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ABSTRACT

Recent changes in the social and economic roles of women are examined. These changes affect the lives of the largest single group in the United States and have resulted from a movement aimed not only at increased access to society's resources and power, but also at a redefinition of the identity of American women. Topics reviewed include women in the labor force, entry into male-dominated occupations and professions, competence and criteria, consequences of women's movement on professional and occupational practice, apprenticeship, minority women, women and education, women and money, women and politics, changes in the family structure, fertility, changing living arrangements, pressures on the family, and child care. The emphasis of this report is on economic changes because it is an important area in defining women's equality. Access to occupational opportunities has given women significant leverage in politics, as well as in the home. Their attitudes toward work have stimulated new versions about marriage and family life. (Author/DE)

REFLECTIONS ON THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

An Assessment of Change and Its Limits

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A Note from the Institute of Life Insurance

This essay by Dr. Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, Professor of Sociology at Queens College of the City University of New York and Research Associate of the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University, was written under a joint grant from the Institute's Family Economic Studies Program and the Social Research Grant Program.

The Family Economics Studies Program was set up to help promote among scholars from various disciplines the need for improved studies in the field of family economic behavior. Through its conferences and reports it has encouraged the work of economists and other social scientists specializing in family studies, to develop a fuller understanding of family economic life. One such conference, held at Williamsburg, Virginia, on "Social Structure, Family Life Styles and Economic Behavior," formed the basis of a book, *Family Economic Behavior. Problems and Prospects*, edited by Eleanor Bernert Sheldon.

Since 1963, the Institute's Social Research Grant Program has supported basic research and conferences on the American family and related topics. Among the projects it has sponsored was the publication of *Women. A Bibliography on their Education and Careers* by Helen S. Astin, Nancy Suniewick and Susan Dweck. This essay is a logical successor to that work. It reviews some of the changes that have taken place in the status of women over the past dozen years. Although the main emphasis is in the labor force participation of women, note is also taken of related changes in education, politics and family life.

The Institute's interest in the changing roles of American women is a long-term one. The Social Research Grant Program's second grant was given to Dr. Epstein in 1963, when she was a graduate student at Columbia University, to study the social forces determining the successful path of women training for active professional work, as well as those forces which tend to inhibit and discourage them. Her report to the Institute became the basis for a book, *Woman's Place*, an outstanding work in the field.

Prelude to Change

Recent changes in the social and economic roles of women, and in the attitudes of society toward them, are unique in the American experience and perhaps in the experience of the world. These changes, affecting the lives of the largest—in number—"minority" in the United States, have resulted from a movement aimed not only at increased access to society's resources and power, but also at a redefinition of who American women are and what they are worth.

There is abundant evidence that the status of women is changing in nearly all spheres of activity. In personal and social relations, in the occupations, in politics, in education and in the courts. The women's movement has affected the ways women are treated as well as their expectations of how they ought to be treated. Women are participating and even taking the lead in places where they were once forbidden to go, and their expectations of equality, status and pay, leadership and competition are increasingly positive.

Statistics can give some indication of numerical and proportional change between certain time periods. But it is not sufficient to take figures at face value, the data on changes in women's position must be seen against the spectrum of changes in other sectors of society.

It is sometimes difficult to determine the direction and causality of change. In times of economic upswing, for example, members of all groups may have more access to jobs that were formerly denied them, because of the need for labor. If at the same time an ideology of opportunity for workers is current in the society, it may be difficult to see whether ideology or economic need has moved employers to change hiring patterns.

Note: The assistance of Susan Ogulnick and Howard Epstein is gratefully acknowledged. Special thanks are also due to Barbara K. Auerbach, Research Associate of the Institute of Life Insurance, for her role in preparing this paper for publication. The paper was written while the author was a fellow at the MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, N.H.

The changes which have taken place in the recent past, particularly in the twelve years since the start of the modern women's movement, have been considerable and many of them are due directly to the movement's efforts. On the other hand, some of these efforts also grew out of a normal sequence of demographic and economic changes taking place at the time, the latter created a fertile seedbed for the growth of ideas about women's equality. Although many of these same ideas had been born in the first feminist wave in the 1840s and 1850s, it was only in the 1960s that conditions were ripe for their widespread acceptance.

It is part of the American ethos to believe that the development of freedoms and new opportunities constitutes progress, and that progress continues in an upward spiral. But change is not always marked by an upward curve and knowledge may not create or meet desired social goals. The situation of women in American society has not been marked by a unilinear curve in the direction of progress.

