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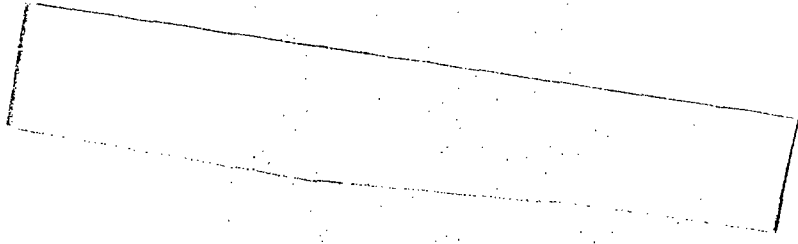
ABSTRACT

Educational attainment of women has risen steadily since the turn of the century. In 1900 about 57,000 girls graduated from high school, and by 1968 the number had increased to 1.4 million. A similar rise occurred in the number of bachelor's degrees received by women. In 1900 about 5,000 graduated from college, and in 1968 the number rose to 279,000. A total of 300 women received master's degrees in 1900; in 1968 the total was 63,000. A similar increase occurred in the number of doctor's degrees granted to women. In 1900 only 23 received doctor's degrees while in 1968, 2,906 obtained doctorates. There is a direct relationship between educational attainment of women and their labor force participation; the more education a woman has received, the greater the likelihood she will be engaged in paid employment. In 1968, 54 percent of the women with 4 years of college, 48 percent of the high school graduates, and 24 percent of the women with less than 8 years of schooling were working. (BC)

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Trends in  
**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**  
of  
**WOMEN**



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
WAGE AND LABOR STANDARDS ADMINISTRATION

VT010856

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October 1969



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## TRENDS IN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF WOMEN

The level of education attained by women has risen steadily since the turn of the century. Secondary school education is now available to all, and access to higher education has been greatly facilitated in recent years.

The recent advances in the educational achievement of both boys and girls have been caused by a combination of social and economic factors. The rise in family incomes has made it possible for many young people to extend their education through high school graduation and beyond. At the same time the growth in publicly supported higher education, and particularly the growth of 2-year community colleges, has made higher education more readily available. Young people have been motivated to take advantage of available schooling by the increasing educational requirements needed to qualify for today's jobs. In an era of technological advances a high school diploma or post-secondary-school education is frequently needed for entry-level positions, and added education enhances the opportunities for advancement.

### Educational Attainment, 1900-68

Following are key comparisons of the proportions of young people in the population who enrolled in and graduated from high school and college in 1900, 1930, 1960, and 1967 or 1968: <sup>1/</sup>

High school enrollments rose from a ratio of 11 per 100 persons 14 to 17 years of age in 1900 to 51 per 100 in 1930, to 86 per 100 in 1960, and to 94 per 100 in 1968.\*

High school graduations rose from 6 per 100 persons 17 years of age in 1900 to 29 per 100 in 1930, to 65 per 100 in 1960, and to 77 per 100 in 1968.\*

College enrollments rose from 4 per 100 persons 18 to 21 years of age in 1900 to 12 per 100 in 1930, to 38 per 100 in 1960, and to 47 per 100 in 1967.

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\* From preliminary data issued by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education.

<sup>1/</sup> A comparison of the total number of enrollees or graduates (regardless of age) in any one year with the number of persons in the population of a certain age or age group in the same year is a useful device to illustrate trends. However, this ratio does not show the proportion of persons of that age in the population who were enrolled or graduated.

College graduations (bachelor's and first professional degrees only) rose from less than 2 per 100 persons 21 years of age in 1900 to 6 per 100 in 1930, to 17 per 100 in 1960, and to 22 per 100 in 1968.<sup>2/</sup>

Another measure of the increased level of educational attainment of women and men is the rise in the proportion of the population who have completed 4 years or more of college. In April 1940 about 1.4 million women 25 years of age and over, or 3.7 percent of the woman population of that age, were college graduates (table 1). By March 1968 about 4.5 million women 25 years of age and over, or 8.0 percent of the woman population, had completed 4 years or more of college. Men made even better progress over the 28-year period. The number of men 25 years of age and over who were college graduates rose from 2.0 million in April 1940 to 6.7 million in March 1968. Moreover, the proportion of the male population of that age who had completed 4 years or more of college increased from 5.4 to 13.3 percent.

Following are specific trends for women by level of education:

#### High school graduates

Since 1900 there has been a steady growth (with the exception of one decade) in the number of girls graduating from high school--from 57,000 in 1900 to 367,000 in 1930, to 966,000 in 1960, and to 1.4 million in 1968 (table 2). The slight decline between 1940 and 1950 is attributable to the low birth rate during the depression decade of the 1930's. In 1900 only 7 per 100 girls 17 years of age in the population graduated from high school. This ratio increased to 32 per 100 in 1930, to 67 per 100 in 1960, and to 78 per 100 in 1968. The comparable ratios for boys were 5 per 100 in 1900, 26 per 100 in 1930, 61 per 100 in 1960, and 75 per 100 in 1968.

Girls have consistently outnumbered boys among high school graduates. However, the difference in the number of girl and boy graduates has narrowed in the last few decades. High school graduating classes recently have been composed almost equally of girls and boys--50.4 and 49.6 percent, respectively, in 1968 (chart A).

