

The Evolution of Women's Roles within the University and the Workplace

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On April 20, 2010, United States President Barack Obama issued a proclamation declaring National Equal Pay Day. In the proclamation it was recognized that despite years of progress in the workforce, women are still not paid as much as men. The proclamation states:

Throughout our Nation's history, extraordinary women have broken barriers to achieve their dreams and blazed trails so their daughters would not face similar obstacles. Despite decades of progress, pay inequity still hinders women and their families across our country. National Pay Day symbolizes the day when an American woman's earnings finally match what an average American man earned in the year. Today, we renew our commitment to end wage discrimination and celebrate the strength and vibrancy women add to our economy.¹

The proclamation emphasized, "Nearly half of all working Americans are women, yet they earn only about 80 cents for every dollar men earn. This gap increases among minority women and those with disabilities."² While the proclamation is meant to be symbolic in nature, the research question, which must be asked, is: Will the status of women in the workforce improve? In order to provide analysis and an answer to the question, one must examine the history of women in the workforce, the plight of women in the university, and the effect of women's roles on society.

Throughout history women's participation in the workforce has had a definite correlation with the rise and fall of the American economy. In the 1820's the Industrial Revolution gave rise to "Mill Girls" who received the opportunity to work in the mills and for the first time received a regular paycheck. At this point in history the economy was strong, businesses were successful and there were more opportunities in the workforce. As more goods were produced in factories and more factories emerged, the workplace shifted from rural areas to urban areas. Women could no longer combine work on the farm with family life and women with no husband or family responsibilities could only make the shift to the cities. This working out of the home became a part of life for unmarried women. After marriage women did not work. Some women who wished to remain in the workforce delayed marriage and stayed single. In 1900, less than 5.6 percent of married women worked outside the home.³

By 1914, America had entered into the World War I and women found themselves in the workforce while the men went off to war. After 1918, women stayed in the workforce and by the 1920's women's roles were evolving. Social norms had changed. This was a time of new inventions. The factories were prosperous and consumer spending was on the increase. Prior to the war it was customary for women to wait for a man, for a date and for marriage. After the

¹ White House Press Release, Office of the Press Secretary, "Presidential Proclamation—National Equal Pay Day," WWW.WHITEHOUSE.GOV, April 20, 2010, 1.

² Ibid. 2.

³ U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau. Women in the Force, 1900-2002. <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/0/1/0/4/6/7/A0104673.html>

war, with a whole male generation lost to combat, women were unwilling to pursue the societal roles of the past. At this time, women made up 23.6 percent of the workforce, while 8.3 million women older than 15 years of age worked outside the home. During this period, 25.6 percent of employed women worked in office jobs, 23.8 percent in manufacturing, 18.2 percent in domestic work and 12.9 percent in agriculture.⁴ The 1920's produced women who were college graduates and while they entered professional careers, they were relegated to positions thought to be best suited to women. Women found themselves in teaching, nursing, social work, and in factories. Women made far less money in these positions than men and definitely less than men who were in careers not designated as women's jobs.

Even though women had penetrated the workforce in the 1920's, the overall situation for women changed drastically by 1929 with the crash of the stock market and the onset of the Great Depression (1929-1945). During the depression the unemployment rate rose from 3.2 percent in 1929 to 23.6 percent in 1932. During this time women and children found jobs more easily than men because of the delineation of jobs, which clearly belonged to women, and men. Twenty percent of Caucasian women were in the workforce during this time period.⁵ Many marriages did not survive due to the strain which existed stemming from men who did not want their wives to work and women who found work a necessity for survival. "Eighty percent of men during the Great Depression opposed their wives entering the workforce under any circumstances, economic factors made it necessary for the women to work. Hours were long and pay was low."⁶ Discrimination existed for married, working women during this time because they were seen as taking the jobs of men. Women lost jobs and stayed unemployed at double the rate of men.

In 1933, the minimum wage was established as part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Enforcement of the minimum wage was meant to elevate the economic position of both men and women, clearly benefiting those in low paying jobs. Unfortunately, there was not legislation, which prevented pay discrimination in the workforce. By 1941, World War II commenced and women reentered the workforce wherever they were needed, filling the jobs vacated by men who had left to serve their country. Between 1942 and 1945, 6.5 million women entered the workforce.⁷ The war effort required workers, supplies, and increased production of items needed for warfare and domestic purposes. While popular opinion was still negative toward women in the workplace, campaigns were launched designed to create a shift toward a more positive view of working women. The most memorable figure to emerge out of the campaigns was Rosie the Riveter.

The media created Rosie the Riveter, a mythical character to encourage Women in the workforce. Rosie was portrayed as a patriotic woman, a Hero for all women. All day long, whether rain or shine, She's part of the Assembly line. She's

⁴ "There is a tacit understanding that women should not make over twenty-five cents an hour."

