵¹ Some of the highlights of the report showed that fifty percent of these women were under twenty years of age, and only about twenty-five percent were over twenty-five years of age. Only one-eighth were married, while almost thirty-five percent were white Americans. Occasionally there was evidence that certain occupations were passing into the hands of recent immigrants. Generally speaking, this was disagreeable work or working conditions, and it was left for the newcomers who had the physical strength and urgent need for the work. These immigrants would take whatever they could get. Some of the occupational risks included exposure from harmful dust and fumes, exposure of risk from machinery, and the risk of injury from constrained or harmful positions.

Few precautions were taken in the pottery industry, and there were lead dusts, as well as harmful effects from painting, japanning, lacquering, or enameling. In the metal working trades, and in the paper box making, there was continuous standing of women workers. It was an exception to find women seated for almost any type of work. Generally, the work was unskilled, mechanical, and monotonous; only the haphazard and unstandardized character of the industrial world was known to these women and girls. They entered without preliminary training. Conditions of health and decency depended on attitude of each particular employer. Wide variations existed in the same industry in the same state, and the same city. Earnings were characterized by lack of standardization. The attitude of the boss predominated! There was no generally accepted standard for direct and reasonable wages for women workers.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Employment of Women and Children in Selected Industries, Report on Conditions of Women and Child Wage Earners in United States, Senate Documents, XVIII* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1913), 15-36.

Locations of the Industries. Annie MacLean did a study on particular industries, compiling the following information:⁵²

New York City	26,450	women were employed
	15,000	of these worked in stores
New Jersey	6,685	women were employed
	1,650	worked in the clothing industry
Massachusetts	40,800	women were employed
Fall River	15,000	worked in textiles
Lowell	12,000	worked in textiles
Rhode Island	1,000	women employed
		Jewelry making in Providence
Connecticut	4,600	women employed
New Haven	2,300	were in metal working trades
New Hampshire	9,400	women employed
Manchester	1,600	in shoe industry
Manchester	7,800	in textiles
Illinois	31,675	women were employed
Chicago	17,500	working in stores
Michigan	1,650	women were employed
Jackson	900	working in clothing industries
Iowa	2,600	women were employed
Dubuque	700	in clothing industries
Des Moines	500	in stores
Nebraska	2,235	women were employed
Omaha	900	worked in stores
Omaha	800	in clothing industries
Missouri	1,850	women were employed
Kansas City	900	in food and meat packing
California	4,555	women were employed
San Jose	1,000	working in fruit picking, canning, drying, and packing
Fresno	2,000	working in canning plants
San Francisco	800	working in canning plants

The Census Report for 1920 listed women employees in predominance in the following occupations: agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry, extraction of minerals, manufacturing and mechanical industries, transportation, trade, public service, professional service, domestic and personal service, and clerical occupations, with a total of eight and a half million working women.⁵³

In New York almost four hundred thousand self-supporting women were used for a study which brought forth the following statistics: almost fifty percent of the women employed earned less than seven dollars per week, seven-eighths lived at home, and almost all of these women were contributing to family support. Ap-

52. Annie Marion MacLean, *Wage Earning Women* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1910), p. 4.

53. Henry, *loc. cit.*, p. 57.

proximately seven-eighths of the working women were single, and only a very few were widowed. A majority of the women were under twenty-five years of age; three-fourths attended church regularly, predominantly Catholic; and approximately twenty-five percent were doing some studying. The following nationalities were included in this research: Americans, Jews, Germans, British, Italians, Poles, and Scandinavians.⁵⁴

54. MacLean, *loc. cit.*, p. 54.

Organization for Women Industrial Workers

THE HAPHAZARD method by which women were entering the labor force contributed to the situation in which it became increasingly difficult to form any type of organization to improve working conditions and standardize wages. However, since the numbers of women workers were growing in many areas of industry, the need was even greater for planning and organized control.

I. UNIONS IN THE EARLY 1900's

Participation in unions among women workers was fragmentary and incomplete in the early 1900's. Only a minimum amount of information could be found on this phase of development.

Bakers and Confectionary Workers International Union of America included seventy-five percent of the candy makers as women. There was a very slight amount of organization in this industry; it was a poorly paid trade, but was growing in size and importance.⁵⁵

The International Brotherhood of Bookbinders Union had locals of bookbinding, which belonged to the allied printing trades council of New York City. There were 175 local unions with eleven composed entirely of women. One hundred ten locals were made up of both men and women, with six thousand women as members.⁵⁶

The Boots and Shoe Workers Union listed one-third or twenty thousand of their members as women. The largest organization of

55. Henry, *loc. cit.*, p. 105.

56. Henry, *loc. cit.*, pp. 57-105.

women stitchers was Local 154 of Brockton, Massachusetts, which boasted 2,909 members.⁵⁷

The International Union of United Brewery included flour, cereal and soft drink workers. Since this trade was hard hit by prohibition, the number of women workers decreased. Formerly, women bottlers had benefited greatly by the unions. Their hours had been cut to eight a day and forty-eight a week.⁵⁸

Glass Bottle Blowers Unions were scattering in number. Women were packers, and they sometimes did other odd jobs around the plant.⁵⁹

United Cloth Hat and Cap Makers of North America Union had an organization date from 1901. Women's wages were formerly eight dollars. In 1920, these wages ranged from twenty-five to sixty dollars per week.⁶⁰

Railroad Carmen Unions included both white and colored women. These laborers worked as cleaners of railroad coaches. Railroad and Steamship Clerks had all agreed to provide the same pay to women as to men laborers.⁶¹

The Cigar Makers International Union had in recent years increased the use of mechanical appliances and unskilled women. By 1920 this industry employed approximately twenty percent more women than men.⁶²

The International Brotherhood Electrical Workers were especially strong in Chicago. They were making electrical supplies and equipment.⁶³

Ninety locals of International Ladies Garment Workers were listed, with membership of fifty thousand women. The United Garment Workers were located in large cities. This industry, making men's clothing, and limited to the overalls trade, was predominantly a man's union.⁶⁴

The International Glove Makers of America was a growing organization. Other organized trades showed a preference for wearing union made gloves.⁶⁵

Other growing union movements were Hotel and Restaurant Employees, United Leather Workers, and Laundry Workers Inter-

57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Ibid.*

60. *Ibid.*

61. *Ibid.*

62. *Ibid.*

63. *Ibid.*

64. *Ibid.*

65. *Ibid.*

national Union. Eighty percent of the women laundry workers were found to be members of the union.⁶⁶

II. THE WOMEN'S BUREAU

The establishment of this Bureau was an achievement credited to women, especially women of trade unions, supported by trade union men, and women's clubs. This step was an essential part in the development of our present Department of Labor. In 1913, the Department of Commerce and Labor were formally divided.⁶⁷

During the winter of 1905 the Illinois Woman's Trade Union League passed a resolution requesting the national league to appoint a committee to secure federal investigation of the conditions of women in factories and shops. Later it was decided that this research should also cover the conditions of working children. The investigation, lasting four years, was completed in 1911 and the information was compiled into nineteen volumes. Several of these volumes are used as references for this study. The following organizations co-operated in securing the information:⁶⁸

AFL and International Unions
State Federations of Labor
Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen's Association
General Federation of Women's Clubs
DAR and Colonial Dames
WCTU
Boards of Trade
Ministerial Association

The research concerned wages, sanitary conditions, health of the workers, poor standards of wages and hours, and seasonal work and unemployment.⁶⁹

First, a Children's Bureau was established as a division of the Department of Commerce. This proved to be a successful move. The Women's Division was then established as a sub-division of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Division had no independent head, no power of initiative, nor its own purse. The Chief was Miss Marie Obenauer, a co-officer with four men. After a long struggle and many disheartening setbacks, Miss Obenauer secured the co-operation of the State Bureau of Labor.⁷⁰

66. *Ibid.*

67. *Ibid.*, pp. 107-20.

68. *Ibid.*

69. *Ibid.*, p. 105.

