Gender discrimination and the future of equality

Clotilde Ann Casados Mueller

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/rtds

Repository Citation
https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/rtds/213

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Scholarship@UNLV. It has been accepted for inclusion in UNLV Retrospective Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@unlv.edu.
INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.
Gender discrimination and the future of equality

Mueller, Clotilde Ann Casados, M.A.

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1992
GENDER DISCRIMINATION
AND THE FUTURE OF EQUALITY

by

C. Ann Mueller

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Ethics and Policy Studies

Institute for Ethics and Policy Studies
University of Nevada-Las Vegas

May 1992
The thesis of C. Ann Mueller for the degree of Masters of Art in Ethics and Policy Studies is approved

Chairperson, Craig Walton, Ph.D.

Examine Committee Member, Maralee Mayberry, Ph.D.

Examine Committee Member, Jay A. Coughtry, Ph.D.

Graduate Faculty Representative, Steven Parker, Ph.D.

Graduate Dean, Ronald W. Smith, Ph.D.

University of Nevada–Las Vegas
May 1992
ABSTRACT

This decade is emerging full of social consciousness about women's rights, partly because of the anti-feminism considered socially acceptable during the Reagan era. The Civil Rights Act of 1991 further expands women's rights. The U.S. Senate confirmed U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas despite many who believed Professor Anita Hill's sexual harassment charges. Because her allegations were ten years old, her credibility was questioned throughout the circus-like confirmation. Ironically, sexual harassment complaints increased 71 percent since her 1991 testimony.

In 1991, two diverse nationally-known men faced controversial rape trials. One a sports celebrity, the other a member of a wealthy, political family. The nation met their accusers through television. One man was acquitted, the other found guilty.

The public also learned the term "glass ceiling" when the U.S. Secretary of Labor released a study aimed at targeting the most blatant workplace violators of sex discrimination. The study revealed that upper-level women are hitting an impenetrable glass ceiling that stalls or derails their careers prematurely. Executive women face inhospitable workplace environments of unrealistic expectations, and qualitatively different from men's.

Many variables keep women from the top executive ranks. Most are common myths, misconceptions and stereotypes. Some view top-level women as weak in commitment, toughness and career risks. They perceive women's strongest assets as charm and adaptability. Women are expected to be less effective. Consequently, they feel pressured to outdo men. "Effective" women must perform 100-150 percent better. Top-level women are exhausted and fed up with these extraordinary expectations. Women are tired of being labeled "bitchy" when they make hard decisions, when they demand excellence from subordinates, and when they must display coolness under pressure while speaking their minds.

Perceived as different in goals, motives, personalities, behavior and effectiveness, top-level women are mostly like men. Top-level women feel less equal to demands for time and energy. Executive men usually have full-service wives acting as support staff at home. Executive women not only do not have "wives," they often do not even have a 50-50 partnership, therefore, experiencing more worry and pressure at home.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the outstanding faculty at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, without whom this thesis project would have been impossible. I especially wish to thank Dr. Craig Walton of the Institute for Ethics and Policy Studies for his unwavering patience and support toward completion of this research project.

I also wish to thank my wonderful husband, Bob, for his constant support, enthusiasm and encouragement during what was a somewhat difficult time.

Sincerely,

C. Ann Mueller

C. Ann Mueller
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPROVAL PAGE</th>
<th>ABSTRACT</th>
<th>ACKNOWLEDGMENT</th>
<th>INTRODUCTION</th>
<th>MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT—A WOMAN AHEAD OF HER TIME</th>
<th>OVERVIEW OF WOMEN’S MOVEMENT IN AMERICA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of the Problem.</td>
<td>Mary Wollstonecraft’s Personal Life.</td>
<td>Political Parties Jump on Bandwagon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Vindication of Rights of Women&quot;.</td>
<td>Book Questions Societal Limitations for Women.</td>
<td>Some Women Emigrate as Indentured Servants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women in Combat Argument.</td>
<td>Romance is Frivolous</td>
<td>Civil Rights for Minorities and Women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Societal Perspective of Women’s Roles</td>
<td>Criticism.</td>
<td>Women’s Attitudes Toward Their Jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Women in Physical Sciences are Few and Far Between.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women Workers Face Different Problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women Need More Role Models.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women and Minorities, Majority of New Job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entrants by 2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sexual Harassment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PAGE

i 

ii

iii

1

4

5

6

9

10

11

14

14

16

18

21

28

29

29

30

32

33

36

36

41

42

43

45

52

54

57
INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Gender-bias remains pervasive as the U.S. work force continues to exclude women from many well-paying jobs considered physically demanding or dangerous. Yet women comprise 53 percent of the population, earn almost 52 percent of undergraduate and graduate college degrees, are closing the gap on doctoral degrees, and will comprise 61 to 65 percent of the total work force by the end of this century. In addition, women who move into positions previously held by men face special problems. These problems endanger America’s societal infrastructure, disrupt working relationships, impede productivity and can lead to legal action. (Eitzen p. 271) Education is the key to a more equitable workplace. Men must be educated on the harm sex discrimination engenders. They must view women as equals.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH PAPER

This research paper will focus on the role of American women in both the societal and economic evolution of the U.S. It will also explore the changing perception of women workers in today’s work force, how the law defines adverse impact and the legal ramifications of sex discrimination — both intentional and unintentional.

This report will examine the status of women in the military service and what the Combat Exclusionary Law means in terms of promotions and perception. Specifically, it will explore the various opinions regarding whether women should, or are capable of performing at the forefront in military battles.

And as part of the overall scenario on working women, I will offer some insight into the pivotal role movies play in presenting stereotypes and biases about women. Many sociologists have theorized that movies may be at fault in perpetuating much of the sex discrimination and sexual harassment in our society as a whole.

That changes are taking place in the workplace, no one will argue. In that vein, the final chapter will present informative insight into how American society and feminism coexisted in the
1960’s and ’70’s and how the conflict is still alive and well in the 1990’s.

Women must realize that the different viewpoints the various feminist groups espouse are all working toward change. And there is truly strength in numbers, not weakness. Rebuilding the movement is crucial. But women must be careful not to make the same mistakes that early suffragists made. The problems they faced stemmed from the fact that suffragists limited their goals too much and were too easily satisfied with small victories.

In view of a number of recent court cases and the Civil Rights Act of 1991 that have expanded the legal definition of sexual harassment, my research will also examine the federal and state laws governing sexual harassment. My research will identify the laws governing sex discrimination and sexual harassment, as well as how these insidious barriers have served to keep women out of upper-management positions. This systemic action is known as the "glass ceiling" and it is found in most workplaces, public and private. I will examine the special problems women face trying to combine careers and motherhood, and the changes that must occur for women to succeed.

This information is timely, especially since the media have reported so many cases recently. In fact, according to a 1991 article in the Las Vegas Review-Journal, when the second-highest elected government official, the vice president of the U.S., admits he has no problem playing at a golf course that excludes women as members we realize how far we have yet to go.

I will provide insight into the sexual stereotypes that women face as part of a cultural ideology in the United States. This political ideology functions to maintain the power of the dominant group.

To quote noted feminist author Betty Friedan, women are more in need of peer support now than ever before. Today, that feminism needs to "transcend sexual politics and anger against men to express a new vision of family and community." Instead of wallowing in a victim’s state, women must "mobilize the power of women and men for a larger political agenda on the priorities of life." And not only do women need peer support, they also need support from their husbands,
fathers, boyfriends, employers, and other males who can provide the encouragement and stimulation to keep women focused on their own career agendas. For statistics tell us that in the next century women will outnumber males in the American workplace.

Specifically, the U.S. Department of Labor published a report in 1987 entitled, "Workforce 2000" that brought dramatic attention to changes taking place in our economy and in the composition of our workforce. Significant among these was the increased importance of minorities and women to the competitive status of the American economy.

Since the publication of Workforce 2000, ample evidence has shown that minorities and women have made significant gains in entering the workforce. But there is also significant evidence from research conducted by universities, nonprofit organizations, executive recruiters, and the U.S. Department of Labor that documents a dearth of minorities and women at management levels—the so-called "glass ceiling."

The U.S. Department of Labor found itself in a unique position. The U.S. Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) is responsible for ensuring that all businesses with federal government contracts do not discriminate in employment decisions on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, disability or veteran status. And the Women's Bureau is the only federal agency with a congressional mandate to promote the welfare of working women. The Women's Bureau has extensive experience in helping women maximize opportunities with programs designed, for example, to obtain careers in nontraditional fields such as aerospace and construction.

While individuals and organizations have developed various definitions of the glass ceiling, the U.S. Department of Labor has concluded that the glass ceiling is most clearly defined as those artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management level positions.

The symptoms of this problem are manifest. Qualified minorities and women are all too often on the outside looking into the executive suite. What the U.S. Department of Labor set out
to do, beginning in the fall of 1989, was to investigate the glass ceiling in corporate America to see if there was a problem, what were the causes, and if there was a problem, then how could it be fixed. This effort combined compliance reviews of nine different corporations, with an evaluation of independent research, and lengthy discussions with representatives from business, labor, women's and civil rights organizations.

The glass ceiling, where it exists, hinders not only individuals, but society as a whole. It effectively cuts our pool of potential corporate leaders by eliminating over one-half of our population. It deprives our economy of new leaders, new sources of creativity--the "would be" pioneers of the business world. If our end game is to compete successfully in today's global market, then we have to unleash the full potential of the American work force. The time has come to tear down, to dismantle--the "Glass Ceiling."

Friedan claims that women need to confront the polarization, and realize at the same time that the years ahead are dangerous ones for women's rights.

Such conciliatory rhetoric is not backsliding. It too is a call to arms.

(Time, p. 55, March 9, 1992)

"VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN"

In Chapter One, I will examine the eighteenth-century feminist Mary Wollstonecraft's work, "Vindication of the Rights of Woman." Chapter Two will focus on the women's suffrage movement and it's relationship to the historical progress of women in the United States. And on that note, it is important to remember that Mary Wollstonecraft is perceived by many modern-day feminists as a forbearer of women's equality. Throughout the research on this paper, Mary Wollstonecraft's name was mentioned as a role model for today's feminist movement.

Nowadays, we call what Mary Wollstonecraft displayed as pure, simple guts. In 18th century Europe, she was regarded as a maverick, a rebel, and worse. But her independence of mind is beginning to show up again today, especially as it relates to the abortion issue. Women are once again uniting for a single cause as they did in the late 1960's and early 1970's.
HOW HOLLYWOOD TREATS WOMEN WORKERS

In Chapter Three, I will offer some insight into how Hollywood portrays women workers in films and how women in Hollywood are severely under-represented at all levels of film making. This chapter will also examine three Academy-award winning movies about women who proved that movies about women can succeed, despite criticism from male producers and screenwriters about women's movies.

And despite what anyone, in or out of Hollywood, may profess, movies are not a mirror of reality. They are exactly what Hollywood producers and screenwriters are peddling on a particular day. Today, it appears the male-buddy-romp movies are popular. Filled with an incredible amount of action scenes, such as wild car chases and drunken brawls, these movies appeal to the male, 18-35 years of age group.

Unfortunately, these movies serve to keep women out of strong leading roles, using women as the love interests or the fallen woman.

On the other hand, it is to the credit of many dynamic and dedicated females in Hollywood that movies about women are being produced. But this action requires a great deal of tenacity and resourcefulness on the part of the women producers and directors. To do this, many have literally stuck their necks out a mile in the hopes that the American public truly wants to see women as leading characters.

WOMEN IN COMBAT ARGUMENT

Chapter Four will report on the role of women in the U.S. military today, and how the Combat Exclusionary Law hinders the career advancement of women in the armed forces. I will present both sides of the issue. And despite the fact that both the military and society have traditionally viewed war and its preparation as man's work, my research will show that women have made great contributions toward war victories.

Unfortunately, many times these contributions have gone either unrecognized or intentionally hidden from public knowledge for a number of reasons. But women have insisted
upon participating in the work involved in both war and peace, as is evident today with the 1990 Persian Gulf War.

"BACKLASH — THE UNDECLARED WAR AGAINST AMERICAN WOMEN"

In this last chapter, I will review two books on equality. One was written in the late 1960's and viewed by many as a handbook for the women's movement of that era.

I will also present a review of a new book on the status of feminism in the 1990's. Written by 1991 Pulitzer Prize-winning author, Susan Faludi, "Backlash: The Undeclared War on Women," offers another dimension on the struggle for equal rights for women. Faludi claims that a new drive is in motion to persuade women that the "equality" women gained in the '70s is ruining their lives. She contends that through political, cultural and economic forces white males are behind an unorchestrated counterassault against women. These critics are trying to convince working women, especially mothers, that they should return to their roles of destiny: stay-at-home wives and mothers. I will also present a counterargument to Faludi's backlash claim that women should try to make it on their own and not try to promote a full fledged movement to protect the "victimized" woman. The argument is that women should pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. This is the same argument anti-civil rights proponents have encouraged for many years. Unfortunately, today we have one of those proponents sitting on the U.S. Supreme Court, and his name is Clarence Thomas.

SOCIETAL PERSPECTIVE ON WOMEN'S ROLES

Biologically and temperamentally, I believe, women were made to be concerned first and foremost with child care, husband care and home care. Dr. Benjamin Spock, 1969. (Starr p. 178)

Most sociologists and legal experts agree that sex discrimination is more openly tolerated than racial discrimination. Unfortunately, many would also agree that women themselves often disagree whether or not women should hold certain jobs that have in the past been filled exclusively by men. In fact during the 1990 Governor's Conference on Women, speaker Eleanor Holmes Norton pointed out that women have not learned the art of networking and job survival
techniques that men have practiced for centuries. These "good old boy" ways have served as a protective device for men in the work force, she said. In fact, she added that some sociologists insist that instead of complimenting or criticizing other women for their looks or clothing, women must learn the male methodology of first evaluating other men for their accomplishments and professionalism.

Chiefly, I will examine the likely trends in women's issues and their roles in relation to civil rights legislation, economics, politics, and family life. As more and more women attempt to balance roles of mother, wife, and career woman, I will assess both the consequences and the rewards of being on the "mommy track." Conversely, the myths, misconceptions and stereotypes that have prevented women from achieving equality have also served to make women the comic relief for many. One interesting analogy offered by Holmes Norton made a great deal of sense. She surmised that women have endured discrimination in the workplace simply through their marital status:

- If a woman is single, an employer might reject her for a job or promotion because she will just get married and have children.
- If she is married, she will just have children and leave.
- If she is married with children, she will not have as much commitment for her job and will have too many diversions with the children.
- If she is married with grown children, she is just too old.

In recent years, new organizations with a more militant and activist stance have emerged to compete with the conventional activities and posture of the more moderate League of Women Voters.

One of these, the National Organization for Women (NOW) was founded in 1966 and is now the largest of the new groups advocating militancy instead of diplomacy. Its credo promises to change "the false image of women now prevalent in the mass media and in the texts, ceremonies, laws and practices or our major social institutions." NOW claims these perceptions "perpetuate contempt for women by society and by women for themselves."

(Deckard p. 339)
That the women's movement is divided along political lines is not new among groups striving for independence. For history has demonstrated that during Colonial times, forces within the colonies were at many times divisive. Only when the various factions mobilized their forces could they begin to make strides.

Recently the women's movement has focused considerable attention on the role of work in life. What is the quality of working life for women in the labor force? What issues are still on the agenda for achieving equality in the work force?

This research paper will show that sexism is a learned value structure. No one is born hating one sex or the other. Boys grow up feeling that they stronger, not only in strength, but in intelligence. They learn early to regard girls and women as play objects and never to think of females as equals. Unfortunately, women are many times at fault for this misguided perception. Far too often this wrong kind of thinking occurs in the home where boys are given the more masculine chores, and girls perform the traditionally female duties.

At the same time this is taking place, studies show that boys and girls receive unequal treatment in school. Boys receive more attention in school and are called upon more often than girls. They are encouraged to elaborate on their answers, while girls are most often given the perfunctory nod to an answer. Little boys talk about what they will be when they grow up, while little girls qualify their answers with, "I'd like to be . . . ."

This institutionalized and societal pandering to boys must stop. Parents and educators must evaluate each child for what he or she can do, rather than what does society as a whole expect of male and female students.

But before we examine the quality of life for the contemporary woman, it is important to look back to the 18th and 19th century conditions — both in Europe and in the United States. This is important because women such as Europe's Mary Wollstonecraft were taking strong public stands during this same time frame. In many instances when Mary Wollstonecraft spoke about the poor conditions for women in her country, the same situation existed in the United States.
MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT — A WOMAN AHEAD OF HER TIME

The importance of Mary Wollstonecraft’s views and perceptions are of importance to my research because her work and social rebellion set the stage for the 19th and 20th century feminist movement in America. Her name and writings are legend with today’s feminists. Her insightful descriptions of how society and its institutions should function are, at the very least, a referendum on public morality. Her work provides a significant foundation for any work on gender discrimination. To exclude it would be to ignore a very important era in the history of feminism.

Some historians have theorized that Mary Wollstonecraft may have reasoned that she entered this world centuries ahead of her ideological perspectives. For when she was born on April 27, 1759 in London, England, women could not openly express their opinions about equal rights.

Noted as a passionate advocate of educational and social equality for women, her early Thoughts on the Education of Daughters of 1787 foreshadowed her mature work on women’s place in society: A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, (1792).

The core and central plea of her later work focused on the illumination of woman’s mind. Her liberal ideological theory centered around her contention that half of the world’s inhabitants were enslaved by the other half: men. Ultimately her published works of the 1790’s provided a theoretical foundation for two centuries of subsequent feminism.

As part of a large family that treated her brothers with a respect not accorded their sisters, she observed her only feminine role model, her mother, in a submissive role. Her domineering drunken father totally dominated her submissive mother, and perhaps provided an impetus into her radical and revolutionary ideas.

Mary Wollstonecraft’s narrow perception of familial life served as a vacuum of sorts. For her authority figures consisted of males. This circumstance led her to surmise that men seemed destined by society and nature to attain a greater degree of virtue. (Wollstonecraft p. 26)
Women lived in chattel slavery during Mary Wollstonecraft's time. They were owned by their fathers while at home and passed along as a commodity in marriage to their husbands.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT'S PERSONAL LIFE MIRRORS HER PHILOSOPHY

As one of many children of a tyrannical father and passive mother, she chose another means of escape from her miserable family situation. Unlike her older sister who married a man she did not love to escape the wretched circumstances of her parents' home, Mary Wollstonecraft chose another avenue. She chose independence. And to make herself economically independent, she initially worked as a teacher, eventually accepting a position as governess to the pampered children of an Irish viscount. But she soon realized she was not destined to work as a servant. She knew she must find something that would enable her to live, yet at the same time provide intellectual stimulation. (George pp. 40-54)

When *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* was published in 1792, it was generally well received. At the time, the American colonies had just experienced the Revolutionary War, Napoleon was less than two decades away from meeting his Waterloo and a revolutionary war was exploding in France. Controversial ideas were abound in England, and people had been pleading for women's education for at least a century. So when this timely book appeared, its renewed plea generated more respect than criticism. (George pp. 97-104)

Ironically, years later Napoleon was quoted as saying:

Nature intended women to be our slaves. . . . What a mad idea to demand equality for women. (Starr p. 179)

In the *History of Woman's Suffrage* (1881 - 1922), Mary Wollstonecraft's book became a central part of the historical perspective. This particular passage is probably the single most important part of that work:

"... Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, published in London attracted much attention from liberal minds. She examined the position of women in the light of existing civilizations, and demanded for her the widest opportunities of education, industry, political knowledge, and the right of representation. Although her work is filled with maxims of the highest morality and purest wisdom, it called forth such a violent abuse, that her husband appealed for her from the judgment of her contemporaries to that of mankind. So exalted
were her ideas of woman, so comprehensive her view of life, that Margaret Fuller, in referring to her, said:  Mary Wollstonecraft -- a woman whose existence proved the need of some new interpretation of woman's rights, belonging to that class who by birth find themselves in places so narrow that by breaking bonds, they become outlaws."

The only fault I could find in reviewing this noteworthy publication was in the reference to Mary Wollstonecraft's husband. In 1792 when A Vindication of the Rights of Woman was published, she was single. In fact, she passed herself off as the wife of an American naval officer, Gilbert Imlay. The love affair ended tragically when Imlay became involved with another woman, but not before Mary Wollstonecraft gave birth to their daughter, Fanny, in 1794. The following year, distraught over the breakup of her relationship with Imlay, she attempted suicide. (George pp. 116-121)

She observed very early in life that women had no history, only that of either their fathers' or husbands' class. She wrote "... women have a situation, not a history..." Her perspective of women classified them as imprisoned in subjugation and exploitation, always inferior to the dominant male. She felt the division of labor degraded women because it relegated women into domestic occupations and placed them in a constant state of economic dependence. Mary Wollstonecraft believed that women live in a masculine world, fashioned, ruled and still dominated by men.

**BOOK QUESTIONS SOCIETAL LIMITATIONS FOR WOMEN**

In this book, she raised many questions. But primarily she wondered about religious, economic, sexual and philosophical problems. And in assessing the trials and tribulations of eighteenth century women, she regarded love as an unwelcome intruder. (George pp. v - viii) She questioned why women must remain in a continuous state of inferiority and challenged the perceived roles assigned women from birth.

She was created to be a toy of man, his rattle, and it must jingle in his ears whenever, dismissing reason, he chooses to be amused.

And claiming that moral responsibility was only possible through the development of good judgment, Mary Wollstonecraft claimed that reason and self-discipline were necessary to exercise
both. In this respect, she focused on this paradoxical view of women as a major cause of their misery. She observed that "gentle and proper women were brought up to be flirtatious, lively, pleasing and unassertive."

Yet in marriage and motherhood, they were expected to emerge as guides of morality and virtue to manifest their natural sensitivity and spiritual nature." She found this contradictory because those who instructed them in this regard were themselves obedient and subservient to their husbands' needs and desires. Resentfully, Mary Wollstonecraft noted the unfairness of these expectations in this passage:

How could Rousseau expect them to be the foundation of their virtue, nor truth the object of their inquiry? (Wollstonecraft p. 90)

In calling for a transformation of consciousness, she wanted women to overcome the inhibitions and fears that would make it possible for all women "... to be human in the truest sense." She stressed inner freedom, independence of mind and judgment, as essential elements of liberation.

Independence, I have long considered as the grand blessing of life, the basis of every virtue. (Wollstonecraft p. 257)

While her liberal ideas about women's independence were interpreted by many to denounce familial life, Mary Wollstonecraft's perception served to benefit the family in general.

A lively writer, I cannot recollect his name, asks what business women turned of forty have to do in the world?

In interpreting the magnitude and scope of this famous book, perhaps this quotation by Mary Wollstonecraft is a good starting point. And chances are she was referring to a passage in Fanny Burney's popular novel of the day, Evelina. In this particular book, the licentious Lord Merton uttered these memorable lines while denigrating the plight of women in general.

I don't know what the devil a woman lives for after thirty: she is only in other folks' way. (Wollstonecraft p. 11)

Derogatory and demeaning references such as these were commonplace in eighteenth-century theatrical plays and novels. And Mary Wollstonecraft took exception to this public
humiliation. She particularly faulted male philosophers and authors, especially, Rousseau who theorized that if women were educated their curricula should be directed toward one point: "to render them pleasing." (Wollstonecraft p. 27)

And in challenging the French Constitution of 1791, she noted that the coveted status of full citizenship belonged only to men over the age of twenty-five. Ultimately, French women did not receive voting privileges until 1944. (George p. 71)

She compared the state of education for women to a flower planted in too-rich soil. Its strengths and usefulness are sacrificed in favor of beauty, and while the leaves please the eye they eventually fade away totally ignored and not allowed to mature. She attributed this to the same fate that women faced: the status of second-class citizens.

Men indeed appear to me to act in a very unphilosophical manner when they try to secure the good conduct of women by attempting to keep them always in a state of childhood. (Wollstonecraft p. 20)

She continually agonized over the fact that no matter what intellectual strength women acquired, they could never attain the same physical strength as men:

I will allow that bodily strength seems to give man a natural superiority over women; and this is the only solid basis on which the superiority of the sex can be built. (Wollstonecraft p. 39)

But in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, Mary Wollstonecraft emphasized independence rather than equality. In both these labels, she viewed society as a collection of individual attitudes instead of legal contracts. And in these, she imagined relationships as fundamentally antagonistic rather than cooperative.

However, the major antagonism is not against an external force but against one's own self -- against fear and especially against desire. Of course, this idea is actually only a generalization of the behavior traditionally advocated for women. And primarily it is the prevailing societal status that stripped away the component of personal assertion and material reward. Chiefly, Mary Wollstonecraft deals with the actual facts in the economic conditions of her times that would benefit the nation in advancing the education system. She leveled as her major criticism against
the eighteenth-century English educational system as holding property rights in greater esteem than any equality for actual instructional principles.

**EDUCATION FOR WOMEN CURSORY ACT**

Two kinds of schools existed in Mary Wollstonecraft’s day: boarding schools and day schools. Both were private enterprises. She described the day school education as truly self-serving. She criticized the schoolmaster for perpetuating a somewhat unethical educational practice. As she observed, “the schoolmaster found himself under necessity of giving the parents a sample of their boy’s abilities when they visited the school. So the schoolmaster loaded the boy’s memory with unintelligible words and literally placed the child on display.” This exercise consequently served to justify the school’s existence.

Yet how can these things be remedied whilst schoolmasters depend entirely on parents for a subsistence; and when so many rival schools hang out their lures to catch the attention of vain fathers and mothers whose parental affection only leads them to wish their children should outshine those of their neighbors. (Wollstonecraft p. 163)

A mistaken education, a narrow uncultivated mind, and many sexual prejudices, tend to make women more constant than men; but for the present I will go still further, and advance without dreaming of a paradox, and that an unhappy marriage is often very advantageous to a family, and that the neglected wife is, in general, the best mother.

**ROMANCE IS FRIVOLOUS**

Mary Wollstonecraft believed that if a woman did not spend an inordinate amount of time absorbed in a romantic liaison with her husband, she would naturally spend more time with her children. But she also advocated that a mature and mutual affection between the parents was good for the well-being of the children. Also, she believed that women placed too high a price on romance and passion and too little on lasting and caring friendships. (Wollstonecraft p. 31)

One of her favorite quotations was from the seventeenth-century French noble and master of the epigram, La Rochefoucauld, found in Les Maximes, No. 473, "... that rare and true love is, true friendship is still rarer." (Wollstonecraft p. 30)
Undoubtedly, Mary Wollstonecraft believed in femininity and argued with anyone who doubted her feminine traits. She said that a female who attempts to achieve masculinity is as physically ill as a male who attempts to achieve femininity. And she fought tooth and nail against the commonly held belief that women were intellectually inferior, and that no women exist or have existed who were the intellectual equals of men. Her argument served to demonstrate that women possessed the same strength of reasoning and reach of intuitive perception. But she knew that if women did possess the same abilities, it was undesirable to exercise them: "... and when all are strong, to whom must the weaker operation belong?" She described the average woman as totally subordinate and dehumanized by social constraints and lack of education. (Wollstonecraft p. 296)

She valued respectability in woman as a virtue and contended that men and women as equals formed a lasting partnership. She felt they should please one another and not strive to outdo each other.

But whether she be loved or neglected, her first wish should be to make herself respectable, and not rely for all her happiness on a being subject to like infirmities with herself. (Wollstonecraft p. 28)

And while she differed with the liberal philosopher Rousseau, who accepted only certain rights for women, she agreed with him when he said that the physical part of the art of pleasing consists in ornaments. She wrote a detailed critique of his views on women's education, labeling them as sexist nonsense. As a substitute, she expressed some of the earliest ideas on progressive education for both male and female, rich and poor.

"... and for that very reason I should guard girls against the contagious fondness for dress so common to weak women, that they may not rest in the physical part. Yet weak are the women who imagine that they can long please without the aid of the mind, or, in other words, without the moral art of pleasing. (Wollstonecraft p. 186)

She claimed that even virtuous women never forget their gender, and in that respect all women are rivals. (Wollstonecraft p. 187)
CO-EDUCATION WOULD BREAK NEW GROUND

Co-education forms the central and well-defined thought on her chapter about national education. She broke new ground in advocating the desirability of educating young people together. At that time not even a limited practical experience offered foundation for this innovative theory. Yet as she had claimed throughout, that the nature of reason is the same in all, everyone had denounced the system of female education. And this belief exaggerated feeling and neglected the understanding. It remained to be shown how that reason was to take her place by the side of man. To her, nothing could seem a simpler solution than co-education.

And there is a touch of sarcasm in this last sentence of the following appeal, which she made to the French nation,

Let an enlightened nation then try, what effect reason would have, to bring women back to nature, and their duty; and allowing them to share the advantages of education and government with men, see whether they will become better as they grow wiser and become free. They cannot be injured by the experiment; for it is not in the power of man to render them more insignificant than they are at present. (Wollstonecraft p. 167)

Her main contention was against an aristocracy of learning. And she perceived that where there is equality of opportunity, there is success and happiness for everyone.

According to Mary Wollstonecraft, the restraint and wearisome confinement in boarding schools for girls was even greater than what the boys endured. She criticized recreation periods because the girls were not allowed to play in the garden at all. Instead, they were forced to practice walking with their heads held high, turning out their toes and bracing their shoulders back.

The poor animal spirits, which make both mind and body shoot out, and unfold the tender blossoms of hope, were turned sour and were vented in vain wishes or pert repining, that contract the faculties and spoil the temper.

She proposed teaching women the elements of anatomy and medicine in public schools so they could care for their own health and also make them rational nurses of their children, parents and husbands. Primarily, she believed schools were good for children because education excited their curiosity and faculties. She pointed out that children always seek out the company of other
children no matter how highly they regard their parents.