<http://www.enotes.com/1920-lifestyles-social-trends-american-decades/women-go-work>, June 18, 2010, 1.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

making history, Working for victory, Rosie the Riveter... There's something true about Red, White and blue about Rosie the Riveter., The propaganda efforts worked... In 1940 before the war, only 36% of women workers were married. By 1945, after the war, 50% of women workers were married. The middle class taboo against a working wife had been repealed.⁸

After the war, women were forced to return to the home so that jobs would be available, once again, for men. Even though women had successfully filled the gap in the workforce left by the vacating male population, women were not perceived as breadwinners. Women were expected to conform to their new role of homemaker without complaint or protest. The book, *The Modern Woman* by Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia F. Farnham, written in 1947, advocates that women should not be in the workforce by calling feminism a "deep illness and labeled the idea of an independent woman a "contradiction in terms," and explained that women who wanted equal pay and equal educational opportunities were engaged in the ritualistic castration of men."⁹

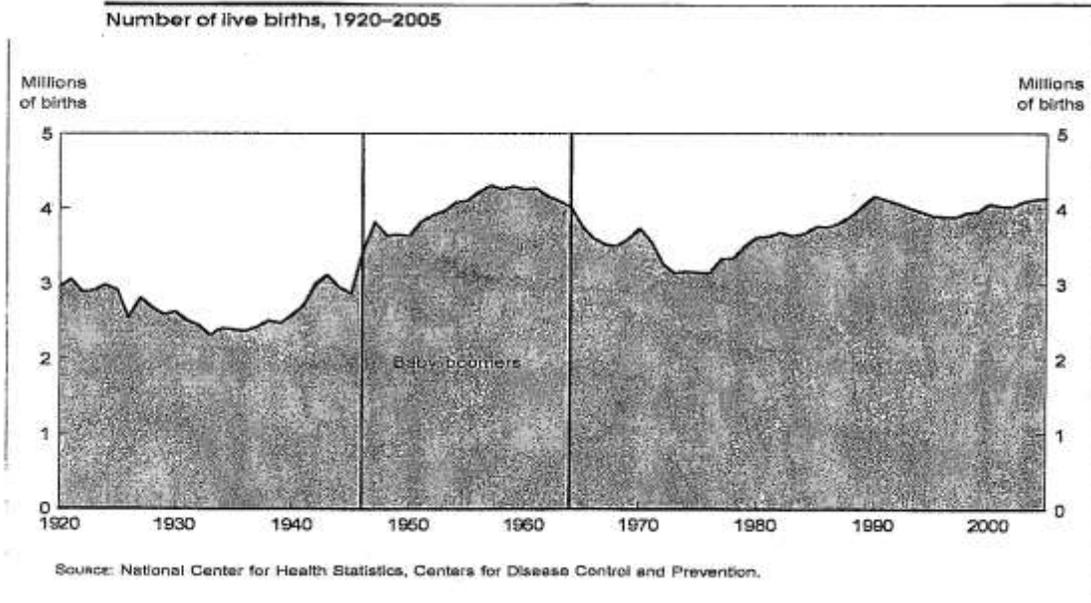
Marynina Farnham, a Freudian psychiatrist, appeared on a radio show entitled "The March of Time" to persuade women who wanted to keep their jobs after the war that their mental health would be in jeopardy unless they stopped working.¹⁰ This shift in employment made women become a misplaced population.

Social opinion placed them in a subordinate position to men and once more made women domestic servants, taking care of the husband, home and children. The Media reinforced this role with the emergence of television shows such as "The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet" (1952), "Father Knows Best" (1954), and "Leave It To Beaver" (1957). These shows emphasized the perfect family life with the father working outside the home, the mother as homemaker and the children growing up in a pristine atmosphere of caring and consideration. Mother always made dinner with daughters helping and life was copasetic. Conflict was kept to a minimum and real life was not depicted. Most families wondered why their life did not mirror the television families and many assumed that other families were closer to the perfect image than theirs. Resentment grew, especially among the 1950's housewives. The dissatisfaction on the part of women led to the abuse of prescription drugs in order to cope with their new situation and expanding consumerism. Women found themselves prisoners in their homes without a social outlet which work could provide. The late 1940 's and 1950's became known as the period of the baby boom with women producing more children than in previous periods of time and the only women left in the workforce were those in a lower economic status.

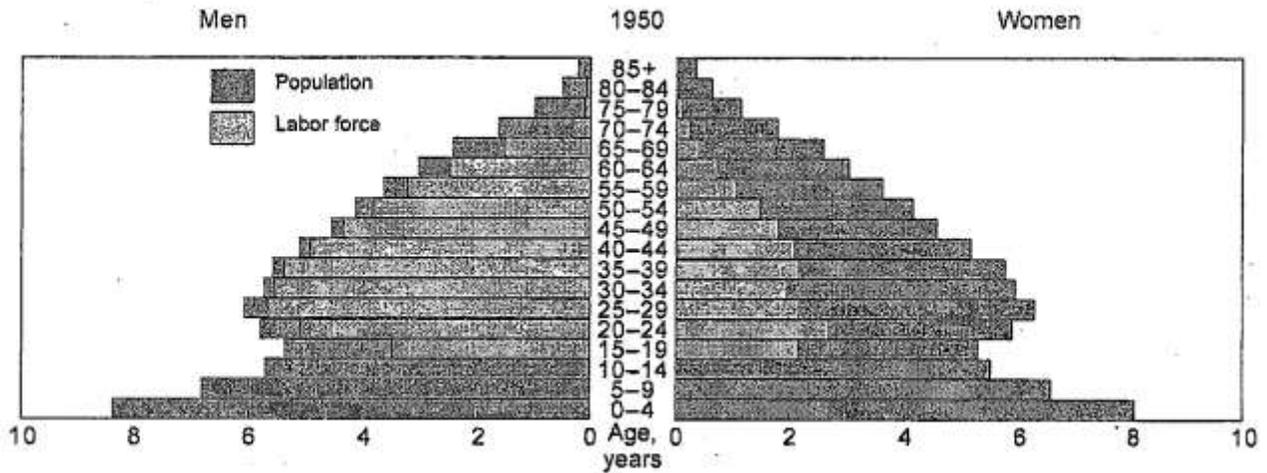
⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia F. Farnham, *The Modern Woman*, 1947.