Although it may be said that the women's movement started in the United States in the nineteenth century, the demands of the movement's leaders for equality in all spheres of life—the family, the economy and politics—were progressively modified and narrowed to focus upon suffrage. Many believed that giving women the vote would have important consequences for the society and its institutions, but the victory in 1920 turned out to be of limited value. According to Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a prominent suffragette, women ended up with "not even half a loaf, . . .only a crust, a crumb."

Having the vote meant no major or even minor changes in women's access to private power. After an initially concerted effort by women's organizations to use the vote to achieve social welfare measures such as child protection laws, it was soon realized that women did not constitute a defined, organized group with negotiable interests for successful political bargaining. Legislators no longer saw any reason to mollify the demands of the few who claimed to represent such a group.

Women had little opportunity for higher education, could not own or manage property, and had limited access to employment in the professions or prestigious occupations. Furthermore, they were convinced that they had no moral right to any of these things, and that probably they were unable, physically and mentally, to deal with them. Only a few voices were heard to offer alternative views, but these were defined (even by otherwise-honorable and liberally-minded people) as insurrectionist or simply mad.

Current historians of the women's movement generally concede that the two World Wars had a cumulative effect in altering women's position in society, making them more active in the labor force and giving them economic independence, and creating a climate in which other "rights" could be convincingly demanded.

Sociologists have noted that social movements generally are begun not by persons in the most disadvantaged stratum, but by those in relatively good situations, or those who have experienced an improvement in economic position. This was certainly the case for American women.

In 1920, the average working woman was 28 years old and single. She had no permanent attachment to the labor force, any such commitment was expected to dissolve with marriage and childbirth, her wages were low, her occupation low-level and subservient. There was little a woman could do to better her position or prepare for a higher position by training. Professional schools were largely barred to women—even those of good family. Only a few managed to fight their way into universities, and later into law and medical schools—where they were likely to be met with determined hostility.

But over the years, the growing participation of women in the labor force became a worldwide phenomenon. By the late 1960s in most countries at the upper levels of technological development, women constituted between 35 and 40 percent of the work force. There have always been national differences in women's progress. Women were more spread through the occupational hierarchy in the Soviet bloc countries, for example, than in the West, where they tended to be employed in narrowly defined "women's" fields, which also tended to be lower stratum jobs. Few women, though, made it to the top in the socialist countries any more than they did in the West.

Nevertheless, throughout the industrial world in the developed countries, women began achieving educational and employment levels inaccessible to them before. They were becoming wage earners with a public right, if not always a private right, to their own earnings. In the United States they had family incomes sufficient to create a life style strong in material comforts.

This climate, though different in each country, made it likely that women would be receptive to the messages of the newly forming women's movement of the 1960s. It is curious, but consistent with the historic

pattern of social movements, that American women relatively the most affluent – became most vociferous in their demands for equality.

Not all agreed there should be a women's movement. But for the first time women organized in groups which worked together, and developed a large enough following and a broad enough distribution of age and class to be politically meaningful. They attacked a wide array of social institutions instrumental in keeping women in subservient roles.

One fortuitous event that aided the women's cause was the amendment Representative Howard W. Smith of Virginia proposed and won, which added "sex" to the list of categories to be protected against discrimination by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Ironically, the "sex" amendment was intended to kill the bill by making it unacceptable to moderates. The act became the most basic and effective tool of the newly organizing women's movement. The birth of the National Organization of Women (NOW) in 1966 alone, or the Civil Rights Act alone, might not have achieved much for women. Together they were a powerful instrument for social change.

Despite this law and other legal improvements for women, a debate continued about whether women should work and especially whether mothers should work, and even more critically, whether mothers with small children should work. Actually, working was already the daily practice of large numbers of these women.

Although working was the reality of many women's lives, certainly it did not constitute an ideal. American culture traditionally prized the family group in which the husband was the breadwinner and his wife the homemaker who cared for the children. The latter, in turn, were to be well educated and not enter the labor force during their adolescent years.

Until well into the nineteenth century, the American family formed an economic unit to which all members contributed. much later this changed, and it became ideal to have the husband bear the entire economic responsibility. This sentiment was underscored by a popularization of the work of Sigmund Freud and his followers, who rationalized that men were properly breadwinners and women naturally dependent. In the psychology of the period, those who deviated from this "ideal" were suspected of being unhealthy or abnormal Even working-class women and young people, who were less concerned with the ideology and justification of the ideal family and had fewer means

to model themselves accordingly, still subscribed to it as a goal to be sought when economic conditions permitted.