70. *Ibid.*

In June 1920, the Kenyon-Campbell Bill was passed, and the Women's Bureau in the Department of Labor was established. The functions of this Bureau were set forth as formulating standards and policies, promoting welfare and wages of earning women, and improving their working conditions by advancing opportunities for profitable employment. However, the United States couldn't make use of this Bureau until every State had established a corresponding Women's Bureau in the State Department of Labor. The Federal Women's Bureau was given no power to administer; it had no laws to administer. Even today, labor laws are state laws, and enforcement lies among the state functions. The work of the Women's Bureau is investigating, advising legislation, furnishing information to the State departments, educating the public and influencing public opinion, and working toward high and uniform standards for women workers.⁷¹

In order to meet these Federal requirements all the way, Minnesota established a State Bureau of Women and Children, in 1913. Wisconsin has, under the Industry Commission, a Women's Department. New York, in 1919, organized a Women's Bureau in the State Department of Labor. Indiana has a Women's and Children's Department in the Industry Board. Other states which have attempted to meet the Federal requirements, in part, include Washington, Oregon, California, Kansas, and Massachusetts. These states have no separate bureau or division for the interest of women, but there is a woman member on the Industrial Commission. She has a certain amount of authority.⁷²

III. WOMEN WORKERS IN KANSAS

There seems to be little information available on the conditions of wage earning women and minors in Kansas prior to 1885, the year in which the State Bureau of Labor Statistics was established. On the basis of special investigation made in 1889, which included only a meager number of returns, it was established that 29,780 women were employed in various occupations with an average weekly wage, including overtime, of \$6.68. This information was reported in the Kansas Bureau of Labor Statistics, Fifth Annual Report for 1889. The study was undertaken reluctantly, "for women are, as a rule, extremely reserved, and too proud to confess their actual needs and deprivations, suspicious of interviews and antagonistic to anything suggesting charitable interference; they

71. *Ibid.*, p. 201.

72. *Ibid.*

are fearful of compromising themselves and are sometimes intimidated by employers and superintendents.”⁷³

Working conditions for women in Kansas, as a whole, were found to be good. Separate toilet facilities, seats in workrooms, fresh drinking water, and hours ranging from thirty-two to one-hundred-eight a week, with the occupations of reporter and superintendent being the only ones with more than sixty hour weeks, were the general findings. Interest in the early investigations soon disappeared with little concern over the conditions of women employees in Kansas. In the 1913 session of the State Legislature, bills were introduced providing for regulation of wages and hours of women. These bills failed. One law was enacted, however, providing for additional factory inspectors. The new inspectors were to be women, and they would have charge of administering all laws affecting women.⁷⁴

Two comprehensive laws regulating wages, hours, and conditions of employment have since been passed in Kansas. They are as follows:⁷⁵

The Industrial Welfare Law of 1915 which established minimum standards for all occupations.

The Industrial Court Law of 1920 which required fair standards in industry affected with public interest.

The possibility of conflict was removed in 1921 when administration of the Welfare Act was vested in the Industrial Court. The State of Kansas had a state policy concerning hours, and unsanitary conditions of employment which were detrimental to health and welfare, and a penalty for unlawful employment.⁷⁶

A few of the unusual orders affecting women workers in Kansas in 1925 included the Laundry Order which used as its scope the working conditions and sanitary drinking fountains, suitable seats, proper and adequate lighting, nine hour day maximum and forty-nine and a half hour week maximum. Night work was prohibited from nine p. m. to six a. m. In 1926, note was made concerning a decision which was handed down by the Kansas Supreme Court on July 11, 1925, declaring the Industrial Welfare Statute and Laundry and Factory Orders established thereunder, void in so far as they fix the wages for adult women. It was declared unlawful

73. Domenico Gagliardo, *Kansas Industrial Welfare Act*, Bureau of Business Research: Kansas Studies in Business, No. 15. (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas, June, 1934), p. 9.

74. *Ibid.*

75. *Ibid.*

76. *Industrial Welfare Orders, Government Employment of Women and Minors* (Topeka: Labor Department for the State of Kansas, 1925), p. 3.

to employ women in Kansas under conditions detrimental to health and welfare, and employers must furnish seats for women.⁷⁷ On July 11, 1925, a decision was handed down that the minimum wage law for women was unconstitutional.⁷⁸

A Kansas report on women employees listed and qualified women's work in the following occupations:⁷⁹

Trade, all wholesale and retail trade in actual merchandise, was considered the most important.

Manufacturing consisted of making articles from raw materials, from other articles, and from processing.

Public housekeeping included public lodging and transient entertainment.

Restaurants were all places where food was served for consumption.

Laundries included dry-cleaning establishments and beauty parlors.

Telephone workers, amusement, and clerical employees were grouped together.

Kansas State College published a pamphlet containing the following careers which were open to women. This college in Manhattan, Kansas, supplies training for these occupations:⁸⁰

Journalism and Radio	Television
Arts, Music and Education	Dietetics and Nutrition
Nursing	Homemaking
Medical Technologists	Architecture and
Scientists	Engineering

In 1887, the Kansas Legislature gave women the right to vote in municipal elections. In some areas of the State, word spread that only disreputable women would so much as show their faces at the polls.

Nevertheless, the good housewives of the day trooped to register to vote. One of the major forces behind the women was the Women's Christian Temperance Union, a force not lightly reckoned with.⁸¹

These circumstances combined to give Kansas, and the world, the first woman mayor. She was Mrs. Susanna Madora Salter, from the town of Argonia, Kansas.⁸²

77. *First, Second, and Third Reports of the Public Service Commission*, Women's Division and Child Labor (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Office, 1927), p. 3.

78. *Ibid.*

79. *Report of Wages and Hours of Women and Minors in Industry*, Women's Division, Department of Labor and Industry (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Office, 1938), pp. 6-35.

80. Helen P. Hostetter, *Preparing Women for Careers*, Kansas State College Bulletin (Manhattan: Kansas State College, 1958), pp. 3-34.

81. Editorial in the *Hays Daily News*, February 28, 1960.

82. *Ibid.*

Why and Where Women Work

IN THE beginning years of the Twentieth Century the common picture of a working woman was a well-dressed, silken-kneed, properly powdered young thing taking swift dictation from a prosperous magnate at glass-topped mahogany desks. And yet women laborers on farms outnumbered stenographers and typists by more than two thousand in the early 1900's. Manufacturing of cloth and shoes engaged a thousand more than stenographers in industry. More women worked in transportation than in trained nursing during these years.⁸³

Women worked as laborers on turpentine farms, were lumbermen, raftswomen, female woodchoppers, and in general, were active in all departments of agriculture and forestry except ditchers. They preferred blacksmith shops, forge and highway garage work to the more tranquil and artistic trade of cabinet makers. Paper hanging was an attraction, but not cement finishing or roofing. Women would raise the roof, but they wouldn't slate it! The 1920 Census Report listed no brakemen, conductors, locomotive engineers or firemen, although twenty-seven of the "frail sex" did earn their daily bread "and precious little applesauce," as freight agents, more than five hundred as switchmen, and flagmen, with almost seven thousand as laborers on waterfronts, as longshoremen, stevedores, boatmen, and deckhands. Two thousand women were employed as chauffeurs, teamsters, garagekeepers and streetcar conductors. Seventy-nine thousand worked in retail stores operated by women, mostly grocery stores, but also a proportion in cigar, drug, jewelry, auto accessories, flour and feed concerns. Almost three thousand women were traveling saleswomen. And in certain

⁸³. Edna Rowe, "Why and Where Women Work," *Woman's Citizen* (November, 1928), p. 25.

universities, women were enrolling in the department of aeronautics.⁸⁴

I. RECORD BREAKERS

During the year 1925, a campaign for police women in smaller cities to improve juvenile delinquency was pushed by many women's organizations.⁸⁵ In August of this year, Miss Nelle Swarts was head of the Bureau of Women in Industry of the New York State Labor Department.⁸⁶ A push for the passage of good labor and workmen's compensation laws, and for social and economic effects of working accidents to women was observed by the New York State Bureau.