¹⁰ Marynia Farnham, "The March of Time" Radio Show, 1947.



"In the 1950's, 33 percent of the workforce is female."¹¹ (Graph Source: *Monthly Labor Review*, November, 2006, 21- 22.)



In 1955, the phrase "Women's Liberation" was coined by French Feminist writer and philosopher, Simone De Beauvoir , in her book *Second Sex*, published in the United States. It was not until the 1960's that the phrase became a wake-up call to women of all ages. Generally

¹¹ *Monthly Labor Review*, November, 2006, 21-22.

the 1960's through 1970 was considered to be an affluent period in America's economic history. There were peaks and valleys throughout the 1960's, economically. The 1960's were a time of reawakening, revolution and the Vietnam War.

Politically, it was a socially volatile time. Women were taking a more active interest in politics and creating a unified voice while running for office and making a stand regarding issues, which affected women and the country as a whole. Women were not staying at home but entering the university in larger numbers and placing value on education. During this time, women saw education as a way to reenter the workforce with the goal of achieving equality with their male counterparts. The issue of equal pay for equal jobs emerged as a concern. In 1963, the Equal Pay Act made it illegal to pay men and women differently for the same job. Legislation, however, does not guarantee that wages will be equal.

"In 1960, women earned 59 cents for every dollar men earned. After the 1963 legislation was passed women made 77 cents for every dollar men earned (2002). While this is an improvement, the fight for pay parity is far from over." ¹² An issue, which must be considered, is whether women's jobs are considered as comparable to men's jobs at this point in history. If women are seen as possessing women's jobs and these jobs are not valued as highly as those of men, then the pay inequity will remain. Ida Castro points out "Fair pay means equal pay for work of equal value, even when the work is different. Fair pay corrects a common practice of paying less for work performed by women. Women may perform jobs with different duties from the jobs performed by men, but if male and female jobs are equally valuable to the employer, they should be paid comparably."¹³ The legislation of 1963 did not solve the problem of pay inequity.

As Lowell states, " Women have come a long way since the vast wage gaps of the 1960's But based on the past rates of wage growth, women's wages will not reach parity with men's until at least 2051." ¹⁴ The 1970's seemed to be a time for advocating independence for women, yet again, The Media put forward situation comedies, which made serious points and provided social commentary. The Mary Tyler Moore Show (1970-1977) showed that women could be independent, but depicted the single woman trying to work and be successful in a large city. Mary's goal was to be successful in television, live on her own responsibly and manage a social life.

The television show "Rhoda" (1970-1977) was a spin-off of the Mary Tyler Moore show and depicted another single female but the storyline took the character back home to live with her sister and family, finally to her own apartment and then to a relationship and marriage. The ratings soared as long as Rhoda Morgenstern was married and a successful window dresser by career. Ratings dropped when the show's storyline included difficulty in relationships and divorce. Yet another successful situation comedy aired in 1976-1983, "Laverne and Shirley."

¹² U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau. *Women in the Force, 1900-2002*.

¹³ Ida. L. Castro, "Women Face Discrimination in the workplace," *Feminism*. Ed. Jennifer A. Hurley. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2001.

¹⁴ Julie Lowell, "Women Face Discrimination in the Workplace," *At Issue: Does Equality Exist In America?* Ed. Stuart A. Kallen. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2006.

Two single girls, living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were enjoying their independence and working in a brewery.

Storylines changed dramatically with the introduction of "All In The Family" (1971–1979) which took a satirical view of relationships and societal issues. The focus of "All In The Family" was to show how prejudice against race, women and sexual orientation, among other issues, were inappropriate by acting out the undesirable behaviors. For the first time, publically, a nation had to view itself through the perceptions of others. Women in "All In The Family" included a stay at home Mother who had to endure the hardships created by an insensitive husband and a daughter who worked while living at home with her insensitive family, while married. Again, the situation comedy showed what family life was like when economic hardships were present. Difficulties were extended when the two adult families had to live in the same house and attempt to get along.