The questioning of this ideal was fundamental to the women's movement. It was important to dissect the ideal because it served not only to keep educated middle class women out of their husbands' professions, and high prestige occupations, but also to keep working class women from demanding the same rewards and access to mobility open to their men.

The publication of *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan in 1963 was a landmark event in the formation of the new women's movement. Ms. Friedan attacked stereotypes and their rationales, challenging the notion that the home was, or ought to be, the most fulfilling and desirable place in which a modern woman could spend her life. She and her supporters pointed to the waste of women's talents which the mystique of feminity had created, and to the frustration and unhappiness many American women were experiencing in their circumscribed lives. Her book called for a total reevaluation of women's place in all major institutions, including the family.

The report that follows recounts women's progress or relative lack of it—in several essential areas, since then.

Women in the Labor Force

A way to appraise American women's present stage of equality and potential for equality is to examine their participation in the labor force. It may seem odd that although public sentiment has been generally negative toward wives and mothers who worked, American women have worked nevertheless. The major reason, of course, has been economic need.

By mid-century, the ideal woman as "homemaker" had little objective relevance to the lives of tens of millions of American families who could not approach a middle-class standard of living by depending solely upon the male breadwinner, or to the millions of families where there was no adult male in residence at all. The contribution made by year-round full-time employed women to their families' income was 38 percent in 1972. In 1973, about 50 percent of families with incomes of $15,000 and over had this second income. Thus, for many of these families to maintain their middle-class standard of living, both partners needed to hold jobs.

In addition to economic pressures, divorce and falling birthrates were also factors in sending mothers into the labor force. In March 1973, 29 percent of wives with children under three years of age were working outside the home, up ten percentage points in a decade. The proportion of minority working wives with preschool children rose from 44 to 53 percent between 1969 and 1973.

There were also changes in the situation of male workers. Since 1953, the labor force participation rate of married men declined gradually from 92 to 85 percent. Over the same period, the rate for married women rose persistently, from 26 to 42 percent. Thus, for every two married men in the labor force, one married woman was also working.

A major reason why the men stopped working was health problems. Another was, and is, the relative lack of education of many men 55 through 64 years of age, which takes a heavy toll in an economy more and more in need of educated workers. The labor participation rate of women (who could be these men's wives) has increased in recent years as many women 55 through 64 years old work to qualify for, or to increase, Social Security benefits. Their husbands are therefore under less economic pressure to continue working.

Both men and women usually claim that they work because they "have to," to support themselves or their families. In actuality, most American men work even when they have inherited wealth, or their wives have large incomes. The work ethic is still strongly held. Many women, too, may work without economic need because they enjoy the self-definition it provides, the autonomy of independent earnings, and the social contacts. However, the most legitimate reason for either sex to work is always seen as the need to earn a living.

Upsetting the idea that economic necessity is the only justification for women working was one of the major points of the women's movement. Since *The Feminine Mystique* was addressed principally to middle-class women and the book drew its largest articulate response initially from them, this was an important issue. These women were proportionately the most under-employed. They typically had good educations, and many of them could afford paid household assistance. This target group was best qualified for professional careers but had the least reason to work, in terms of the approved economic definition.

Beyond the "right to work" ethos, the women's movement was creating a set of focused demands for the right of women to work in occupations long restricted to men. Some of the movement's fire was concentrated on rights which could be attained through the courts, some was directed at occupational gatekeepers who claimed that women were not working in certain positions because they lacked the aptitudes and qualifications, or didn't want the responsibility. The movement also spoke out to women who felt they had no right to question these assumptions.

Feeling that it was more than a coincidence that the jobs considered appropriate for them also had the lowest economic return, women began to aspire to jobs and to go into fields usually described as "man's work." (However, many women who were publicized as "firsts" in seeking an airline pilot's job, navy service at sea, work in fire-fighting and other "male" occupations, interpreted their actions as individual, and said they were unconcerned with feminist ideology.) The pioneers were striking in their variety. first woman jocky, first women mail carriers, and the first women professors in schools of law and engineering.