A first Woman Governor was Nellie Tayloe Ross of Wyoming. At the same time Texas elected Mrs. Ferguson, but Mrs. Ross was the first of the two inaugurated. Mrs. Ross was the first person ever to wear a hat while becoming Governor.⁸⁷

Mrs. Bertha Landes of Seattle, Washington, became the first woman mayor in September, 1926.⁸⁸ However, Kansas also claims to have had the first woman mayor in the country.⁸⁹ The first woman Justice of the United States' Custom's Court was Genevieve Cline. Miss Cline was appointed in May of 1928, by President Coolidge, and her appointment was approved by the Senate.⁹⁰

Honorable Frances Perkins was head of the Labor Department of a most populous and industrial state, New York. Honorable Henrietta Addition was in the Cabinet of the Commissioner of Politics in that city, and Honorable Grace Abbott was Chief of the Federal Bureau, in 1933. And in the early part of the Twentieth Century, California, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania had women as heads of their Departments of Public Welfare.⁹¹

II. NEGRO WOMEN

It has been said that one of the hardest fates to be met, and the very hardest that the American born child can face, is to be born a little colored girl. Many of the early industries employed Negro

84. *Ibid.*

85. Elizabeth Munger, "Police Women for Smaller Cities," *Woman's Citizen* (July 11, 1925), p. 15.

86. *Ibid.*

87. Lee Donaldson, "First Woman Governor," *Woman's Citizen* (November 26, 1926), p. 7.

88. Blanche Brace, "Well, Why Not a Woman Mayor?" *Woman's Citizen* (September, 1926), p. 9.

89. *Hays Daily News, op. cit.*

90. Constance Marshall, "The First Woman Justice of U. S. Custom's Court, *Woman's Citizen* (September, 1928), p. 17.

91. Sophonisba P. Breckenridge, *Women in the 20th Century* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc., 1933), p. 346.

women to scrub floors, clean lint and cotton from the machines in the textile industry, and other odd jobs which were often avoided by the white woman worker. Negro women were a form of seasonal trade. They were the last hired and the first fired, with the poorest hours, wages and opportunities. Even in these early days of the machine age, there was a need for Negro forewomen, but "public opinion is greatest of all powers."⁹²

After World War I, the Negro woman sharing in family migration, left her Southern home for the jobs she heard were plentiful in the North. When she arrived in the North, she found she was unaccustomed to the climate, unprepared as to clothing, and that her knowledge of housing conditions was different. But what was more powerful, she was untrained in the industrial processes. The Negro women whose homes were already in the Northern industrial cities left domestic and personal service to seek work with better pay and fewer restrictions. And soon over half of the Negro women in industry were engaged in the tobacco industry.⁹³

The number of Negro women in industry increased from almost nine hundred thousand in 1890 to fifteen hundred thousand in 1920. And in 1920, almost half of these Negro women were still employed in the South.⁹⁴

III. WAGES AND SALARIES

The first minimum wage laws for women in this country were passed in Massachusetts in 1912, following the successful operation of the Trades Board Acts in England and Australia.⁹⁵ During the next few years, similar legislation was passed in almost a dozen states. The Massachusetts' Act differed from the laws of the other states, in that the former used the method of publicity for enforcing its rules, in lieu of recommendations and compulsion.

In 1919 the Women's Bureau issued a report on the subject of wages. The findings were of such a serious nature that Civil Service rulings were immediately changed to correct the worse offenses against firm employers. Until that time, over sixty percent of the Federal exams were closed to women. Since then, women are considered eligible to compete in any examination given by the Commission. And since the Reclassification Act of 1923, women are supposed to receive equal pay for equal work. It seems necessary

92. Henry, *loc. cit.*, pp. 202-11.

93. *Ibid.*

94. Hill, *loc. cit.*, p. 109.

95. Josephine Goldmark, "Women Workers' Wages," *Woman's Citizen* (December, 1925), p. 25.

to point out that the last concession is truer in theory than in fact.⁹⁶

Uncle Sam was the largest single employer of women in the United States during these years. Women were continually finding a greater opportunity than formerly in Federal Service. Many women were employed as Bureau Chiefs, or scientific experts and becoming national figures. There was a scattering of women employees in many positions, as widely varied as patent examiners and plant pathologists.⁹⁷

The following figures were given as average wages:

Clerks and typists	\$1,140
Stenographers	1,320
(In theory, they might reach	2,700
but only one stenographer and eight clerks out of many thousands had done so)	
Professionals and technicians	5,200
This was the highest pay for women,	
A man would receive	6,000

In 1919, there were only thirty-five women in the entire government service receiving more than thirty-six thousand dollars.⁹⁸ Youth, immaturity, inexperience, immobility, willingness to work for low wages, competition, exploitation, inefficiency, and home work were listed as causes for the low earnings of women.⁹⁹

There were twice as many women employed in commerce and manufacturing as in education and transportation where they had a chance for higher earnings. Sales and publicity work with equal or higher earnings commanded a larger percentage of the female workers than clerical and teaching. Earnings tended to increase with experience for the first twenty years. After this time, earnings were likely to remain constant for about ten years, and then start to decline. Also, earnings and age seemed to increase together up to fifty years of age for women. When this time was reached, wages tended to remain constant for a decade, and then start to decline. General education and technical training influenced earnings to increase.¹⁰⁰

But demand continued to be less than the supply. Nevertheless, the "new" middle-aged woman was slowly and surely wearing down the resistance of convention and prejudice.

96. *Ibid.*

97. Alice Rogers Hager, "Women Who Work for Uncle Sam," *Woman's Citizen* (January, 1927), p. 38.

98. *Ibid.*

99. *Ibid.*

100. Mary Sydney Branch, *Women and Wealth* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934), p. 100.

Part Three

From the Great Depression
To the Present Time

The 1940 Census Report

VERY LITTLE information was recorded concerning women in the labor force during the decade of the 30's; consequently, it has been estimated that women laborers played a minor part in the development of the economy at this time. Employment in general was at a very low level. Men usually received priority to women in employee evaluations, and probably few women were working during these years.

Published information is quite abundant concerning 1940 Census Reports, as well as indications derived from these reports. The data from this Census is often used as reference for long-term trends in women's occupational activities. This was the last peacetime year before the United States entered World War II.

I. GENERAL STATISTICS

In the Continental United States, there were nearly fifty-one million women aged fourteen and over in 1940, and eleven million of these women were at work during the week of March 24 to 30, when the Census Report was taken.¹⁰¹ There were also over a million women actively seeking employment and almost half as many employed on public emergency work. These thirteen million women in the labor force equals one-fourth of all women over fourteen years. And most of the women outside the labor force, approximately thirty-eight million, were engaged in doing housework in their own homes. Approximately eighty-two percent of all women over fourteen years were contributing to the well-being of the nation, through either paid or unpaid work. The remaining

101. Janet M. Brooks, *Women's Occupations Through Seven Decades*, Women's Bureau Bulletin, No. 218 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1951), pp. 15-19.

number of women were in school or were not working because of physical disability, or other reasons.¹⁰²

Women in the Home. Society depends to a greater extent upon men for the paid work done on farms and in the factories; women carry more of the responsibility for the unpaid work carried on in the home. In 1940 the population was about equally divided between men and women; however, men equalled three-fourths of all persons in the labor force.¹⁰³

By custom and tradition women are the caretakers of the home. Even when they enter the labor force, many women continue to do their home work. These are unpaid services, and thus the women are carrying double burdens. If women laborers lose their jobs, or if they consider their employment of minor importance, experience has shown that the census may report these women as engaged in home housework, in their alternative type of activity, rather than as being employed or as seeking work.

Women in Industry. The proportions of women employees in 1940 varied considerably from one occupational group to another. Domestic service work was pre-eminently a woman's field; more than nine out of each ten domestic workers were women. In contrast, five fields were almost exclusively men's province: craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers; farmers and farm managers; laborers, except farm; and farm laborers (wage workers) and farm foremen; and less than one worker in ten as women in protective service work.¹⁰⁴

Of every ten women employed or seeking work in 1940, three were in clerical sales, or kindred occupations; two were operatives or kindred workers; two were employed in domestic service; one was in professional work, and one was in service work other than domestic or protective. Eight other groups of workers accounting for relatively few women were semiprofessional workers, farmers, the proprietor-manager group, the craftsmen group, protective service workers, farm laborers, unpaid farm family workers, and laborers other than farm.¹⁰⁵

For women the primary change from 1910 to 1940 occurred among the white collar group.¹⁰⁶ They emerged to take a leading position in 1940.

102. *Ibid.*

103. *Ibid.*

104. *Ibid.*

105. *Ibid.*, p. 46

106. *Ibid.*

II. FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN WORKERS

Among married women the largest percentage employed was in the twenty-five to thirty-four age group. Women under twenty-five were usually inexperienced and found it difficult to secure jobs. Those women over thirty-five found the employers held a preference for younger women workers. This last age group also tended to have more physical handicaps.¹⁰⁷

TABLE III. Numbers of and Reasons for Women, Fourteen Years of Age and Over, in the United States, Not in the Labor Force, March, 1940 ¹⁰⁸

Number of Women	Reason for Not Being in the Labor Force
Total	
37,464,420	Not all available
4,474,160	Girls, in school, and limited by child labor laws
4,298,440	65 yrs. and older, also physically handicapped
1,090,920	18-64 yrs., unable to work, or in an institution
2,954,320 *	Single
2,872,980 *	Widowed or divorced
1,958,900 *	45 yrs. or older

* These women were between the ages 18-64.