An entirely new type of situation comedy, "The Jefferson's" aired in 1975-1985 and lasted for eleven seasons. "The Jeffersons" depicted an African American family who had worked their way up to an affluent station in life and were moving on up to the East side of New York to a town house apartment. This is one of the first situation comedies to show a minority family in an affluent situation, economically. The wife in the comedy, "Weesie" was shown as a woman who did not work outside the home and whom had an African American maid. Her life was one of leisure and did elevate the view of the African American family. By 1984, The Cosby show entered the scene. In this situation comedy, the African American family had two professional people in it. The wife was a lawyer and the husband a doctor. This showed a college educated couple that were affluent and enjoyed a successful family life. The show lasted from 1984-1992.

The situation comedy, "Murphy Brown" revealed a vulnerable side of its single, female star when it presented her as a recovering alcoholic returning to the work place while trying to balance a successful job and home restoration, on her own. The show drew criticism politically when, then Vice President Dan Quayle, publically criticized the show for "ignoring the importance of fathers by birthing a child alone."¹⁵ The show depicted an independent, female in the workforce dealing with her life on her own terms. From 1995-1998, "Cybil" starring Cybil Shepherd showed an independent career woman (actress) raising her daughter alone. The show depicts the major character as a woman with feminist leanings and possessing a definite sexuality, which is apparent. The balance of career, an additional married daughter and her family moving back with Cybil's ex-husbands constantly visiting make the single mother and career woman the focal point of the show.

From 1997-2000, the situation comedy, "Ally McBeal" presented women as single and independent in the same career as men but this time a variation of theme introduced a conflict between work and family. The main female character continually imagined a dancing baby

¹⁵ Reflections on Urban America," *Commonwealth Club Radio Program Collection*, Program (19920519), May 19, 1992.

emerging on the scene, which represented the countdown of her biological clock. From this show it was clear that women could do the same job as men, share a unisex bathroom and have relationships. There was a realization, however that women needed to remember they were women who had more to think about than work. There was a limited amount of time to establish a family. "Sex and the City" appeared on the American scene in 1998-2004 and all the major characters were women. All four leading characters had professional jobs. Women were being seen as powerful in the work force and this television show spun off two movies in 2008 and 2010. Desperate Housewives (2004-present), remains as a successful situation "dramaedy" which reviews women's issues. All major characters are women who live in a perfect setting on Wisteria lane. The show educates the audience about the changing family dynamic of the woman, who, works when there is a necessity and stays home when the economy is stable. Unlike the shows of the 1950's the women are not depicted as perfect people but rather problem solve through discussion with their friends. The overview of popular situation comedies gives insight into the situation of women during different time periods. The media either reflects what the plight of women is in the workforce or justifies what their role should be, based on what is needed at time. Media campaigns have been designed to promote women entering the workforce or urging them to stay away. The rise and fall of the economy in the 1980's; the savings and loan crisis of the 1990's; the natural catastrophes of 2005 (Hurricane Katrina); and the oil spill of 2010, will all correlate with women being plummeted into force during a stressful economy and being at home during a more prosperous economic time.

In 1950, women tended to stay married because they could not support themselves or a family on their own. There was little work available to women therefore there was an economic incentive to stay married even if you were not satisfied with the marriage. Work available to women was considered women's jobs such as teachers, nurses, or secretaries. Those jobs required advanced education and the pay was low. For the less educated, there were a few low paying factory jobs and while some women were able to work for brief periods of time, the purpose was supplementary to the husband's income. There was also a stigma associated with divorce, which does not exist today. While, not easy, it is possible for a single woman to support herself and her family by herself. The difference in the divorce rates from 1950 to 2000 emphasizes the change in the perception of divorce. As the trend toward divorce increases the attitude regarding divorce also changes.



Source: Monthly Vital Statistics Report

According to "The States of Marriage and Divorce" by D'Vera Cohn of the Pew Research Center, 10-15-2009, the percentage of Americans who are married is lower, while individuals are getting married for the first time at a later age. Many of those getting married have been married before. There also seems to be a correlation between education status and the median age of marriage as well as frequency.

On the National level, the Census Bureau survey showed that a shrinking share of Americans are married. 52 percent of males aged 15 and older and 48 percent of females aged 15 and older. The proportion of Americans who are currently married has been diminishing for decades and is lower than it has been in at least half a century.