While these women forerunners received wide media attention which helped give people a feeling of rapid change for women in the society, there was everyday evidence of a certain constancy in the sex division of

labor. A 1968 study of this by Edward Gross found that once women went into an occupation in large numbers, it tended to become identified as a female occupation. Also, women quickly lost their places of high rank in formerly female occupations, such as social work and librarianship, when men came into them, because men tended to take over the administrative and high-level posts. Another study, made in 1969 by Dean Knudsen, showed that generally women had lost ground, relative to men, by measures of occupation and income over the past twenty-five years.

After 1964, the law guaranteed women both the right of access to nearly all jobs and the right to move from one level of a job to another. This mobility was vital because women had by custom been frozen in dead-end jobs outside the hierarchical pyramid.

Coordinated efforts to set precedents under the 1964 Civil Rights Act were begun by women's organizations like NOW and The Women's Equity Action League (WEAL), the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor helped, as did the government's Equal Economic Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The commission had previously handled cases of discrimination against minority people. When the new legislation set up the machinery, EEOC expanded and established guidelines for compliance with provisions of the law relating to women (Title VII).

It was the EEOC and a number of women lawyers who took the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, the largest employer of women in the world, into court and won a landmark labor agreement. AT&T was required to provide goals and timetables for the hiring and promotion of women and minority persons, and was ordered to give $15 million in back pay to persons who had been denied promotion due to discrimination. The court also ordered $23 million in immediate annual pay increases to women and minority males currently deemed to be underpaid in their job classifications.

Winning this case helped answer the accusations of some critics who had labeled the women's movement an enterprise of privileged white middle-class women, and proved that the women's movement was working for women at all levels of the socioeconomic pyramid. By its interpretation, the legislation which gave middle-class women the right to become lawyers also gave lower-class women the right to become supervisors in factories and businesses, and to receive job training formerly open only to men.

In several other discrimination-in-employment cases decided in the early 1970s, major corporations incurred judgments involving more than $100 million. The Supreme Court held, in one important decision, that the Corning Glass Company used a system of wage differentials for night and day workers which discriminated unlawfully against women. Upholding the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Supreme Court ruled that women workers were entitled to the same wage scales as men with the same type of job, whether or not the men worked different shifts. The decision was expected to cost Corning at least $600,000 in back pay to compensate for the lower wages women had received at three plants.

Advocates of equal rights for women were convinced that the Equal Pay Act had been widely ignored and disobeyed since its enactment, with companies leaving intact practices, once legal, that tended to exclude women from higher paying jobs. Another case under the Equal Pay Act, brought by the U.S. Department of Labor, established that jobs need not be identical in every respect before the equal pay provisions apply. This decision has had impact on a number of industries, particularly for women in the retail sales industry and those in hospital and medical services, employment areas in which women have traditionally occupied most of the lower paying jobs.

A decision by a Federal court in Virginia held that the General Electric Company's failure to provide pregnant employees with disability benefits was sex discrimination. The judge stressed that there is "no rational distinction to be drawn between pregnancy-related disabilities and a disability rising from another cause." He said that a further argument that pregnancy was "voluntary" was meaningless, since the "standard isn't applied to informal athletic injuries, most of which could also be avoided by appropriate preparation, forebearance and circumspect precaution."

Another class action suit, decided by the U.S. Third Court of Appeals in Philadelphia, in February 1975, found against a company whose disability income plan excluded pregnancy benefits and required female employees to return to work within three months after childbirth or be fired. It is calculated that these decisions on pregnancy benefits may ultimately cost $1.35 billion a year in additional health insurance premiums, if all women employees in the nation's work force are to be covered.

The following chart, compiled by Prof. Colquitt Meacham of Harvard University Law School, lists and describes the current major provisions regarding sex discrimination in employment, tells whom they affect, and names the U.S. government agencies responsible for enforcement.