#### First-time college enrollees

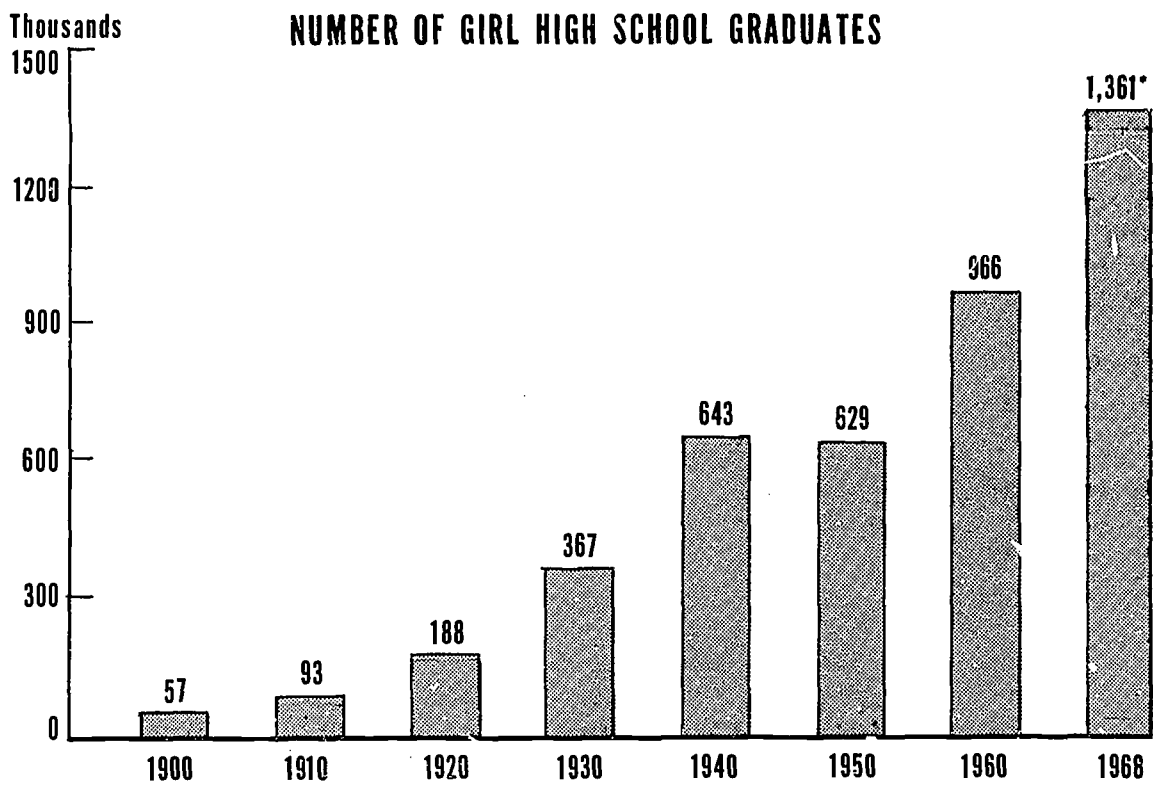
Nearly 819,000 women and more than 1,089,000 men were enrolled in college for the first time in October 1968 (table 3). This represents an

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<sup>2/</sup> Prior to 1966 such degrees as M.D., D.D.S., LL.B., B.D., M.L.S., and M.S.W. were classified as first professional degrees. Since 1966 M.L.S. and M.S.W. degrees, a majority of which are earned by women, have been classified as master's degrees, and first professional degrees have been limited to those requiring 6 years or more of higher education.

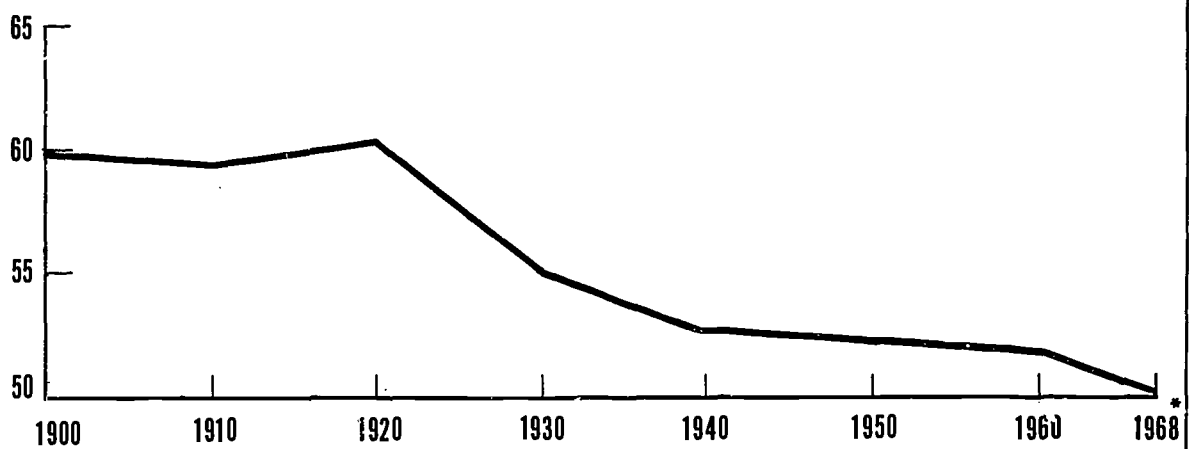
CHART A

# GIRL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES, SELECTED YEARS, 1900-68



Percent

GIRLS AS PERCENT OF ALL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES



\* Preliminary data.  
Source: See page 19.



increase of 14 percent for women and 16 percent for men over the previous year's first-time enrollments, as compared with increases of 7 percent for women and 5 percent for men from 1966 to 1967. These data include first-time students in institutions of higher education both in degree-credit programs and in programs not chiefly creditable toward a bachelor's degree, and are therefore not comparable with data for 1965 and prior years.

First-time students in degree-credit programs only included 712,596 women and 931,036 men in 1968,<sup>3/</sup> an increase of 15 percent for women and 12 percent for men over the comparable enrollment figures for 1965. During the 20-year period since 1948 the number of women enrolled for the first time in such programs increased  $3\frac{1}{2}$  times; the number of men,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times.

First-time college enrollments, particularly of women, have increased proportionately more than high school graduations over the 20-year period, and substantially more during the past few years for both men and women. These differences represent in part a rise in the proportions of young men and women who go on to college directly from high school. They also represent a substantial increase in the number of men and women who enter college after being out of school for a year or more.