And with this outside influence, other children provide them with a society where they can
speak what they think without fear of ridicule. However, private or boarding schools were hot
beds of vice and folly, because they were operated by inadequate teachers who wasted time trying
to impress parents with how many worthless facts their sons have learned. And with a home
education, Mary Wollstonecraft found there was less time wasted but that children became vain
and held too high an opinion of themselves.

On the other hand, Mary Wollstonecraft thought day schools were the best. She
advocated funding them nationally and giving the schoolmasters some independence to teach
children how to think and not fill them with useless facts just to impress their parents.
(Wollstonecraft p. 157)

Mary Wollstonecraft further believed that the primary goal of these schools was to teach
reason and virtue, as well as to develop good citizenship. She emphasized that affection for
mankind must be part of the curriculum so that children could become part of a better world.

Also, she proposed teaching boys and girls together. The foundation for this argument
centered around the fact that marriage, after all, is the base of society, and education should follow
this model. According to Mary Wollstonecraft, marriage will never be held in high regard until
women are reared and educated alongside men, and are prepared to become their companions
rather than their mistresses. (Wollstonecraft p. 162)

Mary Wollstonecraft wanted an enlightened nation to see what effect reason would have
on women. She stressed that by sharing equally the advantages of education and government,
they could become wiser and free.

It cannot hurt them; it is not in the power of man to render woman more
significant than she is already. (Wollstonecraft p. 167)

These schools, she said, would be schools of morality. And society can only be free and
happy in proportion as it is virtuous. (Wollstonecraft p. 169)
Reason, moral responsibility and images of irrational and frivolous were not the only problems afflicting the common women working in the factories, tending farms or laboring stooped in the fields.

That she was a true warrior in this perceived "battle of the sexes," no one would argue. However, one thing a soldier learns early is that everyone in military status is a whole body and part of a team, not a self-contained unit.

To Mary Wollstonecraft, all men were oppressors of women. And women were long-suffering, with all the cards stacked against them. She described the shortcomings of women as consisting of pregnancy, childbirth and child rearing. She regretted that women could never enjoy the carefree and independent attitudes men took for granted. (Wollstonecraft p. 274)

CRITICISM

Yet despite this tough sounding criticism of men, many parts of her book confirm her admiration of the stronger sex.

That may have been why Mary Wollstonecraft so thoroughly rejected a female-speaking voice in her book. Occasionally, she spoke self-consciously as a woman "... in the name of my sex." (Wollstonecraft p. 150)

But more frequently she distinguished between herself and "them," as on page 3 where she said, "I plead for my sex — not for myself." And "I do not wish them" (meaning women) to have power over men; but over themselves on page 62.

But one of the greatest contradictions in Mary Wollstonecraft's book, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, is the passage where she emphasized that woman herself is a hindrance to human progress.

Paradoxically, chapter one opens with the ringing assertion that humanity's preeminence over animals is in reason — the final chapter ends with an impassioned plea for the rights of reason for women. Despite that inconsistency, her theory perpetuates a long-held myth that a woman's mind is filled with illogical perceptions or total nonsense. Mary Wollstonecraft theorized that a
woman inherently persists in being viewed as a sex object, rather than as a personality or creative force in life.

However, she steadfastly maintained that man has been the tyrant so long that he resents an encroachment on his domain: he will never relinquish equal power to women. And as we have seen in the past two centuries since this popular book about women's rights, that has proven prophetic. (Wollstonecraft p. 145)

Mary Wollstonecraft pleaded that men had as much at stake in the battle for equality. And she challenged them to share economic, political and sexual freedom. She viewed the inequities in these circumstances as an unyielding barrier to emancipation for women.

But she never fully explained how her perfect society of patriot equals would be implemented. Although there is evidence in her book that she believed its eventual establishment would simply become part of a progressive revolution, there are no clear-cut guidelines. This passage reflects that opinion:

Everything around us is in a progressive state: everything that survives the difficulties of existence develop from a weak and vulnerable infancy to a strong and dignified maturity. Society is no exception. In its infancy, it suffers the domination of an aristocracy that soon gives way under the pressures of clashing interests to a monarchy and hierarchy; later as civilization enlightens the multitude, the monarchy finds itself forced to maintain its unjustified powers by means of a deception and a corruption at once poison the populace and point out their own antidote -- the perfection of man in the establishment of true civilization. (Wollstonecraft pp. 29-31 & 18-19)

Regarding her chapter on national education, Mary Wollstonecraft also expected equality in education. She stressed this policy should take effect not through individual effort, but as a right granted by a broad national policy. The only criticism is that her demands did not stretch far enough.

She rightfully demanded that primary schools should become national establishments. If she had followed this to its logical conclusion, she would have demanded that higher education also become national institutions, available to everyone not just the wealthy and privileged class. And this would have ultimately developed with the natural tendency of the process stemming from
social development.

Mary Wollstonecraft took the first step, but faltered in the midst of the second. In outlining her plan for a system of national education, she addressed the issue of primary education:

The young people of superior abilities or fortune might now be taught in another school the dead, living languages, the elements of science, and continue the study of history and politics on a more extensive scale. (Wollstonecraft p. 168)

Ironically, this appears to suggest that admission to institutions for higher education would become available only to the privileged class. And these class distinctions would remain and divide society into two classes -- the educated and the uneducated. Surely Mary Wollstonecraft must have realized that equality of opportunity cannot be achieved when the mere possession of wealth secures on the most influential privilege: education.

But again, Mary Wollstonecraft is very moderate in her demands for the higher education of women perhaps because she knew she was treading on unknown territory. And although the brilliant achievements of some of the women of her times might have fanned her hopes, she resolutely and ironically turned away from the exceptional cases, confining herself to the plan, dull average, garden-variety woman.

However, she had nothing to inspire hope beyond the fact that women possess reason and that reason in its nature must be the same in all. But this confusion in moral theory lies at the heart of the misguided separation of virtues into male and female. In retrospect, this contradictory credo must have taken its toll on these women of the eighteenth-century. (Wollstonecraft p. 82)

She further argued that women are born to indulge, and consequently become powerful in the very weakness that is the beauty and cunning which they lord over the men who imprison them. In this way, women can be seen to "...act as men are observed to act when they have been exalted by the same means." They are, theoretically, "...either abject slaves or capricious tyrants," different sides of the same devalued coin. (Wollstonecraft pp. 57-122 & 45-92)

Mary Wollstonecraft's intellectual circle of friends, perhaps prevented her from observing or caring about this other greatly underprivileged class of women. She could not have considered
these women when she categorized all women into a certain group mentality. That she ignored the problems of laboring women is perhaps not surprising since most of her experience gave her the opportunity of observing only middle and upper-class women. And it goes without saying that not all women were oppressed by a belief that they were weak and delicate, demanding the guidance and protection of men.

Her hints and suggestions are given largely with the view to fitting them for their position in the home. For it is her chief contention that the ignorance in which women are kept tends to incapacitate the maternal character, pushing her out of her sphere of influence.

She claimed the ignorance of women renders the infancy of man a much more perilous state than that of animals. If it were only on this account, this in itself would be enough to enact legislation that would provide national education for women. (Wollstonecraft p. 177)

CONCLUSION

That most men perceived women as irrational, irresponsible, incapable of making important decisions, was a commonly held belief. But we should ask the question concerning to what extent did the image of women as irrational and irresponsible reach the heart of oppression of all women? However, Mary Wollstonecraft stated at one point that indeed it was the main problem. And in her introduction, she asserts that claim:

"... profound conviction that the neglected education of my fellow creatures is the grand source of misery I deplore. (Wollstonecraft p. 7)

But by her own description, she is really writing about a certain class of women: women of leisure. She described these women as spending five hours a day making up their faces, and exercising a daily ritual of wasted time preparing their faces by washing with the luxurious, expensive beauty product of the day, the milk of roses. (Wollstonecraft pp. 44-47)

It is significant that Mary Wollstonecraft more often compares women to the rich and powerful rather than to the poor and weak, which would seem more natural.

While it is true that women suffered greatly from this oppression, ironically this forced oppression relegated them into a somewhat privileged status as pampered creatures. As one of
these delicate creatures, a woman was not expected to contribute any mental competence nor
moral intelligence.

And for that reason, Mary Wollstonecraft argued:

"... birth, riches and every extrinsic advantage that exalt a man above his fellows, without any mental exertion sink him in reality below them. In proportion to his weakness, he is played upon by designing men, till the bloated monster has lost all traces of humanity."

Speaking primarily of middle-class women, she further argued that the whole female
gender are, until their character is formed, in the same condition as the rich. (Wollstonecraft p. 91)

She also observed how this theoretical inconsistency has its practical consequences in this part:

And why is the life of a modest woman a perpetual conflict? I should answer that this system of education makes it so. Modesty, temperance and self-denial are the sober offspring of reason; but when sensibility is nurtured at the expense of the understanding, such weak beings must be restrained by arbitrary means and subjected to continual conflicts.

In the nearly two centuries that have passed since Mary Wollstonecraft issued her revolutionary challenge in her book; A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, her work has provoked extreme responses from both defenders and attackers.

And even now people exaggerate at great lengths in ridiculing ideas about equality. And it is interesting to analyze the mean-spirited, inflammatory comments they use in launching their insidious attacks.

But as mentioned earlier, Mary Wollstonecraft emphasized independence rather than equality. That was perhaps based in part because she viewed society as a collection of individual attitudes rather than legal contracts.

Mary Wollstonecraft’s vision of a feminist revolution was indeed somewhat different from ours today. For she believed one of the societal benefits in educating women is that women could become better wives and mothers. She also felt that women were not the full equals of men in all respects, even though the measure of their virtue was the same. (Wollstonecraft p. 26)
However, in the country where she might have expected the crucial support she needed, revolutionary France, Mary Wollstonecraft had little precedence for her feminist views. Although the philosophers of the Enlightenment shared her beliefs that an improved educational system would benefit society as a whole, they held orthodox ideas about women as the weaker sex and adjuncts of men.

Perhaps that is why the conclusion of her book is so clear: society and men in our society perpetuate the customs that keep women in subservient roles.

And that perception was apparently universal in Mary Wollstonecraft's day. For example, in England, as in the American Colonies, the common law ruled that whatever property a woman owned before marriage or might receive automatically became her husband's. Laws such as these kept women in their place, so to speak. And the majority of the eighteenth-century women accepted this inferior status without complaint.

This overwhelming majority knew little economic and intellectual freedom. And given the strong and potentially damaging force that would result from educating women, it is scarcely surprising that by adulthood women were not as capable in many respects as men.

According to Mary Wollstonecraft, the fact that women survived economically dependent upon men, and must live off them by charm, further complicated the situation. She further claimed that "this vulnerability provided a greater incentive to remain the frivolous coquette for as long as their beauty and charms lasted." (Wollstonecraft p. 141)

But Mary Wollstonecraft's pleas were simple. Briefly summarized, she proposed that women receive the same social, political and personal treatment, comparable educations, equal political rights and obligations, the same work opportunities and jobs and finally that society judge both genders by the same moral standards. Anyone who judged that *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* defamed the family unit interpreted the book incorrectly. There is no doubt that Mary Wollstonecraft strongly advocated that the immediate care of children rested with their mother. She mapped out their formative years as the mother's chief employment. And she expressed this
in another connection in the following passage:

Speaking of women at large, their first duty is to themselves as rational creatures, and the next in point of acceptance, as citizens, is that which includes so many, of a mother.

And in elaborating further, she stressed that women owed it to themselves and their families to strive in the direction of a rich intellectual and moral maturity. This, she claimed, would subsequently make them better mothers.

Also, she insisted that education should not take children out of their homes. She felt the full range of maternal activities and the far-reaching moral teachings rested with the mother.

If children are to be educated to understand the true principle of patriotism, their mother must be a patriot. (Wollstonecraft pp. 145 & 168)

But the struggle between her intellect and her passion exacted a bittersweet defeat for Mary Wollstonecraft. In the past fate had played so many pranks on her life. "It brought her back to life and hope, only to slay her at their very doors," according to her biographer, Margaret George.

Controlled by a domineering, tyrannical father in her youth, Mary Wollstonecraft searched vainly for a special nurturing kind of love. But her unfortunate romantic liaisons took their toll on her, eventually leading to a thwarted suicide attempt. One of her romantic entanglements, ironically with an American, produced an illegitimate child, Fanny Imlay.

Luckily, in her last years, she married a member of an influential radical group that included Thomas Paine, Thomas Holcraft, William Blake and William Wordsworth.

In William Godwin, she found a sweet and tender camaraderie, as well as her chief literary supporter. According to Emily Sunstein, author of A Different Face: The Life of Mary Wollstonecraft, "Their relationship was not the same as she had known with other men, the wild, primitive kind, but the quiet mature, warm sort that soothes like a cool hand on a burning forehead."

With William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft lived consistently with her ideas in freedom, each apart from the other, sharing what they could of each other. That they also shared the same
highly intellectual and philosophical beliefs proved a perfect match.

But fate intervened again. This time with full force. For fate stole Mary Wollstonecraft away during her happiest and most peaceful time.

Mary Wollstonecraft had just experienced her greatest joy: she had become a mother again. Her infant daughter was just 10 days old when Mary Wollstonecraft died on September 10, 1797, barely 38 years of age. That daughter, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, grew up and became celebrated in her own right. People of all ages know her as the author of the classic horror story *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley.

And perhaps in proving as innovative and independent as her mother, Mary Shelley never used a pen name in her literary works as most women of her day. Most wrote under a pseudonym of a male author. Instead, she used her married name as the wife of the celebrated romantic English poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley.

In my opinion, Mary Wollstonecraft was not only an intellectual genius, she was also a daring female warrior battling for women's rights. But she was also a woman and lover doomed to pain because of the very nature of her being.

Mary Wollstonecraft was a true leader. Her views and perceptions have withstood the test of time. Her main goal was that women should achieve equality, equality that would put them on equal footing with men. And since her death, changes have taken place in the societal part, but not necessarily in the workplace. Someone such as Mary Wollstonecraft would look at the employment situation with women and vociferously challenge the disparity. She would probably encourage women to become more involved in the political process, the education process, and the separation of government and women's bodies. She would be appalled if she knew that women in the last decade of the 20th century are on the verge of losing control of their own reproductive organs to the will of the federal government. Mary Wollstonecraft would be leading the charge up Capitol Hill and asking, "Why?" She would say that choice and independence of body and spirit are a person's (male or female) unalienable right.
Many millions have been born, died and are long since forgotten in the nearly two hundred years since her passing. Yet we still analyze and debate her arguments and innovative ideas because they are as forceful and innovative today as they were in eighteenth-century Europe. Perhaps in her immortality, Mary Wollstonecraft left a legacy that, though unfulfilled, continues to inspire women toward that final frontier: equality.
ENDNOTE

1. Eleanor Holmes Norton, 1990 Governor's Conference on Women. Norton is currently a delegate to Congress from the District of Columbia, and has served as Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
Chapter Two

OVERVIEW OF WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN AMERICA

For Mary Wollstonecraft, America was not only another continent, but a different way of life. The seeds of her feminist movement were planted at the same time as immigrant women reached the shores of America. Because it was not only the men who were seeking a better life in America, but the women believed that a new country held a hope of some independence for them. Ultimately, in more than 300 years since that first migration, much of that dream is still becoming a reality.

With total equality for women in mind it is important to look back at where the disparity or discrimination began. In the beginning when the United States was becoming a world power many diverse cultures were immigrating onto its shores. Most, of course, immigrated to find better lives in this new land of opportunity. But others were not as fortunate. (Anderson, p. 44)

Only the very privileged women from wealthy families received any formal education during that time. And no public education existed for women up to 1820, with public high schools finally opening for women after the Civil War. It was then that educated women, primarily from affluent families, began speaking out, and eventually their organized efforts led to the women's suffrage movement. (Deckard, p. 258)

Organizers of this nineteenth-century feminist movement included such notable women as Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone and Susan B. Anthony. As abolitionists they learned how to organize their group toward an active and productive cause. And after the Civil War, they successfully changed many state laws that abridged the property rights of married women — laws that continued to treat women as chattel. (Deckard, p. 263)

Initially, the women's suffrage organization evolved from the abolitionist movement, and maintained close ties with the black liberation until the Civil War. The two movements remained allies until the 1890s when the women's suffrage movement became anti-black in the 1900s in
order to win the South. However, women's suffrage still encountered stiff opposition, this time from Southern white males who insisted on the status quo for blacks and women.

**Political Parties Jump on Bandwagon**

In 1916, both major political parties supported women's suffrage but did not indicate how or when. An unlikely turn of events changed history though. With the advent of World War I, President Woodrow Wilson publicly supported women's suffrage, and when the amendment came to a vote in the House of Representatives, it passed. Unfortunately, the Senate dragged its feet for a year-and-a-half, before passing the historic legislation by a two-thirds majority. Women's suffrage was ratified in 1920 by 36 states, with one Southern state, Tennessee, voting for it. (Deckard, p. 278)

Passage in 1920 of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution was the culmination of the early feminist movement. This landmark legislation stated:

The right of citizens of the U.S. to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

An from this early feminist movement, another branch dedicated toward the advancement of women's rights emerged. Known as the more moderate wing of the American suffrage movement, the League of Women Voters advocated not only the right for women to vote, but also spoke out for protection for women workers in industry, child welfare laws and honest election practices.

Working in the state legislatures and in Congress on behalf of a wide range of reforms, the feminist movement concentrated in several key areas. Specifically, these key areas included the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, equal employment opportunities for women, reform of divorce and child support laws, more convictions in sexual assault cases and liberalization of laws regulating abortion. (Deckard, pp. 286-290)

**Sex-Segmented Labor Force Begins**

It was also no coincidence that this sex-segmented labor force has created specific and specially categorized male and female occupations. Today, this sex-segmented labor market is also
experiencing a declining number of primary jobs. This, in turn, results in men and women fighting each other. This is another great benefit for management because now that they are fighting each other they are not fighting management.

Many other significant consequences have resulted from this sex-segmented labor market, a market that had its roots in the old nineteenth-century Domestic Code, when only 5 percent of women in America worked outside the home.

Viewed by its proponents as a moral issue, the Domestic Code relegated women into traditionally female occupations, such as sewing, textile workers and schoolteaching, and subsequently barred them from the more "dangerous" male occupations that paid higher wages. And since there were so few women in the labor force — less than 5 percent — there was little opposition. Most worked in the service sector or as retail workers. (Deckard, pp. 160-161 & 269-271)

**SOME WOMEN EMIGRATE AS INDENTURED SERVANTS**

Many women who emigrated to America worked as indentured servants, and were literally kidnapped off the streets of London or purchased from British prisons. They worked as slaves for seven years then were freed, but without money. Most black women were kidnapped in Africa. They were then shipped as cargo to the United States, where they were enslaved their entire lives. (Deckard, p. 243)

Even after the Civil War when blacks won their freedom, they were still regarded as second-class citizens. Many states, especially in the South, totally ignored the Emancipation Proclamation and passed their own segregation laws. Blacks received the right to vote under the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments, but not women.

As with black slaves, women in the beginning of the nineteenth century could not vote, could be legally beaten by their masters (their husbands), and were considered biologically inferior to white males. Into the 1840s, women could not manage their own property or control their wages, and after marriage, women could not retain ownership of any property. The husbands also
controlled guardianship of their children after divorce. Husbands could drink and gamble away the family funds without any legal recourse by their wives. (Deckard, p. 243)

More than one-third of the slaves imported into the United States before the Civil War were black women, who were sold at auctions. Many served as servants and field hands, while others became "sex slaves." When these women gave birth to their masters' children, the greedy slave owners sold their own children for a profit.

Slave owners' wives did not enjoy the carefree easy life period romantic novels perpetuate. Aside from contending with her husband's love trysts with slaves, the slave owner's wife supervised a vast household staff, endured endless pregnancies, reared many children, and worked hard toward achieving the mythical image of the dutiful, happy wife. (Deckard, p. 249)

In fact, most marriages between slave holders were arranged for purely economic purposes just as they were under slavery in ancient Greece. A Southern newspaper of the 1800s wrote about how the marriage trade functioned:

"... when a young man is about to get him a wife, the first inquiry he makes is, 'Has such a young lady much property'"

So the white woman was also sold, but much more politely than her black sister. (Deckard, p. 261)

But by the late 1800s and early 1900s, the old Domestic Code started to fall apart. Several factors were instrumental in the weakening of this controversial policy. Factors that eroded its power resulted from the increased immigration that added many to the labor supply, the fact that women began entering the labor market into low-paying jobs, and that affluent women started to reject the so-called moral code. These groups also fought for child-labor laws, safer working conditions, higher wages, and shorter workdays. (Deckard, pp. 288-289 & Eitzen, pp. 239-241 & 281-282)

Meanwhile, during the "Roaring Twenties," when women finally earned the right to vote and experienced personal freedom, the same perceptions of women continued at home and abroad. And despite the controversial actions of the daring "Flappers," men remained steadfast in their
opinions of women as property as well as toys and playthings. This perception is exemplified in
this quotation by Sir Alan Patrick Herbert:

I like them fluffy, I know it's bad taste, with fluffy, soft looks and a flower at the
waist.

... Not huffy, or stuffy, not tiny or tall, but fluffy, just fluffy, with no brains at
all. (Starr, p. 206)

MAJOR CRISES BRING ADVANCEMENT FOR WOMEN

Advancement for women continued at a slow pace until the Great Depression when
economic necessity forced many women into domestic and personal service jobs. Ironically, another
national disaster provided the catalyst for women's advancement in the work force. During World
War II, women entered professional careers such as law and medicine, as well as the financially
lucrative defense jobs. However, that advancement was short-lived as war veterans returned, and
the number of employed women dropped by four million between 1945 and '47. All this occurred
despite the fact that two-thirds of the women said they wanted to keep their jobs. Propaganda
by the government had enlisted the women to work in the war plants and again propaganda was
used to get them back to the kitchen when the soldiers returned home.

The long expansion of postwar economy continued, and by 1950 women again entered the
work force in great numbers. However, their salaries remained much lower than men in
comparable positions. That inequality continues into the last decade of the twentieth century with
women earning .68 on the dollar of similarly employed men.

This new era ushered in the beginning of technological advances that created an increasing
need for clerical jobs. In fact, this added technology allowed for expanded production levels to take
place all over the country, creating the greater demand for more clerical workers, the "paper-
pushers."

Until the 1940s, women worked primarily in the clerical, service and retail occupations.
With this, stereotyping began to occur and women entered a different kind of job market, the
secondary labor force. And that is when the labor force started to split into a desk-skilled job
market.

The employment statistics for women reveal a phenomenal increase in the labor market for women in the 1940s when women began entering other occupational areas.

**WOMEN IN LABOR FORCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Sanford, U.S. Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau, pp. 300-312)

And from its earliest beginning, the feminist movement has frequently relied on the tactics of so-called revolutionaries. These tactics, the demonstrations, parades and occasional civil disobedience served to convince governing elites to recognize women’s rights. (Deckard, p. 312)

**CIVIL RIGHTS FOR MINORITIES AND WOMEN**

But with peace and prosperity again abundant on the home front, public interest in women’s rights ebbed until the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. With this renewed interest in equality a topic of discussion among the influential elitists groups, women’s rights again stirred public opinion.

When President Johnson signed the long-awaited Civil Rights Act of 1964, he know it was only the beginning of the end for inequality and cautioned:

"Freedom is not enough. You do not wipe out scars of centuries by saying ‘now you’re free to go where you want and do as you desire.’ You do not take a person who for years has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bringing him up to the starting line of a race and then say, ‘You’re free to compete,’ and justly believe that you have been completely fair. All of our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates; and this is the next and most profound stage of the battle for civil rights.” (Eitzen, p. 224)
Initially, the Civil Rights Act covered race, color, religion or national origin. The historic legislation introduced new employment terms such as affirmative action, equal employment opportunity, protected groups and under-representation. Basically, equal employment opportunity describes the legal, corrective process, and affirmative action is the practice through which the legal remedy is accomplished.

Specifically, Affirmative Action is a definitive, results-oriented policy that guarantees equal employment opportunities for everyone. An affirmative action plan requires that measurable goals and timetables are established and identified deficiencies are corrected within a reasonable period.

Equal opportunity ensures that employment decisions are based upon individual merit and ability to perform a given job, without regard to race, sex, color, national origin or religion.

Protected Class refers to any group or member of that group that is protected by anti-discrimination laws. The term currently identifies women, blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Native American Indians, and Alaskan Aleuts.

Under-representation means that fewer qualified ethnic minorities and women are employed in a particular job group than would reasonably be expected by their availability in a relevant labor market.

But women need aggressive enforcement of sexual harassment by employers to succeed on the workplace. Ignoring sexual harassment is costly to the victim.

The federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, forbids gender and racial discrimination in hiring, pay and promotions. But as noted in the introduction, the disparity in hiring, pay and promotions continues. To remedy the concern of disparate impact on minorities and women, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission adopted the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures in 1978. Essentially, the Uniform Guidelines manual recommends that employers must be able to demonstrate that selection procedures are valid in predicting or measuring performance in a particular job. The EEOC defines discrimination as:

the use of any selection procedure which has a disparate impact on the hiring, promotion, or other employment or membership opportunities of members of any
race, sex or ethnic group will be considered to be discriminatory and inconsistent with these guidelines, unless the procedure has been validated in accordance with these guidelines. (Sherman, p. 73)

Changes in the Civil Rights Act in 1967 added women as part of the protected groups; pregnancy was defined as a disability in 1978 for medical purposes, and federal employers were also included in 1978. Primarily, the law requires that employers with 15 or more employees, federal contractors, public and private educational institutions, as well as state and local governments conform to the policies set by the Civil Rights Act. But, if you ask people on the street their opinions about Affirmative Action, you will most likely arouse a lot of controversy. That is because most Americans do not fully understand the subject enough to discuss it reasonably. Perhaps the most accurate and concise definition of affirmative action is the one offered during a 1982 House Subcommittee hearing on equal opportunities:

"Affirmative action is a process by which public and private employers take aggressive steps to correct and undo past discriminatory practices that have kept ethnic minorities and women out of the mainstream of American life . . . The goal of affirmative action is not to force employers to hire incompetent or unqualified people: the goal is to motivate them to seek out, train, educate and hire persons who are qualified and qualifiable in areas they have been denied access to because of discriminatory practices." (Wilson, p. 19)

The House Subcommittee concluded that substantial employment gains have been made by minorities and women, yet these groups remain remarkably under-represented in many occupations and industries. They determined that there is a continuing need for a strong and effective enforcement of EEOC laws. Many cannot understand why the process of attaining total equality in employment is taking so long to implement. But when you consider that discrimination and segregation have been facts of American life since the colonization of this continent, it brings the situation into a better perspective. The fact that slavery existed for nearly 250 years, and legal segregation of blacks for almost a hundred years after, makes it very difficult for many to recall or realize that the legal segregation ended barely 28 years ago. (Wilson, pp. 17-21)
ATTITUDES TOWARDS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Some people say that to make up for past discrimination, women and members of minority
groups should be given preferential treatment in getting jobs and places in colleges. Others say
that ability, as determined by test scores, should be the main consideration. Which point of view
comes closest to how you feel about affirmative action policies was the question posed in a 1981
public opinion poll.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>THAT GIVE PREFERENCE</th>
<th>ABILITY MAIN CONSIDERATION</th>
<th>NO OPINION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonwhite</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Opinion, April/May, 1981.

Despite public outcry to the contrary, it appears the general public may be softening
somewhat on Affirmative Action. While the preceding 1981 Public Opinion Poll shows 11 percent
favoring Affirmative Action, a 1991 New York Times poll shows that number now at 2 percent.
The 1991 poll also revealed that 60 percent now oppose Affirmative Action, down from 83 percent
in 1981; 20 percent were undecided. (CBS News, September 9, 1991)

WOMEN’S ATTITUDES TOWARD THEIR JOBS

In 1982, women comprised 53 percent of the labor pool, yet only 15 percent worked in
careers classified as professional, with two-thirds concentrated in clerical jobs.

Much of the work that women perform outside their homes deflates their self-images,
according to a report entitled, Work in America prepared by the Special Task Force to the
Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

The report reveals that women hold most of the lowest-paid white-collar jobs in America.
These jobs include key punch operators, telephone company operators and clerical workers.
Women are also over-represented on assembly-line jobs the Task Force describes as "the worse jobs in the economy." (Work in America, p. 57)

According to the Survey of Working Conditions, women tend to derive the same satisfaction as men do from the intrinsic rewards of work. However, the survey also revealed women were nearly twice as likely as men to express negative attitudes toward their present jobs. (Work in America, pp. 57-58)

The job of secretary is perhaps symbolic of the status of female employment in this country, both qualitatively and quantitatively. There are nine million secretaries.

Secretaries comprise one-third of the nation’s female work force. And unfortunately many secretaries have very poor jobs by the accepted standards of job satisfaction.

Typists, in particular, have low status, little autonomy, little opportunity for growth and receive low pay. . . . In many instances, in typing pools, for example, the typist is viewed as little more than an appendage to the machine she operates. But the problems of women and work extend far beyond just this one unrewarding job. (Work in America, p. 56)

The researchers theorized that the cause of this dissatisfaction seems to lie in the discrepancy between women’s high expectations about work and the actual low social and economic status of their jobs. In other words, women tend to identify more closely with their jobs than men in general. (Work in America, p. 58)

This attitudinal conditioning is short-circuited by another kind of conditioning that affects working women in America to a greater degree than in most industrialized countries. This conditioning is perhaps one of the most pervasive and consequential of all cultural attitudes and concerns — occupational sex-typing. Specifically, sex-typing occurs when a large majority of workers in an occupation are of one sex, and when this is an accepted practice. The qualifications for a particular job become those associated with either a male or female role stereotype. (Work in America, pp. 60-61)
Thus, occupations for women are found closely linked to their homemaking roles; others to their socialization as men's helpmates. Conversely, occupations from which women are excluded tend to be those that involve "non-feminine" pursuits or those that necessitate supervision of other employees. (Work in America, p. 60)

These exclusionary practices segregate women into a limited number of jobs where there is an excess supply of workers. This excess supply arbitrarily tends to lower wages below the level that would otherwise prevail.