In 1940, there was a great deal of prediction of war being inevitable. It was estimated that a large portion of the nation's wartime industry would have to be in metropolitan centers of 100,000 or more population. Less than one-half of the women of the country were not in the labor force at the time of the Census recordings, and migration of workers from areas where the need was still less would not obviate the necessary drawing upon this reserve. Such migration would have to be limited, for overcrowding already existed in large industrial centers. Furthermore, migration of married women with family ties would not be easy. Women in the rural farm areas would be useful alleviation for farm labor shortages; they could replace the men necessary for Armed Forces. Possibly the women who would migrate to large production centers could also be used to help seasonally with nearby farm work. These were a few of the expectations recorded with the indications from the 1940 Census Report.¹⁰⁹

107. Katharine Glover, *Women at Work in Wartime*, Public Affairs Pamphlet (New York: Public Affairs Commission, 1943), p. 6.

108. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Women in the Labor Force During World War II

STATISTICS from the 1940 Census gave indication of the number of women between the ages of eighteen and sixty-four who were available for war work. Among the employed women laborers were four million married women, eleven million single women, and more than five million married women living on farms. There were also three and a half million married women with young children who were less likely to be available for employment.¹¹⁰

I. NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

In December, 1942, American women were employed according to the following information: ¹¹¹

28.7 million homemakers	4.4 million in school
3.5 million unable to work	3.1 million in war work
11.8 million in agriculture and civilian industries	.6 million unemployed

In the first years of World War II, women moved more rapidly into the airplane factory than into any other new field. The Women's Bureau gave the figures from a well-known airplane assembly plant in South California, in November: ¹¹²

November, 1940, 14,000 employees, no women
November, 1942, 24,000 employees, 13,000 women

The Curtis Wright Corporation reported in January, 1943, that in the Buffalo division, twenty-five percent of their workers were women; the Goodyear Company in Akron had forty percent women workers; and Boeing Aircraft Company in Seattle had fifty percent women workers, with plans to increase this figure to seventy-five

110. Glover, *loc. cit.*, p. 4.

111. *Ibid.*, p 5.

112. *Ibid.*

percent by the end of 1943. Kaiser, operating an Oregon ship-building corporation in Portland-Vancouver shipyards, employed eighty-five percent women workers.¹¹³

Training on the job consisted of the TWI Program, training within the industry, operated with the co-operation of War Manpower Commission and industry. Seventy percent of all new workers could be trained. Public school facilities and teachers of all skills were utilized. There were short-term college training programs conducted by the U. S. Office of Education.¹¹⁴

Civil Service stenographers and typists on the banks of the Potomac numbered approximately forty thousand a year, employing many women in civilian posts in the War and Navy Departments.¹¹⁵ Twenty-five thousand women worked in the aviation field, inspecting planes, parachutes, clearing engines, towing planes, as well as training ground crews and mechanics.¹¹⁶

Women's Service Auxiliaries included the following: WAACS—150,000 women; WAVES—1,000 officers and 10,000 enlisted personnel; NURSES—2,500 a month in the Army and 500 a month in the Navy; and an unlisted number of SPARS, Women's Reserve of Marine Corps, and WAFS, as well as American Red Cross Personnel. In 1943 the total number consisted of sixty-five thousand American women. The ranks which once were made up of women and ladies were now just WOMEN.¹¹⁷

Information on the character of potential labor reserves among women, made available by the Bureau of Census, indicated that in 1943, there were twenty million women in households, eleven million of which were considered available for the labor market. This was particularly true of women who resided in nonfarm areas, who were likely to be near centers of industrial activity, and who had no children under fourteen years of age. Three and a half million of these were under forty-five years of age; and from this group, it was estimated that the majority of the future labor reserves would be drawn.¹¹⁸

Considering the entire labor force, the increase of women workers was greater than the increase of men workers. A gain in the employment of women was general throughout most of the non-durable goods industries, with a prominent increase in the chemical indus-

113. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

114. *Ibid.*

115. *Ibid.*

116. *Ibid.*

117. *Ibid.*

118. Seymour L. Wolfbein, "Labor Reserves Among Women," *Monthly Labor Review* (July, 1943), pp. 1098-1100.

try. Three non-durable goods industries showed an increase of forty percent in women employment. These were textiles, food manufacturing, and chemical and petroleum. The expansion of heavy industry required male employees.¹¹⁹ Other industries showing an increase included the manufacturing of electrical machinery and transportation equipment. A strong influence in this expansion was the increase of women employment in the growing aircraft industry. The non-ferrous metals industry showed a decrease, while the rubber industry showed a decline in both male and female workers because of the curtailment of production for civilian goods.¹²⁰

Six leading industrial states had a fifty percent increase in female workers during this period of time. These states were as follows: New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Illinois, California, and Pennsylvania.¹²¹

II. OTHER CHANGES IN FEMALE EMPLOYMENT DURING THE WAR YEARS

Employment of women workers in the United States was twelve million in December, 1941; an increase of thirty-six percent raised this total to more than sixteen million in March, 1944. Sixty-one percent of these women had been in the labor force before the attack upon Pearl Harbor, with only half of the number remaining in the same occupational group.¹²²

Research indicates that from December, 1943, to May, 1944, women workers were subject to higher percentages of layoffs and separation than men workers. This was due to the fact that in a majority of situations, the employees in war plants were covered by collective bargaining agreements, specifying that seniority would determine the layoffs; fifty percent of the women had less seniority than the men employees. Total accessions balanced total separations, and it was anticipated that when war production declined, significant employment of women in affected industries would decrease both absolutely and relatively.¹²³

III. NEGRO WOMEN EMPLOYEES DURING THE WAR YEARS

The Navy Yard in Washington furnished a source for many skilled Negro women during the war years. More than three hundred of

119. A. H. Ayeroff, "Estimated Employment of Factory Wage Earners, by Sex, April 1941, and April 1942," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 55 (November, 1942), 913-16.

120. *Ibid.*

121. *Ibid.*

122. Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, "Changes in Women's Employment During the War," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 59 (November, 1944), 1029-30.

123. "Efforts of Cut-Back on Turnover of Women Workers," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 60 (June, 1945), 1180-1.

these women were special trained machine workers and machine helpers. They were placed on the job at wages earning an average of forty-five dollars per week, and an additional number were being employed at the rate of fifty per month. This program equalled the result of efforts of the National Youth Administration, and also the project manager and staff of N. Y. A. War Production Training School in Washington, D. C. The school was open to members of all races between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five. Average registration was between five hundred and five hundred fifty students.¹²⁴

The winter, 1943, number of *Journal of Negro Education*, published by Harvard University, reported the following findings from a questionnaire survey:

1. Prospects of employment were fairly encouraging.
2. Salaries for dietitians employed were regarded satisfactory.
3. However, many potential workers were not sufficiently trained. There were still occupational responsible positions in Negro institutions.¹²⁵

The above mentioned report suggested as the next advance, the education of heads of Negro hospitals and colleges in regard to importance of engaging trained Negro women for managers of food departments. If the demand became greater, the number of women who thought it worthwhile to seek training for such positions would also increase. At the time this report was conducted, only five Negro institutions offered such training, and a few Negro women were receiving training in white institutions. One Negro hospital had a training course in dietetics approved by the American Dietetic Association, and they limited enrollment to four each year, from the average of fifteen applications. However, six hospitals were making plans for future courses in this field. Openings for Negro women in professions of this type appeared to be available in dietary departments of hospitals, commercial organizations, and in Negro high schools, colleges and universities. Three-fourths of the forty-six Negro hospitals covered in the report employed trained Negro dietitians for an annual salary of \$1,585. For trained Negro dietitians and food service directors in social serving centers, hotels, restaurants, Y. W. C. A., Y. M. C. A., college dining halls, nursery schools, an average salary of \$1,500 was quite possible. Dietitians were also employed in educational institutions as teachers of courses in foods, nutrition, and dietetics with an average yearly salary of \$1,710.¹²⁶

124. "Negro Women in Skilled Defense Jobs," *Monthly Labor Review* (November, 1943), p. 953.