Of all women students 14 to 34 years of age enrolled in the first year of college in October 1966, 30 percent had graduated from high school before 1966 and 9 percent had graduated in 1961 or earlier.<sup>4/</sup> Among men first-year students, 34 percent had graduated before 1966 and 15 percent in 1961 or earlier. Among students enrolled in 2-year colleges, the figures were even more striking: 43 percent of men and 36 percent of women first-year students had graduated before 1966, and 21 percent of men and 11 percent of women had graduated in 1961 or before.

Some of these older students may be men who have been in military service and women who have been busy with family responsibilities during the intervening years. But they may also include men and women who have been in the work force and have found the need of further education in order to advance in their careers.

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<sup>3/</sup> "Opening Fall Enrollments in Higher Education, 1968," Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

<sup>4/</sup> "Characteristics of Students and Their Colleges," Current Population Reports, P-20, No. 183, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce.



## Bachelor's and first professional degrees 5/

The increase in recent years in the number of women first-time college enrollees is now being reflected in the rising number of women receiving college degrees. Not only the number but also the proportion of all bachelor's and first professional degrees earned by women rose significantly between 1960 and 1965. This trend has continued since 1966 despite the change in definition for first professional degrees.

The number of women earning bachelor's and first professional degrees increased from little more than 5,000 in 1900 to about 49,000 in 1930, to 139,000 in 1960, and to 279,000 in 1968 (chart B and table 4). Between 1900 and 1930 the rate of increase in the number of such degrees awarded was greater for women than for men--833 percent compared with 232 percent. In contrast, between 1930 and 1960 the rate of increase in degrees earned was greater for men than for women--247 percent compared with 185 percent. A return to the previous trend occurred between 1960 and 1965, when the number of degrees earned by women rose by 57 percent compared with 25 percent among men. From 1966 to 1968 the rate of increase in degrees earned was only slightly greater for women (24 percent) than for men (19 percent).

In both 1900 and 1910 women earned about 20 percent of the total bachelor's and first professional degrees (chart B and table 5). Following World War I, this proportion rose sharply to about 40 percent in 1930 and 1940. Because college graduating classes in 1950 included large numbers of World War II veterans, the proportion of such degrees earned by women declined to 24 percent. By 1965 this proportion had rebounded to 41 percent. Women earned 42 percent of the total bachelor's and first professional degrees in 1968.

Of the 278,761 bachelor's and first professional degrees earned by women in 1968, 1,645 were first professional degrees requiring 6 years or more of higher education. This is a 15 percent increase since 1966, the first year when separate data on first professional degrees were available on a comparable basis. Women's share of all first professional degrees awarded in 1966 and 1968 amounted to 4.5 and 4.7 percent, respectively. In contrast, women earned 42.6 percent of bachelor's degrees only in 1966, and 43.5 percent in 1968.

Another measure of the increase in educational attainment is a comparison of the number of college graduations with the number of persons 21 years of age in the population. <sup>6/</sup> From less than 1 graduate per 100 women 21 years of age in 1900, the ratio rose to 4 per 100 in 1930, to 12 per 100 in 1960, and to 19 per 100 in 1968. The corresponding ratios for men were 3 per 100 in 1900, 7 per 100 in 1930, 23 per 100 in 1960, and 26 per 100 in 1968.

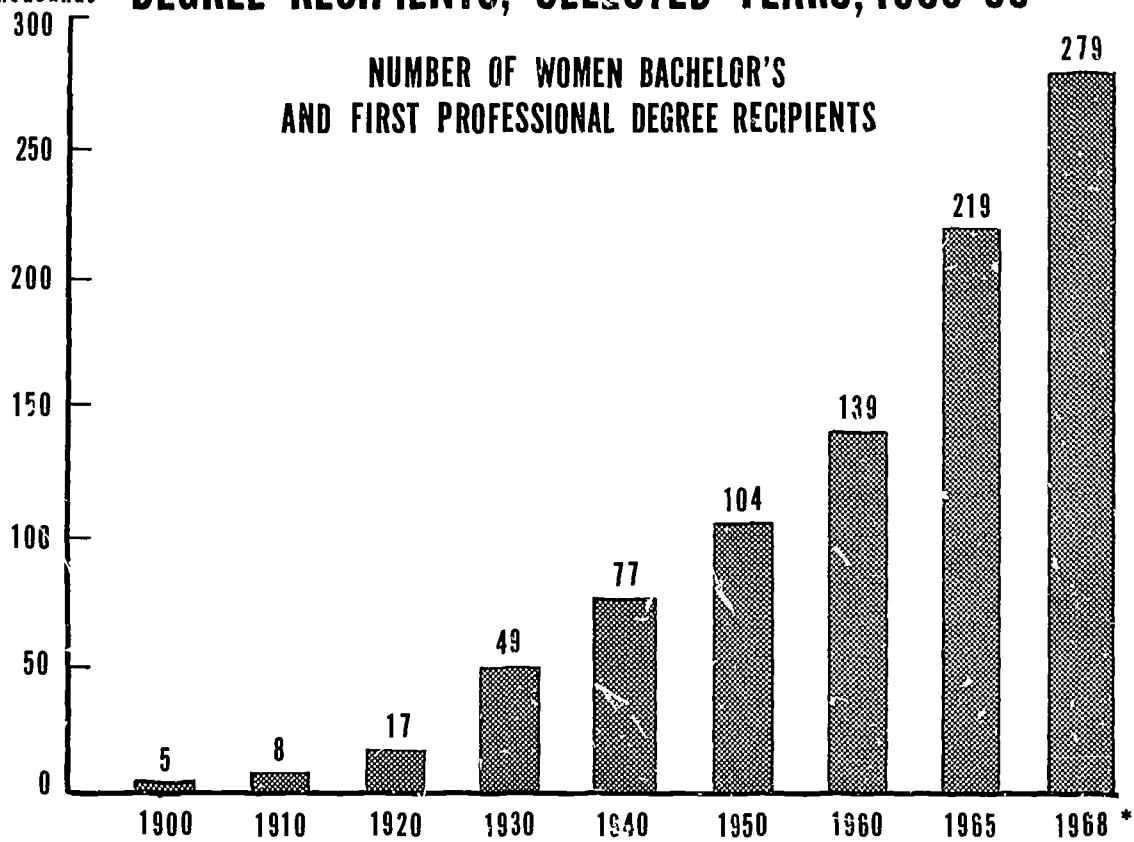
5/ See footnote 2.