Women become secretaries, schoolteachers, waitresses and nurses, while men become plumbers, doctors, engineers and school administrators. Once such a division of labor becomes established, it tends to be self-perpetuating since each sex is socialized, trained and counseled into certain jobs and not into others. (Work in America, p. 60)

The particular division of labor that emerges has little social or economic rational. What is "man's work" in one period or place may become "woman's work" under different circumstances. For example, schoolteaching, telephone operating and clerical work were once male occupations in the United States. More recently, the occupations of bank teller and school crossing guard have been feminized. (Work in America, p. 61)

Conversely, in what was once the Soviet Union, 79 percent of the doctors, 37 percent of the lawyers, 32 percent of the engineers and 76 percent of the economists are female.

Thus, cross-cultural historical materials suggest that the present occupational structure does not reflect basic and unchanging differences in temperament or ability between males and females. Instead, a rather extensive body of evidence indicates that the present division of labor is not the result of differences in the quality or the demographic composition of the male and female labor force. Nor are these important differences between working men and women where education, race and geographical distributions are concerned. Ironically, these divisions are not only traditional but also economic. For society has allowed these differences to perpetuate because the American economic system is not financially equipped to ensure equality in wages. (Work in America, pp. 61-62)

Simply put, if total equality in wages existed, many companies would be forced out of
business. Or worse yet for the American capitalist system, many would be forced to relocate to a Third World country where wages are low in comparison for everyone, male and female. (Eitzen, pp. 174-176)

Realistically however, we must look at the work situation as it is, not as it would be in a utopian environment. It is clear women have consistently been relegated to the lower-paying, lower status jobs in the money economy. In reality, their actual contribution to the economy is far below what could reasonably be expected on the basis of their educations, abilities and work experience, according to the report by the Special Task Force to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. (Work in America, p. 65)

As families began moving from the farms to the cities, living expenses increased and women entered the labor force in greater numbers.

It was no coincidence that women entered deskillled occupations. And because they were so grateful to find employment of any kind, they could not object the same way men could. Management knew they were a controllable labor force. Their contribution for entering the low-paying jobs of the secondary labor market has greatly increased corporate profits. Since women have been traditionally filling these low-paying secondary labor market jobs, these jobs have become known as "pink-collar" occupations. These secondary labor market jobs consist of secretaries, sales clerks, bank tellers, etc. (Gatlin, pp. 202-207)

The "vanishing middle class" is also a consequence of the deskillling process. It became more apparent after World War II and into the late 1960s, when income levels were becoming more equal and the gap between the rich and the poor was narrowing. However, in the mid 1970s, things took a nosedive in the income distribution among families. This has become more unequal ever since.

As a positive influence, the Great Society and the welfare programs of the 1960s contributed to the nation's economic expansion. But by the 1970s, the programs faced severe budget cuts, and the percentage of U.S. households earning middle-class income dropped.
There was also the emergence of "baby boomers" and women into the labor force, the low point of the business cycle in the late 1970s, the recession, wages declining or "freezing" and the exchange, rate of the U.S. dollar plummeting by 30 percent in 1983. (Eitzen, pp. 186-187 & 222-224; Associated Press, September 20, 1991, p. 5A; and Knight-Ridder Newspapers, September 27, 1990, p. 7A)

Clustered in the poorest paying sectors of the economy, women are also employed in occupational categories where low wages are prevalent. Women also earn less than men within the same major occupational groups according to a 1985 U.S. Department of Labor survey.

The study also revealed that men without high school diplomas earned more than women with bachelors' degrees, and women high school graduates earned less than men with less than eight years' of education. Full time year-round female workers earned 60.8 percent of male annual earnings in 1960; 59.4 percent in 1981. Statistics such as these are the primary reason female-headed households are generally classified as economically deprived. (Eitzen, pp. 276-277)

One of the ways women can earn more is to enter occupations numerically dominated by men. Thanks to new federal laws implemented during the last twenty years, these choices have expanded. For instance, new federal training programs have opened up non-traditional professional and technical work, as well as skilled blue collar trades for qualified women. (Eitzen, pp. 268-269) But whether women will succeed depends in large part on changing the attitudes of employers and co-workers. To end sexual discrimination, employers must strive for the elimination of sexual harassment, create safer working conditions and remove health hazards in the workplace. Employers must also encourage and implement provisions for high quality child care facilities. (Gatlin, p. 217) And while job performance is important, employers must accept the fact that child rearing is a parent's primary responsibility. Coupled with a 50 percent divorce rate and child rearing duties, the living standards for women are far below those of divorced men.
WOMEN IN THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN

Before basic societal reordering can take place at all levels there must be more comfortable work environments for the career woman. And as we have already demonstrated, many sexist attitudes are nurtured in the formative years, years when career choices are being made. The sciences are where a so-called “chilly climate” is very obvious. And even though women earn 40 percent of the Ph.Ds in biological sciences and more than 35 percent of the total in chemistry, the share of physics doctorates for women hovers at only 10 percent. (Flam, p. 1604)

Women physicists make up only 6.5 percent of the American Physical Society (APS), and women astronomers, only 11.4 percent of the American Astronomical Society (AAS). This latter percentage edged up from 7.9 percent in 1972. But the figure is still well below the fraction of women in other fields inside and outside of science.

Many people have offered theories on why these numbers are so sparse. The most popular reason for few women scientists is that fewer girls than boys develop an interest in the physical sciences. Many girls shy away from the math required for these positions. Additionally, some theorize that women leave science careers to start families. But this only explains part of the problem, as recent surveys have shown. In fact, two recent surveys of astronomers pointed to the extraordinary level of discontent among women physicists and astronomers. Primarily, the women complained about a chilly climate more than over sexual harassment or discrimination.

The loss of female talent in the physical sciences — especially when the nation is facing a potential shortage of scientists and engineers — is sparking a lively debate about the desirability of stronger measures to increase the numbers of women.

Women scientists themselves are sharply divided regarding whether affirmative action programs are needed to reduce the male domination in these scientific fields. Yet, despite the bleak numbers, improvements have taken place. This is evident because as recently as the 1960s, women were not even admitted to physics and astronomy graduate programs at Cal Tech, M.I.T. or Harvard. And, despite the fact that women are no longer barred from graduate schools or research facilities, "some astronomers and physicists believe that traces of a clubhouse attitude still
Many women reported that they felt their male colleagues inadvertently left them out. Many times the exclusion of women centered around such ordinary events as forgetting to invite women to social occasions. Many women complain that they miss out on important inside information that is shared at these social gatherings.

Jill Price of Bentley College in Weston, Massachusetts, sent a questionnaire to 548 women faculty and graduate students to find out how women in the sciences are coping. Out of the 90 responding, 71 percent reported experiencing some kind of harassment or discrimination. In another survey done by AAS, 5,300 members were polled with 1990 astronomers, including 250 women responding. "Some 40 percent reported experiencing discrimination in the category of 'general social treatment'." Some comments were that subtle forms (of bias) are prevalent and are the most damaging because they are more difficult to detect. Between 24 and 33 percent of the respondents reported having experienced discrimination in the areas of hiring, tenure, pay and promotions. Most of the women agreed that the atmosphere in their field would improve if the field included more women. Some believe that affirmative action programs need to be strengthened; "arguing that without advantages for women, men will continue to have the upper hand." (Flam, p. 1605)

To achieve parity, women must continue to fight for a strong legal framework. Not only must national, state and local laws become more responsive to the eradication of sexual discrimination, but enforcement agencies, including the courts, must understand, and in turn, condemn the problem for the harm this invidious discrimination inflicts upon society as a whole. (Gatlin, p. 221)

**WOMEN WORKERS FACE DIFFERENT PROBLEMS**

In that same vein, research has shown that women experience different employment prospects and problems from men because of the closer connection between their work and family lives. At the top of the list as a central concern of employed mothers and potential mothers is
child care. Not only does child care include competent day care programs, it also encompasses other areas such as tax credits, paid and unpaid childcare leave, flexible work schedules and various cash allowances for child rearing. (Gatlin, p. 231)

That presents yet another social problem: there are no statistical data that reflect the number of children left unsupervised while their mothers are at work. However, one government study estimated that 32,000 preschoolers and two million school-age children between seven and thirteen are unsupervised "latch-key" children. In 1984 there were 52.1 percent of mothers with children under six in the work force, so the numbers now are most likely much higher. (Eitzen, p. 272)

Meanwhile, the agency with the most influence on the private sector, the U.S. Labor Department, has continued to enforce employment "goals" upon both private and federal entities. State and local governments have also adopted or broadened racial-preference employment systems, as have many private businesses. (Deckard, p. 385) Perhaps that utilitarian attitude is one of the reasons for the recent upsurge in society, and particularly on college campuses, of sexist incidents.

THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was established as part of the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964, but it has been the U.S. Supreme Court that has more clearly defined employment discrimination. (Beatty, p. 506)

But the lack of stronger civil rights legislation has taken its toll during the Reagan administration and a vacillating Bush administration. The Reagan administration consistently opposed affirmative action, and demonstrated that negative attitude by its political appointments. (Beatty, p. 507)

EEOC needs greater enforcement powers, a larger staff and the authority to hold administrative hearings so it can develop into a strong regulatory agency such as the Internal Revenue Service. However, that legislation runs counter to the vested interests of many powerful
groups and organizations. Those special interest groups exert more influence on an already antagonistic administration than blacks, civil rights or women's advocacy organizations.

The shortage of investigatory staff members at the EEOC became more apparent recently in a report released by the General Accounting Office (GAO). The report found that the EEOC did not fully investigate up to 82 percent of the job discrimination claims filed.

The GAO reviewed investigations of cases closed between January and March 1987. GAO charged that 41 to 82 percent of charged closed cases were not fully investigated. The investigation centered around five states: Georgia, Michigan, New York, California (Northern), and Tennessee. (Associated Press, October 12, 1988, p. 3A)

EEOC Commissioner Tony Gallegos acknowledged that his agency receives more than 100,000 cases annually, and operates with a staff shortage most of the time. (Telephone conversation, Washington, D.C., 1989) He said that his own figures showed that annual charges of sexual harassment nearly doubled between 1981 and 1988. Currently, EEOC employs 3,198 staff members, up considerably from the 220 in 1973. In early 1973, he noted, the work force at EEOC consisted of 30.

The Equal Opportunity Commission was established in 1964 as part of the landmark civil rights legislation. In its first four years, the agency handled less than a dozen federal discrimination suits. By 1968, the caseload increased substantially and the agency gained credibility with a successful suit against the nationwide operations of a large employer.

The EEOC's slow start was a direct result of the paltry $2 million budget originally appropriated by Congress, and the fact that President Johnson did not name the commissioners until late in 1965. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. was named as the agency's first commissioner in 1965, but resigned after a few months to run for political office. (Beatty, p. 508)

Initially, the EEOC was strictly an investigative agency that practiced conciliation in settling its cases. Cases requiring further litigation were referred to the Justice Department. Even though it is classified as a regulatory agency, EEOC has no authority to hold hearings, as
other regulatory agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service. Congress has remained firm in its refusal to grant that authority, perhaps believing that the EEOC's strong advocacy position hampers its efforts to maintain a sense of neutrality. That lack of real enforcement power has prevented the EEOC from specifically defining the law, leaving most of that responsibility to the U.S. Supreme Court. (Beatty, p. 509)

To its credit, the EEOC became a more effective regulatory agency when it started developing industry-wide plans, collecting data on firms, initiating lawsuits and negotiating non-discriminatory actions. After that, affirmative action emerged as an active anti-discriminatory policy.

Achieving that greater power began taking form when women's groups applied pressure on the EEOC, and the lawsuits increased in federal courts. By 1972 and '73, the lobbying by feminist groups started paying off. The EEOC's enforcement arm finally permitted the agency to sue an employer directly in federal court for violating the Civil Rights Act. (Beatty, p. 509)

The EEOC has filed lawsuits against many Fortune 500 companies and won massive awards for victims of discrimination. The organizations included General Motors, Ford, Sears, General Electric, United Auto Workers, American Telephone and Telegraph and United Electrical Workers. The 1973 action against AT&T forced the international conglomerate to give $50 million in back pay to women and minority workers. (Beatty, p. 507)

With successful litigation against employers such as these, EEOC has finally become a tool against discrimination. During its first seven years, EEOC received 100,000 complaints and then increased to 80,000 a year by 1976. (Gatlin, pp. 506-508)

**WOMEN NEED MORE ROLE MODELS**

Educators warn that if parity is not achieved soon in the higher education ranks for minorities and women, the picture will be as bleak in the 21st century.

Equally startling are the circumstances affecting working women. While the majority of women work because of economic need, two-thirds are either single (26 percent), divorced (11
percent), widowed (5 percent), separated (4 percent), or had husbands whose incomes were less than $15,000 (19 percent), 1984 U.S. Department of Labor statistics revealed. (Eitzen, pp. 274-275) The proportion of married-couple families with the wife working rose from about 40 percent to 52 percent between 1972 and '83. In 1983, the median income for married-couple families with the wife in the paid labor force was $32,107, compared with $21,890 for married-couple families without the wife in the paid labor force. Women represented 61 percent of all persons aged 16 and above who had incomes below the poverty level in 1983.

More than half of the households in the United States are headed by women, and 83 percent of the budget for the Aid to Dependent Children program is paid to women as the principal breadwinner. (Eitzen, p. 275) In Nevada, women head 75 percent of single-parent families with children under 18. Single-parent households in Nevada grew at twice the rate of all other family households in the state. Female-headed families with children comprise 50 percent of Nevada's families living in poverty. This compares to only 5.1 percent of male-headed families and/or married couples with children in poverty. (Poverty in Nevada: Its Extent and Distribution, March 1986, p. 23)

One in four households in Nevada are headed by women. And during the decade 1970-80, families headed by women had the highest growth-rate, with a 55 percent increase statewide. According to the State of Nevada Office of Community Services, national statistical data indicates these numbers have continued to increase. (Current Population Reports, 1981, p. 20)

Surprisingly, for a supposedly conservative state touched with the Mormon religious values, Nevada has the highest percentage of non-family households in the nation. Specifically, only 25 percent of all households in Nevada can be considered "traditional." That is, a married couple with children. Non-family households comprised the fastest-growing segment of the state's population, while the traditional family comprised the slowest-growing household type between 1970 and 1980. This trend has also continued. (Nevada Statistical Abstract, 1986, p. 4)

In the work force, 72 percent of Nevada women work in administrative support (clerical)
service and sales occupations. They are segregated in occupations with the lowest pay and most limited benefits. Overall, 46 percent of Nevada’s women are in the labor force. (Nevada Affirmative Action, April, 1988, pp. 2-3) Perhaps part of that is because gender discrimination has become more subtle and disguised as we enter the 1990s. And although virtually every manager today knows that simply using gender as a criterion in employment decisions is illegal, discrimination still goes on.

And with the dramatic demographic shifts in the American work force, providing equal opportunity is no longer just the law or a prerequisite to win government contracts, it is a basic business necessity!

Since most of the gains for women have occurred in professional the technical fields, employment prospects appear to have improved more for educated middle-class women than they have for working-class women. Although women have some gains in the skilled trades, particularly printing, men continue to hold a disproportionate share of the better-paying jobs. Only 16 percent of women blue-collar workers were craft and kindred workers in 1982, while 47 percent of the men in the blue-collar category were in the skilled crafts.

Working women still remain concentrated in a small number of occupations. Half of them are employed in just 17 out of 400 occupations listed by the U.S. Bureau of the Census; while half of the male work force is distributed among 63 occupations. One-quarter of all employed women are found in five occupations: but primarily secretary, sales clerk, typists, telephone operator and waitresses. Over 34 percent of all employed women were working in clerical jobs in 1982, compared to less than seven percent of working men.

The modest increase of women in male-dominated professions and trades has coincided with changes towards routinization and de-skilling in these occupations, as well as loss of power by professional organizations and labor unions. Professional and managerial occupations have developed both a finely-graded hierarchy and a split between highly-prestigious jobs with good pay and opportunities for advancement, and a new class of more routinized, poorly-paid jobs that lack
promotion ladders. As one study pointed out, women's gains have been mainly confined to this newer sector, where professional barriers restricting entry have been weakened by the loss of power by professional associations and need for higher returns of capital investments. (Gatlin, pp. 207-208)

A 1990 issue of Time devoted to women's issues reported that 60 percent of women work outside the home, but only 2 percent of top management personnel are women. It went on to report that a full 90 percent of male executives 40 and under are fathers, but only 35 percent of their female counterparts have children. (Castro, Fall 1990, pp. 50-51)

Women who move into positions previously held by men face special problems. These situations often disrupt working relationships, impede productivity and lead to legal action in the workplace. For example, although women constitute 49 percent of the American student body, they comprise only 10 percent of the college professors who actually teach them. (Richardson & Taylor, p. 265) Ironically, in a December, 1991 survey of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and Reno (UNR) campuses, professional women cite sex discrimination and sexual harassment at both campuses. At UNLV, between 40 and 49 percent complained that sexual harassment was an overt, continuous problem. Sex discrimination was also reported as a major issue. One of the most prevalent perceptions of the women professional employees at UNLV is that their work is not valued, that they are not important to their male colleagues or to the University.

The Classified system which constitutes the clerical workers was not surveyed at either campus (Pappa, December 6, 1991, p. 5A) And in yet another report released in January 1992, the hiring of both women and minorities in the University and Community College System of Nevada "remains stagnant." As in other universities, women comprise a greater majority at all four Nevada community colleges and two universities.

... women constitute a majority at all the campuses, ranging from 53 percent at UNR to 66 percent at Northern Nevada Community College in Elko.

According to the report, women have actually lost ground, declining one percentage point
from 48 percent to 47 percent. System-wide, 70 percent of the total faculty are white males. At UNLV, 2 percent of the faculty are black, and 1 percent Hispanic; the faculty is 87 percent white. Of 229 new hires within the system, 5 percent were black and 38 percent were women; only 2 percent were Hispanic. (Whaley, January 3, 1992, p. 2B)

The legal framework for eliminating sex discrimination in employment consists of national, state and local laws and enforcement agencies, including the courts. As a result of the public support for civil rights legislation in the 1960s, three important laws were passed.

**Equal Pay Act of 1963** prohibits employers from paying different wages, because of sex, to women and men employed in the same establishment and doing essentially the same work. (Sherman, p. 66)

**Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act** makes it unlawful for employers to refuse to hire or to discharge any individual or to discriminate against any individual with respect to compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. (Sherman, p. 67)

A Supreme Court milestone in affirmative action occurred in 1987 when the Court offered its strongest endorsement. The Court approved an affirmative action plan implemented by a Santa Clara, California transportation agency that promoted a woman over six equally-qualified men. The Court ruled that consideration of gender as a factor in promotions of equally qualified applicants is "plainly not unreasonable." The decision was hailed by women's rights groups as well as many black leaders. Until the decision in the Diane Joyce case, the Court's rulings were viewed as producing mixed signals. With this decision, the Court specified that setting aside a certain number of openings for women and minorities is unacceptable, but "moderate, flexible plans such as the California County Road Department's are congruent with the original civil rights legislation."

In explaining its decision, the Court stressed the fact that Ms. Joyce and the defendant, Mr. Johnson, were both qualified and ranked in the top five of the company's promotional listing. The Court suggested that it would not approve plans that forced an employer to promote an unqualified woman over a qualified man. The Court further declared that it did not like plans that...
harm "specifically identifiable people." In the California case, the Court noted that Johnson had "no firmly-rooted expectation" of getting the promotion, since there were other equally-qualified candidates on the company's promotional list. (Houston, p. 2)

And, although women gained important legal leverage in the U.S. through Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, sex discrimination in employment remains as pervasive as it was two decades ago. Not only must women endure the humiliation of lower wages, they also suffer from sexism, sexual harassment and a lack of upward mobility. (Gatlin, p. 210)

The Civil Rights Act of 1991 expands the law further, allowing victims to collect punitive and compensatory damages. Under the old law only actual damages, usually back pay or front pay were allowed. The Act reversed a number of Supreme Court rulings. Specifically, the following cases are affected:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>SUPREME COURT RULING</th>
<th>CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wards Cover/Packing Co. v. Atonio, 1989</td>
<td>The Court ruled that an employer did not have to prove &quot;business necessity&quot; to defend a case in which a complainant had shown the employer's practice(s) had a disparate impact on a protected group. The Court required only that an employer provide business justification for the challenged practice.</td>
<td>The act requires the employer to &quot;demonstrate that the challenged practice is job-related for the position in question and consistent with business necessity,&quot; codifying these terms for the first time. Complainants are still required to specify the particular practices alleged to have a disparate impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterson v. McLean Credit Union, 1989</td>
<td>The Court held that protection against racial bias under a key statute (42 USC 1981) was limited to hiring and some promotion decisions, but did not extend to harassment on the job, discriminatory firing, or other post-hiring conduct by the employer.</td>
<td>The act specifies that the statute covers all forms of racial bias in employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin v. Wilks, 1989</td>
<td>The Court permitted white firefighters to challenge a consent decree years after it had been approved by a lower court.</td>
<td>The act prohibits challenges to consent decrees by individuals who had reasonable opportunity to object to the decree or whose interests were adequately represented by another party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins, 1989</td>
<td>The Court held that an employer could avoid liability for intentional discrimination in &quot;mixed motive&quot; cases if the employer could demonstrate that the same action would have been taken without the discriminatory motive.</td>
<td>The act stipulates that any intentional discrimination is unlawful, even if the same action would have resulted without the discriminatory motive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This law will encourage more women to fight back against sex discrimination and sexual harassment. The removal of the $300,000 cap on damages will serve to bring forward cases that were too cumbersome under the old act. Also, the two-year time limit on filing claims, expanded from one year, will enable more women to file lawsuits with a greater amount of documentation and evidence. And with the extended two-year time frame, women will feel better about bringing cases to the court knowing that they have had a longer time to consider their decisions.

With the new Civil Rights Act of 1991, legislators as well as the American public can now look forward to the day when there will be no need for legislation to encourage support and respect among men and women alike. Hopefully, men will finally accept women as equals, not as threats or nuisances.

Fortunately, the fact that professional women are becoming more apparent is a strong statement on equal employment opportunity. The increasing number of women physicians is in part due to a reorganization of the health care industry, with many doctors becoming salaried rather than self-employed professionals. At the same time, competition for the more prestigious specialties has intensified in the medical, legal and academic fields. Newcomers face longer hours of work, increased pressure, higher standards of performance, relatively lower entry-level salaries and prolonged periods of employment insecurity. For these reasons, professional women are concentrated in the less preeminent specialties and workplaces. Female attorneys, for example, tend to cluster in family law, trusts and estates and public interest or poverty law. They are also
more likely to work in legal clinics where working conditions and opportunities for advancement are inferior to those in law firms. (Gatlin, p. 207)

Today, there are six times more women doctors, 15 times more women lawyers, 15 times more women engineers in the American work force than there were in the 1960s. And, even though women occupy many other jobs today where they were rarely found 20 years ago, gender bias is still common. The "old boy" network often works to exclude women from opportunities in upper-management, and gender-bias prejudices continue to exclude women from many jobs considered physically demanding or dangerous. (Deckard, pp. 162-163)

**WOMEN AND MINORITIES MAJORITY OF NEW JOB ENTRANTS BY 2000**

But, as Workforce 2000, a U.S. Government study shows, women and ethnic minorities will comprise 80 percent of new job entrants into the nation's work force by the year 2020. For that reason, employers must begin to plan for this diverse work force. The age group of 16-24 is the slowest-growing demographic group, thanks to the "baby bust" of the 70s and 80s.

The fact that attitudes toward professional women is slow in changing has alarmed many demographers who predict that women will comprise 47 percent of the work force by the year 2000. Women already represent more than half the nation's population; yet when working, women are more likely employed in marginal or low-skilled jobs. As long as sexism persists, affirmative action is needed so that women receive a fair shake in the labor force. The slow progression of equal employment opportunities robs society of valuable role models. Young people need outstanding adults — both men and women — as mentors and role models. They must see women as academic achievers if they are to accept them as peers and colleagues. (Wilson, p. 19)

Marion F. Berry, a professor of history and law at Howard University, and member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is optimistic about the future of Affirmative Action.

"The issue is no longer whether Affirmative Action will be upheld, but simply what kinds of plans are valid," Professor Berry said. "I would hope that finally opponents of affirmative action, including those in the Justice Department would understand that they should stop wasting the taxpayers’ money to oppose Affirmative Action and join in trying to enforce valid plans." (Fields, p. 2)
Recently, at a symposium conducted at the University of Notre Dame entitled, "Life in the 21st Century," Kate Rand Lloyd, Editor-at-large of *Working Women* magazine attributed most sex discrimination to the war of the sexes. She theorizes that men are afraid that women are catching up and may ultimately overtake men in the workplace.

They would be absolutely stupid if they said, "Gee, golly, we're sure glad you're here; why don't you take my job?"

She claims the battle will become more intense before men and women come to terms with each other. Sexism begins in the classroom. In a recent study conducted by the Sadkas (Myra and Dean Sadka, Dean and Professor, respectively, at the American School of Education), they found that teachers relate differently to boys and girls, talking more to boys and giving them more directions. In addition, teachers often give boys instructions so they can work independently, while they are more likely to assist girls in completing their tasks.

They also found that teachers praise boys for their intellectual qualities and girls for their neatness. If a boy fails, the teacher often tells him it is because he did not try hard enough; when a girl fails, the teacher is less likely to encourage her to try harder. Teachers discipline boys more, according to the survey. (Shapiro, p. 4a) "Girls begin elementary school ahead of boys in reading math, science and social studies," Anne L. Bryant, Executive Director of the American Association of University Women explains.

Further, she adds, that girls soon begin to fall behind in these subjects, and their lower achievement gap grows throughout their school years. The poll also found that while 60 percent of elementary school girls and 69 percent of boys proclaim they are "happy the way I am," by high school, the study revealed, 46 percent of boys express such feelings while the same attitude in girls drops to 29 percent. And, in another study in 1991, girls seem to do worse in school as they get older, according to Bryant. The study surmises that this occurs because young women suffer from a lack of confidence assertiveness and sense of authority that gradually increases during their elementary and secondary school years. (*Las Vegas Review Journal*, November 10, 1991, p. 2J)
Summarily, this quotation by Martin Luther (1533) presents a valuable perspective of this respected religious leaders' opinion of women.

Girls begin to talk and stand on their feet sooner than boys because weeds always grow up more quickly than good crops. (Starr, p.)

From my research it appears that two decades ago, nobody expected the "temporary expedients" evolving from the Civil Rights Act would remain in effect so long. But, the temporary alleviative measures show every sign of becoming permanent. Significantly, few Affirmative Action supporters even discuss it as temporary, for even the roughest measurement of success is proving achievable only through affirmative action.

Perhaps the best reason for affirmative action is evident in demographic statistics compiled by the U.S. Labor Department. They predict that by the late 1990s, the country will experience a serious labor shortage. This shortage will greatly reduce the number of entrants into the job market, and companies will be forced to hire more women and minorities to fill these jobs. These groups will account for more than 80 percent of the growth in the labor force for the rest of the century. The "baby bust" of the late 1960s and '70s may contribute more to affirmative action than mandatory legal remedies have so far. In their search for qualified employees, companies will concentrate more on skills and educational training, and not on how to circumvent affirmative action policies. (Hudson, p. 61)

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

One of the consequences of the resurgence of women into the work force has been the increase in the number of sexual harassment and sex discrimination claims. The reasons for the increased number of claims are varied, experts say. However, the consensus among civil rights professionals is that women are more conscious of what their rights are. Men have also not yet learned to differentiate how they should treat women in a work setting as opposed to a social one. Women have also observed that most of the major sex discrimination and sexual harassment cases have been settled in behalf of the victim and, consequently, women are no longer afraid of pursuing litigation. (Associated Press, November 23, 1988, p. 3A)
According to Gallegos, sex discrimination complaints climbed roughly 20 percent between 1982 and 1988. Charges of pregnancy discrimination exploded, shooting from 58 complaints in 1980 to over 4,000 in 1985. Complaints of exclusion, demotion and firings based on gender alone rose nearly 30 percent in the years between 1982 and 1988; complaints of general harassment, excluding sexual harassment, more than doubled. And since the testimony of Professor Anita Hill at the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings, the complaints of sexual harassment received by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has increased 71 percent. (CBS News, April 6, 1992.)

Locally, Nevada Equal Rights Commission Director Delia Martinez reported, at the 1990 Governor's Conference on Women, that 45 percent of all discrimination complaints her Reno and Las Vegas offices receive are for sexual harassment. Altogether, one-third are from casino employees (85 percent are usually settled in favor of the victim, Martinez said, and USA Today poll revealed that 42 percent of working women have been sexually harassed. (KTNV TV-13, November, 11, 1991)

This is the definition both federal and Nevada state (NAC) laws use in investigating sexual harassment complaints.