125. "Opportunities for Negro Women as Dietitians," *Monthly Labor Review* (July, 1943), pp. 104-5.

126. *Ibid.*

Women in the Labor Force After World War II

IN JANUARY of 1943, Class I Steam Railroad employees included sixty-three thousand women; in April of 1945, with an eighty-three percent increase the number had risen to almost one hundred sixteen thousand; the following nine months brought a sharp decrease of fifteen percent. During the same nine-month period, maintenance of equipment and transportation, other than train, engine, and yard, decreased from twenty-eight to fifteen percent of women employees in relation to the total number of workers. Clerical and professional groups fell by eleven percent in this nine months.¹²⁷

In the South, one woman out of four was seeking work outside the home. This rate was equal to the West, but less than the North. Residence and family characteristics were found to reduce the number of working women. The rural areas provided more lack of opportunity, more household responsibilities, a larger percent of married women and more children per family. Non-whites continued to be greater in number in domestic service in the South than in other regions.¹²⁸

Domestic characteristics of the Southern labor force seemed to fall into the six following classifications:

1. Except for the effects of migration, the South had the greatest potential rate in the nation.
2. Non-white workers comprised a relatively large percent of the Southern female labor force.
3. The percentage of the female labor force concentration in the younger age group was greater than in other regions.
4. A predominance of rural workers existed in the South.

127. "Postwar declines in Railroad Employment of Women (U. S. I. C. C.)," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 63 (July, 1946), 90-1.

128. Sophia C. Mendelsohn and Lester M. Pearlman, "Labor Supply in the South," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 63 (October, 1946), 490-4.

5. Southern female workers left school earlier to go to work, and retired later in years, than either workers in the North or the West.

6. In general, the South had relative fewer women working outside the home, than the other regions.¹²⁹

I. POST-WAR CHANGES

In the first half of 1947, an average of 16.6 million women were in the labor force. This was seventeen percent above the 1940 average and fourteen percent below the peak year of 1944. A few of the influences causing these changes are listed below:

1. There was a decline in both the number and the percentage of women in the civilian labor force.

2. A decrease existed in all occupational groups, except the slight reversal of the wartime downward trend in professional and domestic work.

3. The wartime increase in the percentage of all women thirty-five years of age and over in the labor force, continued.

4. The high participation in labor for both single and married women with some increased participation of smaller groups of widowed and divorced women workers, continued.¹³⁰

The net addition equalled more than two million women to circulation in the labor force, which was an estimated one-fourth million more than if no war had occurred. This fact was explained with the forty to forty-seven increase in the percentage of women clerical and operative occupations, a decline in the percent of professional workers, and a large decrease in the percentage of domestic servants. It was predicted that the future would contain the disadvantages of the traditional attitudes as to the types of work for women; however, women would have the time, training, and skill developed to continue in industry.¹³¹

TABLE IV. Postwar Distributions of United States Women Production Workers in Manufacturing Industries.

(U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics) ¹³²

INDUSTRY	Percent of women workers		
	Oct., 1939	Nov., 1943	Nov., 1946
Textile and apparel.....	50.9	28.1	43.4
Non-durables.....	34.1	26.6	31.6
Durables.....	15.0	45.3	25.0
All manufacturing.....	2,268,000	4,800,000	3,265,000

129. *Ibid.*

130. Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, "Women Workers and Recent Economic Changes," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 65 (December, 1947), 666-70.

131. *Ibid.*

132. "Distribution of Women Production Workers," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 64 (March, 1947), 413.

II. PRE-KOREAN WAR CHANGES

The period immediately preceding the Korean War was a time of industrial expansion stimulated by national defense and related activities. Employment of women in manufacturing areas contained twenty-seven percent of the total women employees in September of 1949.¹³³

TABLE V. Comparison of the Employment Characteristics of Women Factory Workers to Men Factory Workers in the United States in 1950¹³⁴

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS OF WORKERS	Per 100 people	
	Women	Men
Accessions	44	38
Separations, totals	43	38
Quits	24	18
Layoffs	19	20

Manufacturing industry women employees expanded in number from 3.8 million in March, 1950, to 4.8 million in September, 1953, then declined to 4.3 million at the close of 1954. After 1950, hiring rate of women employed in manufacturing industry was sixteen percent greater than the men's hiring rate. And women's employment tended to fluctuate more than men's employment.¹³⁵

Women appeared less inclined than formerly to leave their jobs in 1951, with the noticeable drop in hiring activity in the manufacturing industry due to materials shortages, tighter credit controls, consumer resistance to higher prices, and factors which affected the durable goods less than non-durable goods and the level of accession being higher in durable plants.

In several important durable goods industries, small but fairly steady expansion existed in the women work force throughout the year. In 1952, shortages occurred, large inventories were reduced, durables, and non-durables gradually mounted to meet continued demand for goods. October, 1952, again brought peak rates of women accession. Factories engaged an additional sixty-one women for each one thousand already employed; transportation industries increased their number of women employees by sixty-

133. Jean A. Wells, "Labor Turnover of Women Factory Workers," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 78 (August, 1955), 889-94.

134. *Ibid.*

135. *Ibid.*

seven for each thousand; seventy-five additional women workers were added for each thousand in fabricated metal production; and seventy-seven for each one thousand was the increase in electrical machines.¹³⁶

One-fourth of all the married women living with their husbands in 1950 earned some outside income, and since then, there has been a steady increase in the number and proportion of married women in industry and the professions. It was a general surprise that after World War II many women stayed on their jobs—many had no other choice, others needed the money, and still others gave personal reasons as the cause.¹³⁷

More and more, women tend to have two work lives. They work a year or two after marriage to help pay for the furniture, the washer, or a car; and then women work again when they reach the mid 30's in age, to help put the children through college. According to the United States Women's Bureau, many women work "to keep the wolf from the door," some enjoy a higher standard of living and are determined to keep it, others are concerned with the later years and want to be independent of their married children, and a certain group work to add interest in their lives after their children are grown.¹³⁸

Management of a home, children, and a job is a three ring circus, with the women seldom relaxed. In the early years women were tolerated in industry; they were a cheap source of labor. The five million women workers in 1900 increased to nineteen and one-half million in 1952. And experience of the last war has shown that woman's job preference can be as good as man's if the women are properly trained, obtain a suitable job, and have the physical capacity for handling the job. The 1940 Census Reports had listed women in most all occupation classifications, including bank officials, clergymen, sheriffs, customer's brokers, lighthouse keepers, crane operators, undertakers, and street cleaners. The 1950 Census reported a total of 78.8 percent of the eligible women in the labor force, with 26.4 percent in office work, 18.7 percent in factory work, 12.6 percent in service work, 10.3 in domestic service, and 10.8 in professional and semi-professional employment.¹³⁹

136. *Ibid.*

137. Stella B. Applebaum, *Working Wives and Mothers*, Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 188 (New York: Public Affairs Commission, 1952), p. 4.

138. *Ibid.*

139. *Ibid.*

Women workers changed as a group. In 1900, twenty-six was the average age of women workers; in 1951 thirty-seven years was the average age. Before World War II "over thirty-five was doom," but after Pearl Harbor, many older women entered the labor market and proved their mettle. Between the years 1940 and 1949, three-fourths of all the added women workers were between the ages of thirty-five and fifty-four years old, with the greatest increase in employment of women between the ages of forty-five and sixty-five years of age. In March, 1950, of the eighteen million women working in the United States, thirty-two percent were single, fifty-two percent were married, sixteen percent were widowed or divorced; by 1951 the percent of married women workers rose to fifty-five percent because of the increased percentage of married women in the total population and also because of the greater percent of women working. Fourteen percent of these women workers had children under six years, and twenty-four percent had children between the ages of six and eighteen years.¹⁴⁰

Many employers still show evidence of the traditional attitude, while others feel that married women are better suited to certain types of work such as department store clerks, women's apparel industry, and women's magazine publishing. Absenteeism proved to be a real problem during the war, and more so with women employees than men employees. Much of this was due to conditions of work and also the double responsibility of homework. As for wages, the War Labor Board settled wage disputes, enforced policy and supported no-wage-discrimination against women on the grounds of sex.¹⁴¹

III. WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN THE MID 1950's

The steady increase in the percent of wives and mothers employed in industry caused the 1900 figures of 18.4 percent to rise to 34.8 percent of the total labor force in 1957. In March of 1957, 12.7 million, or 29.6 percent of all married women were working, or were actively looking for jobs. This number was four million greater than the number of women who held jobs during the peak years of World War II, and eighteen percent of all the women with children of school age were in the labor force in March, 1957.¹⁴²

140. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

141. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

142. "Marital Status of Workers, March, 1957," *Current Population Reports*, U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Series P-50, No. 78 (U. S. Government Printing Office, November, 1957), p. 7.