6/ Based on population estimates for October of the preceding year.

CHART B

# WOMEN BACHELOR'S AND FIRST PROFESSIONAL DEGREE RECIPIENTS, SELECTED YEARS, 1900-68

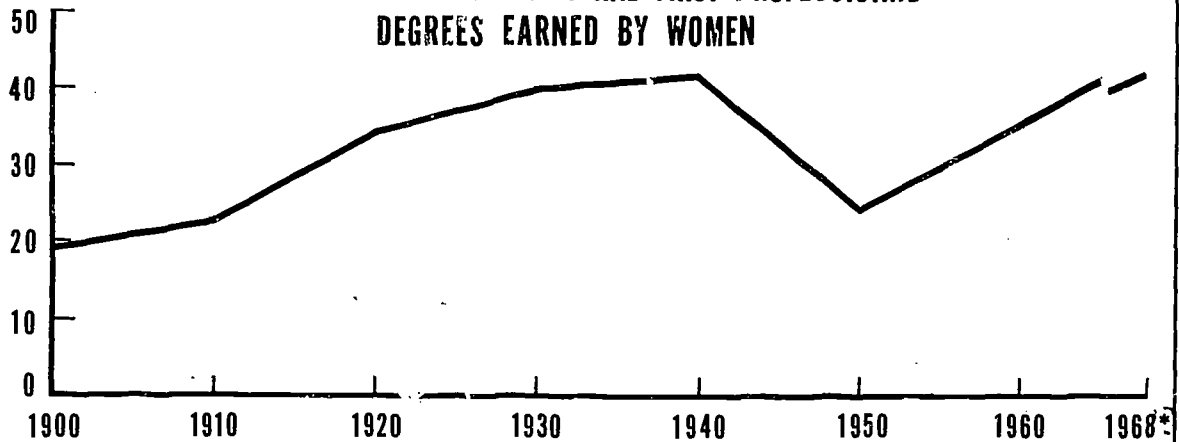
Thousands



NUMBER OF WOMEN BACHELOR'S AND FIRST PROFESSIONAL DEGREE RECIPIENTS

Percent

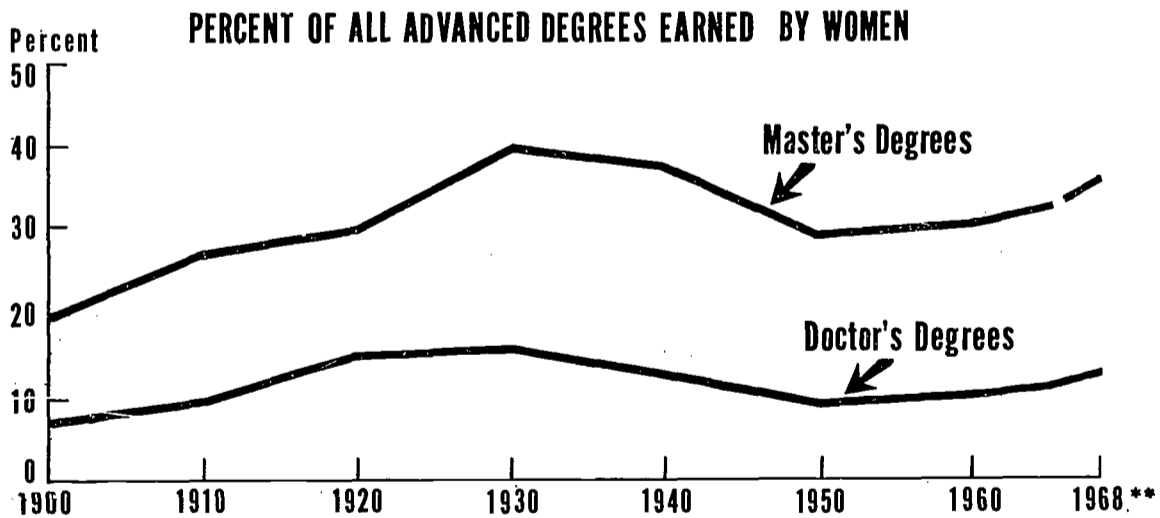
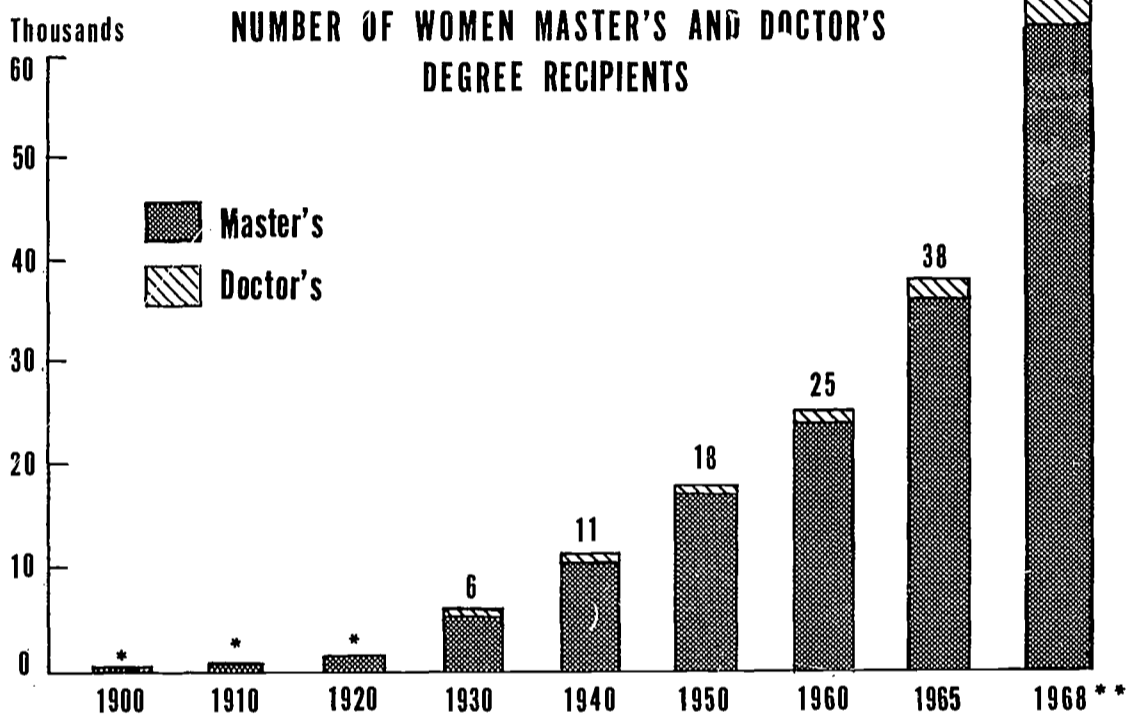
## PERCENT OF ALL BACHELOR'S AND FIRST PROFESSIONAL DEGREES EARNED BY WOMEN