SEX DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

	Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by the Equal Opportunity Act of 1972	Executive Order 11246 as amended by 11375	Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended by Education Amendments of 1972 (Higher Education Act)
WHO IS COVERED?	All institutions with 15 or more employees.	All institutions with Federal contracts of over $10,000.	Industries engaged in interstate commerce. Employees covered by Fair Labor Standards Act.
WHAT IS PROHIBITED?	Discrimination in employment (including hiring, upgrading, salaries, fringe benefits, training and other conditions of employment) on the basis of race, religion, national origin, or sex.		Discrimination in salaries (including almost all fringe benefits) on the basis of sex.
EXEMPTIONS FROM COVERAGE	Religious institutions are exempt with respect to employment of individuals of a particular religion or religious order.	Non-federal contractors and employees. Non-federally assisted construction.	Local, state and Federal governments. Industries exempted from Fair Labor Standards Act.
WHO ENFORCES THE PROVISIONS?	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).	Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCC) of the Department of Labor has policy responsibility and overseas Federal agency enforcement programs.	Wage and Hour Division of the Employment Standards Administration of the Department of Labor.
CAN THE ENTIRE INSTITUTION BE REVIEWED?	Yes. EEOC may investigate part or all of an establishment.	Yes. Contracting agency may investigate part or all of an institution.	Yes. Usually the Wage and Hour Division reviews the entire establishment.
RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS AND GOVERNMENT ACCESS TO RECORDS	Institution must keep and preserve specified records relevant to the determination of whether violations have occurred. Government is empowered to review all relevant records.		

(Cont'd)

	Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by the Equal Opportunity Act of 1972	Executive Order 11246 as amended by 11375	Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended by Education Amendments of 1972 (Higher Education Act)
ENFORCEMENT POWER AND SANCTIONS	If attempts at conciliation fail, EEOC or the U.S. Attorney General may file suit. Aggrieved individuals may also initiate suits. Court may enjoin respondent from engaging in unlawful behavior, order appropriate affirmative action, order reinstatement and award back pay.	Government may delay new contracts, revoke current contracts, and disqualify institutions from eligibility for future contracts.	If voluntary compliance fails, Secretary of Labor may file suit. Aggrieved individuals may initiate suits when Department of Labor has not done so. Court may enjoin respondent from engaging in unlawful behavior, and order salary raises, back pay and interest.
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION REQUIREMENTS	Affirmative action is not required unless charges have been filed, in which case it may be included in the conciliation agreement or be ordered by court.	Affirmative action plans (including numerical goals and timetables) are required of all contractors with contracts of $50,000 or more and 50 or more employees.	Affirmative action, other than salary increases and back pay, is not required.
COVERAGE OF LABOR ORGANIZATIONS	Labor organizations are covered by the same requirements and sanctions as employers.	Any agreement a contractor may have with a labor organization cannot be in conflict with the contractor's affirmative action commitment.	Labor organizations are prohibited from causing or attempting to cause an employer to discriminate on the basis of sex. Suits may be brought against these organizations.
IS HARRASSMENT PROHIBITED?	Institutions are prohibited from discherging or discriminating against any employee or applicent for employment because she/he has made a complaint, assisted with an investigation, or instituted proceedings.		

Compilation by Colquitt Meachem, 1974.

Entry into Male-Dominated Occupations and Professions

For many years, women have tried to find the entrance into high-ranking, male-dominated occupations and professions. These carry the highest prestige and remuneration in society and demand technical skills, high commitment and talent, they form a plateau to which women have been denied adequate access. American women have always constituted small percentages in law, medicine, engineering, and the upper levels of academia, banking, business administration and political affairs.

Particular professions are customary gateways to other positions of power. Political leaders most typically are lawyers, and many business leaders have legal training. Similarly, a number of top executives of the "Fortune 500" companies hold degrees in engineering. Thus women in the past had double and triple disadvantages because few were permitted to prepare for professional careers, and without the professional degree they could not compete for top business or political jobs.

During the 1960s, women's representation in the professions increased by roughly the same small extent it had in the preceding decade. Census Bureau figures show that women lawyers and judges increased from 2.5 percent of their profession in 1940 to 3.5 percent in 1960, and to 4.9 percent by 1970. This was not significant growth, considering the enormous emphasis on women's liberation during the late 1960s.

In contrast, there have been dramatic increases in women's enrollment in some professional schools in the past few years. The Columbia Law School increased women's enrollment from the 4 to the 10 percent level between 1950 and 1968, and to 20 percent in 1974. Striking increases are also reported at other law schools

In medicine, things have not gone so well. Women moved from 6.5 percent of the profession in 1960 to 9.3 percent in 1970, but represented only 8.5 percent of all M.D. degrees that year, according to the Economic Report of the President, 1973.

As for entrance into business, probably even more than male recruits, women need the legitimation of competence that a graduate degree in business administration can give best. Yet Harvard, for instance, did not admit women to its Master of Business Administration program until 1963. Other top schools admitted women earlier, but clearly under a quota system. With the curbing of quotas and the changes in the legal, and cultural climate, women's applications and admissions jumped. Columbia University's Graduate Business School raised its enrollment

of women students from 7 percent in 1971, to 20 percent in 1973, and to 24 percent by January 1974. At the Harvard Business School, women's enrollment went up from 4 percent in 1968-1970 to 11 percent in 1974, the Stanford Business School, once one of the most restrictive, increased enrollment of women from 2 percent in 1968-1970, to 18 percent in 1973.