It is against the policy of the state for an employee, male or female, to harass another employee by:

1. Making an unwelcome sexual advance or a request for sexual favors, or other speech or physical conduct of a sexual nature;

2. Making the submission to or the rejection of such conduct the basis for employment decisions; or

3. Creating an intimidating, offensive or hostile working environment by such conduct.

(Added to NAC by Nevada Department of Personnel, 10/26/84)

And, according to a recent USA Today poll, Nevada ranks second nationally in the number of sexual harassment complaints filed:
## State and Cases of Sexual Harassment Complaints Filed per 100,000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Cases per 100,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>7.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

("KTNV TV-13 News," November 11, 1991)

One recent sexual harassment case, for example, resulted in a record $3.2 million settlement against the huge K-Mart chain. And, a survey released this year indicated that 90 percent of 160 Fortune 500 companies responding to a questionnaire reported receiving sexual harassment complaints. In the complaints, 42 percent involved deliberate touching. Actual or attempted sexual assault involved 1 percent of the cases. Eight of ten offenders received verbal or written warnings, and two out of ten eventually were fired. (Deckard, p. 387)

Employers can be held legally liable for financial damages if the case is proved that the employer or supervisor know or should have known that the sexually-harassing conduct was taking place at the workplace.

As in rape cases, sexual harassment is about abuse of power not sexual desire. Financial consultants estimate that sexual harassment claims cost each of the 160 Fortune 500 companies an average of $6.7 million in related low worker productivity, employee turnover and absenteeism. (Associated Press, November 23, 1988, p. 3A)

Sexual harassment comprises four distinct forms, according to Iris McQueen, a Sacramento-based writer who has published three books on the subject. The four forms are: physical, verbal, visual and written. And, within each category there is both sexual overt and subtle behavior that may or may not constitute sexual harassment. (Renzi, David, p. 1F)
CONCLUSION

In a recent court case (Ellison vs. Brady), the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit expanded the definition of sexual harassment much further. In what has become known as the "Reasonable Woman" test, on the sexual harasser they so much as said that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and so is sexual harassment. In this particular case, the court held that in order to evaluate whether a female employee has been sexually harassed, a proper legal standard must be applied. The court, therefore, set the standard that the challenged conduct must be viewed through the eyes of a "reasonable woman." The Court therefore concluded that the presence of a hostile environment should be judged from the perspective of the victim. In Ellison vs. Brady, the court rejected the gender-neutral standard of a "reasonable person," because that standard tends to be male-biased. It also tends to systematically ignore the experience of women. This decision placed an even greater liability on the employer. It sent a message telling companies that they must take strong and effective steps to remedy sexual harassment in the workplace, even if it means permanently removing the harasser. (Employment Counselor, p. 1)

Shared responsibility for home and family, equal treatment in the workplace, and a change in societal attitudes toward girls, women and minorities is required to achieve the goal of equality. But despite laws and executive orders requiring nondiscrimination, differential treatment of women and minorities has not disappeared, and equality of opportunity does not yet exist. Some of these problems are clearly economic. Others are societal. However, both have a negative impact on the achievement of women and minorities in the workplace and society in general. That economic inequity is creating a new layer of poverty: the female breadwinner. Even when the female head of the household is employed full time, she still remains, in most cases, below the poverty level. An earlier government study surmised that if working women earned the same salary as similarly-qualified men, the number of poor families would decrease by one-half. (Eitzen, pp. 273-277)

And as the gap between the rich and the poor also continues to widen it is resulting in
what is commonly referred to as "the vanishing middle-class." As this gap widens, sociologists predict that antagonism against women and ethnic minorities will increase. And, since more than 61 percent of women are expected to work in the national work force by the year 2000, the workplace could be incompatible for some. (Hudson, p. 41 and Hudson p. 43, Chap. 3)

My next chapter will examine what is supposed to be a mirror of society: films, and how women workers are portrayed. Mostly I will focus on the current trend in Hollywood toward male buddy-romp movies--movies that include women only as sex objects. It seems the only answer for more women as leading characters is for actresses to underwrite screen projects themselves, for they know that the sexism that is prevalent in Hollywood only serves to exclude women from key roles. But women are fighting back. And it is to their credit that major stars such as Meryl Streep, Sally Field, Goldie Hawn, Dyan Cannon and others are speaking out. Amazingly enough, people are listening. Perhaps with knowledge of the situation will change occur.
ENDNOTES

2. Professor Anita Hill is a faculty member at the University of Oklahoma, School of Law. Clarence Thomas is now a U.S. Supreme Court Justice.
Chapter 3

MOVIES AS A MIRROR OF REALITY

As my research has shown, throughout history in nearly every culture, women have been the subordinate sex. In some cases, this role has been accepted by the women themselves as the only possibility. But in many others, including the case of American women, they have been held back from achieving equal status with men and denied the circumstances favorable to reach their desired potential as contributors to society, whether in business, science, or in many instances, the arts. What has held these women back is not their inability to succeed on intellectual or functional levels, but by the men who hold the power positions: the leaders, the decision-makers, the key figures in nearly every industry.

My report will first focus on what was going on in the late 1960’s and early 70’s, and the correlation between that time frame and the movies released. And as perhaps a pre-Women’s Movement catalyst, how the melodramas of the 1930’s and 40’s portrayed women workers in films. I will provide insight into how sex, as a marketing tool, became a lucrative draw.

Fortunately, during the 1980’s many top Hollywood actresses began to bankroll their own film projects. Most of these movies became great successes and resulted in a reevaluation by leading producers and directors regarding what the general public really wanted in films.

Finally, I will explain the storylines of three Oscar-winning films that featured women as the leading characters, a phenomenon that is quickly declining. Fortunately, a number of leading actresses are working toward ensuring that does not happen.

HOW HOLLYWOOD TREATS WOMEN AS WORKERS

My perspective will highlight many important areas where change is vital. Most of that focuses on how society views women. And since society gets many of its ideas and stereotypes from film, that is an area that bears review. In this next section, I will present various eras in Hollywood and describe what the movie roles were which actresses filled and how the roles depicted women during that time frame.
As an industry, films could help mold perceptions in favor of women as professionals. Instead, many Hollywood producers prefer to cast women in the bedroom instead of the boardroom. Unfortunately, they are under the misconception that women cannot carry a movie as the lead. They do not think women’s stories can be as interesting. But fortunately that is changing, but not as fast as most would like, as I describe further on.

As we already know, the portrayal of working women in films is undergoing a somewhat transitional change. No longer is the movie industry collectively relegating women into traditional roles such as homemakers and seductresses. But this change is slow at best.

To its credit, Hollywood recently released a number of critically acclaimed films that show women as attorneys, entrepreneurs and even Wall Street executives.

First of all, if one is looking for an era where Hollywood depicted women as professionals, one could look at the World War II movies. During that era there were also many propaganda films that depicted women workers as Rosie the Riveter types. This kind of film probably caused greater harm to the women’s labor movement than anyone could have predicted. Traditionally, these films portrayed women workers as untiring, uncomplaining, subservient and as "temporary" solutions to the male labor shortage.

Yes, the women were eager and uncomplaining, but they also were patriotic and loyal to the war effort. Many of these perfectly staged films utilized young, attractive and freshly scrubbed women on the assembly lines in much the same way today’s television commercials sell deodorant. Could these women have possibly been actresses contributing toward the government’s propaganda machine that wanted women to work on the assembly lines while the men were overseas fighting World War II?

According to film analysts Edward Benson and Sharon Harmon Storm, most of the best films about working women of last five years are documentaries rather than Hollywood features. They speculate that filmmakers must now convince producers that stories about working women can become vast money makers. The authors contend that some movie studios have tried to
capitalize on the women's movement by making films about women, but their images are badly out of focus.

Since these films are marketed toward the middle class, they tend to exploit either the anxieties of the repressed housewife or the career woman, according to Benson and Harmon Storm. They further concluded that none have openly dared to portray a woman as a feminist, and only a few have been interested in the lives of working-class women and their struggles.

And, since Hollywood producers perceive movies as a form of escape for the masses, this is not especially surprising. Women provide the love interests and allow producers to capitalize on erotic aspects. This sensuality is then manipulated and transformed into highly successful marketing campaigns that sell tickets. (Benson, pp. 18-23)

**MELODRAMAS OF 30's AND 40's WOMEN**

In the thirties and early forties, most movies portrayed women as either the strong independent type or as the repressed, betrayed woman, never really focusing on worker-related problems. In 1945, and for the next decade, the melodrama took on darker tones. These films warned of the threat ambitious women presented and described in seemingly, realistic terms the many tragedies ahead. (Sochen, p. 5)

But just as the "Mildred Pierce Character" had to be destroyed to eliminate any troublesome thoughts held by working mothers, *Rosie the Riveter* and *Mildred Pierce* had to go home again. In the Depression 30's, a divorced housewife in business may have been portrayed as heroic; in 1945, she has to be reminded of her proper role. (Sochen, p. 13)

Film critic June Sochen claims the weepies, also known as the melodrama and the soap opera, always had a heroine whose suffering seemed unending, while the Independent Woman presented a strong and exciting career woman. During the Depression and war years, the Independent Woman image flourished in Hollywood.

But movies about women took an ominous turn after *Mildred Pierce*, which showed the lead actress as manipulative and cunning. The melodrama or tearjerker had the Independent
Woman types combined to produce destructive women. These women were unhappy about their domestic situations and usually expressed their unhappiness in brutal ways. (Sochen, p. 1p)

As mentioned earlier, the U.S. government has been instrumental in producing a share of propaganda films designed as persuasive in changing attitudes about women workers. Specifically, The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter presents two contrasting views. The first: recruiting of women for work in critical wartime jobs such as airplane assembly lines workers. The song from the film best sums it up:

While other girls are dancing in their favorite cocktail bar, drinking dry martinis, munching caviar, there's a girl that really puts them to shame. Rosie is her name. All the day long, whether rain or shine, she's a part of the assembly line. She's making history, working for victory. Rosie the riveter. She keeps a sharp look out for sabotage, sitting up there on the fuselage. Nothing the frail can do, more than a male can do on the assembly line. Rosie the riveter.

Rosie's got a boyfriend, Charlie. Charlie's a marine. Rosie's protecting Charlie, working overtime on the riveting machine. When they gave her the production team, she was as proud as a girl could be. There's something true about red, white and blue about Rosie, Rosie the riveter.

Everyone stops to admire the scene, Rosie at work on B-19s. She never twitters, nervous or jittery. Rosie, Rosie the riveter. What's a few smears full of oil and grease, doing her bit for the old lend-lease. She keeps the gang around. They love to hang around Rosie, Rosie the riveter. Rosie buys lots of war bonds. That girl really has sense; can't wait until she can purchase war bonds, working all her cash into national defense. They do a man's job. They're getting a man's pay and they're doing it safely, safer here than in their own home.4

But as the three former women assembly line workers interviewed on the film pointed out most of the work was extremely dangerous, with many women losing their lives on the assembly lines. So songs such as this were merely tools used to convince women workers they were desperately needed for the war effort.

But the agreement between women and their employers was for the women workers to leave their jobs without question when the war ended. However, many women enjoyed working and wanted to keep their jobs.

So as another means of getting the women back to the homefront, films such as "Rosie the Riveter" criticized working women. They chastised working women, claiming they contributed to
juvenile delinquency, unhappy husbands and that women became too independent when they worked. Also, that working interfered with their shopping, and that it was unhealthy for them. Food manufacturers even advertised recipes in magazines, newspapers and on radio programs that encouraged preparing intricate, gourmet dishes, dishes that took all day to cook. They wanted the women back in the home, and resorted to great extremes to return them to their rightful place: home and family. Critics claimed that working women, "Go home where you belong became the new battle cry." Everyone was worried because women had proven themselves, proven they could do a man's job and do it well.

**CHANGES IN ROLES FOR WOMEN INCLUDE SEX AS A MARKETING DEVICE**

Then movies in the 1970s assumed a new role in women's films. They began handling human problems in a realistic and honest confrontational manner. Unfortunately, filmmakers displayed their inability to deal with the women's liberation movement by ignoring the subject and by simply omitting women from the screen altogether.

Within this context, the kind of female portrayals that producers increasingly choose for women are roles as prostitutes. This characterization remains the most acceptable. But even within this image there is less and less variation. (Sochen, pp. 15-20)

Movies no longer provide either fantasy outlets or socially approved roles for women. They ignore them entirely. One major reason Hollywood has been able to effect this Great Disappearance Act against women is women moviegoers have cooperated. Re-searchers of audience tastes claim that women will watch men on the screen happily and not require the presence of women in the cast. (Sochen, p. 9)

As outsiders to the serious work of soldiers, cowboys or laborers, Hollywood typically views women as the routine love interests or as sex objects. This contradiction of the roles for actresses and women as professional business people was taking place when women were on the front lines fighting for equal rights.
ACTRESSES GAIN LEVERAGE BY BANKROLLING PROJECTS

However, with the recent addition of a few strong women as producers, i.e.: Sally Field, Jane Fonda, Dyan Cannon, Barbra Streisand, and Lee Grant, changes are beginning to occur in Hollywood.

These women as well as others have experienced great success in escaping the Hollywood conventions about class and sex roles. They have successfully confronted the issues of women's liberation, as evidenced by a number of critically acclaimed documentary and docudrama films these women have produced.

Most films critics agree that women must gain more key jobs in the film industry before movie roles become genderless, i.e. powerful world leaders, strong political figures, U.S. Supreme Court Justices and others. (Waugh, p. 47)

Notable female filmmakers such as Lee Grant, Martha Coolidge, Lizzie Borden and Susan Seidlman are hoping that the larger film studios will soon open the doors that have long been closed. The major studios have long regarded directing as a man's game, they say.

And as film critics Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert have pointed out male directors prefer directing action movies. Critic Siskel has also acknowledged that screenwriters — who are also mostly males — prefer writing action-type films. The reason is simple. Action films sell better on the oversees market because they do not require as many subtitles as romance films. (Siskel & Ebert, 1990)

"The action-adventure genre seems to be getting a little tired," acknowledges Hollywood Pictures' Ricardo Maestres.

Perhaps that will whet people's appetite for something different. If someone only feeds you peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, ham and cheese starts to look very good. One highly placed studio executive forecasts that just as teenage movies were replaced by cop-buddy movies, they, too will be edged out by the growing market for films aimed at the adult tastes. (Dudka, p. 18D)
YEAR 1990 MEANS A YEAR OF CHANGE FOR HOLLYWOOD

But an unusual phenomenon already occurred in 1990, a phenomenon that shocked the film industry. It happened when the two greatest money makers turned out to be "Ghost" and "Pretty Woman." "Ghost" placed first and "Pretty Woman" second. To date, "Ghost" has earned $470 million and "Pretty Woman" $411 million from worldwide circulation. Another surprising fact is that the cost for making these movies was an astonishing $22 million for "Ghost," and $13 million for "Pretty Woman." (Time, Fall 1990, p. 63)

Because of this development, Hollywood producers are taking much closer looks at the projects they develop. In fact, the chief of Walt Disney Studios has told his colleagues to avoid high-priced stars whenever possible, shun the blockbuster mentality that has gripped our industry and return to Disney's roots as a budget-minded film-maker.

Apparently, Disney studios share that assessment with other major studios because other studios are also giving second and third thoughts to all new projects. The successes of "Ghost" and "Pretty Woman" caught the film industry off-guard and forced top management into more analytical type of thinking.

These films succeeded beyond all hopes in a year when studios shelled out $30 million to $60 million to make films with big-name stars and fancy productions. Many of these budget busters (Among them "Another 48 Hrs," "The Bonfire of the Vanities," "Days of Thunder," and "Rocky V") fell short of expectations or flopped outright.

Major studios are now opting to offer top stars a cut of the ticket sales instead of paying a Bruce Willis or Dustin Hoffman $10 million right off the bat. (Time, Fall 1990, p. 64).

HOLLYWOOD REFLECTS SOCIETAL SEXISM

In the end, Hollywood reflects the sexism and racism of society in general, according to Susan Tarr, Vice-president of Isis Production Company. Tarr says, "Wealthy white males run the industry. There's a spate of violence and action covering the map — the product of male thinking and sensibility."

"Films mirror what's going on around them," adds a William Morris Agency official.
But as is the case in all other industries, Hollywood is about money. Filmmakers, like all other business people, look at the bottom line. They are not producing films merely for the sheer joy of sharing their ideas with others. They are producing films for the economic value essentially.

And as far as films mirroring society, that certainly does not appear to be the case. Because if that were true, there would be a proportionate number of females and ethnic minorities depicted at the same ratio as to their numbers in society.

One former studio head stated that it is almost impossible for a female to "open" or be the leading character. He claims the "females as the lead characters" concept does not work and that moviegoers shun those types of movies. *Ghost* succeeded conceptually, on its own terms, not because it had Demi Moore," he said. (Dudka, p. 18D)

**COMPARABLE WORTH IN HOLLYWOOD**

And that brings to mind the comparable worth issue in Hollywood. Meryl Streep is quoted as saying:

I make half of what Dustin (Hoffman) makes, half of what (Robert) Redford makes, half of what Jack (Nickelson) makes. There are different rules for men and women...and I think it stinks. (Dudka, p. 18D)

In the movie industry, so too on film, male characters outnumber females in on-screen portrayals, especially dramas. Male producers, writers and directors greatly outnumber females as well.

Statistics released by the Screen Actor's Guild in August, 1990 provided more depressing documentation. The statistics also revealed by the Screen Actors Guild show that actors earn twice as much as actresses and get 71 percent of all feature film roles — and the discrepancy increases with age. "Even the top actresses encounter career roadblocks as they approach their middle years, a time that is financially golden for their male counterparts." At last count, women over 40 earned less than 9 percent of all film and television roles.
Meryl Streep claims:

If the trend continues...by the year 2010 we may be eliminated from movies altogether. (Dudka, p. 18D)

The study also found that fewer than half of the characters in television series are women. This is a real tragedy since women are the majority of the nation’s population.

In dramas, men outnumber women by almost two to one. As performers, only 3 percent of female television characters are over 60, compared to 14 percent in real life. Behind the cameras, men comprise 85 percent of television’s producers, 91 percent of directors and 75 percent of writers. (Las Vegas Sun, November 14, 1990, p. 3A)

And as the figures also prove, women are still greatly underrepresented in all creative positions within the film industry. In 1983, for instance, female directors accounted for only two percent of the days worked on feature films. Fewer than 15 percent of all the feature films produced from April 1982 to April 1983 were written by women.

Of the 683 members of the Producer’s Guild, fewer than 100 are women. And, there is only one female director of photography in the American Society of Cinematographers. But worst of all, the place where all the action takes place — the film studios — employ fewer than 10 percent women as network and studio executives. (Rickey, pp. 49-55)

With statistics such as these, it is easy to understand why it is next to impossible for women to break into the motion picture business. The few women who do succeed, according to Martha Coolidge, must be twice as good as a man. (Wolt, p. 47)

Women filmmakers are usually offered teenage-romance movies and romantic comedies, while male directors get the action-oriented films or movies that deal with social issues, according to Penelope Spheeris ("Suburbia").

As veteran, low-budget director Barbara Peeters ("Humanoids from the Deep") notes, the discrimination is subtle. “The ‘old-boy network’ perpetuates itself,” she says.
Women and minorities don't have a lot of credits because they don't get a lot of jobs, and they don't get a lot of jobs because they don't have the credits.

Ironically, that quote is attributed to Carson Films president Richard Fisechoff.

(Wolt, p. 52)

In 1990, women directors accounted for only 5 percent of the films Hollywood released. But no women director has ever been nominated for an Academy Award even though women have directed a number of powerful box office hits. A classic example is "Prince of Tides" released in 1991, directed by Barbra Streisand. Streisand claims she does not feel the lack of a nomination was sexist, but based on a number of different factors. She did not elaborate on the different factors. (CBS News, March 16, 1992)

Perhaps Barbra Streisand summed up the situation best at the 1984 Women in Film Crystal Awards ceremony: "Every woman's failure closes the door another inch and every woman's success opens the door a little wider."

**WOMEN FILE DISCRIMINATION SUITS**

Improvement may be on the way, though. Recently, the Directors' Guild of America (DGA) filed discrimination suits against two of Hollywood's major studios, Warner Bros. and Columbia. The DGA is also considering suits against 19 other companies.

Of the 7,332 feature films released from 1949 to 1979, only fourteen were directed by women. Of 65,600 primetime television hours produced since 1949, women directed only 115. Thirty five of those were directed by one person, Ida Lupino, a director who owned her own company.

The committee requested a voluntary affirmative-action program to secure greater opportunities for women.

In March 1983, the DGA received a right-to-sue authorization from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. And hoping to avoid a showdown in court, the Guild once again initiated negotiations with the studios. But talks broke down, first with Warner Bros. and then with Columbia. After that, the DGA filed its first class-action suits.
"We wish there was another way," DGA executive director Michael Franklin says. "But we had no choice."

The suit against Columbia was filed five months later. Warner Bros. categorically denies any discrimination against hiring of women and minorities. It is the first major studio ever to face this kind of lawsuit.

"There's been some improvement," Joelle Dobrow, another director acknowledges. "But it's not really major committed change. And it's temporary. If the suit didn't exist, you know what would happen? We'd have a reaction of positive hiring for a year or two and then, pouf, it would disappear." (Wolt, pp. 47-54)

Unfortunately, both cases were "thrown out of court" by federal judge Pamela Rhymer from Orange County, California. Judge Rhymer ruled that the DGA did not have standing to represent women and minorities. And because the litigation was so expensive, neither the DGA nor the individual complainants had the financial resources to pursue further legal action. Interestingly, the judge was a Reagan Conservative appointee. (Chuck Warn, telephone interview, March 19, 1992).

Martha Coolidge says there are men who get shots at directing who have never directed in their life. She says that does not happen with women.

"City Girl," produced in 1984, gave Coolidge a chance to direct "Valley Girl." The film cost $325,000 and earned $17 million at the domestic box office.

The year "Valley Girl" was released was also the year that "Fast Times at Ridgemont High," directed by Amy Heckerling came out. Those two movies opened the doors a little, Coolidge says.

When Coolidge arrived in Hollywood, nobody was hiring women. Now twenty-four years later women are somewhat visible in major productions, albeit few and far between.

In 1968, fresh out of art school, Martha Coolidge applied to film school at New York University. At that time, she was challenged to name even five women directors. Now she is one of the most-respected women filmmakers in Hollywood. Her credits include award-winning films such as "David: Off and On" (1973) and "Old-Fashioned Woman" (1974). (Coolidge, pp. 16-19)
Women do not fare any better in getting television jobs either, as a recent study shows. The study was an 81-page report entitled, "What's wrong with this Picture?"

The yearlong study examined 80 prime-time programs on the ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox Broadcasting Company networks. The study assessed 555 television characters and the producers, writers and directors responsible for creating them.

Women continue to fare poorly on television — both on screen and behind the camera — despite significant gains over time and some notable, but scattered breakthroughs.

THREE FILMS ABOUT WOMEN WIN OSCARS

Most women agree that women workers are not taken seriously in Hollywood films. And, in actuality, few movies depict the lives of working women accurately. Fortunately, two films Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore (1975) and Norma Rae (1979) are the earliest postwar films that take into account the struggles and alienation women face in a working world ruled primarily by men.

Ironically, both leading actresses won Academy Awards for their brilliant portrayals of working women in these two popular films.

In Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore, recently widowed Alice Hyatt must sell her home and find a job after her husband is killed in a traffic accident.

Both attacked and defended on feminist grounds, this movie deals with the speculations and daydreams many women face as they enter middle-age. Alice must deal with a new situation, a situation she fantasized about many times: independence. As a young girl, Alice vowed to do things her own way. But by the time she reaches 35, Alice is married to an uncommunicative truck driver and the mother of a precocious 12-year-old son.

This film supplies perhaps the best example of how women strive for careers but end up in traditional low-paying jobs. Alice learns that lesson quickly when she decides to pursue a lifelong dream after she realizes that she is viewed as a "loose and easy mark" by the men she meets.
After securing more respectable work as a waitress, Alice gains insight into both her shortcomings and admirable qualities. Alice realizes she is a good mother and can again become someone’s loving wife. And, as with most Hollywood films, the film ends with the love interest taking the form of a decent man, this time a hardworking farmer. (Milne, pp. 188-189)

In *Norma Rae*, another young widow also encounters another kind of harassment: wrath and resentment. But this time, the intimidation is from her male co-workers.

Based upon a true story, this film centers around a woman’s struggle to bring unionization into her company.

Like everyone in town, Norma Rae works in the textile mill. The industry is prosperous. But after decades of great prosperity, the mill has no union, pays minimum wages and offers few benefits. And, worse yet, the company does little or nothing about brown lung disease.

Norma Rae is portrayed as happy, go-lucky and sexually promiscuous -- never excelling in anything. But with the help of a union organizer from New York, she becomes totally consumed by labor activities. However, her volunteer work as union organizer takes so much of her time that her new marriage falters. Luckily, Norma Rae and her husband decide that the struggle for better wages and safer working conditions are worth the sacrifice.

The movie allows the union organizer to describe the evolution of a new Norma Rae as a woman who slowly opens her eyes to herself and her world. Unfortunately, Norma Rae is never portrayed as an equal to the union organizer. To him, she is merely an entry into the factory he wants to organize. And, since this is an old-fashioned Hollywood-type film, it must include the always anticipated, traditional love story. The movie sets up the audience for the inevitable love interest between Norma Rae and the union organizer. But that never develops. And the film never reveals who Norma Rae really loves: her husband or the union organizer. Instead, the film is steadfast in its determination that Norma Rae is growing because of her own thought and will, not because she is under the influence of yet another sexual liaison. (Ebert, p. 527-528)
Ironically, another film about World War II women workers is similar in many respects to *Rosie the Riveter: Swing Shift* (1984). Goldie Hawn's character is unexpectedly thrust into the work force when her husband enlists in the Navy. But unlike the "Rosie the Riveter" movie, this "Rosie" encounters stiff opposition from her male co-workers, but recognition from her supervisors who promote her to "leadman" for her outstanding work. The men, especially the boyfriend she reluctantly becomes involved with, resent her new-found status. And even upon his return at war's end, her husband is also uncertain about her new authority.

Now, as we enter the twenty-first century there are a few films that present women in professional positions. One, in particular, depicts a "Rocky"-type heroine in a comedy-drama that earned an Academy Award for lead actress Melanie Griffith.7

In *Working Girl*, the obligatory sexism setup scenes occur during the first 15 minutes. And perhaps the greatest example of true sexism takes place when Tess (Melanie Griffith) and a male co-worker agree that Tess needs a better job:

Co-worker: "You're hungry. My friend Bob Almador's firm is looking for a new assistant, and he wants to meet you."

Tess: "Is this another setup?"

Co-worker: "Do I look like a pimp?"

As a result of that conversation, another scene shows Tess seated beside Bob Almador in the back seat of a stretch limousine. A somewhat inebriated Bob spills a drink on Tess' legs, and as he hurries to clean it up with his hands he makes several seductive moves in the process. During this same time frame, a pornographic movie is showing on the car video cassette recorder. The conversation:

Tess: "You're not really looking for a new assistant?"

Bob: "Well, not really. But I'm always looking."

Tess: "I'm hungry. But I'm not that hungry, Bob."


With that final statement, Tess demands that the chauffeur stop the car. She leaps out and finds herself again the object of attention as a car whizzes past and a male driver whistles at her.

In another early scene, Tess is modeling her birthday present from her boyfriend Mick. Clad in black garters, black hose and black bra, Tess whines:

"You know, Mick, just once I wish you'd give me a sweater or earrings; a present I could wear outside this apartment."

That scene fades out as Mick motions her into a reclining position.

Meanwhile at work, Tess moves into another department in the Wall Street brokerage firm she works where she finds a new, strong female boss. Tess is relieved when this boss announces that the organization is a team effort and she will be Tess' mentor in her climb up the ladder. But, poor Tess because another kind of setup looms on the horizon. (Ebert, p. 848)

The combination of sexism and snobbery are amazingly well presented in this fast-moving film. The only real criticisms I have are that it is difficult to believe a supposedly street-smart, college-educated woman could be as naive as Tess. The other criticism is that it seemed rather condescending in this fairy-tale story to pit women against women in their quest for both power and romance.

Films such as "Working Girl" are both condemned and lauded by feminists. But as denigrating as the obligatory sexism and sexual harassment scenes are, at least women workers are portrayed as professionals. For as corny as they appear now, these films still offer some semblance of role models for young women and girls.

**DYAN CANNON IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF AN ACTIVIST FOR CHANGE**

As Dyan Cannon describes the overall situation,

"The best way to handle all this stuff is to laugh at it...It's about all you can do in a business run by men essentially for male tastes." (Lovell, p. 4D)

Only when women directors secure more work and serious actresses such as Melanie Griffith, Goldie Hawn and Sigourney Weaver demand better, more compelling scripts, can women
workers gain better portrayals. Only then will women workers and their special problems and issues be presented in a more positive, professional manner.

Actress Dyan Cannon has received a number of directorial offers in the past five years, but has been noticeably absent from the big screen. Cannon says she is not condemning what is out there. "We just need more stories about women, not just little girls."

They (producers) cater to the youth audience.
You don’t see women, full-blooded women like
Myrna Loy or Carole Lombard—women who can be
both strong and vulnerable. These days, you
have to be one or the other. (Dudka, p. 18D)

Cannon is heartened by the fact that female directors — such as Randa Haines (The Doctor), Mary Agnes Donoghue (Paradise) and good friend Penny Marshall (Awakenings) — are making strides. But, Cannon says, "they’ve still got a long way to go."

I’ve got to tell you something: I’m so disappointed in the men in this business. They’re afraid to acknowledge women directors. Why wasn’t Penny (Marshall) nominated last year? I thought that men had bigger hearts than that?

She goes on to explain that everyone knows that movies such as Awakenings do not happen by themselves. Cannon blames the "men’s-club mentality" for the paltry number of director jobs open for women. All in all, though she continues: "What battle isn’t uphill?" Each one leaves a person stronger, she claims.

Cannon describes instances where the fighting was not worth the trouble. She points to one incident where prominent and renowned director Otto Preminger substituted a photo of another woman’s nude body onto Cannon’s face. The insert later found its way into a skin magazine.