\*1966-68 not strictly comparable with prior years. See text for explanation.  
Source: See page 19.

CHART C

## WOMEN ADVANCED DEGREE RECIPIENTS, SELECTED YEARS, 1900-68



\*Master's and doctor's degrees combined (less than 2,000).  
 \*\* 1966-68 master's degrees not strictly comparable with prior years. See text for explanation.  
 Source: See page 19.

### Advanced degrees 7/

An increasing number and proportion of all degrees earned by both women and men have been at the master's and doctor's degree level. In 1900 only 6 percent of all degrees earned by women were at this level. By 1930 this percentage had doubled to 12. From 1950 to 1965 it averaged about 15 percent. With the change in definition, the proportion was 18 percent in 1966, and 19 percent in 1968. The trend for men was slightly different. In 1900, 7 percent of all degrees earned by men were at the advanced degree level. This percentage rose to 13 in 1930 and to 15 in 1940, but dropped to 12 in 1950 when the number of men receiving bachelor's and first professional degrees reached a peak after World War II. It rose to 22 percent in 1965 and to 25 percent in 1966 and 1968.

Master's degrees.--About 300 women earned master's degrees in 1900 (table 4). A momentous expansion occurred between that date and 1930 when 6,000 women earned master's degrees--a 20-fold increase. From 1930 to 1960 the rate of growth in the number of women earning master's degrees was considerable but did not match this earlier advance. The rate of increase accelerated between 1960 and 1965 and amounted to 53 percent; during the 2-year period from 1966 to 1968 it amounted to a striking 33 percent. Among men the rate of growth from 1900 to 1960 was more even--from 1,300 in 1900 to 8,900 in 1930, and to 51,000 in 1960. As was true for women, the rate of increase in the number of master's degrees earned by men accelerated between 1960 and 1965 and amounted to 50 percent. But the rate of growth for men from 1966 to 1968 (22 percent) was considerably less than for women. More than 63,000 women and nearly 114,000 men earned master's degrees in 1968.

In 1900 women accounted for about 20 percent of all master's degree recipients (chart C and table 5). By 1930 this proportion had grown to 40 percent. In 1950, despite the increase in the number of women earning master's degrees, their share of all master's degrees earned had dropped to 29 percent. After that a slight recovery occurred, and the proportion of all master's degrees earned by women had leveled off at about 32 percent in 1965. Between 1966 and 1968, after the change in definition, it increased from 34 to 36 percent.

Doctor's degrees.--The trend among women earning doctor's degrees has been similar to that for women earning master's degrees. The greatest growth in the number of women earning doctor's degrees occurred between 1900 and 1930--from 23 to 353, or a 15-fold increase (table 4). The rise from 1930 to 1960 was less dramatic and relatively steady. But between 1960 and 1968, the number of doctor's degrees earned by women almost tripled--from 1,028 to 2,906. Among men the rise in the number