Women experience not only pay discrimination but they encounter a set of values that puts a lower total worth on the worker who is paid less It will be interesting to see if younger women, straight out of Master of Business Administration programs and presumably paid on an equal basis with males starting at the same time, will keep pace with them in future pay increases and promotions.

American women's participation in top levels of any of the upper ranking occupations has been miniscule. Today, affirmative action programs mean that businesses and other institutions must consider upgrading women on their staffs and institute programs to insure a flow of women into management.

Until the passage of protective laws, the women who did attain upper-level administrative jobs most often found themselves in positions which were not on a track to top management, but ancillary routes. Even now, a woman may be named an administrative vice president, or special assistant to the president, only to find that she has been put in charge of an affirmative action plan and asked to recruit women personnel. Corporations today are supporting large in-house staffs of equal opportunity officers, and by appointing women as these officers can raise their proportion of "women in management." Such jobs are considered non-functionally specific to the goals of the firm. Thus, the kinds of management jobs women get, regardless of whether their title or salary at the moment is high, can serve as an indicator of the employer's actual commitment to equality of opportunity.

In business, almost up to the present day, women executives were such a rarity that clients and colleagues assumed that any woman at a business meeting was a secretary. The woman executive, lawyer, or architect had to explain who she was, and often found difficulty in exerting authority. Men in power or authority expect others to treat them with respect because their status is evident. For women, there has been no equivalent of the grey flannel suit to announce their status. In addition, they are expected to project competence yet not "lose their femininity," qualities which have nothing to do with each other.

A national survey sponsored by the Institute of Life Insurance in 1975 found just 60 percent of women and 63 percent of men entirely for, or more for than against, the women's liberation movement. So it is not surprising to find opposition to equality also coming from women, at many levels.

Some women join or lead the opposition to women's entry into male-dominated spheres. A woman is leading a fight against the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, and a coalition of women's groups supports her. It is often threatening for wives to know their husbands will be in daily contact with other women, when formerly they were in "safe" male occupations. Although wives could not insist there be no women secretaries in their husbands' offices, the introduction of women into positions of equality with men seems to highlight their presence and make it more objectionable.

The resistance from wives typically comes from social groups in which women play the most traditional roles. The wives of police officers have objected to the prospect of women officers "buddying" with their husbands on patrol. Some miners' wives in Kentucky told the first women miners in the United States (women miners are fairly common in the Soviet Union and China) to "get husbands and let them support you."

Opposition from wives, or the pretense of opposition, has been used to bar women from professional openings. In the past, sometimes qualified women applicants for jobs in law firms were told by hiring partners that women couldn't be employed because the wives of the firm's associates "wouldn't like it." Today, this would be de facto evidence of sex discrimination. Cultural permission for such opposition has never been consistent, but has varied with the relative power of the men and women involved.

Such outmoded excuses for illegal discrimination make many women impatient, but they realize that the advantages of work in male-dominated areas far outweigh the problems of entry, and that increased social support has given women viable options. Young, unmarried women are breaking through opposition and stereotypes by taking nontraditional jobs for the higher pay offered. If young women increasingly take on such positions, it is probable that they will be unwilling to return to low-income ones after they marry and have children. Or if the unconventional jobs prove more interesting, as they often do, and offer other fringe benefits, as many do, women may build the same long-term commitment to them that men have.

There is often evidence of only minimal support for women entering male work preserves. Usually organizations hire as few women for good jobs as are legally required to fulfill affirmative action programs. This management reluctance is transmitted through organization ranks, sometimes making a woman's workday difficult.. Success will be assured only when members of an organization are committed to equal opportunity, and immediate superiors know they will be evaluated on the outcome of the total affirmative action program.

Women are still exposed to exclusionary practices, though formal barriers have been removed by law. These may be informal business lunches at clubs where women are barred, or after-hours drinking sessions at which business is discussed by men among themselves. Both examples tend to impede the functioning of a business team that includes a woman. The integration of women is complete only when they are given full participation in the formal and informal structure of their occupational circle, and have equal access to the silent rules of the game.