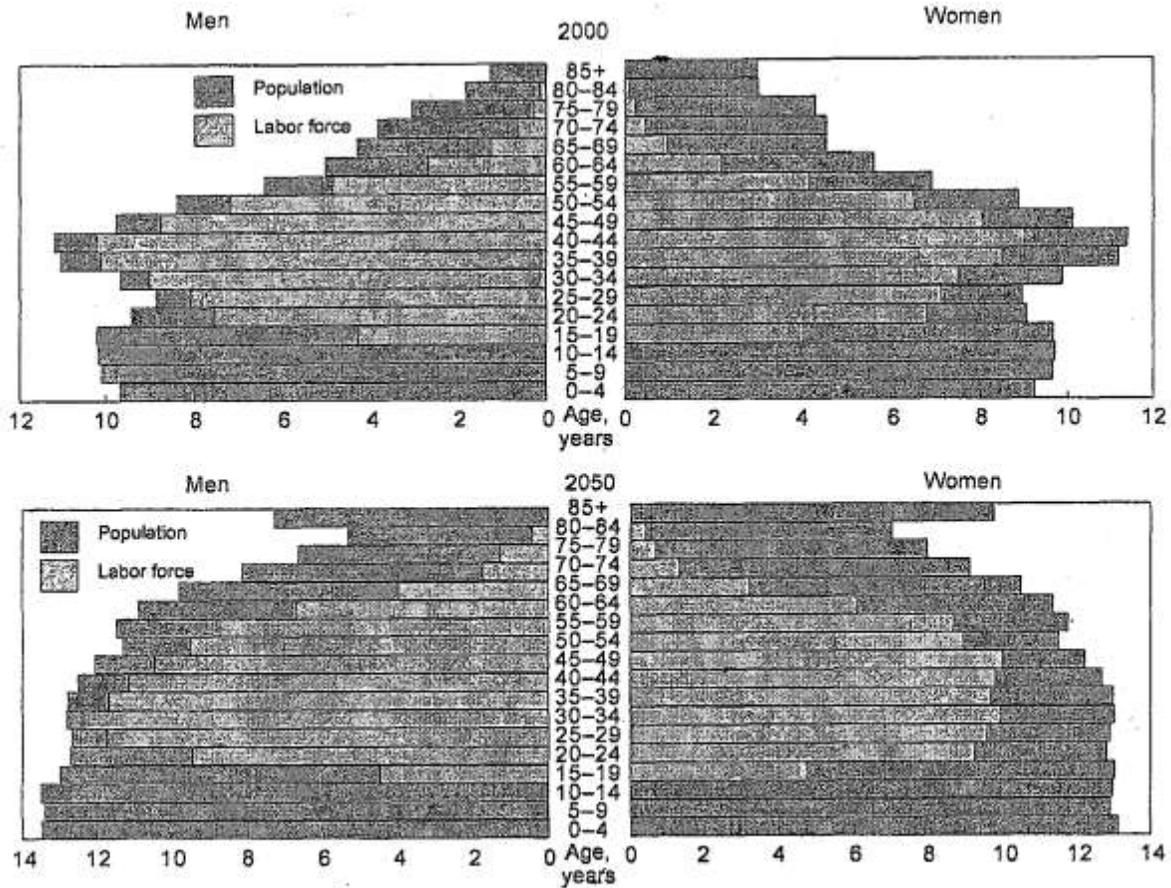
Nationally, the median age at first marriage has been climbing for decades. It now stands at 28 for men and 26 for women, meaning that half are younger and half are older when they wed. Among married Americans, the median duration of their married life was 18 years. Among men, 9 percent are divorced; among women 12 percent.

About 2.3 million men reported that they wed within the previous year and 1.2 million said they were divorced. About 2.2 million women said they wed and 1.3 million said they were divorced. About 1 in 20 Americans who have ever been married said they have been married three or more times. That comes to 4 million men and 4.5 million women.¹⁶

¹⁶ . D'Vera Cohn, "The States of Marriage and Divorce," Pew Research Center, October, 15, 2009.

The same article indicates that there is a correlation with marriage and educational status. College educated men and women tend to marry at older ages. In states with low shares of college educated adults, they are more likely than average to marry three or more times. In states with low income levels men are more apt than average to be married three or more times.

If one compares the numbers of women in the workforce in 1950 to those of 2000, the percent of women is much larger in 2000. This correlates to a more difficult 2000 economy. The projection of women in the workforce for 2050 shows women remaining in the work force in strong numbers.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

(Graph Source; Monthly Labor Review, November, 2006, 26.)

Women entering careers previously held by men and remaining in them may explain this projection. One only needs to look to the university for an example of this employment. Women are occupying leadership positions in universities and corporations. Women are slowly securing presidential positions at colleges and universities. According to Women in Academia, Women held 23.0 percent of the president positions and men held 77.0 percent in 2006. (American Council on Education, 2007). This is an increase from 1986 when only ten percent were female. Women may make better university presidents than men. A study by Fisher, Koch and McAdory

found that "female college presidents are more innovative and entrepreneurial than male presidents."¹⁷ The study included over 700 university presidents with 136 of them being women. It was reported that female presidents are found to be more risk takers than their male counterparts. On an interpersonal note, there are differences, again, between male and female presidents. "While 89 percent of male presidents are married, only 63 percent of women are married. 91 percent of the male presidents have children and only 68 percent of the female President's have children."¹⁸ Women may have to focus more on career while subjugating their personal life and regarding it as secondary. While women held four of eight presidential positions at Ivy League schools, (Brown, Harvard, Princeton, and University of Pennsylvania) they had fewer percentages of tenure positions than men at doctoral, masters, and bachelor's institutions.¹⁹ Three of the largest institutions in Michigan are being lead by women. The presidents of Eastern Michigan University, Michigan State university and The University of Michigan are all women. Many colleges and universities have their first female president since inception of the institution. This trend of female presidents has developed over the past ten years.