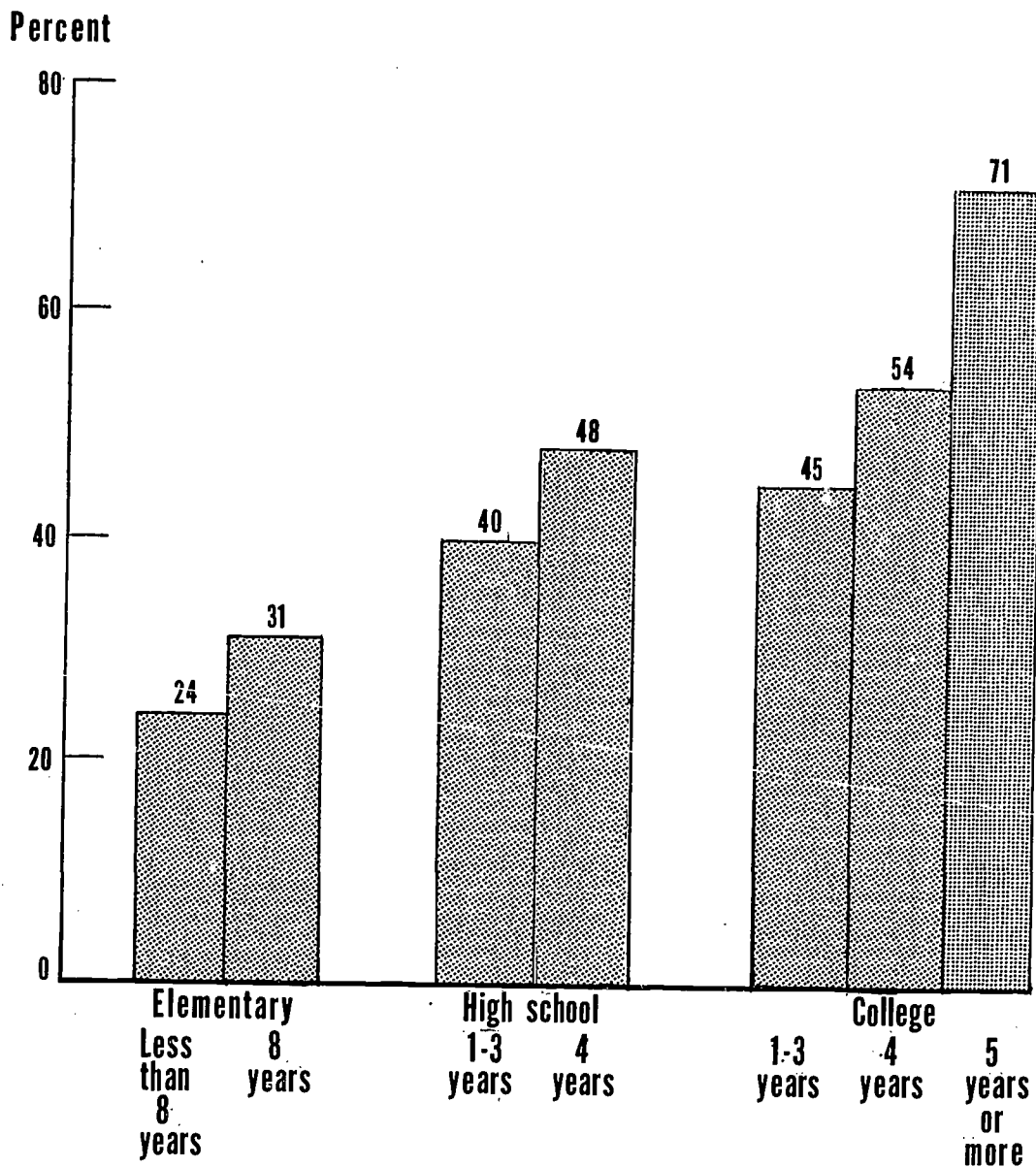
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7/ See footnote 2.

CHART D

# LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES OF WOMEN, BY EDUCATIONAL LEVELS, MARCH 1968

(WOMEN 18 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER)



Source: See page 19.



earning these degrees was more regular throughout the 1900-60 period. Between 1960 and 1968, however, the rate of increase in doctor's degrees earned by men was less than for women--129 percent as compared with 183 percent. Men earned 360 doctor's degrees in 1900, 1,950 in 1930, 8,800 in 1960, and 20,000 in 1968.

Women earned 6 percent of all doctor's degrees in 1900 (chart C and table 5). By 1920 this proportion had reached a peak of 15 percent. Since then women have earned relatively fewer doctorates--the proportion dropped to a low of 10 percent in 1950 and has risen steadily since to 13 percent in 1968.

#### Education and Labor Force Participation

There is a direct relationship between the educational attainment of women and their labor force participation. The more education a woman has received, the greater the likelihood she will be engaged in paid employment. For example, in March 1968, 71 percent of women who had completed 5 years or more of college were in the labor force (chart D and table 6). Similarly, 54 percent of women with 4 years of college were employed or looking for work. The proportion dropped to 48 percent for women high school graduates and to 24 percent for women with less than 8 years of schooling. The chances of being employed were even slimmer for those women who had less than 5 years of formal education.

This pattern of greater labor force participation among women with higher educational attainment generally held true when the figures were broken down by age group. Exceptionally high labor force participation rates were shown for both women 45 to 54 years of age with 5 years or more of college (86 percent) and women 20 to 24 years of age with 4 years of college (82 percent). Among women with less than 8 years of schooling, labor force participation rates were generally below 40 percent. Exceptions were the very small group of young women 18 and 19 years old with a rate of 40 percent, and women 35 to 54 years of age with 41 percent in the labor force.

Educational attainment appears to exert a stronger influence today on whether a woman works than it did in October 1952. The labor force participation rate of all women 18 years of age and over increased 6.4 percentage points to 42 percent from October 1952 to March 1968 (table 7). For those with a high school education or better, however, the increase was 7.4 percentage points or more. On the other hand, the labor force participation rates of women with 8 years or less of schooling were practically unchanged over the same period, except for a decline from 28 to 17 percent among those with less than 5 years of formal education.

This growth in labor force participation among women with the most education and the reduction in the likelihood of employment among women with relatively little schooling generally are sustained when comparisons are made by age group over the 17-year period. The extent of the increase or decrease, of course, varied somewhat among the age groups. The greatest increase in labor force participation of women college graduates was shown by those 25 to 34 years of age. The decrease in labor force participation of women with less than 5 years of schooling was most noticeable among those under 35 years of age.



Table 1.--College Graduates 25 Years of Age and Over,  
by Sex, Selected Years, 1940-68

(Numbers in thousands)

Month and year	Women			Men		
	Population	With 4 years or more of college		Population	With 4 years or more of college	
		Number	Percent of population		Number	Percent of population
March 1968	55,959	4,450	8.0	50,510	6,721	13.3
March 1967	55,107	4,178	7.6	49,756	6,372	12.8
March 1966	54,467	4,032	7.4	49,410	6,180	12.5
March 1965	54,004	3,820	7.1	49,242	5,923	12.0
March 1964	53,447	3,629	6.8	48,975	5,714	11.7
March 1962	52,381	3,505	6.8	48,283	5,497	11.4
March 1959	50,437	2,969	5.9	47,041	4,765	10.1
March 1957	49,422	2,813	5.7	46,208	4,359	9.4
October 1952	45,990	2,638	5.7	42,368	3,480	8.2
April 1947	42,095	1,946	4.6	40,483	2,478	6.1
April 1940 <sup>1/</sup>	37,313	1,386	3.7	37,463	2,021	5.4

<sup>1/</sup> Excludes Alaska and Hawaii.