I said straight up that I wasn’t doing nude scenes. Everyone agreed. But then when we started shooting, Preminger tried to coerce me into it. I said, 'don’t work in the nude.' So he took a nude body and attached my face. And it wasn’t even a good body.

Cannon chose not to make an issue of the body double, fearing it would draw more attention to the film. The later magazine exposure hurt, especially when her daughter received a copy from her boyfriend. (Lovell, p. 4D)
The fact that women at all levels in the film industry are forced to grovel for work does not speak well of the industry as a whole. Women are the majority of the population and deserve equal treatment based on talent. And as illustrated, movies about women can become box office hits, i.e. "Ghost," "Pretty Woman," "Norma Rae," "Baby Boom," "Working Girl," etc. Women in Hollywood must continue to fight for equality. Otherwise, there will be few women role models for girls as well as boys. Both need to see women as professionals, not only as love interests for the super hunk of the moment.

As we have seen, Hollywood is indeed in a state of crisis. How long can producers continue to pay the Sylvester Stallones the $15 million contracts? How long can they continue to offer a fourth or a fifth of that same salary to women who have Oscars to their credit? Many young actresses have more than one Oscar; i.e., Jodie Foster. How long can they continue to ignore directorial talents, such as Barbra Streisand, Dyan Cannon, Penny Marshall, etc.?

This decade of the 1990's will prove critical to the film industry as it relates to women workers in movies. Women are entering the workforce in droves. That means that women have more expendable money, money to buy movie tickets. Maybe this will be the decade that women will rise up in unison and finally say, "We've had enough; give us a true reflection of our lives, not Hollywood pap." For Hollywood really does not care which movies are blockbusters because the money all spends the same, and it is the right color: green.
ENDNOTES

3. James Cain, Mildred Pierce. A dark, suspenseful black and white movie about a drab, conniving California divorcee with two daughters to support. Distributed by Warner Brothers, starring Joan Crawford, 1945.


CHAPTER FOUR

THE COMBAT EXCLUSIONARY LAW AND WOMEN AS SOLDIERS

When one thinks of a typical workplace for women, one usually envisions traditional settings such as offices, restaurants, spacious malls with well groomed and friendly sales personnel. But there is one scenario few would name as a commonplace work setting. That location is at the forefront of a military battle as a combat soldier. That few can envision that as a workplace for women is not unusual. For the battlefield is the one place women are strictly forbidden from by public law. And this discrimination is serving to form the military's own special glass ceiling. But, unfortunately, this glass ceiling is legal.

As we have seen in previous chapters, sex discrimination is slowly eroding in most workplaces. Unfortunately, the United States military is not one of them. But discrimination is not new to the armed forces of this nation. First it was widespread with racial discrimination until President Harry S Truman ordered desegregation of all the armed services in 1948. Ironically, that was the same year Public Law 625 passed both houses of Congress. This law was ambiguous, but served to keep women from serving in combat positions. Some bureaucrats believe the law should not be repealed. Others want a review of the situation. The time is right for a thorough evaluation of this sexist legislation.

Also, in previous chapters, we have examined how women have managed to break into practically all of the other stereotypical male occupations, albeit at a very slow rate in some. But nevertheless, they have proven that brains, not brawn, are the requisite skills for this technological age. Therefore, women deserve the same equal employment opportunities afforded men in all jobs, including the United States military. Women are not second-class citizens, nor are they children, and should not be treated as either. Sexism is illegal in all workplaces, except the U.S. military.

For that reason, this chapter will investigate the role of women in the United States military, the last bastion of male domination. Specifically, this exploration will cover combat and
non-combat positions, career opportunities (in terms of promotion and leadership), recruiting and enlistment factors, training and education, assignments and factors influencing the retention of women soldiers in the armed services.

The 1991 Persian Gulf War and the 1989 Panama invasion put servicewomen in dangerous combat positions. More than 35,000 served in the gulf in supply units, flying support aircraft, with missile units and aboard Navy tenders. Although none of these were considered front line units, 11 women were killed and two taken prisoner. Modern warfare tactics and weaponry have nearly eliminated the line between the "front" and "rear" positions on the battlefield. (Newsweek, August 5, 1991, p. 24) After the war, Congress reopened the debate concerning whether women should be allowed to serve in combat units.

But women as warriors is not a new phenomenon. Warrior queens led their armies to victory over the Roman Legions. During the Fifteenth Century, Joan of Arc led French troops to victory over the English invaders, after French armies lead by male generals had been defeated. During the Vietnam War, it was the Viet Cong women who were the more disciplined, the tougher, who were the most willing to make sure their enemy wasn't going to come back at 'em in future battles. (Newsweek, August 5, 1991, p. 30)

In 1775, the Second Continental Congress authorized that a "...matron be allotted to every 100 sick or wounded." Ever since then, women have served as nurses at or near the battle fronts of every war the United States has been involved in. However, it was not until World War II that women were incorporated into the U.S. military on a permanent basis.

MODERN WARFARE REQUIRES MORE BRAINS THAN BRAWN

But, before we consider further the intricacies involved in how women entered the armed forces, we must consider three important factors that allowed women to be utilized in the military initially.

1. Changes in technology have greatly reduced the number of tasks that require great physical strength. Although the average man is still much stronger than the
average woman, strength requirements are no longer the great barrier they once were for women. (Holm, pp. 21 and xv)

2. During any war, the most basic element is people. The military obviously needs more personnel in war than during peacetime. When it simply cannot get the required numbers of men, nations have no choice but to use women. Two examples are the U.S.S.R. during World War II and Israel since its birth in 1948.

3. Public attitudes change during times of war. War is a condition that requires the efforts of everyone doing his or her part. Nazi Germany made a big mistake by keeping women at home during the World War II to raise children. In America, the attitude that a woman's place was in the home quickly changed. Germany had no comparable figure to America's "Rosie the Riveter," the woman who worked in the war plant while her husband went to war.

WOMEN PROVED VERSATILITY IN TWO WORLD WARS

During World War I, the U.S. military used women not only as nurses but in some jobs that men normally performed. The slogan was "release our men for combat." General George Pershing asked that women actually enlist in the Army for support duties, but he was refused. Women did work as telephone operators overseas under contract to the Army, however, and replaced many men.

The Navy also needed more manpower. The Secretary of the Navy found there were no laws that specified a yeoman must be male. The Navy enlistment clause stated "person," rather than man. Subsequently, 12,000 women enlisted in the Naval Reserve. During the war they took over the desk jobs that men previously held.

The United States faced unprecedented manpower problems in 1942. The Army was already 160,000 men short by the summer of 1942. Nevertheless, the WAAC legislation had strong opposition in the Congress. The bill establishing the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) was finally passed because of the pressure of the war and the support of military leaders such as
General George Marshall. This was the only women's organization other than the nursing corps authorized to serve in the Army. It was soon renamed the Women's Army Corps or WAC.

Women were now in the military on a permanent basis. They had cleared the first hurdle. But other hurdles remained: the fight for real equality. (Bevins, 1990)

However, not everyone feels the same, as confirmed by a quote by former U.S. Senator and former presidential candidate Barry Goldwater. He claims:

Women are hard enough to handle now, without giving them a gun. (Starr, p. 184)

But, the public's attitude toward women in the military appeared to change somewhat during the Persian Gulf War. This was especially noticeable when two women were actually taken as prisoners of war and held by Iraqi troops. And, recently a memorial honoring women soldiers was announced and built at the gateway to Arlington National cemetery.

To date, 1.8 million women have served in the U.S. military. Now, all of these women veterans, plus active duty female military personnel, in the reserves or the national guard will be honored by a Women in Military Service for America memorial. (Parade Magazine, November 10, 1991, p. 29)

Women attained permanent status in all branches of the Armed Forces in 1948 with the passage of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act. However, the original act did not restrict women from combat positions.

PUBLIC LAW 625 NOT EASILY DEFINED

Public Law 625 specified under 10 U.S. Code Sec. 8549 that the Air Force was prohibited from assigning female members to duty in aircraft engaged in combat missions, excluding medical, dental, chaplains and other "professionals." Section 3012 provides that the Secretary of the Army may assign, detail and prescribe the duties of members of the Army, while Sec. 6015 prohibits permanent assignment of Navy women to duty on vessels or on aircraft that can be expected to be assigned a combat mission.

Unfortunately, the law does not prohibit the services from applying the exclusions to units
other than aircraft and ships, nor does it define "combat missions."

Concerning combat, Public Law 625 states that the Air Force must restrict women from combat missions and positions that have a high risk of capture.

The Marine Corps identifies direct combat as having enough positions to form two Marine Expeditionary Brigades for each of the three Fleet Marine Expeditionary Forces.

However, the Army defines combat as direct combat or engaging an enemy with individual or crew-served weapons while being exposed to direct enemy fire, a high probability of direct physical contact with the enemy's personnel, and a substantial risk of capture.

Basically, the Army's policy since 1983 has been to code each position according to the Direct Combat Probability Code (DCPC) or the probability that the soldier would be involved in direct combat. The assessment is based on the duties of the job specialty, the unit's mission, tactical doctrine and battlefield location. Ultimately, positions with the highest probability are coded "P1" and the lowest "P7".

Current Army policy prohibits the permanent assignment of women to positions coded P1. However, women are not barred from combat-support and combat-service support positions that may routinely bring them into the P1 location on the battlefield.

U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN BACKS WOMEN IN COMBAT

And there is where the actual controversy arises. (Congress of the U.S. Fact Sheet, January 20, 1990) As a means of correcting the inequities involved in these military interpretations, U.S. Representative Pat Schroeder (D-CO) has introduced legislation designed to end the debate:

... direct the Secretary of the Army to carry out a four-year test program to examine the implications of the removal of limitations on the assignment of female members of the Army to combat and combat-support positions.

As part of this Congressional Bill, Sec. 3, entitled "Annual Reports to Congress," provides for the Secretary of Defense to submit an evaluation from the Secretary of the Army on the test program. And in the final evaluation, the Secretary of Defense will include any recommendations
for permanent changes in regulations establishing limitations on the assignment of female members of the Army. (H.R. 1, pp. I-III)

**WOMEN SOLDIERS INELIGIBLE FOR TOP JOBS**

Currently, women comprise 11 percent of U.S. military strength. Of these 225,000 troops, 32,000 are officers; only nine hold the rank of general. (Eskin, pp. 20-21)

However, none of these women — including the Generals — is eligible to work in 12 percent of the military job titles because these positions are classified as combat-related. Despite these restrictions, women now serve in units as close to combat as the supply planes and ships that enter battle zones. (Schrof, p. 61)

But the Congressional law enacted in 1948 bars these women from direct combat and, by extension, from all jobs viewed as hazardously close to combat where the risk of capture is high. And while this exclusion is interpreted by many as sex discrimination, it is further compounded by the fact that even the Pentagon acknowledges that combat experience is not only a push toward promotion, but in the top ranks a prerequisite. (Scholastic, p. 21)

In addition, the Army policy not only keeps women from serving in units designated for combat, but an act of Congress forbids them from joining the combat sections of the Navy and Air Force. As a result, nearly half of the nation's 2.1 million military jobs are legally off-limits to women. And, these jobs include assignments to units such as infantry and artillery. (Scholastic, p. 20)

But that exclusion is proving difficult to enforce. During the Panama invasion, a number of the 771 women on duty actually engaged hostile Panamanian forces. When U.S. Army strategists dispatched Capt. Linda Bray's military police unit to secure a dog kennel on December 20, 1989, they had no way of knowing it would make military history. And Capt. Bray certainly had no idea either of any historical significance when she led her troops into a mission designed to secure a Panamanian dog kennel.

Instead, the platoon encountered a full-blown firefight. As part of that firefight, Bray was
forced to crash the kennel gate in a machine gun-armed jeep to help in the battle. The toll: three Panamanian Defense Force members killed and one enemy soldier captured. Capt. Bray's troops suffered no casualties in the military action. (U.S. News and World Report, January 15, 1990, p. 12) But, while their male counterparts are eligible for the Combat Infantry Badge, these women military personnel are prohibited by Army policy from receiving the medal solely because of their gender.

Women were also at the forefront during other recent skirmishes. For instance, they flew on the tankers that refueled bombers in midair during the 1986 Libyan operations. And when the U.S.S. Arcadia sailed in the Persian Gulf, 258 women were on board as active-duty military personnel. During the Grenada invasion, 270 women served as military police, signal operators and munitions specialists. (Eckman, pp. 63-64)

Air Force women fly tankers that refuel bombers at 400 mph. Sixty-five feet underground, they are ready to launch nuclear ballistic missiles. (Bevins)

In pointing out the number of ways women have distinguished themselves in battle situations, Rep. Schroeder says:

Once you no longer have a definable front, it's impossible to separate combat from non-combat. The women (in Panama) carried M-16s, not dog biscuits. (U.S. News II)

Fully aware of leadership skills among women such as those of Capt. Bray, the director of the National Security Council, General Colin Powell is quoted as saying: "We can no longer go to war without women." (McCall's, p. 63)

MALE SOLDIER-AUTHOR AGAINST G.I. JANES

At the other end of the issue though, a 1989 book entitled Weak Link: The Feminization of the American Military challenges the fitness of women, in general, for military duty of any kind. In the book, former infantryman and officer Brian Mitchell contends that women are incapable of performing critical battlefield functions. He claims women Marines are not allowed to throw live grenades because the Marine Corp does not believe women can toss them far enough to avoid
injury.

Additionally, Mitchell claims the Department of Defense is succumbing to political pressure from feminist groups when it promotes the role women play in the military. *(Time, January 15, 1990, p. 29)* Mitchell also cites armed services statistics that allege higher levels of medical absenteeism and attrition among women than men, and further claims that at any given time 5 to 10 percent of the women in the military are pregnant.

He specifically blames feminist groups for forcing military officials to lower physical strength standards and for threatening military readiness by pandering to family problems of military couples. *(U.S. News, November 20, 1989, p. 12)*

All of the services have double standards for men and women on all the events of their physical fitness tests. Young male Marines must perform at least three pull-ups to pass the test, but women Marines must only hang from the bar with arms flexed for 16 seconds. In the Army, the youngest women are given an extra three minutes to complete a two-mile run. All the services require men to perform more sit-ups than women, despite the much vaunted strength of the female midsection. *(Roessner, pp. 1d-2d)*

According to Mitchell, the repeal would expand greatly the pool of possible recruits and simplify the services’ personnel management systems, enabling them to make more efficient use of all personnel.

Even Mitchell agrees with the sexism involved in barring women from all combat jobs in the military:

The feminization of the American military is perhaps the greatest peacetime military deception ever perpetrated. It masks a continuing drive toward full sexual equality in the military, which will only be achieved when women are no longer barred from combat and when the number of women in the military matches the numbers of men. *(Mitchell, p. 45-47)*

But as we have seen, women have been “in” the U.S. military as long as there has been a nation. Women in the Revolutionary War served only in an unofficial status, although such heroines as Mary McCaully distinguished themselves during action in that status. Despite heroics such as those of McCaully, women have not been permitted into direct combat. However, women
in this century have served at the battlefront, officially as nurses, starting with World War I.

The Navy (in World War I) called (the women nurses) 'yeomanettes,' the Marine Corps 'marinettes.' These terms implied that the women were seen as little or 'mini' service people. Florence Nightingale was a proper role model for the women in uniform, it was decided, and not Sergeant Furry, combat hero.

During World War I, however, "women really proved what they can do":

'Free A Man To Fight' was a recruiting call answered by some 265,000 women. They served in all of the services — Army, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard. (The Air Force was at that time part of the Army.) Women served worldwide in jobs ranging from communications to gunnery instruction, jobs that sometimes took them into combat areas. Several military nurses serving in the Pacific became prisoners of war in the Philippines and in Guam. Others were victims of the enemy attack and lost their lives serving their country. (Marrs, p. 19)

And since World War II the number of women on active duty in the armed forces in general has gradually increased. However, after World War II, the number of women in the armed forces was limited by law to 2 percent of overall military strength, meaning only two of every hundred individuals in uniform could be women. The law was repealed in the 1950's and women began to increase in number; they were also provided the opportunity to compete, at least to some degree, for higher rank. Consequently, to date, no war, not the two World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, Panama or the Persian Gulf, has seen women "officially" play any role in combat.

If there is one area that today continues to differentiate most powerfully between men and women it is this area of combat. In fact, as Jason Berger argues in *The Military Draft*, almost every aspect of the conditions of women in the Army is deeply influenced by the exclusion of females from combat roles. The fact that women are treated as generally inferior by the armed forces is an institutional reality, rather than an incidental one. The Army would have no reason to exist were it not for the fact or threat of harm to our nation and the military need to defend against aggression. Therefore, any individual or group of individuals excluded from participation in the central element of the organization cannot be expected to be treated equally. And that inequality is precisely what we find in today's armed forces, despite claims to the contrary by the public relations office of the Department of the Army, or the advertising, "Be all that you can be in today's Army." (Berger, p. 139)
TO BE IN COMBAT OR NOT TO BE

This section of my research study focuses upon assessing claims made by both sides of the controversy surrounding whether women should serve in direct combat positions. While there were numerous factors that precipitated the military’s inclusion of women, clearly the abolition of the draft and the subsequent creation of the All-Volunteer Force in 1973 were critical.

However, it is important to remember that there is basically no U.S. law that prevents women from serving in combat. But, there are two laws that preclude the permanent — not temporary — assignment of Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force women to duty on certain ships and planes in certain conditions or "situations," as determined by the individual service. The Army has no legislative restraints on the assignment of women.

The main point of this study up to now is that the role of women in the military was minimal until after the Vietnam War. In the military, as in many other occupations, women were not needed or wanted. This was not because they could not meet the standards or do the jobs, but because they were not allowed an equal opportunity to compete for the jobs.

As Jack D. Foner emphasizes in Blacks and the Military in American History, the situation of the black women serving in World War II was similar to the one faced by American black women at home. He particularly highlights the situation for women in general, but at a greater extent due to dual discrimination. For example:

By the summer of 1945 there were 120 black officers and 3,961 black enlisted women on duty with the Women's Army Corps . . . However, the black women WACS made the same charges of discrimination in assignments as those made by black and non-black women in other branches of the Army.

Black women suffered far greater discrimination than white women, however: "Black women were . . . sent to only cooks' and bakers' schools instead of to higher technical schools (and) white women were . . . assigned to field jobs while Negro women were not."

Foner argues that in essence the same discrimination awaited the female soldier in Vietnam. But perhaps because of the impact of the early stages of the women's liberation movement and the later stages of the civil rights movement, the women in the Vietnam War
suffered more subtle experiences and exclusions. In neither World War II nor the Vietnam War, however, were attitudes toward women and war sufficiently altered to allow women in combat roles. (Foner, pp. 166-168)

Despite the fact that conditions have improved for women in many ways since both World War II and Vietnam, the inequality remains. Many believed that through civil rights legislation and the women's liberation efforts, there would be greater demand for women in the military which would ensure more equitable treatment. But that equal treatment remains elusive.

**OCCUPATIONAL SEXISM IN ARMED FORCES**

Women in the early 1990's comprise approximately 11 percent of the total military strength. In 1972, the total was only 2 percent. Eight percent of all of the officer corps are women, meaning that despite their exclusion from combat they are still able to move into the equivalent of upper management in the Army. However, Berger estimates that had women not moved into the Army at such substantial numbers since the lapsing of the Selective Service's draft authority, "the U.S. military may have been forced . . . to abandon the all-volunteer military and go to a draft." (Berger, p. 139)

In *Blue-Collar Jobs for Women*, Muriel Lederer writes that recruitment of women in the Army has been upgraded to reflect the military's need for women:

> In the Army, a woman doesn't just sign up anymore; she discusses 'career development' with an Army representative (and) if qualified, a contract guaranteeing personal choice of a career field is offered. (Lederer, p. 193)

Many of the most obvious forms of discrimination against women in the Armed Forces have been eliminated (Marrs, p. 24) The biggest limitations women still face are the Congressional combat restrictions and the Congressional limit on women in all branches of the services. Once a woman has entered the Army, she is not eligible for training that might involve combat. Currently this means women are excluded from 12 percent of the positions in the Army.

For the remainder of options in technical, mechanical, communications, electronics and other areas, women are eligible and receive all that men do.
Regarding recruiting, the same opportunities and restrictions apply — combat-related assignments are not available. There "is no discrimination against women in (the) administration" or requirements for assignments, although if, for example, a specific assignment calls for heavy lifting, the woman, as would any man, must be able to do the physical work. (Marrs, p. 27)

Regarding geographical assignments, Marrs writes that limitations are present. One has to do with the absence of facilities for women at small isolated posts, and another has to do with the nature of the culture of another nation. In Saudi Arabia, for example, military women are looked on with "disfavor and even disgust." Aside from such restrictions, however, and already-mentioned combat-related areas, women are not excluded. (Marrs, p. 31)

Regarding promotions, the sources indicate, again, that the restrictions are few and are at least technically (overtly) not based on gender.

"... the higher military grades — especially in the officer ranks — are pretty much reserved for those who do or may, in time of war, operate and manage the machinery of combat — tanks, planes, ships and missiles. To the extent that women are excluded from assignment to these jobs, promotional opportunities are limited . . . However, this limitation should not affect (the female soldier) during her first enlistment and her first few years on active duty." (Berger, p. 141)

Marrs further writes that the retention rate for women is about half that of men although this might be explained by the fact that the drop-out rate in basic training for women is about twice that of men. For those women who seek out and participate fully in the training and educational opportunities the Army offers, the retention rate is somewhat higher. So many women are satisfied with their first hitch that 54.5 percent reenlist compared to 48.2 percent for their male counterparts. Although most women still choose administrative and medical fields, some are venturing into areas regarded as exclusively male territory such as flying missions, repairing planes and assorted motor vehicles, operating in intelligence units, serving as officers aboard ships and sometimes even commanding brigades.

And despite limitations based on public law, these new and varied occupations also take women into areas where they are inevitably exposed to greater danger during hostilities. As a result, they also join other exclusively male domains in one other way: they are also more likely
to be killed while fulfilling their assignments. (McCall's, p. 63)

But the military service is not for every woman no more than it is for every man. It is a demanding life physically with heavy responsibilities that cannot be shirked. Then why are so many women joining the armed forces? Basically, women are enlisting into the armed services for the same reasons men do. They can learn new job skills, qualify for educational benefits, build a military career and also fulfill a patriotic duty. (McCall's, p. 64)

Unfortunately, a woman's military career advancement is limited under the current federal law, according to David J. Armor, Ph.D., a sociologist and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Air Force Management and Personnel.

As long as there is combat exclusion, there will be career limitations for women. If you want to change that, you've got to change Congress; you've got to change the people in this country, many of whom believe women should not be war fighters. (Holm, p. 169)

WOMEN SOLDIERS AND PHYSICAL FITNESS TESTS

But even though nearly 1.5 million American women are veterans today and another 230,000 are on active duty, risking their lives for their country, their country is reluctant to let them. Our northern neighbor has changed its law against allowing women in combat. Just last year Canada decided to accept women in all combat forces except on submarines. And Sweden also dropped its ban last year, though in both countries rigorous physical tests will probably keep most women out of the infantry. (U.S. News, January 15, 1990, p. 12)

Recent Army studies indicate that women's physical strength develops rapidly during training. But as the head of a Defense Advisory Committee, Meredith Neizer notes, intelligence and technical skills are also important to a soldier:

Modern war is fought in a variety of arenas and the slightest physical differences don't have to play a role. (Time, January 15, 1990, p. 29)

All military personnel undergo annual physical fitness tests that include push-ups, sit-ups and a distance run among other activities. Determined by each service, the physical fitness standards vary in degree with each service setting higher standards for men. However, there are
interesting variances. For example, West Point's standards for women cadets' physical fitness are
the same as the standards for men in the active Army, and Army women are held to higher fitness
standards than those designated for Navy men.

The Army and Air Force have an upper body strength standard intended to relate
to the work in a particular job specialty. In this way, individuals that lack the
appropriate standard for upper-body strength are screened out of the more
vigorous jobs. The Air Force's standard called the 'x factor' is higher than the
Army's standard for heavy jobs. The Navy applies no upper-body strength factor
in the assignment of recruits to specific job specialties.

Given appropriate assignments, varying degrees of physical strength do not
detract from or degrade military unit effectiveness. Mitchell himself admits "the
Air Force (rejected) WITA (Women in the Army Study) findings on physical
strength because the WITA study group had assumed but not proved that soldiers
who lacked strength to perform assigned tasks actually degraded unit
effectiveness." (Becraft, p. 49)

And on the issue of overall effectiveness, the anthropologist Margaret Mead suggested that
men do not want women as fighters because they fear women might be too good at killing.

It is possible that the historic refusal to give women weapons... may be due not
to a rejection of putting the power of death into the hands of those who give life,
but rather because women who kill on behalf of the lives of their children are
more implacable and less subject to chivalrous rules with which men seek to mute
the savagery of warfare. It may be that women would kill too thoroughly and
endanger the negotiations and posturing of armies, through truces and
prisoner-taking with which nations at war eventually manage uneasy breathing
spaces between war. (Bevins)

REP. SCHROEDER CITES WEAKNESSES IN ANTI-WOMEN COMBAT ARGUMENT

However, Rep. Schroeder obviously disagrees with these arguments. In introducing
legislation against combat-exclusion, she stated that the military's arguments against allowing
women in combat are based on three weak points. The "protection" issue is a sham, she claims,
because the Army evaluates the jobs available to women in terms of their theoretical proximity
to the battlefield.

However, the realities of modern warfare, whether missiles or guerilla tactics, make it
difficult to define a field of battle. Regardless of their positions, military personnel are likely to
be exposed to danger since contemporary battle doctrine calls for striking first at the supply lines
instead of the front lines.

Second, Congresswoman Schroeder discusses the view that repealing the combat exclusion law weakens the military. She points out that current demographic studies indicate a shortage of males eligible for military service. In fact, as the pool of eligible males for military service shrinks, the military will have to look for qualified women to fill the gap.

Third, Rep. Schroeder argues that the combat exclusion law neither reflects public opinion nor everyday realities of war or citizen life. Opponents claim that the American public is not ready to accept women being wounded or killed in combat. However, the public already accepts women in such dangerous jobs as police officers and firefighters.

**PUBLIC OPINION FAVORS WOMEN IN COMBAT DESPITE STUBBORN BUREAUCRATS**

Public opinion polls do show that support of military women is strong. For example, a 1982 National Opinion Research Center poll reported 84 percent of the American public supported maintaining or increasing the number of Women in the armed forces in offensive combat roles; 62 percent favored women as jet fighter pilots; 59 percent as missile gunners; 57 percent as crew members on combat ships. (Becraft, p. 50)

As further evidence that the will of the American people favors the removal of the combat exclusion law, Maj. Gen. Jeanne Holm adds that the exclusionary law was "imposed by the whims of one man, who happened to the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee in 1948."

There was never anything like a public debate on women in combat. It was a non-issue until the ERA came up for enactment in 1970. And what discussion there has been since that time has been largely ideological and emotional rather than factual and informed, even within Congress.

Accepting women into direct combat positions could take some of the social pressure off men who really do not want to serve in the military in the first place.

Concerning the contention that it is easy to define combat and make clear distinctions between what does and does not constitute combat duty, and what is or is not a combat mission, Maj. Gen. Holm makes a strong point:
Technology has expanded the range and destructiveness of weapons so that entire nations are potential targets and entire nations lie exposed to enemy attack. The distinctions that each of the services has drawn between ship and shore, between combat and noncombat ships and airplanes, between combat and noncombat missions are as artificial as they are arbitrary. They were drawn for the primary purpose of circumscribing women's roles, particularly in relation to the service academies. If all the women were discharged tomorrow, most of the distinctions would be abandoned the day after. This process of drawing distinctions has divided the military into two castes: on the one hand is the shrinking minority of people classified as warriors, who occupy the elite combat enclave; and on the other is the great bulk of service people, including all women. (Holm, pp. 394-395)

But the actual interpretation of Public Law 625 accounted for a lot of wrangling in the 1980s, focusing, as well on the implementation policies of each service. And each service at different times spends considerable effort trying to define combat exclusion policies strictly to eliminate or constrain the expansion of roles for military women. During these efforts, military analysts examined every hypothesis that would possible prove that women do not belong in the armed services. All the branches collected data but were ultimately forced to admit that they could not present any factual data to show that the presence of women hampered military performance. In fact, Department of Defense statistics proved the opposite. (Becraft, p. 51)

Other published reports further confirm this analysis:

Military officials say women are worth the trouble because they are better disciplined, less insubordinate and worthy of quicker promotions than their male counterparts . . . There is even a growing drive inside the Pentagon to give women direct combat positions partly because of the declining male recruitment pool and partly because modern high-tech warfare relies more on know-how and less on bulk strength. But that decision won't be made until this long-running debate plays out even longer. (U.S. News, January 15, 1990, p. 12)

Additionally, women tend to have higher levels of education and perform well on written advancement examinations as well as more often demonstrating greater poise, composure and eloquence before promotion boards. Perhaps that accounts for the fact that women are promoted at a faster rate in all services and in all ranks and grades up to general officer level. Also, their selection rate for schools and command is comparable to, and often better than, the rate of men. (Becraft, p. 49) According to Maj. Gen. Holm, the official history maintained during campaigns in North Africa and Mediterranean areas shows that men were 89 times more likely to go AWOL,
85 times more apt to get drunk, and 150 times more apt to commit offenses. (Holm pp. 84-85)

And as this research has shown, the nature of modern warfare has evolved to such a degree that the requirement for sheer brawn has been replaced by the need for well-educated, intelligent people. America needs military personnel who are capable of understanding how to operate and maintain equipment of ever-increasing complexity and technological sophistication.