The work background of female president's prior to attaining the position was that 46 percent were previously provosts or chief academic officers as compared to 28.5 percent of men. This 2005 statistic shows that women presidents, overall, are more experienced than men and may be better prepared for the job. Yet women holding prominent positions in colleges and universities are paid less than men across all ranks. "Women on average earn 81 percent of what men earn."²⁰ When examining the situation of women across the ranks, women make 87.8 percent of men's salaries as Professors; 93.1 percent as Associate Professors; 92.7 percent as Assistant Professors; 96.0 percent as Instructors and 90 percent as lecturers.

As the positions women hold become higher in status the pay becomes lower. There is a large difference between men and women in tenured positions in academia. "Nearly twice as many men as women have tenure."²¹ It seems, therefore that numbers of women are improving in academia in less senior positions but as the female advances up the ranks, promotions become fewer and more difficult to attain. There are fewer females in senior positions. An interesting point to be made is that since women advance through the ranks more slowly than men, more older women are left behind and this imbalance makes salary figures look more equitable than they actually are.²² Women are underrepresented at research institutions. Only 25 percent of full time faculty are women (2001). At four year institutions 50 percent of full professors are men, while 23 percent are women. At research universities women account for 17 percent of full professors. Women do not progress as fast as their male colleagues. For each year after receiving

¹⁷ James L. Fisher, James V. Koch, and Alice R. McAdory, "Do Women Make Better University Presidents?" *Inside Higher Education*, July 23, 2005.

¹⁸ Caryn McTighe Musil, "Harvard Isn't Enough-Women in Academia Still face Hurdles to equality—including the Baby Gap," *Ms. Magazine*

¹⁹ Catalyst Research (2008), "Women in Academia," 2008. 1.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

²¹ Catherine Hill, Director of Research, AAUW, *Forbes*, 2010.

²² *Ibid.*

a tenure-track job assistant professors are 23 percent more likely to be tenured. For each year after earning tenure, male professors are 35 percent more likely to receive a full professorship.²³

Research has been done which explains the differences between the way males and females are perceived in academe. In the article "References on Chilly Climate for Women in Academe," Jennifer Freyd references a 1968 study and a replication in 1983 where college students were asked to rate identical articles according to certain criteria. The names of the authors were systematically reversed for the groups. At one time the name of the author was male, and the next female. Articles thought to be written by women were consistently ranked lower than those thought to be written by men. Similarly, department chairs were asked to rank vitae of male and females. Those thought to be male were recommended for the rank of associate professor while those thought to be female were recommended for the lower rank of assistant professor. Freyd concludes that "These and many other studies show that in academe as in other settings the same professional accomplishments are seen as superior in quality and worthy of higher rewards when attributed to men than when they are attributed to women."²⁴ *Academe Today*, (May 22, 1997) reports of a Swedish study where males and females were rated for their productivity. They found that females had to publish three extra papers over their male counterparts in important journals and 20 extra papers in less prestigious journals to be ranked the same as men.²⁵ This study definitely showed gender discrimination in the academe. Generally, this type of discrimination is not taken into consideration when it comes to merit, promotion or tenure. Research shows that female professors may also have to do more in the classroom to achieve higher student evaluations. If gender bias exists in student evaluations, her evaluations will be lower than her male counterpart.

Female professors may suffer from gender bias in student evaluations for their classes. The article "Student Ratings of Professors are not Gender Blind," by Susan Basow (AWM Newsletter, Vol. 24, No. 5, Sept-Oct, 1994) suggests that when gender of the student evaluator is taken into account, female professors receive lower ratings. "Researchers who consider the gender of the rater find a more complex pattern. The ratings of male professors are unaffected by student gender, but female professors frequently receive lower ratings from their male students and higher ratings from their female students. Female professors also appear to be evaluated according to a heavier set of expectations than male professors, and these expectations affect student ratings."²⁶ The article went on to give further explanation as to why female professors do not fare as well on student evaluations.

²³ Kathy Gill, "Women in Academia and the Sciences," <http://uspolitics.about.com/od/electionissues/a/women.Science.htm>, February, 21, 2005, 2.

²⁴ Patricia Faulhaber, "Womenomics" Could Help Spur the Economy," *Women Executives in High Demand*, May 28, 2009. 1.

²⁵ Jennifer Freyd, "References on Chilly Climate for Women Faculty in Academe," http://dynamic.uoregon.edu-jif/chilly_climate.html, June 7, 2010., p. 2

²⁶ Susan Basow, "Student Ratings of Professors are not Gender Blind," AWM Newsletter, Vol. 24, No. 5, Sept.-Oct., 1994, p. 2.

"To receive good evaluations, male professors simply must demonstrate their competence and knowledge; that is they need to fulfill their stereotypical gender role expectations. But female professors bear a double burden: they must fulfill both their gender role by being nurturant and warm, as well as their professional role by being competent and knowledgeable."

"Separate studies led by Sheila Bennett and Anne Statham found that women professors are judged more negatively than males if they are not more interested in and available to students than male professors. But even when women professors are more available and more helpful, their overall ratings are no higher. In order to receive comparable ratings, female professors need to do more than their male counterparts. Thus, findings of no difference between male and female professors in overall ratings may mask the fact that different standards are being used to judge male and female faculty."²⁷

The research findings support the idea that when women are in the minority, at an institution or corporation it is more difficult to advance because perceptions hold them back.