Part-Time Work. The Women's Bureau of the United States recently completed Bulletin No. 238, a study involving interviews with eighteen hundred women. These women gave the following reasons for part-time work.¹⁴³

1. To supplement family income.
2. To use skills and abilities.
3. To have outside interests.
4. To supplement fixed incomes.
5. To help pay for children's college, family vacations, new house, or car.

Several of these women stated that since their children were grown, they felt a compelling need for outside interests, others wanted to keep skills alive—particularly professionals, including nurses, teachers, social workers, and technicians. It was a typical situation that married women over thirty-five years of age had previously held full-time employment.¹⁴⁴

Opportunities for Advancement. The Women's Bureau study on "Women in Higher Level Positions," Bulletin No. 236, was concerned with the higher level of jobs held by women in the middle income brackets. Using the U. S. Census Bureau figures, the estimate was that one million women were employed in the higher echelons. The number of women managers, officials, and proprietors doubled from 1940 to 1956. Professional workers, including technical and kindred workers, increased from 1,570,000 to 2,400,000 or fifty-three percent. In 1956, the total number of women workers was twenty-two million, or one-third of the total labor force.¹⁴⁵

Uniform reciprocal enforcement of the support of legislation was in effect in all states, territories and commonwealths with the exception of Washington, D. C. The last two states to enact such legislation were Mississippi in 1954, and Nevada in 1955. In addition, many states enacted strengthening amendments to their legislation after 1952.¹⁴⁶

For the June, 1955, graduates with B. A. degrees, teaching appeared to be the most attractive. Stated intentions of these graduates indicated that sixty-one percent would be teachers, nineteen percent would enter the professions, fifteen percent would be clerical, and five percent were miscellaneous. Six months after graduation eighty percent of the graduates were working, nine per-

143. Applebaum, *loc. cit.*, p. 28.

144. *Ibid.*

145. Frances Maule, *Executive Careers for Women* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), pp. 1-59.

146. *Ibid.*

cent were continuing their education, four percent were seeking work, and seven percent of these young women were not in the labor market. The first job proved to be the most important, with the first year's earnings starting at approximately \$3,141 and averaging between \$2,500 and \$4,000.¹⁴⁷

IV. HIGHLIGHTS OF FEMALE EMPLOYMENT IN 1958

Approximately twenty-two million women were in the labor force in 1958. This was thirty-six percent of the women of working age, and one-third of the labor force. The general characteristics are as follows:

Three-tenths of the women workers were clerical workers, including two million stenographers, typists, and secretaries.

One-fourth of the women workers were in service work, including one million waitresses and cooks.

One-seventh were operatives, chiefly in factories.

One-eighth were professional or technical workers, including one million teachers.

One-half of the women workers were forty years of age and over.

Two-fifths of the women workers were forty-five years of age and over.

More than fifty percent of the women workers were married.

Of the single women, twenty to sixty-four years of age, seventy-five percent were working.

Less than one-eighth of all the women workers had children under six years of age.

The median income in 1957 was \$3,000 for year round, full-time women workers, or \$1,200 for all women with incomes.¹⁴⁸

Negro Women. Two and three-fourths million non-white women were employed in the civilian labor force in April, 1958. Most of these women were Negroes. One out of every seven women workers was non-white. Forty-five percent of these non-whites were working outside their homes, as compared to thirty-five percent of the white women. The non-white workers fell into three broad occupational groups: private-household workers, other service workers, and operatives in factories, laundries, and other work-places. During the last two decades, there has been a marked decrease in farm laborers, and only a small increase in the number of private household workers. The number of non-white workers in clerical work almost tripled between 1950 and 1958.¹⁴⁹

Laws Concerning Women Employees. The husband and father is primarily responsible for family support of his wife and minor

147. "Women College Graduates," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 79 (September, 1955), 1057-61.

148. Janet M. Brooks, *Women's Occupations Through Seven Decades*, Women's Bureau Bulletin, No. 218 (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1951), p. 2.

149. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

children. If he is dead or incapable, responsibility falls upon the wife and mother. In eight states, having community-property laws, the common estate of husband and wife is liable for family support, but this does not relieve the husband of his responsibility as head of the family.¹⁵⁰

Alice K. Leopold, Assistant to the Secretary of Labor for Women's Affairs, made the statement that all of the states have some special laws concerning women's working hours, wages, and working conditions; all except five states have laws safeguarding women's maximum hours of work; one-half of the states require one day of rest out of seven; many provide meals and midshift rest periods; and twenty-nine states and Washington, D. C., have state minimum wage laws concerning women.¹⁵¹ However, occupations are still limited. Many of the prohibitory laws for adult women concern mining and working in establishments serving liquor. Of the twenty-four states having such laws, seventeen prohibit women employees in mines, even though several states permit clerical work in the mines; nine states prohibit mixing, selling, or dispensing alcoholic liquors for on-premises consumption, with Illinois authorizing the cities and counties to govern the prohibition; and eight states have laws prohibiting other employment considered hazardous. The conditions are as follows: ¹⁵²

Colorado—Coke ovens.

Louisiana—Cleaning moving machinery.

Michigan—Operating polishing wheels and belts.

Minnesota—Core rooks, cleaning moving machinery.

Missouri—Cleaning or working between moving machines.

New York—Core-making, or in connection with core-making rooms, and oven also in operation.

Pennsylvania—Dangerous or injurious occupations.

Ohio—Cross-watchman, section hand, express driver, metal molder, bellhop, taxi driver (except from 6 a. m. to 9 p. m.), gas or electric meter reader, shoe-shining parlors, bowling alley or pin setters, poolrooms, in delivery service or motor propelled vehicles of over one ton capacity, operator for baggage elevators not automatic or semi-automatic controlled, baggage and freight handling, trucking and handling by means of hand trucks heavy material of any kind, open wheels and belts.

The minimum wage laws of thirty states, Washington, D. C., and three territories have minimum requirements for women, and of these, twelve also apply to men. Sixteen states and Alaska have equal pay laws for women. Forty-three states and Washington, D. C., regulate daily and/or weekly working hours for women.

150. "Legal Rights of Women," *Book of the States* (Chicago: The Council of State Governments, 1956-7), p. 342.

151. *Ibid.*, p. 416-20.

152. *Ibid.*

Maximum hours of eight a day or forty-eight a week are set by twenty-four states. Puerto Rico joins twenty states in prohibiting and/or regulating employment of adult women at night. Eighteen states and Puerto Rico also have industrial homework laws or regulations.¹⁵³

Puerto Rico and six states prohibit the employment of women immediately before and/or after childbirth; twenty-five states prohibit the employment of women in specific occupations or industries, or under certain working conditions considered hazardous or injurious to health. Forty-five states and the District of Columbia, as well as all the territories, permit women to serve on state juries. Women are eligible for Federal jury service in all jurisdictions by virtue of the 1957 Federal Civil Rights Laws. All except six states give both parents the same rights of natural guardianship over their minor children. No state prohibits a mother from serving as guardian if the father is deceased. All states recognize a married woman's legal capacity to contract her personal services outside the home. Married women generally have control of their own earnings. However, in six of the eight community-property states, the wife's earnings are under the control of the husband.¹⁵⁴

Pope Pius XII, in a radio address from Castel Gandolfo, October 14, 1956, to a meeting of Italian women in Loreto, deplored the employment of women in industry and heavy labor as "exalted and practiced by some countries that would want to inspire progress." He called this a pre-Christian rather than a modern concept. His words were as follows: "The sublime mission of women is maternity."¹⁵⁵

153. Brooks, *loc cit.*, p. 110.

154. *Ibid.*

155. *Facts on File* (November 6, 1956), p. 6379.