The time has come to end this charade and recognize that the entire defense establishment is a combat organization whose mission is to deter wars and, when required, to fight them. Everyone must accept the fact that modern wars are "fought" not just by an elite class of people classified as "combatants," but by all who serve as a team effort.

(Holm, p. 396)

Both the moral and ethical issues beg for equality in this controversy. Now more than ever before in our nation's history, our armed forces must make maximum use of the talents of the resources available to maintain the professionalism of the military establishment. Maj. Gen. Holm, quoting John Stuart Mill, suggests this quote as a sign of our times:

Is there so great a superfluity of men fit for high duties, that society can afford to reject the services of any competent person? Are we so certain of always finding a man . . . for any duty or function of social importance which falls vacant, that we lose nothing by putting a ban upon half of mankind and refusing beforehand to make their faculties available, however distinguished they may be . . . ? (Holm, p. 397)

Other countries are arriving at that conclusion. For example, of the other major nations in the free world, only Great Britain, Canada and Japan requires neither registration nor conscription. However, of the some seventy-five other countries that register and/or conscript persons into armed services, the Defense Intelligence Agency reports that nine include women: Algeria, Chile, Israel, North and South Korea, Peru, Romania, Vietnam and what was formerly known as the USSR. Everyone in Israel registers at 17. At 18, men serve three years; women two. Women married by 18 serve in reserves only; mothers and pregnant women are exempt. (Holm, pp. 360-361) Israeli women have served in direct combat, but do not in 1990. (Weinstein, May 7, 1990)
And in the end, maybe it all boils down to as simple an explanation as the one national columnist Barbara T. Roessner offers:

We won't give them the Combat Infantryman Badge . . . We can't even decide what combat means. A full 11 percent of our armed forces is now female, and we spend millions recruiting them, training them, preparing for any eventuality — including annihilating the enemy — and then we tell them they're non-combatants. But by the way go ahead and fight, sort of.

We say all this springs from some primal need to protect them from danger ("women and children first"), and then we penalize them both financially and psychologically, denying them promotions, commendations and higher levels of salary and decision making. (Roessner, p. 2d)

PUBLIC LAW 625 IS SEXIST

Viewed in the context of the 1990's, Public Law 625 is a classic example of pure sexist legislation. However, this law inaccurately reflects the prevailing societal/cultural attitudes of the post-war period concerning women's roles and legal status. If the military would have completely integrated women into the armed forces in 1948 with fully equal status, it would have been totally out of character with that stage in the evolution of women's role in American society. Maj. Gen. Holm suggests that if the threat of another war had not existed and the assumption that women would again be needed, it is doubtful this unjust law would have passed. (Holm, p. 127)

Society, in general, must begin to view women as more than the nurturers, the caregivers. It must view women in both roles, as hunters and gatherers. For not only are more women than ever classified as single heads of households, but the armed services are becoming a very real career option for women.

And as we stand at the threshold of the twenty-first century, political circumstances throughout the world are changing before our very eyes. There is a rebirth of the women's movement, due in part to the current debate over the abortion issue. These political changes could prove the catalyst for change within the U.S. military system.

Events such as these may prove divergent forces for the repeal of Public Law 625. For the fact also exists that a peaceful coexistence is now possible between the United States of America and the all those republics formerly under Soviet rule. This political environment will
most likely make it highly improbable that Congress will rescind the combat exclusion law for women. After all as we have seen, the issue resurfaces only after a war or a military crisis, i.e.: World War II, Vietnam, Panama, Kuwait, etc.

In fact, the acronym WAVES stands for Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service. And, it took another crisis before women were allowed into the military after the Versailles Peace Treaty. World War II again brought our nation's need to use manpower of both sexes for national defense. During World War II, more than 265,000 entered the military. And again the idea that inspired women to enter was "to free a man to fight." This time though, there was one major difference from the World War I experience. This time women were in the military to stay. (Bevins)

WAR TECHNOLOGY MAY PROVIDE LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

Technology and modern warfare doctrine have rendered the combat exclusion status of the Navy and Air Force obsolete. For that reason, public attention may be directed toward allowing the secretaries of the Navy and Air Force the same authority already granted the Secretary of the Army: the right to determine the personnel policies for members of that service. Items for continued consideration will include the work place accommodation issues — dual-career couples, pregnancy and parental leave policies and spousal employment. Already these issues are stressed in civilian corporations as well as military organizations, as they attempt to adjust to changing economic realities.

Everyone agrees that the current issues are emotional ones, and ultimately the decisions rest with us — the people, citizens, voters. And those political leaders will undoubtedly postpone any decision until the next major battle confrontation.

However, before that happens society must willingly accept women as leaders at all levels, including the military. Ironically, a device that may prove useful in that endeavor is something right out of the toy department. Mattel Toys introduced a new line in the Barbie doll collection in 1990: a Barbie doll dressed as an Air Force pilot. Mattel Toy Company officials admit that since
1959 when they first introduced the Barbie doll, the coordinating outfits have "reflected popular culture and little girls' dreams." This added career choice for Barbie may provide a sort of role model for a new generation of female combat soldiers. (Knight-Ridder News Service, March 3, 1990, p. 1)

But first, we must remember that not all women will qualify for this heavy responsibility, says Pentagon official Lawrence Korb:

We wouldn't take women for the sake of taking women who (sic) we felt would contribute to the overall effectiveness of the force in quality and quantity. In doing so, we are not going to set any goal that becomes a goal for the sake of a goal. (Holm, p. 386)

As we have seen since 1973 and the end of the draft, the situation for women in the U.S. military in general has significantly improved — but only in comparison with the situation before the end of the draft. To argue that women should be relatively happy with their lot in the armed forces today is the equivalent of arguing that blacks should be happy with their situation today because it is much improved compared to the racist reality of the 1930s or 1940s. Perhaps the only valid argument is that women must be included in combat roles if they are to fulfill their full potential, and if the U.S. military is to be considered a place of true equal employment opportunity for women. Common decency asks for no more.

If a woman is physically able to perform a task (driving a tank, firing an artillery weapon, etc.), then she simply should not be excluded from performing it, whether in combat or not. Women have demonstrated in police and firefighting occupations their ability to perform in life and death situations, and the armed forces are not that much different.

Concurring with Maj. Gen. Holm, Berger also notes that women have proved equal if not superior to men in intelligence, in sharpshooting, in honor guards; they drink less, go AWOL less often, and in general indicate they would do well in any military situation. "Women have to do it better," one female sergeant said, "we can't afford to do just an average job." (Berger, p. 141)

Arguing against Brian Mitchell's statements concerning whether the Department of Defense is threatening military readiness by "pandering to the family problems of military couples,"
a recent *U.S. News & World Report* article stated that the military is finding it nearly impossible to provide adequate day care for many of the military personnel's children. Deployment plans are often altered to keep husband and wife teams as close as possible, but Pentagon officials assert that such scheduling changes are never given priority over the readiness of troops. (*U.S. News, "Women Have What It Takes," August 5, 1991, p. 30*)

Finally, the U.S. military should discontinue the coding for all jobs and simply state the requirements of the particular position. They should take a cue from the civilian personnel management system and rely on setting the minimum qualifications for the job, rather than if a female can perform the job. Specifically, not all men can perform all the jobs in the U.S. military, so why should women be excluded as a group from even trying?

Simply put, the combat exclusion policy is sexism in the worse form because it is not only antiquated, but also so blatant. And it is unfathomable that a "democracy" such as ours allows this injustice to continue. If a private corporation permitted the same kind of sex discrimination, it would find itself entangled in a major class action multi-million dollar lawsuit.

Perhaps as a start toward equality, the U.S. Senate passed, in 1990, a bill permitting women who volunteer to fly combat missions. The next barrier for women in the military to overcome is the right to serve in any combat situation if they wish to do so.

And because the majority of the American public (84 percent) supports women in offensive combat positions, it is in the interest of the nation as a whole to repeal this sexist legislation as soon as possible. (Schroeder) Choice, as in any other occupational field, is the key to equality here. Why should the U.S. military remain exempt from equal employment opportunity? After all, federal dollars are spent in supporting the military excursions, military spending that is funded through American working women, as well as men. And in this day of detailed accountability in the expense of federal dollars, can the spending of military funding toward higher salaries for male military members be far behind?
In this chapter, I examine a book that has become a handbook for feminists: *Born Female* by Caroline Bird. This book has been called a source book for the Women’s Liberation Movement. In fact, that phrase appears on the cover after the author’s name. I will also review *Backlash - The Undeclared War Against American Women* by Pulitzer-prize winning author Susan Faludi. Faludi claims that the 1990’s are proving a difficult time for American women because of both internal and external circumstances that pit women against societal and corporate American economic forces.

Also, I will review preceding chapters and thus form a conclusion concerning the current status of working women in the U.S. As has already been established in prior chapters, women have traditionally been viewed as more of an appendage to men -- just an ornament, as Mary Wollstonecraft lamented more than two centuries ago. But today, when close to 20 percent of American households are headed by women breadwinners, and continue to be the fastest-growing segment of society, there is more and more reason to worry about the working woman and her predicament.

It was thought for a long time that women were not smart or determined enough to succeed anywhere but in the home, and most films perpetuated that belief. Further, it was until very recent years a common belief that women entering the workplace on a wide level would result in the disintegration of the family as a solid unit. Whether this was an excuse made by employers to keep women in the home, or a very real fear, it was nevertheless contradictory to what women desired for themselves at that time and for many, today. For no matter the era, women have taken it upon themselves to increase their status as competent and competitive breadwinners in the face of great difficulties.

Bird’s study stands as striking evidence of just where the women’s movement was a generation ago. There were some lasting victories resulting from the actions of the women’s
movement in a relatively short period of time. This is most probably due in part to the radical demands of the 1960’s made by women and men, who agreed with them. This was a time when people spoke out loudly against established societal conventions found to be distasteful. Another logical cause was the Vietnam war. Women, already learning to be assertive, felt indignant that their mates and potential mates were whisked off to fight a war that no one wanted to fight, a war that could not be won. While there already was a disproportionate ratio of women to men, the war increased this gap and many women were forced, as during all war-time situations, to fend for themselves.

That the role of women in American society has undergone dramatic changes over the past 25 years is an understatement. But since the inception of the Women’s Liberation Movement in the 1960’s, women have redefined their roles in the home and the workplace, demanding recognition for their abilities and a greater measure of political and economic parity with men.

The notion that a woman’s place is in the home has been supplanted by a growing recognition that women can function equally well outside the home in business, government, and other traditional male arenas. The idea of a woman running a major corporation or running for the nation’s second-highest office is no longer an implausible one to Americans.

At the same time, there appears to be a growing backlash against the emergence of women from their traditional roles as wives and mothers. Many women are insisting that they derive fulfillment from these roles, and that their contribution to society should be acknowledged and valued.

"I'm a person, not just a wife and mother."

Most people are unaware that this common female complaint had a legal origin. Specifically, when the grandmothers of today’s middle-aged American women were married, they ceased to exist in the eyes of the law. Instead, they were "incorporated and consolidated" with their husbands. On their wedding day, they literally became the property of their husbands. (Bird, p. 19).
The first section of this chapter examines the struggles women have faced, and to some extent still largely encounter, both in the workplace and in society. This analysis will review the book, *Born Female*, to study the women's movement of the 1970's and 1980's.

Admittedly, Bird's book is dated and cites circumstances unimaginable to today's generation of young women. Although much contained in the book is obsolete (it was written in 1968 and revised in 1972), many of her observations still hold true.

During that time period, marriage was traditionally a cut-and-dried exchange of domestic service and sexual availability in return for financial support. Women have advanced significantly since the terrible years of indentured servitude. They have come a long way since they were casually bought and sold in an abbreviated sort of slavery. Women now have voices in government, and nowadays their births and deaths are recorded in the same manner as men. (Bird, p. 20)

**WOMEN BECOME CHEAP LABOR SOURCE**

Fortunately, when the westward movement opened new frontiers it also extended other rights for women such as voting and property ownership. And it appears that even in recent years, women have usually had an easier time getting elected in the West than in the East. But even as the West developed and more and more people moved, there was again a problem concerning the division of labor between the sexes. Generally speaking, it took frontier conditions, wars, revolutions and boom times to force men and women to perform a different way, a sort of androgenous role. However, the Industrial Revolution emphasized the difference between men and women. Of course, the higher-paying machinery jobs were reserved for men. The women were delegated the same chores they had always performed at home.

Some sociologists surmise that the Industrial Revolution, in many ways, created the feminist mystique because it commercialized the spinning and weaving jobs women performed at home. But when power equipment took the work to the mills, women followed the work out of their homes. They worked for less money than men because there was less work open to them.
Skill, strength and particularly prestige determined whether a man or woman performed the work. (Bird, p. 22)

And it was not until World War II that women became a viable work force. Women performed every job a man ever held. Some women who started working during the war years never really knew that some of the jobs they performed "belong" to men. The shortage of job candidates narrowed the differentials between the pay of men and women, and the equal pay principle was actually written into defense contracts. (Bird, p. 38)

When the men returned from battle, women were expected to leave their jobs willingly. However, many women balked, but to little avail.

In another form of blatant discrimination, Congress, in 1948, arbitrarily limited women to 2 percent of the uniformed military forces. This figure gradually increased to 5 percent, and in 1972 the quota was finally eliminated from military recruitment. (Bird, p. 4)

These situations provide an insight into how America's development and its crises played pivotal roles in the lives of the nation's women. As illustrated, America has always maintained a steadfast labor reserve and has proved ingenious in finding cheap, docile labor. First, we captured primitive Africans and made them slaves. Then, when the sight repulsed the nation, we freed them but kept them segregated. That way we could use them when, as, and if industry needed extra work hands.

At another stage, America attracted landless European peasants and did the same with them when the country saw them huddled in ghettos, exploitable and impoverished. We even worked children horrendously long hours under dangerous conditions until reformers, and perhaps the angry men they displaced, shamed us into legislating strong child labor laws. In boom times, teenagers filled a gap in factory work until times were slack and they were sent back to school.

America used single girls too. But until recently housework was so inescapable that mothers were forced to stay at home. And before birth control became common, most wives had
nowadays, all these labor reserves are gone or going. The children and the teenage boys are in school, and recent U.S. Department of Labor statistics show that black men are closer to equality than white women. To their advantage, the claim from black men for equality is more urgently pressed and widely recognized.

**Born Female**

Many would not like to admit it, but in 1992 our prosperity depends on the labor and earnings of women. (Bird, pp. 45-46)

Concern during the Vietnam war had already become evident by what took place at the outset of World War II. As cited in Chapter Two, the U.S. Department of Labor reported that "It can hardly be said that any occupation is absolutely unsuitable for the employment of women." (Bird, p. 32) It is hard to believe in these early 1990s that such a statement need ever have been made by a government commission. Furthermore, Bird points out that the shortage of males on the labor force opened many doors for women: "Women became crane operators, riveters, tractor operators, truck drivers." (Bird, p. 40)

Women were welcomed in law schools and medical school, in the professions, and in the armed forces." (Bird p. 32) It was unfortunate that after the war, employers reverted to their old stance of not hiring women for men's work, however cloudy the dividing line between men's and women's work might have been. But the consequences of the war proved to be a shot in the arm for the women's movement; no longer could it be unequivocally maintained that women suffered from an inherent lack of ability. (Bird, pp. 38-41)

Born Female outlines many hardships women faced to get where they are today. One example is the fact that they accept considerably less pay than a male for the same job in order to advance from home to the workplace. Primarily employers justify the pay difference by stating that women do not need as much money because they are supported by their husbands.
Additionally employers claim women are worth less than males because of inherently inferior qualifications, and because women are more likely to leave a position after costly training to have children. Unusually disconcerting is Bird's example of unequal pay in business management, although by no means is the discrepancy unique to the field. Said Bird:

The managers of a manufacturing enterprise in northern New Jersey saved money by hiring a woman to serve as their chief financial officer at $9,000 a year. When she left, they had to pay $20,000 to get a man to do her job. When he left, they went back to a woman at $9,000 and they then replaced her with a man at $18,000. According to the recruiter, all four employees were good at the job. (Bird, p. 67)

Note that the four employees all filled the exact same slot in the same company. Not only was unequal pay a hardship for women in the past, it remains an unfortunate reality for women today.

Another example Bird cites of what women have endured to get where they are today focuses on the type of work they were allowed to perform. Lucky was the female, perhaps, who found herself in a position where she was only dissatisfied with lesser pay for the same job as a male co-worker. She was happy to work in a "man's job," albeit without the title or salary to match.

But she worked harder to get that job than did her male cohort, according to Bird, with the expectations of those who inherited the business or those with relatives who hired them. Bird calls it the 'secretarial rut' and explains that escape was found by taking on extra work until a job was created that required a title. Says Bird:

"Other successful women have taken equally heroic measures to get out of the secretarial rut. Some of them have quietly taken on extra work until they have created a job that obviously required a title."

Thus, a woman earned a higher position in a company by creating her own job; she earned it by doing more than she was either expected to do or paid to do. She earned it by taking it. (Bird p. 53)

But, could it not be said that anyone, male or female, 1960 or 1992, earns a higher position in precisely this way? Is this not the standard method by which promotions are attained,
regardless of sex? Indeed it is. But the difference Bird is pointing out is that women would not be expected to be anything but secretaries in a business. As she is the helper of her husband at home, so she is the helper of her boss at work. Bird brings to the surface the common assumptions of the time the book was written.

Society doesn’t push a woman to succeed as hard as a man, so it is only natural that women drop out of the rat-race more frequently. But even if a woman doesn’t try as hard as a man to be vice president, the fact remains she . . . has no bargaining power. (Bird, p. 67)

Although this situation is greatly improved for women today, it is rare to find male secretaries (a woman’s work) and, indeed, a woman would more likely be assumed a secretary than an executive. Fortunately, today, many female executives stand proudly and competently as proof that these assumptions are unfounded.

CULTURAL BRAINWASHING OF WOMEN

In addition to these areas where women have traditionally suffered, there is a less tangible example, yet one no less real or important. This is in the emotional arena. In the past, women have been brainwashed to accept the preposterous notion that they are somehow less able to compete and survive as functioning human beings in the outside world.

If indeed they are less able to survive, it is due only to the proliferation and wide acceptance of this very belief. This is a belief perpetrated by the men who would like their women docile and dependent, possessed of time and energy to cook, iron shirts, and accommodate their other personal needs. Women have been made to withstand the humiliation of this belief in their efforts to simply lead full lives, the right of all individuals. (Bird, pp. 50-53) Illustrating this assertion is one man’s definition of ‘femininity’ (assuming, of course, that it is preferable for a woman to be feminine rather than masculine):

It’s looking pretty and elegant. And it’s being nice, not arguing with men or nagging or complaining, or having different opinions. Not pushing them, or interfering or anything, not wanting to get their own way instead of doing what they’re told. I would say it’s wanting to please a man all the time. (Bird, p. 48)
In short, according to this man, being a feminine lady is being a slave to the man who puts a roof over her head. What this man really needed was not a wife, but a robot, programmable to his whims. It almost certainly did not occur to him that women themselves would find it attractive to have a similar slave of their own.

To be sure, a man’s opinion is of little import on the subject until these opinions hold her back professionally. Caroline Bird assures us that they most certainly did. Although the emotional frustration women have experienced resulting from opinions such as the one cited above was and is unpleasant, it seems to fuel the fire to overcome the obstacles. Bird wrote of other instances resulting in this dual emotional consequence for women. One executive said about a woman who desired a promotion that, "She’s an aggressive woman, and I don’t like to deal with aggressive women." (Bird, p. 49)

Perhaps this description on woman is appropriate after all:

A businessman is aggressive; a businesswoman is pushy. He's good on details; she’s fussy. He loses his temper because he’s so involved in his job; she’s bitchy. He follows through; she doesn’t know when to give up. His judgements are her prejudices. He is a man of the world; she’s been around. He climbed the ladder to success; she slept her way to the top. He’s a stern taskmaster; she’s hard to work for. (Anonymous)

This executive was indifferent to aggressive men. What he was actually saying is he does not like to deal with women at all in a professional sense since aggressiveness is necessary to a great degree to succeed in business. The woman’s desire to succeed violated his notion, based on his emotions, of what a woman should be.

For the most part, women today seem to have survived and overcome this barrier, yet by no means has it been completely squelched. Fortunately, the majority of those who continue to subscribe to the female-as-inferior theory are males, leaving women able and determined to shape their futures as a strong and intelligent sex.

So, then, we have seen three ways where women have struggled in order to achieve their present status. First, they were traditionally, and often still are, paid less for the same job as their male counterparts. Second, they had difficulty attaining positions that were considered male
positions. And lastly, they were subjected to men’s emotionally-based ideas of women and femininity, and consequently endured their own emotional frustration.

CRITICISM

The only real criticism I could find on *Born Female* was that Caroline Bird inaccurately assumed all women felt oppressed or considered themselves "victims." I think one thing she neglected to factor in to her argument is that many women enjoy being sheltered and protected by their husbands. Many women do not believe in equal rights for women, as was evidenced in the nation’s failure to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. If women all believe as she espouses, then the ERA would have passed, since women are the majority of the U.S. population, and have been throughout this century.

Also, I did not like her statement that liberated women were rebelling against men when they tried to open doors for women, or change tires, or even pay bills for them. This seems rude because everyone should practice polite behavior and opening doors should be done equally. If one is walking ahead, it is considered gracious to extend the courtesy of opening the door for the next individual, male or female.

She mentioned that "liberated" was bad language to show their authority. I do not believe this display is any sign of power, only coarse behavior.

Finally, I did agree on the number of improvements needed to make women’s lives easier. These improvements covered ten areas. They are:

1. Nationwide, free 24-hour child care centers for all, staffed equally by men and women, with immediate income tax deductions for child-care expenses until they are in operation.
2. Opening of all courses of study to boys and girls without pressure to elect on the basis of sex.
3. Programs of women’s study similar to black studies in all colleges.
4. Flexible working hours for both men and women and part-time employment for women who want it.
5. Investigation of the percentage of women hired in each job category of big companies.
6. Abolition of the presumption that sex roles are biologically determined. "Children should be given human models to emulate, not just male and female models."

7. Penalties for violation of discrimination on the basis of sex in employment prohibited under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

8. Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution of the United States striking down all laws that classify citizens on the basis of sex.

9. Legal recognition of the right of every woman to determine whether she shall bear a child by the repeal of all laws against abortion, birth control, and sterilization; and free birth control to all women who want it.

10. Protest against the "generally derogatory image of women presented by the media, and specifically the misrepresentation of the movement for women's liberation to the women of America."

(Bird, pp. 262-263).

But I tend to disagree strongly with Caroline's hostile attack on the corporate business system in the United States. Specifically, she claims American women are underprivileged in the workplace because they have been brainwashed into believing that "they should prefer domesticity to an active, exhilarating life." She says women are afraid to complain because they are afraid of losing the gains they have already achieved. Also, she alleges that "thirty million working women have been systematically trained to humbly accept inferior status, unequal pay for equal work, and penalties for getting pregnant and having children." Bird contends that women have been forced to disclaim personal ambition and to apologize for their intellectual qualities and abilities.

This is similar to the perspective of Susan Faludi, the author of *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*, takes. But the difference between the two viewpoints is that Bird claims there is a real conspiracy to rob women of equal opportunities in the workplace. Faludi, however, alleges that the media is mostly at fault. In its zealous efforts to find startling developments in a changing workplace, filled with both men and women as colleagues, the media exaggerates or distorts scientific studies before they are validated, according to Faludi.

Bird says she believes there is a concerted effort to keep women down, while Faludi claims the effort is not deliberate, that it is "unorchestrated."
But what about the larger perspective? Given that women have still not reached their goal of equality, what battles are they fighting now? If not the archaic notion that they should be only efficient wives and mothers, and if not the latter, more subtle idea of "New Masculinism" whereby their role is less defined but still based on serving men's needs, then what? It seems that despite the progress women have made, they are fighting very old, deeply ingrained beliefs. These archaic beliefs are maintained by those in the greatest power positions, many who are not generally qualified for power themselves. (Bird, pp. 149-152)

This may not be a result of sex discrimination per se, but due to the fact that it is a relatively recent trend for women to seek higher education and become professionals. Thus, time would suggest that the next 50 years will see a more equal number of women performing jobs that now only a handful perform. Whether they shall be paid fairly for their contributions will depend on their continued support of women's rights, and on men's realization that equal pay is truly not as threatening to them as they somehow imagine.

PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

Women in our society have worked extra hard to become competent and credible performers outside the home. They have shown that their contributions have been of benefit to business, law, government, science and medicine, and that this benefit was achieved in a more substantial capacity than merely clerical.

It has become a generally accepted belief that it is dangerous and wrong to suppress talent and that achievement, regardless of the sex of the achiever, benefits society as a whole. Men have responded favorably in recent years to the professional ambitions of women, thus allowing women to drop the role of tough feminist and replace it with that of determined liberation supporter.

Many men who still prefer homemaker wives exhibit no qualms about accepting other women in the work force or even working under and reporting to a female superior. And with this, women truly have come a long, long way in some professions.
But even though this was all reported by *Time* in 1990, only two percent of the nation’s corporate executive officers are women. (*Time*, Fall 1990 p. 10-26).

And forces within corporate America and society are satisfied with the status quo for women. That is very evident in a recent book detailing the plight of the American working woman. Forces beyond the control of women seek to perpetuate the myths of women, especially working mothers.

**BACKLASH — THE UNDECLARED WAR AGAINST AMERICAN WOMEN**

In her new highly acclaimed book, 1991 Pulitzer Prize-winning author Susan Faludi sheds new light on the propaganda that business leaders and lawmakers are espousing, fueling a media frenzy against working women. In this innovative and thought-provoking book, she claims that these movers and shakers want women to believe there is no longer a need for equal opportunity since women have finally achieved equality on all fronts. She points out how the media have contributed to this inaccuracy and distortion. These movers and shakers claim that women suffer from feelings of dissatisfaction and distress as a result of too much feminism and independence. (Faludi, p. i)

But if women are so equal why do 88 percent work as secretaries and other low-level support staff earning less than $20,000 a year? Instead of being leaders in the industrialized nations, American women have the worst gender-based pay gap in the developed world. (Faludi, p. iii)

The media, she explains, perpetuate the equal opportunity myth by portraying strong career women in television commercials flaunting their own American Express cards, and the victories women have achieved in making choices on their own. However, these same manipulators are also involved in endless reporting about how miserable women are now that they’re free and equal. They also want to make sure society knows exactly who is to blame for the rapidly climbing youth crime rate, high divorce rates, poor health care for children, generally poor nutrition among American families and the many dysfunctional families. (Faludi, pp. 1 & 52-53)
According to some sociologists, feminism and increased independence is responsible for less stable American families. (Faludi, p. xii) Meanwhile, demographers claim that sex ratios and fertility trends do not mix with marriage and motherhood. Faludi cites a Virginia Slims poll that showed the problems that upset women the most. The first problem cited was the lack of money, followed by the refusal of their spouses to share child care and domestic duties. In contrast, when the same women were asked whether the desire to hold a "less pressured" job or to stay at home ranked on their list of concerns, they placed them at the bottom. Faludi contends that instead of justice, women have been given what she calls a "Big Lie." (Faludi, p. xv)

The Big Lie, she explains, is a widespread backlash that operates by boldly standing the truth on its head. "Women have achieved equality," proclaims the backlash, "and are suffering for it," adding that the backlash tells women that the very things that strengthen them — such as the right to reproductive choice, or access to higher-paying jobs — have led to their downfall.

However, everyone was misled in this scenario. And one specific survey that claimed women were closing the earnings gap is just another example of inaccurate reporting. The report incorrectly attributed the higher earnings to women, by using a weekly instead of a yearly pay standard. Faludi claims women are as bad off in 1992 as they were in 1955, earning only 68 cents to a man's dollar. Faludi acknowledges that the reason women are faring so poorly is not because of greater independence, it is because not enough have reached beyond the "glass ceiling." And even though some have reached into the senior management level, it has been at a price. (Faludi, pp. 22-25)

The goals of the glass ceiling initiative are:

- To promote a quality, inclusive, and diverse work force capable of meeting the challenge of global competition;
- To promote good corporate conduct through an emphasis on corrective and cooperative problem-solving;
- To promote equal opportunity, not mandated results; and,
To establish a blueprint of procedures to guide the U.S. Department of Labor in conducting future review of all management levels of the corporate workforce.

These goals speak to not only what is right and just in our society, but what makes good economic sense as the private and public sectors seek to work together to achieve an ever improving quality of life for all Americans.

The initiative has, to date, been a four-pronged effort: 1) An internal educational effort within the U.S. Department of Labor; 2) A pilot study looking at nine individual companies; (3) Public awareness to the issue and encouragement of voluntary efforts; and 4) An effort to recognize and reward publicly those companies which are independently removing their own glass ceiling.

The process was designed to produce three basic results: 1) Identify systemic barriers to the career advancement of minorities and women; 2) Eliminate these barriers through corrective and cooperative problem solving; and 3) Further the U.S. Department of Labor's and the employer community's understanding of how to identify and eliminate discriminatory and artificial barriers.

In accordance with the legal requirements federal contractors are required to follow, companies were reviewed to ensure that they do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, disability, or veteran status; and that they take affirmative action to actively recruit qualified workers from all segments of the labor force, and provide training and advancement opportunities for all employees.

During the past 25 years, shifting demographics--coupled with a changing, more global business environment, and the practice of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action--have resulted in greater participation of minorities and women in the workforce.