Research which takes into account women's reactions to other women in the workplace is interesting and may support the supposition that women are not perceived as highly as men, even by other women. In an article entitled, "Women Bullying Women in the workplace," (June 10, 2009), it is emphasized that women "Women feel they have to be aggressive to be promoted." Then they keep it up when they should be collegial and collaborative as leaders."²⁸

The article offers some reasons as to why women may react to each other in less than a collegial way, when it points out "Some women may sabotage one another because they feel helping their female coworkers could jeopardize their own careers."²⁹ The article further offers additional reasons why women are not helpful to other women at work and why women are made targets by other women. "One reason women select other women as targets probably is the assumption they will find a less confrontational person or someone less likely to respond to aggression with aggression."³⁰ Some, including women, perceive women as less tough than men therefore find it appropriate to withhold information that could help them on the job. Peggy Klaus, an executive coach in Berkley, California states "The time has come for us to really deal with this relationship women have to women because it truly is preventing us from being as successful in the workplace as we want to and should be. We have enough obstacles: We don't need to pile any on any more."³¹ Women may have a survival instinct that becomes operational when their own well being at work is threatened. Because promotions are difficult for women to attain, more ruthless measures may be adopted. Women may not see themselves as part of a bigger group such as a department, university or corporation but instead see themselves as being judged on their individual performance. This perception may make women less likely to be

²⁷ Ibid. , 2-3.

²⁸ Surjeet Rai-Lewis, "Women bullying women in the Workplace," June 10, 2009, Nielson Business Media Inc., 2010.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

generous with information, time, or money in the workforce.

Although there have been difficulties, women are maintaining a presence in higher education. Women are attending colleges and universities in larger numbers than men. This trend has been constant since the 1970's. "In the last three decades, women have come to form a solid majority of America's college student population."³² More than half of the students in medical schools and law schools are women.³³ Women have also earned more educational degrees than men. Women have earned 57 percent of bachelor degrees awarded in the United States and 58 percent of the graduate degrees.³⁴ These statistics represent an important trend. Women have shown up and are remaining in higher education as students and graduates. They are establishing a presence in the institutions of higher learning as professors and university presidents. Even though it is harder to advance, women have not given up and have remained in the workforce.

Women have taken a definite role in politics, which can be noted by the appointments of the Secretaries of State. Hillary Rodham Clinton, Condoleezza Rice, and Madeleine Albright (appointed by Presidents Barak Obama, George Bush and Bill Clinton) are examples of women who have occupied positions previously held by men. Women are becoming Justices of the Supreme Court and are serving an important function in the United States legal system. The appointments of Sandra Day O'Connor (Reagan), Ruth Bader Ginsberg (Clinton), Sonia Sotomayor (Obama), and Elena Kagan (Obama) have all shown progress for women in the workforce and the university. Women have undergone a significant amount of social, economic and political change.

Economic determinism can be defined as all social and political change which is determined by economic factors of demand and supply.³⁵ When women become recognized as more of an economic determinant, and consistently remain in the workforce, they will come closer to achieving parity with their male counterparts. `By attending to the gendered organization of value, and not merely to the symbolic value accorded women, it has become possible to speak of a feminization of the global economy"³⁶ Pru Goward, Sex Discrimination Commissioner at Reserve Bank, Central Banking Management Program, in a speech to The Australian Human Rights Commission, September 30, 2005 said it best when she indicated that it was in the national interest to promote gender equity.

Striking the balance (among) women, men, work and family, is concerned with a broad range of national interest objectives...including contentment, along with economic growth, fairness (that is gender equity) and demographic sustainability. Choice lies at the heart of economics. How do we spend our time? In particular, how do we reconcile the demands and responsibilities of paid time, that time that provides the money to sustain us and our families, with the demands and responsibilities of unpaid time? Unpaid time is the time we spend recovering from

³² Catherine Hill, Director of Research, AAUW, Forbes, 2010.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Patricia Faulhaber, "New Demographics Can Help Reach This Targeted Audience," *Marketing and Selling to Women*, June 2, 2009, 2.

³⁵ <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/economic-determinism.html>, 2010.

³⁶ <http://science.jrank.org/pages/9467/Gender-Studies-Anthropology-Materialism-Dialectical-Analysis.html>>Gender Studies: Anthropology-Materialism And Dialectical Analysis. 1

the demands and responsibilities of paid work, but importantly includes the time we spend caring for others—our children, our partners, the households we live in, our elderly, our community. This is time we cannot buy. It is the glue that holds us together.