Competence and criteria

It should help women that the whole question of competence is being reevaluated, now that affirmative action programs are creating pressures on professions and industry to advance women to the top. Much of the outcry against this has to do with pools of eligibles, the argument is made that due to the nature of women's early socialization and to their lack of specialized education, not enough are qualified to choose among for top positions. But this claim circumvents some basic facts about development of competence.

Usually, competence is created within a profession or corporation, and is not dependent upon more than basic intelligence and a general education or training in a field. Most lawyers learn courtroom procedures and gain experience in handling cases in the courtroom. Surgeons learn techniques in the operating room at the side of skilled physicians who choose them as residents. Top business executives are customarily groomed by corporate officers, who provide good contacts and open the secrets of the inner circle to them. Women, however, have not typically had access to places where they could learn competence. They are still not considered by most corporations to be "good" investments, until they are considered so, they cannot become so.

Psychological and sociological studies have shown that "labeling" the process by which a person is termed competent or incompetent, suitable or unsuitable, good or bad - tends to have a great impact upon self-image. Persons are led to think of themselves as they are labeled by others, and to act consistently with the imposed image. Studies of people who were reportedly "self-made" indicate that the setting in which they lived, and the supports they were given, were as important to success as their talent or drive. Gatekeepers in the work world are often bound by their own stereotypes, which blind them to emerging talent or competence, because the package in which it is presented is alien. Even the "new" women occasionally fall into the trap of defining their work as special, distinctive, and the product of the unique talents of women.

There is no evidence that women are better than men in some of the occupational categories in which they have tended to cluster, such as pediatrics and psychiatry in medicine, divorce counseling in law, family court in the judicial system. Nor is there any evidence that women are worse than men at the specialties in which there is most prejudice against women.

Studies performed by the Human Engineering Laboratory of the Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation in Boston demonstrated that in 22 aptitude and knowledge areas measured, there is no sex difference in 14, women excel in 6, and men in 2. From these results the researchers concluded that there is no field which can, with absolute assurance, claim to be the exclusive province of either sex.

Women have long accepted negative stereotypes regarding their aptitudes and strengths. Working women generally still lack the special aids they need, like child-care facilities, and the normal supports men receive without question - family and community approval, and the expectation that they will be promoted and paid well if they do a good job.

Supportive Mechanisms: Women's Professional Organizations

Important changes are now occurring which provide support for women in the professions. A recent count found more than 67 women's caucuses and organized groups within occupational associations as diverse as the American Bar Association, the Association of Cell Biologists, and the American Management Association. These women's networks of

information and assistance in a common cause act as watchdogs and provocateurs for opportunities for women, and indicate that the old belief that women feel most competitive toward other women is fading.

Formerly, qualified women were excluded from male professional societies, and were forced to form separate associations which had low prestige and little power. In the past six or seven years, however, professional women have worked within the "male" societies. From this vantage point they have been able to increase the representation of women in professional and graduate schools, and to obtain equal opportunity for them to gain fellowships and scholarships. The rise in women's law school admissions, at some schools to more than 40 percent of entering classes, is one result.

Consequences of Women's Movement on Professional and Occupational Practice

As professional women have become established, they have given close attention to identifying and rooting out sexism in the work of their own professions. Women in medicine have urged more respect for women as patients, and more serious study of diseases associated with their sex. The feminist movement and young male physicians have pressured for a general de-mystification of the male medical establishment, and have protested paternalistic treatment.

Women sociologists have exposed sexism in standard medical textbooks, and in those used in other disciplines. When Diana Scully and Pauline Bart made a content analysis of medical textbooks, they found grossly incorrect and stereotyped characterizations of women's personality and emotional makeup. For example, one textbook claimed that in women "Sexual pleasure is entirely absent or secondary."

In the legal area, researchers found that in a number of states women offenders were receiving stiffer sentences than men for the same crimes. Often women were defined by the courts as "persons needing supervision," much like juveniles. They were given indeterminate sentences which resulted in longer jail terms than those served by men, who were given sentences of specific length.

Apprenticeship

Although attention is usually directed to access to jobs or formal education, apprenticeship programs are an important channel of access which has been denied to women over the years.

In 1970 in the United States, there were 280,000 men in apprentice programs in 350 recognized trades or crafts. By contrast, 1,200 women were in training as apprentices, a large number of them learning hairdressing.