Minorities and women have made significant gains at the entry level of employment and into the first levels of management. Yet they have not experienced similar gains into the mid and senior levels of management, notwithstanding increased experience, credentials, overall qualifications, and a greater attachment to the workforce.
The Department analyzed data from a random sample consisting of 94 reviews conducted of corporate headquarters of Fortune 1000-size companies over the past three years. Four Department of Labor regions were included in the sample. Those data indicate that:

- Of 147,179 employees at these companies, women represent 37.2 percent of all employees.
- Of the 147,149 employees, 31,184 were in all levels of management, from the supervisor of a clerical pool to the CEO's and Chairmen. Of this number, 5,278 or 16.9 percent are women.
- Of 4,491 managers at the executive level (defined as assistant vice president and higher rank or their equivalent), 6.6 percent are women.

Beyond the U.S. Department of Labor's own findings, a number of surveys and studies tracked the results indicated above. The absence of women in higher corporate levels was highlighted in a 1990 survey done by the UCLA Anderson Graduate School of Management and Korn/Ferry International, an executive search firm. According to that survey, during the last 10 years, there has been only a slight increase in the representation of women in the top executive positions of our nation's 1,000 largest corporations. Women now hold less than 5 percent of these managerial positions, up from less than 3 percent in 1979.

The barriers to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder for minority women appear to be nearly impenetrable, according to a report by Heidrick and Struggles, an executive search firm. Minority women make up 3.3 percent of women corporate officers who, in turn, make up only 1 to 2 percent of all corporate officers.

Even where minorities and women made gains, the picture may be misleading. Titles are not consistent throughout all businesses and industries, and salary levels are not consistent with titles. Catalyst, a New York group whose specialty is women-in-business issues, did a recent study of "Women in Corporate Management" that showed larger percentages of women at all levels of management--including senior management--in the financial services industry than in either durable or nondurable manufacturing.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau also provided research pointing to a glass ceiling problem. The preliminary findings of a study, funded by the Women's Bureau, show
that in terms of job and career attitudes, female executives were very similar to their male peers in terms of job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and job stress. But, when it came to expectations of being promoted, the findings varied significantly between female and male executive peers—with women having lower perceptions of their own future promotability than their male counterparts.

These findings led the U.S. Department of Labor to conclude that a greater understanding of what was affecting the career advancement of qualified minorities and women was necessary for the Department to fulfill its responsibility to ensure equal opportunity in employment among federal contractors. It was on this basis that the Department announced that it was undertaking nine corporate management reviews and that it was seeking a greater understanding of what was affecting the career advancement of qualified minorities and women.

While some assert that minorities and women have neither been in the work force long enough, nor have the needed credentials, the vast majority of available research information points to artificial barriers as a significant cause for why minorities and women have not advanced further in corporate America.

From the very outset of the glass ceiling initiative, the U.S. Department of Labor’s aim was to encourage industry that it is in its own best interest to provide equal career advancement opportunities to women so as to best develop all of their human resources—to identify and voluntarily resolve any impediments to equal opportunity which may exist.

We know that many companies are aware of and concerned about the heightened attention to glass ceiling issues. And, while there may be many reasons behind their interest, we have been encouraged by how positive the responses from industry have been since the outset of this effort. Not only the participating companies, but many others have voluntarily advised the Department of the efforts they are undertaking to identify and correct any unfair impediments which may be keeping minorities and women from advancing in their corporations.

Importantly, chief executive officers have become personally involved. Special studies and
task forces to identify glass ceiling issues are being directed by top executives to give these efforts high profile and to communicate a corporate commitment.

For instance, one large defense contractor recently briefed the U.S. Department of Labor's executive staff of their efforts. With the strong support of the CEO and other corporate officers, this company has determined to aggressively recruit minorities and women through external recruitment efforts, including executive searches; make "deputy" assignments, when possible, using these positions as training grounds for developing minorities and women as "high potential" managers; encourage executive mentoring and sponsoring high potential for high performing minority or female managers and professions; increase executive accountability and responsibility for cultural changes at every level through a creative incentive compensation plan.

Another company, again with the CEO's personal involvement, has developed monitoring programs to measure the corporation's personnel development, retention, and advancement efforts. As a long-term goal, the company is committed to minority and female participation in officer ranks in the same proportion as their participation in lower management ranks. To meet this goal, assignments, educational opportunities, and evaluations are carefully monitored throughout management. High potential minorities and women are identified early in their careers and tracked to assure they are given the same opportunities for development as their peers. (Sanford, U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau).

This is because the strategies that have helped millions of women maintain a precarious balance between job demands and family needs — flex-time, part-time work, shared jobs, extended parental leaves, mommy track hours — handicap them in the race for the top. Highly ambitious men usually refuse to take such options even if they are available. (Beck, p. 6B)

In Newsweek, Faludi claims free-lance writer Kay Ebeling dubbed feminism "the Great Experiment that Failed." She further contends that her generation of women were the "casualties." Harper's Bazaar accused "women's lib' of having lost [women] ground instead of gaining it." (Faludi, p. 90)
Even some sociologists have joined the media in promoting this perspective. Some claim that "no-fault divorce is responsible for the 'feminization of poverty'." In addition, some economists also argue that in the boom years of the past decade, "women who left home to work created 'a less stable American family'." In all, it seems reminiscent of the propaganda claims after World War II that criticized women for wanting to work, and blamed most societal ailments on them.

Interestingly, Faludi points out that the professional ranks that career women have entered are also the career areas where wages are actually dropping. She lists some of these professions as public relations directors, middle-management jobs and personnel directors, for example.

The truth is that women's income, on average, will always be a fraction of men's, so long as America remains free.


Further demonstrating that the purpose of the backlash is to stop women's pursuit of equal rights before it goes too far, they — business leaders and law makers — "want to launch a preemptive strike. This tactic would create doubt among women and serve to halt their drive for equality long before they reach the finish line."

Ironically, there is a smidgen of truth to the Big Lie in that a small group of women did make real economic gains in the seventies. But only a decade later, the strides began to slip back. Faludi asserts that both government and private surveys now show that women's already vast over-representation in the lowliest occupations is increasing, not falling. (Faludi, p. 315-319)

And it is unfortunate but Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin declares she "won't try to smash the glass ceiling with a 500-pound hammer." Instead, her strategy will consist of depriving government contracts to corporations that overtly or subtly bar women and minorities from reaching the top. She is using what she called a "bully pulpit" to talk sweetly to corporate honchos about the benefits and business necessities of letting talent and ability rise to their highest levels without racist or sexist barriers. Martin's sweet reason may not shatter the glass ceiling, but hard
economic facts will — and soon. Business cannot afford to waste the abilities of so many workers. However, it must change to use them effectively. Women themselves will force the issue. And short-sighted managers who cannot see high-level talent, except in white males, will be obsolete. (Beck, p. 6b)

Patricia Taylor, president of Business and Professional Women USA, questioned Martin's reluctance to call this difference discrimination. She said:

If 98 out of 100 U.S. senators were women and if 98 out of 100 directors of Fortune 500 companies were women, I don't think the men in this country would stand for it. (Zaldívar, p. 1)

Surveys also show, according to Faludi, that the tiny presence of women in high-paying trades and crafts jobs is stalled or backsliding. But, worst of all, their minuscule representation in upper-management posts is stagnant or actually falling back.

GLASS CEILING LOWER THAN ORIGINALLY BELIEVED

In a two-year study by the U.S. Labor Department of nine unidentified Fortune 500 companies results disclosed that the glass ceiling is much lower than previously assumed. This tactical barrier keeps women and minorities out of executive posts and is trapping them in lower and middle-management jobs, intentionally creating an adverse impact on these two groups. In a separate survey of 94 companies over a three-year period, the Labor Department found that 6.6 percent of top managers were women. "This represents only a slight improvement during the '80s, according to the Labor Department."

Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women, said she would rather see the EEOC bring some class-action lawsuits to give corporations warnings that the law is being enforced even at the executive level. This opinion varies sharply with Labor Secretary Martin's "bully pulpit." (Zaldívar, p. 1)

In fact, at a conference on cultural diversity in 1991, Professor Roosevelt Thomas, Jr. noted that all management jobs fall into two categories: Group A workers and Group B workers. Group A workers formulate policy and are primarily Caucasian males. Though they represent only
28 percent of the work force, they hold 75 percent of upper management jobs, and receive 47 percent of the upper-management jobs. (Thomas 2/28/91) Meanwhile, Group B — the women and minorities — implement policy decisions and comprise 72 percent of the work force, yet hold only 25 percent of upper-management jobs. In all, Group B receives 53 percent of all jobs. [Figure 1]
FIGURE 1

115 MILLION U.S. WORKERS = 120

+ 72% of the U.S. workforce are women & minorities
+ they make up 25% of upper-management jobs
+ they receive 53% of all jobs
+ they implement policy

GROUP B
25% are women
& minorities

GROUP A
75% are caucasian males

POWER JOBS
POLICYMAKERS

+ 28% = caucasian males in workforce
+ they formulate policy
+ they make up 75% of upper-management jobs
+ they receive 47% of all jobs

As the Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin noted recently, even in lower and middle-management jobs, men tend to get the positions that can lead to the top while women are given support and personnel posts that are career dead ends. Additionally, she acknowledges that "women and minorities often don't have access to the training and development programs that could prepare them for promotions." And they rarely have the advantage of mentoring relationships executives use to groom successors in their own image. They also miss out on informal male networking, and to put it bluntly, they are just plain left out of the loop. (Beck, p. 6B)

But, as Faludi points out, this is not what the media report. Many newspapers have reported half truths such as the previously mentioned contradictions that the gap between the sexes is closing while others report that women and minorities cannot reach the glass ceiling.

Faludi explains there was never a real conspiracy to defuse women's clout, but a general resentment instead. This resentment stems from changes in the workplace that many men cannot accept. These changes range from pregnancy leave to flex-time to part-time jobs to child care. Men, in general, she maintains — from corporate presidents and male politicians to male evangelical leaders to male sociologists — did what they could "to attack women, exhaust them or divert them from pursuing their advantage." (Faludi, pp. 77, 363 & 454)

In other words, the effort to defuse women's clout was set off not by their achievement of equality, but by the increased possibility of their winning it. (Faludi, p. 57)

Psychologist Jean Baker Miller, M.D. writes:

A backlash may be an indication that women really have had an effect, but backlashes occur when advances have been small, before changes are sufficient to help many people. (Faludi, p. xx)

Faludi acknowledges that not all men are part of the backlash. She points to men who actually fought the feminist challenge of the 1970's. When they saw that women would not back down, many men started to make accommodations. Despite this, she contends that the backlash
has gathered momentum. When this occurs, she claims, it cuts off the few from the many.

And, as proof a recent study by a women's rights advocacy group revealed that less than 3 percent of Fortune 500 companies' top jobs were held by women in 1990. The study looked at jobs at the level of vice president and up and was based on figures compiled by a University of Southern California researcher.

At that rate of increase, Eleanor Smeal, former NOW president, predicts that it will take until the year 2466 for women to reach equality with executive men. (Associated Press, p. 5A)

Unfortunately, some women at the senior corporate levels seek to prove, as a social survival tactic, that they are not so interested in the advancement of women as a group, and parade their defection from the women's movement. This is in keeping with the old divide-and-conquer strategy: single vs. married; working women vs. homemakers; middle vs. working class.

In 1986 while 46 percent of upper-income women were claiming in a Gallup Poll that they were not feminists, only 26 percent of low-income women were making the same claim. In 1989, while 85 percent of black women were calling for a strong women's movement in the future, only 64 percent of white women joined them. (Faludi, pp. 271-272)

Backlashes against women are not new, Faludi claims and points to another in the first part of the nineteenth century. (Faludi, pp. 46-47) All in all, the purpose of the backlash is to keep women in their place. Or as Mary Wollstonecraft said: "man's toy to rattle whenever he chooses."

Faludi insists the backlash will fail as is evidenced by the postponed marriage figures, the control and limiting of family size and women combining work with child rearing. Thus even though the federal government may have crippled equal employment enforcement, and the courts may have undermined twenty-five years of anti-discrimination law, women continue to enter the work force in record numbers. Women are the majority and must learn how powerful they are, Faludi asserts. Women represent nearly half the work force and spend 80 percent of consumer dollars. (pp. 457-459)
Eleanor Smeal of the Fund for the Feminist Majority sums it up best:

If women all got together on the same day, at the same hour, we would go over the top. (Faludi, p. 459)
CHAPTER SIX
A FUTURE OF MORE AND MORE CHANGE

"THE SECOND STAGE"

Conversely, women in the 1990's find themselves at what Betty Friedan refers to as "the second stage" of development, which involves "a restructuring of our institutions on a basis of a real equality for women and men." The gains made on behalf of women by the feminist activists of the 1960's and 1970's are merely the first stage of an ongoing struggle for true equality between women and men. This struggle, according to Friedan, will require dramatic changes in our economic, political and social institutions. These so-called standards remain firmly rooted in competitive, male-oriented standards of success and achievement. Only by a basic reordering of our society, Friedan argues, can women achieve a meaningful, lasting equality with men. (Friedan, pp. 40-41)

But such a radical overhaul in our institutions and values is not likely to occur in the next twenty years, or even the next fifty. The 1990s will see changes occurring on a smaller scale as women continue to struggle with issues. These major issues include sexual harassment and sexism in the workplace, divorces, abortion and child rearing as well as access to political power, and their own personal identities. Other major changes will find women successfully mixing work and motherhood as they marry later and prepare for a career and family with great diligence.

Based on recent trends, it is reasonable to assume that women will continue to achieve gains in the economic and political spheres, albeit at a slow pace. The main reason for the slow pace is that many of the prejudices against women assuming a "man's role" are still firmly entrenched. But the backlash against the feminist movement remains a factor, with many women questioning whether they want to sacrifice their traditional roles as wives and mothers in order to achieve success in the workplace or in politics. The tension between this duality of goals will continue to dominate the position of women in society for the next decade. And employers must become more involved in providing basic necessities such as child care, flexible hours, and career
One of the most striking trends of the past twenty years is the increasing number of women who opt for work in addition to, or an alternative to motherhood. *(Time, Fall 1990, pp. 80-89)*

Women earn 51.9 percent of undergraduate and graduate degrees. *(Time, Fall 1990, p. 26)* And according to Dr. Joyce Brothers, celebrity-psychologist, women who have achieved success in the fields of law, medicine and management do not share the same views and interests as their male colleagues. She claims women are especially concerned about the rights of women, children and minorities.

Women lawyers have worked for reforms in the treatment of female victims of spouse abuse and rape. Women doctors are less authoritarian with patients, and women executives have created supportive networks to help female employees cope with various problems such as child care. Politically, women are most likely to vote liberal and democratic. They are more likely to vote for candidates who favor social spending for the poor, for child-care, education and equal rights for women and minorities. *(Brothers, May 20, 1990)*

Recent statistics show that both men and women are choosing to marry later than ever before. The latest figures reveal that in 1960, the average age for women to marry was 20, and 22 for men; in 1988, these figures increased to 23 for women and 26 for men. Married couples are also delaying starting families, as well. A number of these couples are motivated at least in part by economic necessity. Today’s family seems unable, in many instances, to subsist on one paycheck. Of course, mere subsistence in our affluent society is not an acceptable alternative for many. *(Martinez, October 30, 1990)*

And the phenomenon of the two-paycheck family is to some degree a logical outgrowth of the consumerist ethic. Items that once were considered luxuries: a second car, ski trips, fashionable wardrobes — are now regarded as necessities. A second income is one way of realizing
the American Dream, which is becoming increasingly costly and difficult to achieve.

But financial need is not the only factor motivating women to enter the workplace. Many women who take jobs outside the home are interested in more than just a paycheck; they are also seeking fulfillment, a sense of achievement, and the status and power that corporate success can confer upon them. Legislation banning discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sex has aided women in their advancement through the corporate hierarchy, and of achieving equality of pay.

But legislation cannot break down deeply entrenched attitudes toward women, nor the subtle, intangible forms of discrimination that still block women from advancement and recognition.

Consequently, EEOC Guidelines and enforcement powers must be strengthened now. Carefully tailored affirmative action which does not involve preferences or quotas is an effective method of fighting under-utilization without inviting reverse discrimination challenges.

**THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1991**

Clearly, the Civil Rights Act of 1991 extends the rights of women, and ethnic minorities in the workplace. Specifically, this new Act applies to any actions leading to unjust terminations or unfairly denying members of these protected groups promotions based on these factors.

From a general standpoint, the Act also makes it clear that it is always illegal to make job decisions on the basis of anything other than qualifications. This Act also guarantees that for the first time the right for women to sue an employer who intentionally discriminates against them and to sue for monetary damages.

The Civil Rights Act of 1991 seeks to extend Title VII by repudiating or limiting several 1989 U.S. Supreme Court Title VII decisions. Specifically, it would apply to the often-quoted *Wards Cove Packing Co. vs. Antonio* decision of 1989. In the Wards Cove case, the Supreme Court reduced the potentially expansive and expensive class action liability created by the disparate impact theory.

It accomplished this by requiring plaintiffs to identify that such employment practice is the
cause of the statistical disparity. This, in effect, relieved employers from providing the burden of proof of establishing a "business necessity" for not maintaining equal employment in the workplace. The proposed 1991 Civil Rights Act would reverse this ruling.

In disparate impact cases, employers would be required to prove the business practice bears a "significant relationship to successful performance on the job."

In turn, plaintiffs will not be required to specify or identify a particular employment practice resulting in disparate impact, such as a lower number of females in a given occupation. They would only need to show that a combination of practices or the overall employment process has a direct result in a statistical disparity, meaning a disparate impact on women and minorities.

In addition, the 1991 Civil Rights Act further expands Title VII in other significant ways. For one, it would authorize compensatory damages beyond back pay and prejudgment interest, punitive damages and the assessment of expert witness fees against the loser. It also provides for jury trials and extends the time limit for filling EEOC charges from 180 days to two years.

The time frame on the two-year limit does not begin to run until the alleged unlawful practice affected the plaintiff, even though it had been in effect for nay years.

Another major U.S. Supreme Court case that will be reversed is the Price Waterhouse decision. In that case the court held that where a plaintiff established that discrimination occurred through "direct smoking gun evidence," the employer would have to prove that its hiring decision would have been the same regardless of the discriminatory motive.

The Act makes it easier to establish discriminatory practices because it would expand the rule to circumstantial evidence cases.

Another 1989 Supreme Court case that will be affected through the passage of the 1991 Civil Rights Act is the Patterson case. In this particular case, the Court substantially limited the 1866 Civil Rights Act and added more constrictions by ruling that hiring, promotions and transfers create new and distinct contractual relationships.
The Civil Rights Act of 1866 covered racial and not gender discrimination, and the right to sue for punitive damages, so it has been of little value to women in general.

The Act reverses this ruling and applies the 1866 original Act to all aspects of employment. Specifically, the bill amends the 1866 Act "to define the right to make and enforce contracts to include 'the making, performance, modification and termination of contracts, and the enjoyment of all benefits, privileges, terms and conditions of the contractual relationship'."

But the only difference between the Civil Rights Act of 1991 and the vetoed 1990 Civil Rights Act is that the new version extends a punitive and compensatory damages cap of $300,000 and mandates that the 1991 Act not be construed to require or encourage the adoption of quotas in any form. (House of Representatives Bill H.R. 1, pp. 4-49)

And according to former EEOC Chairman Eleanor Holmes Norton, quotas and goals can never be more than remedies anyway. They cannot be more than benchmarks for achieving equality. She also claimed that the transitional constitution must move on once the job is done.

"Law is not value system, but a system in search of equality," she said. But now, she added, America's quest for equality has moved from the courts to the president. She cited the City of Richmond vs. Croson as a landmark case. In this action, the Court ruled that the city's minority set aside program was held to violate the equal protection clause of the constitution. She added that it is probable that the principles established in this case will be applied in Title VII cases involving affirmative action.

Holmes Norton said she fears that unless state governments begin enforcing equal opportunity in business contracts with private companies, the bias that exists against women-owned businesses will continue.

She compares constitutional rights with the job of law enforcement as the only means of equality. She claimed that Justice Brennan upheld certain quotas and timetables. But she says that is a slippery-slope argument because that in itself can mean discrimination against other groups.
Holmes Norton said she believes the new Civil Rights Act of 1991 will help in three distinct ways. First of all, people who are discriminated against could get much more than two years' back pay. So more people would use the process.

And with this change, more attorneys will take gender discrimination cases because they can earn more money. But best of all, employers will not want to risk paying large fines so fewer of them would discriminate.

But many business leaders oppose tougher punishment. They fear that more people will go to court. They are also afraid companies will be forced to hire unqualified people to stay out of court, according to Holmes Norton.

But, fortunately, the number of women who own and operate small businesses, and the presence of more women on lists of corporate officers and boards of directors suggest that women will continue to assume a growing importance in the workplace, despite residues of discrimination.

[Figure 2]
FIGURE 2

WOMEN HOLD A GROWING SHARE OF MANAGERIAL AND PROFESSIONAL JOBS
(Percent Female)

With the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment, "both the symbol and substance of women's rights," to be ratified, many women felt that their dream of achieving workplace equality would never be realized.

Indeed Betty Friedan believes that women's rights are in grave danger of being completely negated by a conservative Congress and Supreme Court. But this fear, while founded in legitimate concerns, does appear to be exaggerated. Certainly women continue to face many obstacles that are not destined to disappear overnight. The process is one of slow evolution rather than overnight revolution. Thus, women in the 1990s are not apt to realize any spectacular gains beyond that they have already achieved. (Friedan, p. 329)

Specifically, mommy-track schedules that stretch out law firm associateships, medical residencies, pre-tenure teaching positions and similar jobs should be used to help talented people stay on career ladders, not to shunt them into dead ends. (Beck, p. 6B)

Conversely, 28 years have passed since the enactment of Title VII, the most important and far-reaching employment discrimination law ever passed. In the midst of a growing civil rights movement in the '60s, Title VII was created as recognition that minorities — and, as Congress would later decide, women — were being kept out of the American workplace.

The statute, as it was passed and amended, requires employers to base all employment decisions on merit alone, not race, color, sex, religion or national origin. By definition then, employment assessment and selection is at the heart of Title VII. Anti-discrimination laws are about personnel decisions.

Fortunately, the courts appear to be moving toward more stringent proof requirements for plaintiffs seeking to show discrimination, and more stringent proof for employers seeking to remedy discrimination. The Legislature, on the other hand, is endeavoring to create new causes of action for employees and to require more aggressive affirmative action by employers.

Women who do have careers that demand much of their time and energy are finding it increasingly difficult to fulfill their roles as wives and mothers. Many feel guilty at leaving their
children off at day care centers while they go to work, and at not having the energy at night to devote to their husbands and children. This guilt factor is a pervasive one that will continue to influence women’s self-perceptions in the 1990’s. How does one become a superwoman?

The idealized solution of husbands and wives sharing the responsibility for child rearing is not apt to be realized in this century, both because of the resistance of many fathers to assuming this role and because of the economic realities that compel the men to go to work because of their higher earning power. Thus women many times are forced to choose between working and motherhood, or to make a bad job of both. The increased provisions for maternity leave by some corporations are easing the situation somewhat, but the 1990s do not promise any radical revisions of this situation.

Corporate cultures will have to change to accommodate the needs of employees’ families and neither men nor women should be penalized overtly or subtly for using the coping strategies that are offered. (Beck, p. 6B)

WOMEN ACHIEVE POLITICAL CLOUT

Politics in the western United States have proven more successful for women in general. Nevada, for example, elected quite a number of women to high political posts in the last couple of years. Of course, Mayor Jones in 1991, and in 1990 Frankie Sue Del Papa as Nevada Attorney General, Cheryl Lau as Nevada Secretary of State and Sue Wagner as Nevada Lieutenant Governor. The State Legislature currently seats 10 women; six in the Assembly and four in the Senate.

Also, as noted earlier the rapid increase of women entering the workplace in recent years has been driven by powerful social and economic trends. Slow economic growth has necessitated a two-member family wage-earner team for many families struggling to maintain a middle-class lifestyle. And fortunately, technology has simplified homemaking at the same time that society has redefined women’s roles. Specifically, the need to include paid employment outside the home as the choice for most women. (Hudson pp. 86-89)

While women have enjoyed some dramatic gains in government and politics in recent years,
they have only limited access to the male-dominated political apparatus through which political gains are made. An increasing number of women are being elected to city councils and state legislatures; even in the House of Representatives the number of women is increasing. But the Senate remains a male-dominated bastion, and the likelihood of a woman occupying the Oval Office in this century is nil.

Of course, one can conjure up a scenario in which the Mondale-Ferraro ticket defeated Reagan and Bush in 1984, then Mondale dying in office and Geraldine Ferraro assuming the presidency. While not implausible, such a scenario would result only from the most extreme chain of events. Women have been suggested as presidential candidates — Barbara Jordan for the Democrats, Jeanne Kirkpatrick or Elizabeth Dole for the Republicans — but neither party appears willing to take the first pioneering step.

There is a glimmer of hope on the horizon, however, for a woman eventually reaching the White House. The Ferraro candidacy and the appointment of Sandra Day O'Connor to the Supreme Court indicate that Americans' prejudices toward women in government are breaking down, that even the more conservative elements will accept a qualified woman in the nation's highest political offices. The re-election of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister of Great Britain offered impetus to the idea of a woman president; the conservatives who traditionally resisted the presence of women in government were among her most ardent supporters.

Ironically, Margaret Thatcher became the standard bearer for women who desire a career in politics, though many in the feminist movement remained diametrically opposed to Thatcher's political beliefs, and may have even played a large role in her 1990 defeat. Thus, the conservative political climate that has prevailed in the 1980s, blocking passage of women's rights legislation, may prove amenable to a conservative woman becoming president.

'MOMMY TRACK' VS. APPLE PIE AND MOTHERHOOD

One on the obstacles to women succeeding in politics is the same as that found in the workplace — the conflict for women embodied in the duality of motherhood and ambition.
Geraldine Ferraro confessed to her own confusion on this issue, observing how difficult it was to fulfill her role as a mother while she was trying to run for office and discharge her duties in the House of Representatives. She made the choice to pursue both goals, but at considerable emotional cost.

It is this cost that prevents many women from giving themselves wholeheartedly to the rigorous demands of a political career. The few women who do achieve success in the political arena are willing to pay the price, or have chosen this career over motherhood.

The question feminists raise is, why should women be forced to make such a choice, merely because they are biologically equipped to give birth and society has determined that they should be the child rearers? Susan Brownmiller argues that "without a radical restructuring of a social order that works well enough in its present form for those extremely ambitious, competitive men whose prototypical ancestors arranged it," there is little hope for accommodating a duality of purpose.

For many women, perhaps most, motherhood versus personal ambition represents the heart of the feminine dilemma. In the work of psychologist Carol Gilligan, ambivalence in making and sticking to some hard decisions (abortion, career choice), long considered a feminine weakness, has been shown to stem from the ethics and responsibilities of motherhood — the importance of 'caring relationships' — as women perceive this role.

Brownmiller claims that the desire to be a mother can be a powerful ambition, too especially when the opportunity is slow in coming and the biological clock seems to tick a lot faster as the woman ages. But is it fair that motherhood is so universally perceived as the ultimate proof of the feminine nature? Is it fair that many believe the intended purpose of female existence is motherhood? Why should women who choose to remain childless be made to feel guilty at family functions? These are profound questions Brownmiller raises. (Brownmiller, pp. 230-231)

The radical restructuring of institutions such as marriage and the family is not inconceivable to some. For example, Maggie Tripp argues that by the year 2000 the relationships within a marriage will have been sharply altered, with "new attitudes and a mature sense of self on the part of the female partner" forming the dominant pattern. (Tripp, p. 52) This sanguine
view goes against the experience of the last one hundred years, in which institutions have been slow to adapt to new realities and change has been gradual rather than sudden. Women can expect to make some progress in all areas — social, political, and economic — into the 1990s. But the essential conflict impeding their progress will be the biological imperative of childbirth balanced against their need for fulfillment outside the traditional confines of home and family. (Tripp, p. 56)

The operational word here then is choice. Women will have choices, about their careers, whether to marry or whether to have children, where to live, etc.

Today's young woman will . . . have less trouble in experimenting with various lifestyles than older women. She has more lifestyle mobility . . . because she has not become so entrenched in a way of life as to find it psychologically impossible to make a change. Her lifestyle over a few years may include living in a commune, living alone, living with a man or living with a woman. What the young woman does share in common with older women is the problem of holding onto, and constantly reinforcing her changing ideas about her role in society, while at the same time, confronting, in her everyday life, those who are threatened by her new non-appeasing self-assertive behavior. (Tripp, pp. 256-257)

And because more women are in the work force today, research on how work affects working women needs to be expanded. Specifically, more research is warranted because their growing demands for equality will change the kinds of work women have traditionally performed. (Work in America, p. 116)

CAREER WOMEN SUFFER SAME HEALTH PROBLEMS AS MEN

But probably the most important reasons center on the difference in life spans between men and women. As a matter of fact, actuarial charts obtained from Allstate Insurance Company show that the life span for women is 77 and 70 for men. These figures suggest that occupation plays a central role in the "genesis of disease and premature death."

According to recent statistics, the distribution of coronary heart disease in the U.S. is substantially greater in middle-aged white men than middle-ages white women. In fact, the period of peak occupational years (ages 25-64), "the male mortality rate from coronary disease among whites is from 2.75 to 6.5 times greater than the female rate."
According to Susan Faludi, reports from such well-respected newspapers as The New York Times report unprecedented outbreaks of "stress-induced disorders" affecting professional women. Disorders such as bad nerves, alcoholism, an infertility epidemic and even heart attacks are becoming common among women. Additionally, she reports that the pages of Newsweek have carried stories that "unwed women are said to be 'hysterical' and crumbling under a profound crisis of confidence." Other news sources report that "working mothers are collapsing as a result of 'burnout', and are yearning to 'cocoon'." (Faludi, pp. 127-135) Even founding feminist Betty Friedan warns that women are confronting a new identity crisis and "new problems that have no name." (Friedan, p. 97)

On a more positive note, some theorists surmise that the unique hormonal composition of pre-menopausal women ("the usual 'explanation' for the difference in coronaries") has recently been discounted because "there is no noticeable increase in female death rates following the onset of menopause." (Work in America, p. 116)

**MYTHS, MISCONCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES**

Many myths, misconceptions and stereotypes still exist, according to Dr. Joyce Brothers. She says these misconceptions serve to perpetuate negative views about women and work. Some still believe that women today are more anxious to be married than men are, and are less likely to approve of divorce if the marriage is an unhappy one. (Brothers, April 10, 1990, p. 12D)

According to a March 1990 special issue of Time magazine, devoted exclusively to women, fewer women (37 percent) than men (60 percent) believe it is better to be married than to go through life single. And more women than men approve of divorce for unhappily married couples.