Summary and Conclusions

I. SUMMARY

THE PERCENTAGE of the total number of women engaged in earning pay or profit was quite comparable in the beginning of the Twentieth Century to the percentage at the mid-century mark. However, in the Nineteenth Century, the number of women carrying on working force activities without leaving the home was much greater. Since the beginning of the Twentieth Century, women have increasingly left home to work outside, and by the mid-century, home needlework, and related home industries had almost disappeared. There had also been a great amount of diminution in agricultural work, as well as a decrease in birth rates, and an increase in the percentage of working women taking jobs.

Sometimes, women's employment was a result of the husband's inability to earn enough to support the family adequately; however, there was also the desire of some women to pursue their own careers, or to escape the duties for which they had little talent or taste. On the whole, employment of women included more of the first group than of the second group. Nevertheless, the percentage of women compelled to accept employment in order to supplement their husband's incomes, seemed to be falling.

Factors in the present industrial situation lead to improved growing class consciousness among women, bringing them into the labor movement. The influence of trade unions demand the same wage scale for women as for men workers. The effect of piece work systems, and removal of women's political and social disabilities, do away with the influence of custom and tradition to a certain extent. At the present time, the two women's industries, cotton and clothing industries, employ as many male as female workers. And the

two men's industries, printing and boots, employ one-third female workers.

In the years ahead, certain developments can easily be assumed. Our country will have the service of womanpower maintained at a higher level of productivity than today. With women marrying earlier, and living longer, added womanpower will equal the number of married women workers. But this is no modern inspiration. Pioneer women worked side by side with their husbands. Women have merely changed the location of their work; they followed the activities into the factories.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The greatly increased and rapidly increasing number of women working at paid jobs outside the home add new dimensions to the nation's total manpower resources. There are also many far reaching consequences on the national economy and its social organization and customs.

A few of the findings of the research for this study of women in industry are listed as follows:

1. All singular alterations in human behavior, whether they occur within individuals or groups, are products of the complex developmental processes. They are problems of motivation, attitude formation, utilization, changes in technique, family living standards, and rearing and development of children.

2. The new pattern of work outside the home for wives and mothers has had, by and large, desirable, social and economic consequences, continuous growth of real income, improved living standards, an increase in the percentage of middle income families, and expanded individual freedom of choice.

3. Recognition should be acknowledged of how little is known about many of the consequences of revolution in women's employment. There is need for new clinical studies, attempts to synthesize existing bodies of clinical data; significant judgments may be derived from a system of values, rather than research inquiry.

4. Certain generalizations should contain the label, "Beware of." We should not generalize families, local communities, nations as a whole, socio-economic groups, motives, or attitudes.

5. No single problem can be identified as "the problem" of the working mother and wife. There exists a complexity of different and uneven problems, some major, and some of trivial importance.

6. No single or simple policy can be invoked to deal with all problems connected with the employment of women.

7. Basic moral and value issues infuse every problem.

8. Optimistic expectations call for continued high levels of employment, a high demand for labor, and a looked for continued recent trends.

9. Uncertainty about the importance of the pull of historical forces against that of individual choice still exist.

10. Man and woman are very imperfect creatures. The social organization which they fashion is also imperfect. Much of the social lives of these imperfect creatures will not fit neatly into some of the ideal schemes.

Our goal should be to work toward more efficient use of woman-power in the national interest. All local, state, and national groups, educational groups, and individual employers should be stimulated to encourage and support research for increased employment, urging more scholarships, placement facilities, vocational guidance services and any other help available to meet the requirements in professional and semi-professional occupations where shortages now exist.

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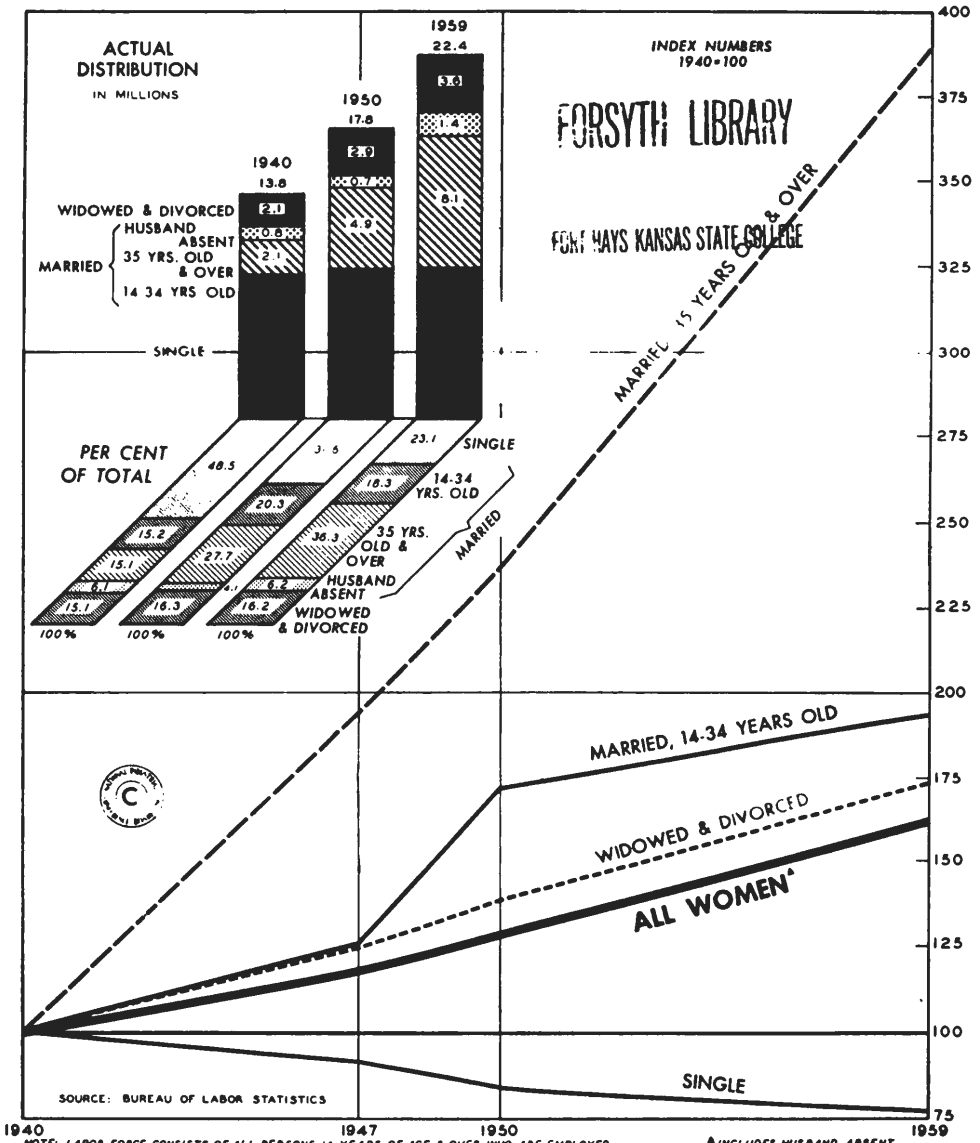
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Appendix

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FOR USE IN 1959 Women in the Labor Force