Source: See page 19.

Table 2.--High School Graduates, by Sex, Selected Years, 1900-68

Sex	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1968 <sup>1/</sup>
Total	94,883	156,429	311,266	666,904	1,221,475	1,199,700	1,864,000	2,702,000
Girls	56,808	92,753	187,582	366,528	642,757	629,000	966,000	1,361,000
Boys	38,075	63,676	123,684	300,376	578,718	570,700	898,000	1,341,000
Percent distribution								
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Girls	59.9	59.3	60.3	55.0	52.6	52.4	51.8	50.4
Boys	40.1	40.7	39.7	45.0	47.4	47.6	48.2	49.6
Number of high school graduates per 100 persons 17 years of age	6.4	8.8	16.8	29.0	50.8	59.0	65.1	76.7

<sup>1/</sup> Preliminary data.

Source: See page 19.

Table 3.--High School Graduates and First-Time College Enrollees, by Sex,  
Selected Years, 1948-68

(Persons of all ages)

Year	Women		Men	
	High school graduates	First-time college enrollees	High school graduates	First-time college enrollees
1968	<u>1</u> /1,361,000	2/818,526	<u>1</u> /1,341,000	<u>2</u> /1,089,412
1967	<u>1</u> /1,348,000	<u>2</u> /715,911	<u>1</u> /1,331,000	<u>2</u> /936,406
1966	1,346,000	<u>2</u> /670,648	1,326,000	<u>2</u> /894,916
1965	1,337,000	618,332	1,305,000	834,594
1964	1,169,000	528,340	1,121,000	706,466
1963	991,000	446,584	959,000	608,562
1962	984,000	436,627	941,000	601,993
1960	966,000	387,049	898,000	542,774
1958	780,400	312,450	725,500	468,625
1956	735,300	277,064	679,500	446,114
1954	663,600	244,573	612,500	386,549
1952	627,300	213,206	569,200	323,673
1950	629,000	197,103	570,700	319,733
1948	627,046	198,844	562,863	369,924

1/ Preliminary data.

2/ Data for 1966, 1967, and 1968 not strictly comparable with data for prior years, which included only first-time students in programs chiefly creditable toward a bachelor's degree.

Source: See page 19.

Table 4.--Earned Degrees Conferred, by Level of Degree and Sex, Selected Years, 1900-68

Level of degree and sex	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1965	1966	1968
Total degrees	<u>29,375</u>	<u>39,755</u>	<u>53,516</u>	<u>139,752</u>	<u>216,521</u>	<u>498,373</u>	<u>479,215</u>	<u>667,592</u>	<u>714,624</u>	<u>871,832</u>
Women	5,563	9,039	18,029	55,266	87,606	121,513	163,973	257,019	274,197	345,068
Men	23,812	30,716	35,487	84,486	128,915	376,860	315,242	410,573	440,427	526,764
Bachelor's and first professional degrees	<u>27,410</u>	<u>37,199</u>	<u>48,622</u>	<u>122,484</u>	<u>186,500</u>	<u>433,734</u>	<u>394,889</u>	<u>538,930</u>	<u>1/555,613</u>	<u>1/671,591</u>
Women	5,237	8,437	16,642	48,869	76,954	103,915	139,385	219,260	224,491	278,761
Men	22,173	28,762	31,980	73,615	109,546	329,819	255,504	319,670	331,122	392,830
Master's degrees	<u>1,583</u>	<u>2,113</u>	<u>4,279</u>	<u>14,969</u>	<u>26,731</u>	<u>58,219</u>	<u>74,497</u>	<u>112,195</u>	<u>1/140,772</u>	<u>1/177,150</u>
Women	303	558	1,294	6,044	10,223	16,982	23,560	35,984	47,588	63,401
Men	1,280	1,555	2,985	8,925	16,508	41,237	50,937	76,211	93,184	113,749
Doctor's degrees	<u>382</u>	<u>443</u>	<u>615</u>	<u>2,299</u>	<u>3,290</u>	<u>6,420</u>	<u>9,829</u>	<u>16,467</u>	<u>18,239</u>	<u>23,091</u>
Women	23	44	93	353	429	616	1,028	1,775	2,118	2,906
Men	359	399	522	1,946	2,861	5,804	8,801	14,692	16,121	20,185

1/ Data not strictly comparable with data for prior years. M.I.S. and M.S.W. degrees, formerly counted as first professional degrees, included with master's degrees.

Source: See page 19.

Table 5.--Percent Distribution of Earned Degrees Conferred, by Level of Degree and Sex,  
Selected Years, 1900-68

Level of degree and sex	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1965	1966	1968
Total degrees	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Women	18.9	22.7	33.7	39.5	40.5	24.4	34.2	38.5	38.4	39.6
Men	81.1	77.3	66.3	60.5	59.5	75.6	65.8	61.5	61.6	60.4
Bachelor's and first professional degrees	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Women	19.1	22.7	34.2	39.9	41.3	24.0	35.3	40.7	40.4	41.5
Men	80.9	77.3	65.8	60.1	58.7	76.0	64.7	59.3	59.6	58.5
Master's degrees	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Women	19.1	26.4	30.2	40.4	38.2	29.2	31.6	32.1	33.8	35.8
Men	80.9	73.6	69.8	59.6	61.8	70.8	68.4	67.9	66.2	64.2
Doctor's degrees	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Women	6.0	9.9	15.1	15.4	13.0	9.6	10.5	10.8	11.6	12.6
Men	94.0	90.1	84.9	84.6	87.0	90.4	89.5	89.2	88.4	87.4

<sup>1/</sup> Data not strictly comparable with data for prior years. M.L.S. and M.S.W. degrees, formerly counted as first professional degrees, included with master's degrees.

Source: See page 19.