Another common misconception claims women bosses today are no different from the stereotype of the "Macho" blue-suited female executive of the 1970s. Fortunately, that misconception is false because women bosses of the 1990s are more comfortable in their role, according to Dr. Brothers. They are less likely to always appear in tailored suits and they have now developed what has become known as a softer feminine style of management. This is also
characterized by an open-door policy where they talk more candidly with employees and are not afraid to share information.

Other myths attributed to working women is that they work only to supplement family income, and have no real commitment toward their jobs and will leave to have a baby or simply spend more time at home. In reality, Dr. Brothers reports that the U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics reveal that women are more likely to move on to advance their careers in the same manner men have demonstrated for many years. In a recent study only 7 percent left their jobs to stay at home. Many left to set up their own firms. In fact, more than twice as many companies were owned by women than 10 years earlier.

Also, most women work in jobs outside the home today because they need the money. Of course, like men, most women enjoy the added sense of self-esteem that comes from knowing they are doing a good job. As Dr. Brothers confirms, both men and women enjoy and need the ego fulfillment a satisfying career provides. (Brothers, April 10, 1990, p. 12D)

Friedan insists that the problems of equality cannot wait another generation, she writes:

They are the new necessity, political and personal, which neither women nor men, conservative or liberal, can avoid in the 1980s.

In the same vein, on a personal basis women share the burdens, choices and rewards of earning and parenting, pay-work and housework on a daily basis. "...as we seek new forms of intimacy and family, we are, in fact, already entering the second stage."

Friedan claims women's identity roots go so deep that they actually affect women's memories, feelings, tradition, biology and reach wherever our needs and soul reside.

Under the challenge of the lure of the new, we can forget for a while personally or politically, how deep are the roots of women's identity in the family — even as we ourselves are living, taking them for granted, or denying, defying our own yearnings.

Additionally, if we deny these identity roots, we cannot feel truly alive, she emphasizes.

The Women's Movement played a large part in taking the "happy housewives" out of the kitchens and giving them identity. Many women praise the Women's Liberation Movement for changing
their lives by leading the fight for "personhood." Opening up new strength and options... have come out the other end of women's liberation with a sureness different from those of younger women who take the new rights for granted." (Friedan, pp. 234-235)

Basically, Friedan wants her "feminist sisters to go beyond the sexual politics that cast men as the enemy and denied women's roots and life connection in the family." She wants younger women to get more involved and not let the movement die. (Time, December 4, 1989, p. 86)

In this special Time magazine cover story, Claudia Wallis draws somewhat the same conclusion as Susan Faludi about the death knell for the feminist movement. In a survey conducted for the special Time cover story, only 33 percent of the women polled identified themselves as feminists, yet 62 percent agreed that feminists have been helpful to women. (Time, December 4, 1989, p. 89)

Ironically, Faludi also cites a 1988 Gentlemen's Quarterly report that claims that less than 25 percent of men support the women's movement. (Faludi, p. 59)

And there is the underlying quest to deal with the basic differences between men's and women's perceptions. That is how men make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to take women's concerns seriously. Also that is how some women themselves are taught to compete with and distrust each other early on, rather than to join forces and offer support.

According to Faludi, political, cultural and economic forces led to a decade long backlash against women in this country. She describes the backlash as the unorchestrated counterassault on women's gains in the 1970s.

In that decade, Faludi explains, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld women's right to abortion. The Congress enacted laws to protect women from discriminatory employment practices. Popular culture, whether it was through advertising, movies, music or magazines, encouraged the independent woman to take charge of her life.

Society began to tolerate and accept women having more choices about their lives. Women were enjoying the great American tradition of progress. But like many progressive movements,
women actually took two steps forward and one step back.

Interestingly though, Faludi points out that what made this backlash more insidious than previous ones is the fact that there was no conspiracy involved. Instead, within its political core pushed by the New Right and conservative politicians were forces that condemned feminism as the domestic equivalent of the Evil Empire.

But other forces — new statistics, faulty scientific research, heavy societal moralism and unskeptical media — were key to fueling the momentum of the backlash against women's rights during the '80s. For example, these inaccurate and highly publicized studies announced infertility epidemics, shortages of marriageable men, and working-mom burnout were under close scrutiny. (Faludi, pp. 229, 230, 314 & 414-415)

CONCLUSIONS

As a counterpoint to Susan Faludi's backlash argument, Karen Lehrman, in a 1992 magazine article, admonishes women to stop acting like the victims Faludi describes. While she agrees that there are systemic anti-feminist forces in the workplace and beyond, she says they are not part of a diabolical conspiracy to keep women down. It may be unfair, she says, but women must work harder to break down the remaining stereotypes on an individual basis.

She argues that the workplace no longer has a place for the Women's Movement because federal laws have replaced the rhetoric of equal rights. In advising women to strive for more individualism, Lehrman contends that women need to become more adept at making their feelings known. By acting on their own or part of a group, Lehrman stresses that women can become more assertive and effective as both individuals and as employees. She challenges women to confront their bosses the same way men do. Lehrman acknowledges that women may be fired, but then again, they may not.

Getting men more involved in working toward a more personal equality for women is another way women can strengthen their goals. She advocates leaving government out of the issue.
Government cannot cleanse a society of sexism; culture and time can. (Lehrman, p. 34)

To perpetuate government involvement is a waste of time, Lehrman claims. And Lehrman emphasizes women have broken into virtually every field already and do not need government intervention nowadays. (Lehrman pp. 30-34).

A recent article in *Fortune* magazine advises women to continue breaking through traditional stereotypes. Supposedly, in breaking through the glass ceiling, the adage that line jobs are the straightest line to the top still holds. Women must take the lead from men and steer clear of dead end jobs such as personnel and public relations.

The most successful have typically sought but risky, thankless projects whose results become immediately apparent on the bottom line! You have to prove you’re a leader. You have to show you’re willing to steal second base.

"Women don’t project that ability well," according to Mary Rudie Bareby, an entrepreneur who built a $3 billion corporate retirement plan business for Merrill-Lynch. (Fierman, pp. 40-62)

When *Fortune* examined 1990 proxy statements of the 799 public companies on its combined lists of the 1,000 largest U.S. industrial and service companies, it found only 19 women in the 4,012 highest-paid officers and directors. In comparison, in a 1978 survey of 6,400 officers and directors in 1300 companies identified ten as women.

Reasons given for the almost negligible increase are that many women quit or deliberately leap off the fast track for the mommy track, or just plain get tired and quit the rat race. The women who have remained have endured discrimination, admits Ralph Ablon, Chairman of Ogden Corp., number 74 on *Fortune*’s list of the 100 largest diversified service companies.

Sure there’s discrimination. It’s stupid to say there’s not. Despite our intellectual efforts to deny it, prejudices exist until a new generation comes along that doesn’t have them.

Unfortunately, that new enlightened generation was supposed to be the baby boom generation, the male generation that is now filling many top CEO positions.
Many male survey respondents claimed they found women weak in interpersonal skills, a dimension they felt critical for a high corporate position. (Fierman, pp. 40-46)

In yet another poll lies perhaps another reason that so few women fill top spots. In this recent *Fortune* poll, 241 respondents out of 1,000 CEOs found that 80 percent reported identifiable barriers are keeping women from reaching the top. They concede that women have the same technical skills because women attend the same schools as males. They identified some of the problems as stereotypes and misconceptions about women in general.

But why are men, especially corporate men, afraid to deal with stereotypes and misconceptions about women? Why are they afraid of confronting the problem head on? Perhaps this quote from a corporate woman describes that situation best.

> Corporate males still don’t know how to deal with women. They are afraid to yell at them or to give them negative feedback. It’s as though they think they are yelling at their mothers or their wives. Men often worry women will run from the room in tears, or worse yet, yell back. They’re not really sure the women will come through for them. They just don’t trust them as much as the guys with whom they talk football.

Ellie Raynolds  
Partner/Ward Howell International

Another explanation cited in the article regarding why women get stuck in lower-level jobs is that they job-hop too much. A recent survey by Opinion Research Corporation of New Jersey corroborates this theory. The poll surveyed 26,500 managers in seven large companies, and asked whether they intended to quit their jobs in the next year. Seventeen percent of women answered "yes" compared with 11 percent of the men.

When women choose the corporate ladder, they let some of life's other options go. Many of the senior corporate women with salaries from $82,889 to $739,874 are either single or divorced without children. The few married women with children found the corporate success road rocky at best. Many complained that they rarely participate in family-oriented events because of their grueling work hours.

One very senior woman at a large consumer products company described the price she has personally paid for success:
"I would never want my mother to know how much it hurts to be childless."

However, this woman is hardly alone, judging from half the women on *Fortune’s* 1990 list of highly paid women. Most of the 29 are childless, five are divorced and one never married. (Fierman, pp. 26-55)

A recent study cited statistics that appear to confirm the perception about how career interruption ultimately results in pay gaps for women. Career "gappers" — as the study referred to these women — eventually make up some of the wage differences. However, even 20 years after returning to the work force, women’s paychecks are still less than women who never left. Joyce Jacobson, study co-author writes:

These women gappers partially rebound, but never catch up. Part of the problem is that employers think that these women who left aren’t as serious about their jobs.

For the study, Jacobson, an economics professor, teamed up with another economics professor, Lawrence Levin. Levin laments that employers are quick to classify "gappers" as bad investments. He writes:

If you (women) leave the work force, that signals to some employers that a woman might not be as good a worker. Or when a woman who had a baby comes back to work, an employer might think she’s got her mind on her baby and her home life instead of her job.

Levin and Jacobson cited other contributors to the persistent pay gap between men and women as three reasons:

— Women who leave the labor force lose seniority and thus earnings ability.
— Women who have career interruptions miss on-the-job training.
— Women who stay away from jobs too long might forget skills.

Both researchers interviewed 2,426 career women whose ages ranged from 30 to 64, from 1984 through 1986. Each woman had one or two work gaps over a 2-year period of at least six months each. Their analysis revealed that the average work gap was 7.5 years, with 85 percent of the women citing "family reasons" as the cause of the career interruptions. Levin adds:
It's not totally disastrous for a woman to interrupt her career, but it's going to cost her.

According to Jane Porter, a former Wall Street human resources director, there are a number of ways companies can assist women in meeting their career goals. Some of the more crucial focus upon the family unit. Companies can build day care centers at the office. They can allow flexible work schedules and job sharing among employees. They should also provide special training when needed so that women on the workplace can polish and expand their skills. Porter stresses:

The perception that a woman might not be 100 percent mentally committed after a break . . . is tougher to fix. But it's possible to convince employers that someone who wants to be home by 6 (pm) is just as dedicated as someone who works 80-hour weeks.

She suggests that employers try and "get the same bang for their buck" if they know how to help women make up for any lost time. In essence, employers should make an attempt to create an atmosphere helping women become re-oriented in the work force. (Myers, p. 2C)

A 1992 study conducted by the Boston-based firm of Work/Family Directions reports that the overall distribution of household labor has not changed, and it is impeding the progress of women in general. The study surveyed 25,000 professional employees at 15 major U.S. corporations by asking the employees to maintain a log of weekly housework they performed.

From the study, researchers found that working mothers averaged 44 hours on the job and 31 hours on housework. Fathers, on the other hand, worked 47 hours on the job and only 15 hours at home. The housework performed by men was broken down by gender lines, with men doing traditional tasks such as repairs and car and lawn maintenance.

They also found that a more equal distribution of labor exists until the arrival of children.

Before children are born, women work 44 hours at their jobs and men only 41 hours. After children, women remain at 44 hours but men more up to 47.

Charles Rodgers, a principal in the research firm "The study suggests that men move more quickly on their career paths because women 'cover' for them at home," Rodgers claims.
According to sociologist Patricia Voydanoff, the change in the household distribution of labor is slow because "women are considered supplementary wage earners . . . (with) major responsibility for housework."¹¹

Before changes will come in the housework, we need pay equity and the recognition that women’s work outside the home is as important as men’s.

Economist Heidi Hartman suggests that because women do most of the work at home, it will be difficult to change what is considered a reflection of power politics.¹²

There’s a connection between the work women do at home and the lack of respect and low-paying jobs they hold, she says.

Both in the household and in the labor market, the division of labor by gender tends to benefit men.

A solution must come soon for a long-lasting effect to occur, an effect that involves 13.7 million two-career families. (Klelman, p. 6C)

Another interesting theory concerning why so few women break through the glass ceiling centers around sports and sports jargon. According to this perspective, women are at a disadvantage on the workplace because most never participated in team sports the way boys do naturally. Apparently, there are many advantages in becoming part of a team. There is a feeling of sharing, of camaraderie, as well as a sense of pride and self-esteem. Boys learn the team spirit early because they are invariably steered into sports by their fathers or their peers. On the other hand, girls have few sports role models. And the few who do command national prominence or attention are usually in tennis or golf, which are not team sports.

This lack of team mentality and organization transcends into the workplace where women suffer a hardship because they have not learned to deal with disappointments and rejections that boys experience in sports. They do not adapt as easily to a team spirit and find it difficult to become part of a competitive team. Women actually do compete, but against each other. Instead of joining forces for a greater edge against outside competitors, they judge other women too much.

In the sporting arena, patience and critical reasoning are a vital part of winning. Boys and
men understand the strategic value of devising solid game plans. They also understand how important it is to put past failures or losses behind quickly, and to focus on long-range goals instead.

Women lose out on the sports language, as well. Too often they cannot become part of many male-dominated conversations because most women do not follow the popular team sports regularly. Many times even though men have nothing else in common, there always seems to be a sport they can discuss.

In many meetings or conferences, which men usually preside over, there is usually some kind of reference to sports. Terms such as "you dropped the ball," "learn to roll with the punches," "the ball's in your court," or "take your best shot" are examples of commonplace jargon on the work site.

The lack of the sports mentality may appear as a small disconcerting part of relationships. But men fare quite well with the sports attitude and jargon, both at work and socially. They learn how to share a common goal and strive for winning. Sports can be a good teacher, teaching humility as well as getting along with others during tough situations. This is good practice for establishing interpersonal relationships and handling authority as well as delegating lower-level duties.

But perhaps most important, sports are helpful in developing strong mental attitudes and healthy physically conditioned bodies. Athletes realize that tomorrow is another day, another game. They learn to be as graceful when they lose as when they win. For they know that in any sports event there must always be a winner as well as a loser. Perhaps the best adage here is the well-worn: "It's not whether you win or lose but how you play the game!"

Sports teaches players that they are only part of a whole, and that in order to win they must cooperate with other team members. And that is true even if one team member dislikes another. Personal feelings have no part in a sporting event, athletes learn very soon. Coaches usually do not tolerate primadona players or so-called hot shots. Unfortunately, most women do
not have the benefit of all this experience, experience that is so valuable during a person's lifetime, and contributes so much to self-discipline and ultimate success. (Jones, March 11, 1991)

Did any woman ever acknowledge profundity in another woman's mind, or justice in another woman's heart?

Friedrich Nietzsche
*Beyond Good and Evil* (1886) (Starr, p. 76)

Then again we know that the stereotypes of women exist not only among men, but oftentimes among other women, they also manifest themselves among high-powered political leaders. The most common misconception of women as wives, mothers, secretaries, waitresses, etc., was rather apparent during President Bush's 1992 visit to Las Vegas. A rather peculiar incident was reported in the newspaper a few days after his visit. The reporter who described the meeting of a high-level Bush appointee and Las Vegas Mayor Jan Laverty Jones as a standard case of "foot in the mouth" disease was right on target.

It seems that when Mayor Jones was greeted by W. Henderson Moore, the former number two man in the U.S. Department of Energy, and now Bush's Deputy Chief of Staff, he committed an insensitive and sexist faux pas. During the glad-handing parade at McCarran International Airport, Moore replied upon meeting Jones:

"Oh, I can see why you're the mayor. Are you smart?" According to Jones, she felt as though she should have replied: Do you want to see my Stanford credentials? (Ralston p. 1B)

It should be noted that Mayor Jones is an attractive woman in her early forties with five children.

For even if the rates of women in the labor force rise more slowly than projected, the impacts of the increased numbers of working women will still remain profound. For in less than a generation, the nation's pattern of employment has been radically altered. No longer is the nuclear family of the 1950's commonplace. In fact the percentage of families rated as true "nuclear" families has dropped to 12 percent.¹³
The pattern in which most women aspired to become wives and mothers has changed into one where nearly everyone is paid to work. And because so much of the change has taken place since 1960, societal implications are still under constant debate. There is no doubt that this controversy will continue into the year 2000 and generate other needs in the form of more flexible work hours for working mothers, daycare centers in the workplace and other areas in need of attention. Policies and patterns of child rearing, taxation, pensions, hiring, compensation, and industrial structure will change as they conform to the new realities in the workplace. (Hudson, pp. 88-89)

Conversely, the economic growth that the U.S. has enjoyed as a result of the shift of women from low-productivity, unpaid housework to paid employment will taper off. In fact, for the remaining years before the year 2000, the nation will experience the slowest job growth since the 1930s. That decrease is expected to hover around 1 percent annually until the new decade. (Hudson, pp. 78-79)

That means that women must prepare for a more diverse workplace filled with advanced technology and greater skills demand.

Statistics reveal that 14 million women joined the work force between 1970 and 1980. However, due to the "Baby Bust," only nine million will become wage earners between 1990 and 2000. This means that as fewer women move from the unmeasured to the measured economy, economic growth rates will be lower overall. But even with these conservative statistics, daycare and pre-school education will demand greater attention. All facets of society will become more heavily involved. By the year 2000, it may become routine for employers to subsidize or directly provide daycare and pre-school facilities onsite. In addition, federal daycare programs for children of welfare mothers as well as early childhood education for disadvantaged children, and tax subsidies for child care may be substantially expanded.

Other areas of concern to working mothers will be the tax system that historically has carried a "marriage penalty," child care deductions and other spin-offs related to mothers in the
workplace. This societal struggle is projected in spite of the fact that most Americans desire to promote a close family unit, but instead are faced with the reality of requiring the higher incomes of many two wage-earner families.

But other problems could face employers as the two-career families become less willing to relocate for their jobs. This is anticipated despite the greater relocation assistance corporations offer to spouses. The two-career trend will reinforce the rigidity that develops as the work force ages. Middle-aged, two-career families will become less geographically mobile. (Hudson, pp. 85-89)

*Workforce 2000* claims that the distinctions between male and female jobs will decline in response to market pressures. This could result in both union and federal government intervention into the ongoing wage debate between the sexes. The study also speculates that part-time, flexible and stay-at-home jobs will increase and total hours per employee are likely to drop in response to the needs of women who want to work and have children. Unfortunately, this combination with the continued trend toward early retirement will result in a greater fraction of the national income taken as leisure.

Economists predict that this action will further depress the measured gross national product consumption.

Already, many corporations are restructuring employee compensation packages to reflect the needs of the two-earner families and single workers. Some packages, for example, may feature a "cafeteria" benefit plan where an employee can choose from a menu of health, retirement, leave and other benefits. These benefit packages will be subject only to a dollar limitation and are likely to become more widespread. Where a single parent might choose more daycare, health and flexible leave options, a middle-aged household head might prefer more insurance, retirement or savings programs. It is also predicted that private pension benefits will most likely be tied to an individual's earnings and structured less on years of service, family status and income from other sources such as Social Security.
While this so-called tailoring of private plans to individual needs and earnings is a step in the right direction, public programs will most likely move in the other direction. This could take the form of a means-testing of Social Security benefits, Medicare and federal pensions, and increased support for families with children. These policies could disrupt the access of women to many pension, health, and other benefits as compensation plans become increasingly segregated between those available to wage earners, the ones strictly tied to economic value and those available through government. And, of course, those available to the government will have the greatest adverse action toward individuals with lower income and children, specifically, single and divorced mothers. (Hudson, pp. 87-89)

That social changes in lifestyles, leisure living, economic trends and other important factors are related to life in America is no surprise. We can only hope that as changes occur, more and more women have a voice in the changes that will affect both the women and their children. For anything less is undemocratic. (Hudson, pp. xiv-xxvii)

If federal intervention is necessary to equalize the wage situation between the salaries of women and men, then it will also be essential that the federal government look at its own house, too. For only last year, when the Civil Rights Act of 1991 finally passed, were the employees of the House of Representatives, Senate, and White House covered under the Act for discrimination and sexual harassment.

But much of the problem in the American workplace can be laid at the federal government’s doorstep now. Because of the legislation allowing so much of our own products to be assembled piece-meal all over the world, no one is ever very sure where a particular product is manufactured. This, of course, has resulted in a downsizing of manufacturing jobs in this country. And people who filled these jobs are now unemployed, seeking any jobs they can find. Many of these people have also been replaced by new technology such as robotics. Because of this deskilling mechanism, many of the people who earned higher salaries in the more skilled occupations are now underemployed in lower-paying jobs.
This has resulted in what has become known as the "vanishing middle class." The relationship between the vanishing middle class and the process of deskilling has resulted in an increase in the lower and higher classes, pushing many former middle-class wage earners into the lower class. And with the emergence of women and minorities into the workforce in such great numbers, Caucasian males are becoming increasingly worried about losing their piece of the pie. That is why there is so much hostility about women and minorities and affirmative action.

Caucasian males have been in control so long that they are now fearful that their control over the workplace is slowly eroding. That is why there is so much discussion about affirmative action and distinguishing what stand a particular political party holds on the subject. But as long as discrimination is so readily apparent, affirmative action is necessary to ensure that women and minorities receive a fair shake in the labor market and that they are judged by their capabilities and not gender or race.

Fortunately, as mentioned previously, many changes are taking place in this nation that may serve to realign the women's movement again. The significance of the Roe v. Wade decision scheduled for review in late 1992, the 1991 confirmation of Justice Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court, and the Civil Rights Act of 1991 have certainly proved to be catalysts. The fact is that now women are angry enough to begin forming political action groups in great numbers. They know that power must come from within their own ranks. They also know that this power must transcend personal beliefs and must ultimately result in more women in positions of power. Women must begin to realize that for many, many years men have fought politically in what appeared to be a "dog-eat-dog" fight, but they still shook hands and went out and had a beer together. Women must learn that they can be their own worst enemies. They must learn to work together and not be influenced by male opinion or dogma. Women are strong; they can prove themselves worthy of any challenge. But first they must realize that power belongs to the many and not the few.
Men have led this country straight into a form of certain destruction through their greed and opulence. It is now time for women to take the helm and prove that women may be the weaker sex physically, but mentally, they can outshine the men anytime around.

The diversity of the many different viewpoints and the number of independent groups that are involved in the women’s movement is a strength, not a weakness. There is a great need for experimentation, both in organizational forms and in tactics. As long as there are many factions, the movement is not endangered if one or another gets sidetracked into nonproductive activities, or even disintegrates.

Rebuilding a movement that is viable for an extended period of time is crucial. We cannot expect quick or easy victories. But if we can avoid the mistakes of the suffragists, who limited their goals too much and were too easily satisfied, our chances are better. With strong commitments from all groups, we can build a more humane, nonsexist society. After all, women do constitute more than half the world’s population.

Women, even feminist women, are not yet all sisters. Class and race divide us. Old fears, prejudices, and suspicions are hard to overcome. Yet we do have many basic interests in common. Even those women who benefit materially from the status quo do so, by and large, only are adjuncts to men. They pay for their comforts through dependency. As more and more women begin to realize that the present system does not serve their interest, that it serves only the interests of a few upper-class white males—a mass movement aimed at basic socioeconomic change may emerge.

But no matter what happens in the women’s movement or other women’s rights’ organizations, there are so many other individual actions that we, as human beings, can undertake. Some are so simple that it seems incomprehensible that most are not in practice already. Specifically, our most revered institutions should be part of the solution, not the problem.

First of all, parents must discourage any deliberate stereotyping of their daughters and sons into what are inaccurately known as traditional female and male occupations. They should
also instill in their children the knowledge that they can accomplish any goal they choose, that it just takes work, and a great deal of planning. Of course, the home is the most fundamental of areas where changes can take place, and these changes must not only become apparent in behavior, but also in attitudes.

Children must receive equal amounts of attention in both their homes and in their schools. They must also recognize that education is the key to realizing their full potential. As mentioned previously, teachers must evaluate boys and girls in the same way. They should not steer girls into traditionally female occupations. Instead, they should emphasize and encourage choice and independence. Nowadays, that is especially important because the number of women who combine career and family responsibilities is rising steadily, according to the demographics already presented.

Women need orientation toward lifelong careers, smaller families, and continuing education. And while the educational process has been primarily directed toward the young female, the older female student population is also on the rise. According to Women’s Bureau statistics, 9 out of 10 women are employed outside their homes during their lifetime. Since the life expectancy of women now stands at 75 years, most women can expect to work outside the home another 30 to 35 years after the last child has left home.

But the problem areas interfering with women’s pursuit of professional vocations appear to center on sex role conditioning and socialization, role conflict, marriage focus, lack of work orientation, sexism, and sex discrimination. The old adage that young female children look at the future and ask, "What can I do?" and male children exhort, "What can I be?" appears to have some merit.

Unfortunately, the socio-cultural definition of the breadwinner role has not changed and stereotypical explanations are still evident in the education of male and female children. That is one of the reasons society should bear most of the blame for stereotyping women into homemaker roles for so long. As recently as 1960, social pressures and prevailing norms prevented many
women from seeking outside employment for financial reasons. As a result, society traumatized women into undergoing immeasurable guilt associated with the supposed irreparable damage to children brought on by working mothers. Research has, of course, disproved that theory.

The Women's Liberation Movement and trends toward later marriage and fewer children have opened doors for women who felt doomed in lives as unfulfilled homemakers. But in order for women to fully succeed, both in the workplace and in the home, their husbands or significant others must assume more of the homemaking duties. Women must demand more personal time for themselves. Man must share the child-rearing duties as well as share responsibility for the spiritual upbringing of their children too.

Employers must become more flexible regarding parental leave, shorter work hours, flexible work schedules, and ensure that seniority rights are maintained during any parental leave. They must attempt to provide some kind of centralized child care centers for working women. That could become a real asset to organizations as a whole, and the cost could be shared by several employers. Perhaps legislation is necessary to give employers a tax break for providing child care and maternity leave. Whatever it takes, it is crucial that all women have access to decent, affordable child care.

Another area that must also be addressed by legislation is the alimony system. In today's divorce court, many no-fault divorce laws virtually force some women into destitution. The law needs to be strengthened to provide some form of financial support for these impoverished women and their children.

Churches and religious organizations must offer support to working women as well. Churches, on the whole, have been very slow in getting involved in women's issues. However, just recently a news item on television mentioned that the Catholic Church had denounced sexism as "evil." In the next breath, though, the television commentator went on to say that the Catholic Church would continue its tradition of allowing only men into the priesthood.
But perhaps the most expedient method for providing real change is through the political process. Women must get more involved, even if it is only at the grassroots level. Already, in one U.S. Senate race in Illinois, a black women defeated an incumbent legislator by using the incumbent’s vote for Justice Clarence Thomas as a campaign issue. Women are forming political action groups and raising funds for women candidates across the nation. Women have proven in the past that they are strong, hardy warriors, so let the political arena become the next frontier for women with the political savvy and support to conquer.

Finally, the media as a whole must bear a great deal of responsibility for the erroneous and pervasive stereotypes they perpetuate about women. Advertising copy in magazines, newspapers, radio and television has on many occasions depicted women as having lesser intelligence than the average male. And oftentimes, television programs utilize the dumb blonde stereotype almost to the form of excess. That kind of humor is extremely outdated. One can only hope that television producers will become more educated and realize the harm these stereotypes inflict upon women and girls.

Perhaps as more and more women are allowed to enter the screenwriting and production fields in films and television, a more accurate portrayal of women will be presented. Media must make a more conscious effort to present films, television and advertising copy that shows women and girls in a more positive light. After all, women are the majority of the population and, therefore, most likely the majority of the viewing public.
ENDNOTES

10. Delia Martinez, Executive Director, Nevada Equal Rights Commission
    October 30, 1990, Las Vegas, NV

11. Patricia Voyanoff is Director of the Study of Family Development,
    University of Dayton.

12. Heidi Hartman is an economist in charge of the Institute of Women's

13. Unknown Writer, There's No Such Thing as Women's Work, a 30-minute
    black and white film produced and directed for the Women's Bureau
    of the U. S. Department of Labor, with ABC News' Carole Simpson as
    narrator and hostess, approximately 1985.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Brothers, Dr. Joyce. "Women and Men View Work, Home Life Differently," Las Vegas Sun, April 10, 1990, p. 12D.

Brothers, Dr. Joyce. "Men and Women Hold Different Political and Social Philosophies," Las Vegas Sun, May 20, 1990, p. 6D.


Martinez, Delia. Governor's Conference on Women, September 14, 1990, Las Vegas, NV.


Pappa, Erik. "UNLV Profs Cite Sexual Harassment," Las Vegas Sun, December 6, 1991, p. 5A.


Wolt, I. "All Dressed Up With No Place to Go," *American Film*, (December, 1984), pp. 47-54.