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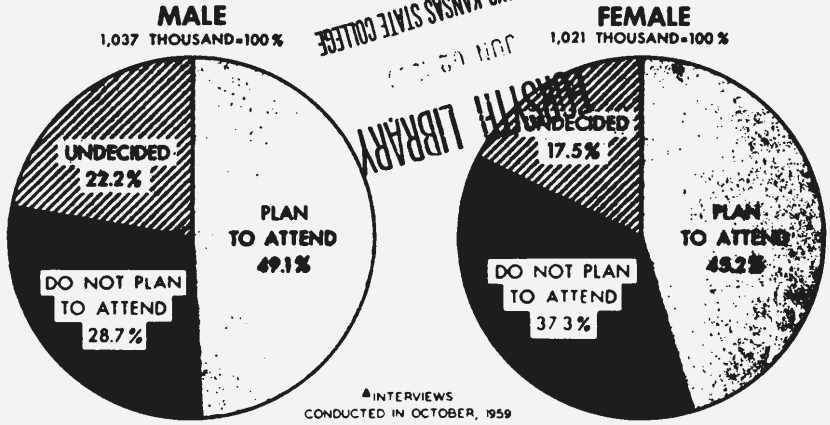
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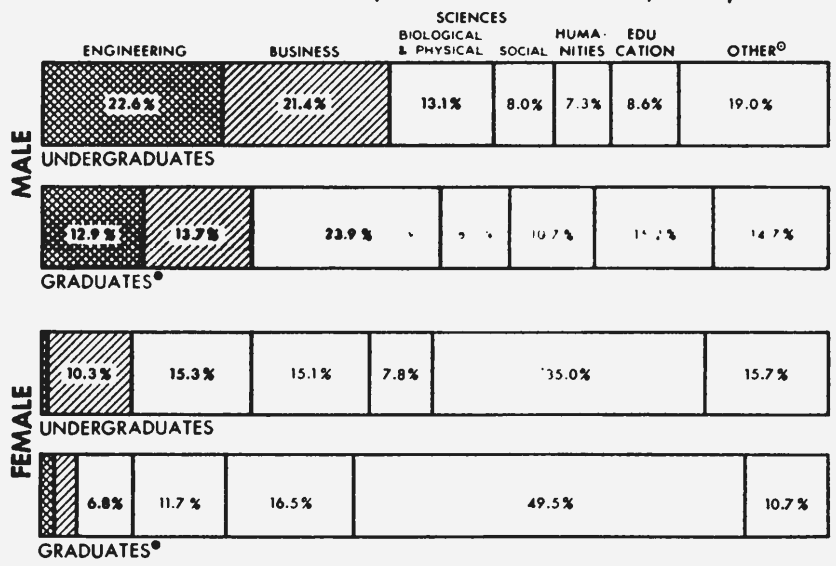
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COLLEGE PLANS OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS FOR 1960^a



MAJOR FIELDS OF STUDY, COLLEGE STUDENTS, FALL, 1959



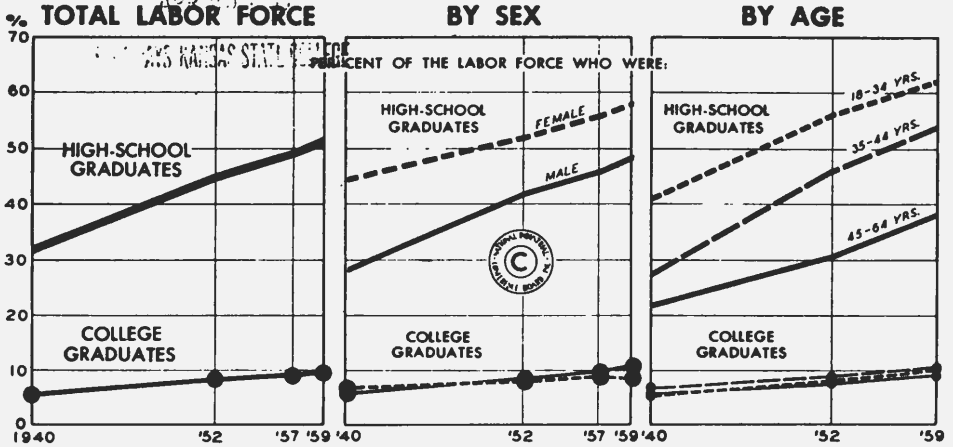
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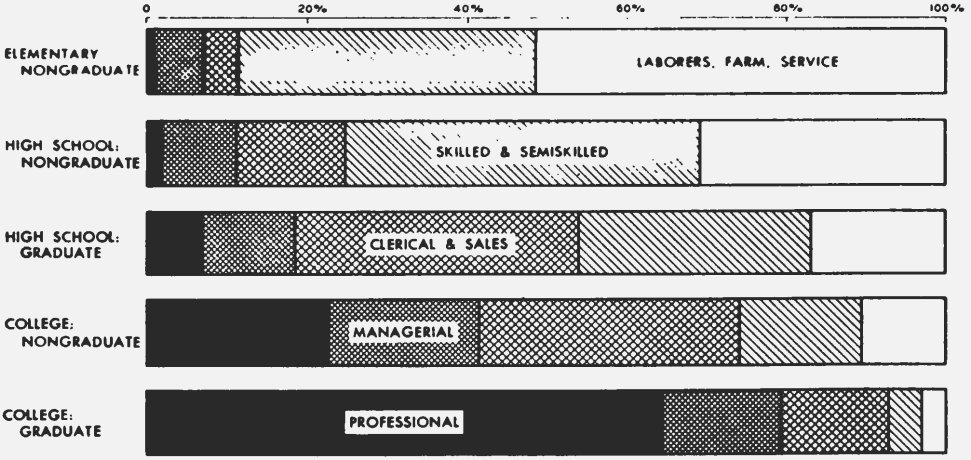


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EDUCATION & THE AMERICAN WORKER



EDUCATION & OCCUPATION: PER CENT OF TOTAL EMPLOYED IN EACH GROUP, 1959



NOTE: SEE REVERSE FOR DEFINITIONS OF OCCUPATIONS

Slightly over half the American labor force (18 to 64 years old) had a high-school diploma in 1959 and nearly one in ten was a college graduate. In 1940, only one third had completed high school and one in eighteen had a college degree. Approximately two of every three college graduates were employed in a professional capacity in March, 1959, and one in seven was working as a manager, official or proprietor.

Source: Bureau of the Census

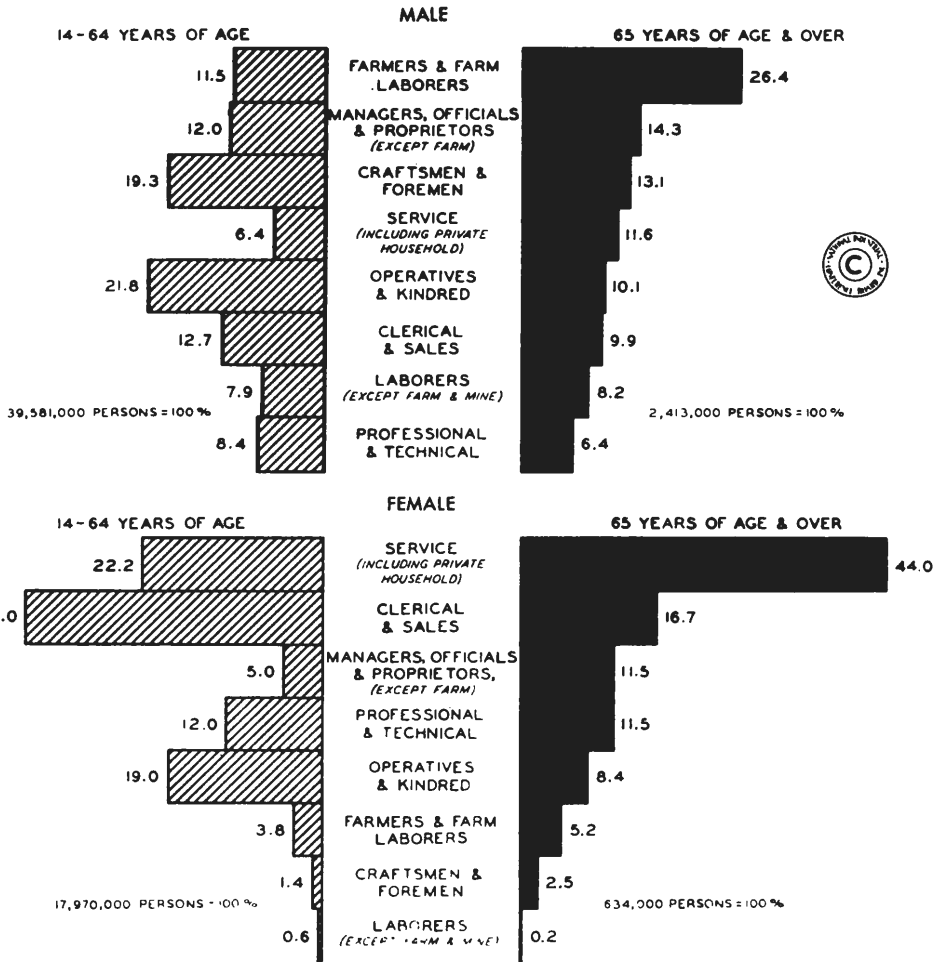
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EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER PEOPLE

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION



More than thirteen million people in the United States are 65 years of age or over. Out of this total, only about three million are employed. The percentage of employed by occupational groups is shown in the chart for April of this year. The composition of each occupational group is given in more detail on the reverse side.
 Source: Bureau of the Census

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