The use of unpaid time affects equality between men and women. Clearly, if the division of responsibilities for paid and unpaid work are uneven, if men spend more time away from their families in paid work and women spend more time away from work meeting their unpaid responsibilities, it affects their life outcomes. Women are two and a half times more likely than men to live in poverty during retirement. Half of women sole parents are not in paid work and live instead on the bread-line with their children or live on casual wages supplemented by means tested government assistance. Despite women working more than ever before, the Association of Super Funds predicts that by 2019, women will have half the retirement of men. There can be no one in this room who is not familiar with the business case for keeping women in work; it reduces turnover costs, improves the competitiveness of labour, and raises standards and diversity. Aging isn't gender neutral. Not only do women live longer than men, as we know, they also live poorer. Poverty and poor health is their destiny, if women do not seek to change it.³⁷

American working women are providing a reason for change in the family structure and in economic policies. According to an April 8, 2010 article "Working Women Reshape Families, Economic Policies in Workplace Culture," by Louise Harris "Governments and policymakers must adapt to a changing work place where women share the financial burden and maintain a family, according to two reports."³⁸ The reports are: *The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything* (Heather Boushey, March, 2010, Center for American Progress) and *Our Working Nation: How Working Women Are Reshaping America's Families and Economy and What it Means For Policymakers*. Both reports acknowledge the changing climate of work and family, realizing that laws do not currently protect all workers. Focus is given to a recommendation of paid sick and family leave, flexible hours and predictable work schedules.

According to Harris, the report focuses on four areas: updating basic labor standards, improving fairness in the workplace, providing direct support for caregivers and improving knowledge about family-responsive policies,³⁹ As women take their place in business and industry they are becoming a new demographic for marketers and those in public relations. In a June 2, 2009 article by Patricia Faulhaber "Marketing and Selling to Women: New Demographics Can Help Reach This Targeted Audience" it is emphasized that women are in big demand and in control in business and industry, ranging from farming to running Fortune 500 companies. While the number of farms across the country has decreased the number owned and operated by women have increased (U.S. Department of Agriculture). Women are now buying

³⁷ Economic Determinism, Women, Men, Work and Family, Speech by Pru Goward, Sex Discrimination Commissioner at Reserve Bank Central Banking Management Program, Sydney, September 30, 2005, <http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/speeches/sex-discrim/ec>.

³⁸ Louise Harris, *Our Working Nation: How Working Women Are Reshaping America's Families and Economy and What It Means For Policymakers*, "Working Women Reshape Families, Economic Policies, April 8, 2010, p. 2.

³⁹ Ibid

more cars than men (53% in 2007).

Car manufacturers are now designing cars according to the needs of women. Most important, is the growing income of women. Women earned two trillion dollars in income in 2001 (Womenomics/ Women Executives in High Demand). This shift of women in the workplace should draw the attention of advertisers and change the way manufacturers are marketing their products.

In a USA Today article, "Women gain as men lose jobs" (2009), it is reported that women are outnumbering men in the workforce for the first time. The reversal is "caused by long-term changes in women's roles and massive job losses for men during this recession."⁴⁰

"The change reflects the growing importance of women as wage earners, but it doesn't show full equality. On average women work fewer hours than men, hold more part-time jobs and earn 77% of what men make. Men also still dominate higher-paying executive ranks." (Heidi Hartmann, President, Institute for Women's Policy Research).

Local government, with a 14.6 million-person workforce cut 86,000 men from its ranks and hired 167,000 women. (Bureau of Labor Statistics).⁴¹ Maureen Honey, author of "Creating Rosie the Riveter" states that Equality in the workforce numbers reflect a long term cultural change... The image that the man has to be the breadwinner has changed."⁴² Finally, we must return to the research question: Will the status of women in the workforce improve? The answer is yes but it will be dependent on women remaining in the workforce and actively working to gain their equality. It will take more than a Presidential Proclamation. It will take more than legislation, such as the first bill President Barack Obama signed into law, known as the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Trade Restoration Act. The establishment of The White House Council on Women and Girls will not be enough. The creation of the first office for Global Women's Issues at the Department of State, while representing an acknowledgement of need, will not be enough to achieve equality in the workforce.

Women will have to manage to consistently stay in the workforce, balance their unpaid time, and insist on working for those organizations, which represent adaptability, and flexibility for working women. Women have come a long way from the 1929 when Lucia Trent's poem entitled, "Breed, Women Breed" first appeared. The poem was meant to satirize the condition of women by aiming its message at "the men who manage the institution of motherhood within capitalism but also at the women who collaborate with it"⁴³

⁴⁰ Dennis Cauchon , "Women gain as men lose jobs," USA TODAY, September 3, 2009, http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2009-0903womenwork_N.htm

⁴¹ Ibid., (accessed September 3, 2009).

⁴² Ibid., (accessed September 3, 2009).

⁴³ Carey Nelson, "The Fate of Gender in Modern American Poetry," *Marketing Modernisms: Self-Promotion, Canonization, and Rereading*, ed. Kevin Dettmar and Stephen Watt, copyright 1996 by the University of Michigan Press.

Breed, little mothers,
With tired backs and tired hands,
Breed for the owners of the mills and the owners of the mines,
Breed a race of danger-haunted men,
A race of toiling, sweating, miserable men,
Breed, little mothers,
Breed for the owners of the mills and the owners of the mines,
Breed, Breed, Breed!

It is only by women working together for a united cause of equity that further progress will be made. It is up to the working women to make progress a reality.

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