Table 6.--Labor Force Participation Rates of Women, by Educational Attainment and Age,  
March 1968

(Women 18 years of age and over)

Years of school completed	Age group							Total		
	18 and 19 years	20-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65 years and over			
Total	49.5	53.6	42.7	49.0	52.4	43.0	9.5	48.0	52.4	48.5
Elementary school:										
Less than 8 years <sup>1/</sup>	2/40.0	29.5	33.9	41.2	40.7	30.7	6.3	35.9	32.2	36.5
Less than 5 years <sup>1/</sup>	2/18.8	2/17.0	18.8	35.2	34.0	28.1	5.1	29.6	2/17.5	31.6
5-7 years	2/45.6	32.5	39.1	43.6	43.7	31.9	7.3	38.5	35.8	38.6
8 years	2/47.7	36.5	36.2	46.2	49.2	38.3	8.4	42.8	39.8	44.0
High school:										
1-3 years	37.3	34.8	41.2	49.1	48.2	42.1	9.9	43.5	35.9	46.9
4 years	58.4	59.1	41.6	49.5	55.8	47.6	12.4	50.8	58.9	51.5
College:										
1-3 years	43.7	51.7	44.2	48.4	52.9	48.6	14.8	48.7	49.8	49.9
4 years	--	82.2	51.9	50.1	63.0	59.8	12.1	59.1	82.3	56.4
5 years or more	--	2/74.0	68.6	71.5	86.0	75.7	33.0	74.9	2/73.4	77.5
Median school years completed	12.4	12.7	12.5	12.3	12.3	12.0	10.3	12.4	12.6	12.2

<sup>1/</sup> Includes women reporting no school years completed.  
<sub>2/</sub> Base is less than 100,000.

Source: See page 19.

Table 7.--Labor Force Participation Rates of Women, by Age and Educational Attainment, October 1952 and March 1957, 1962, and 1968 (Women 18 years of age and over)

Age, month, and year	Years of school completed							
	Total	Elementary school			High school		College	
		Less than 5 years	5-7 years	8 years	1-3 years	4 years	1-3 years	4 years or more
<b>Total</b>								
March 1968	42.0	17.4	28.2	30.8	39.6	48.1	45.5	58.4
March 1962	38.1	19.5	27.8	30.1	37.8	43.2	41.8	57.3
March 1957	36.6	22.0	28.7	31.5	35.6	41.3	42.0	55.3
October 1952	35.6	27.7	27.5	31.2	35.2	40.7	37.5	50.2
<b>18-24 years</b>								
March 1968	52.4	2/17.5	35.8	39.8	35.9	58.9	49.8	81.4
March 1962	45.3	2/17.5	32.3	32.9	33.1	52.0	43.7	79.5
March 1957	45.5	2/22.0	33.7	33.8	33.5	53.7	45.1	76.1
October 1952	46.9	38.6	38.2	36.9	35.7	54.7	38.9	77.4
<b>25-34 years</b>								
March 1968	42.7	18.8	39.1	36.2	41.2	41.6	44.2	55.3
March 1962	36.7	27.4	29.6	32.3	35.2	36.3	38.6	49.1
March 1957	34.8	24.3	31.9	34.8	34.0	33.0	37.8	50.8
October 1952	36.3	39.2	33.1	36.9	36.2	35.5	36.1	43.4
<b>35-44 years</b>								
March 1968	49.0	35.2	43.6	46.2	49.1	49.5	48.4	55.0
March 1962	44.1	35.4	40.7	41.3	43.9	44.4	41.9	57.7
March 1957	42.6	39.3	40.7	40.7	41.4	42.7	40.1	54.1
October 1952	40.7	43.4	35.8	39.0	40.4	41.9	37.3	51.8
<b>45-64 years</b>								
March 1968	48.2	30.7	37.1	43.3	45.5	52.9	50.9	67.7
March 1962	45.1	31.2	36.1	39.0	44.7	50.2	51.3	68.7
March 1957	41.1	30.9	32.4	37.2	40.5	46.7	51.1	62.1
October 1952	36.6	35.0	30.6	34.3	34.7	39.2	44.1	57.6
<b>65 years and over</b>								
March 1968	9.5	5.1	7.3	8.4	9.9	12.4	14.8	17.2
March 1962	10.7	5.2	8.9	9.9	16.5	12.1	16.4	17.9
March 1957	11.5	6.9	9.7	11.7	11.7	16.4	16.2	22.6
October 1952	10.2	7.8	7.7	9.1	14.8	12.6	13.6	18.6

1/ Includes women reporting no school years completed.

2/ Base is less than 100,000.

Source: See page 19.



### Chart Sources

- Chart A. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education: Digest of Educational Statistics, 1968.
- Chart B. For 1900-40, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census: Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957; for 1950 and 1960, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education: Earned Degrees Conferred, 1962-63, Bachelor's and Higher Degrees, Circular 777; for 1965, 1966, and 1968, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education: Summary Report on Bachelor's and Higher Degrees Conferred During the Year, 1964-65, 1965-66, and 1967-68.
- Chart C. Ibid.
- Chart D. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics: Special Labor Force Report No. 103.

### Table Sources

- Table 1. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census: for April 1940, 1960 U.S. Census of Population, Detailed Characteristics, U.S. Summary, PC(1)--1D; for April 1947 to March 1968, Current Population Reports, P-20, Nos. 45, 77, 99, 121, 138, 158, 169, and 182.
- Table 2. Same as Chart A.
- Table 3. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education: Digest of Educational Statistics, 1968, and Opening Fall Enrollment in Higher Education, 1960 (Analytic Report) and 1968.
- Table 4. Same as Chart B.
- Table 5. Ibid.
- Table 6. Same as Chart D.
- Table 7. For October 1952 and March 1957, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census: Current Population Reports, P-50, Nos. 49 and 78; for March 1962 and 1968, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics: Special Labor Force Reports Nos. 30 and 103.