A study of apprenticeship in businesses in one East Central Wisconsin town, where the system was widespread, showed no women apprentices. The study reported that many plants posted information about apprentice openings in places where women were unlikely to see it, such as men's washrooms. (This practice is not confined to blue-collar work; for many years the bulletin board maintained by the Faculty Club of Columbia University was located in the men's washroom.)

Numerous efforts to open up apprentice programs have been made by government agencies like the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor, and by women's organizations, but progress has been slow. In addition to sex discrimination, women also face the same prejudices some men do in entering crafts that have traditions of "belonging" to a certain ethnic or racial group, and give strong preference to young male relatives of members. Recently, a start has been made toward eliminating some of these barriers.

Probably the greatest impediment for members of "outside" groups– men or women– if they do get into the crafts and trades is the traditional negative attitude of many of the men who work in them, most with low-income, low-education backgrounds. Apprenticeship success requires rapport between teacher and trainee. Women, especially, must overcome added hindrances before they are accepted into the close-knit training and comradeship groups that many crafts have developed. As in similar work situations where women have been vastly outnumbered, only when sufficient numbers of women are employed can they expect to find comradeship from co-workers of their own sex.

Minority Women

In spite of some recent gains, black and other minority women are the most disadvantaged group in the U.S. labor force. In 1973, about 49 percent of all minority women, as compared to 44 percent of white women, were workers. they were more likely than white women workers to be wives and mothers. They generally had less formal education, filled the least skilled and lowest paying jobs, and experienced more unemployment.

This set of harsh circumstances made black women—contrary to the current belief—strong in approval of attempts to raise the status of women. In 1972, 62 percent of black women polled in a national survey (as compared to 45 percent of white women) favored efforts to strengthen or change women's position in society. Sixty-seven percent of black women were found to be sympathetic with women's liberation groups, as compared with 35 percent of white women.

Unlike white women, minority women rarely have had a choice of whether to work or not to work. Those who are married and have husbands present in the home (nearly half of the minority women workers) are more likely than white women to work, because of their need to add to the family's lower income. In addition, one-third of minority families is headed by a woman. Since institutional child-care facilities are insufficient to meet working families' needs, children in these families may be unsupervised, or cared for by older children. The lack of adult supervision deprives many minority children of the individual attention necessary to psychological well-being, to the formation of positive life goals, and to maintaining good study habits.

On the positive side, the capable working mother is a respected and honored figure in the minority family, and a good model for her children. It is when the circumstances of poor education, low income, unskilled work, large families, and urban living come together that problems arise in minority families, as they do in many white families in similar predicaments.

Minority women have been at the bottom of the occupational ladder, but this is changing. They used to provide much of the domestic service for the white middle class, but between 1960 and 1973, the proportion of minority women in private household work decreased from 35 to 13 percent. Minority women moved into clerical jobs which offered more dignity, but were still low paying. More minority women became clerical workers than did minority men (24 versus 7 percent in 1973), but they continued to make less money than the men, who were often in higher income blue-collar work.

During the same years, the proportion of all minority women employed in professional and technical positions rose from 6 to 12 percent. They became visible rapidly in nursing and the social services, especially in larger cities where minorities are the major clients of the professional social worker. Among black doctors and lawyers, black women form a higher percentage than white women do among white doctors and lawyers.

Their improved situation has made minority women workers a new resource in the United States a more valuable set of consumers, a politically active group, a more educated and alert parent body in dealing with the education of their children, and an embryonic but growing source of professional and technical workers. Helped by the legal force of affirmative action, of the three women who are partners in top Wall Street firms, one is black, a black woman U.S. ambassador later became the first woman trustee of IBM, several minority women now appear regularly as newscasters on major television stations. This is remarkable progress for a comparatively short time, it demonstrates how ready these women are to press forward to take a higher place in American society. Relatively small investments in their educations and careers can be enormously productive.

Women and Education

Education has long been one of the most important channels to upward mobility in the United States, particularly for immigrants and disadvantaged groups seeking to qualify for places of decision-making and economic stature.

Peculiar to the situation of American women is that, while more of them—like men—have been getting college educations, women have not had equal opportunities for professional training. Discrimination has been strong against them in technical, engineering, professional and graduate schools. Leading universities used to maintain quotas to limit women's entry. In recent years, however, as a consequence of changes in U.S. laws and the activities of the women's movement, women have begun to attend leading professional schools in increasing numbers.

The new regulations which have been adopted by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to end sex discrimination in departments of education will probably broaden women's staff participation in education at all levels. The regulations are designed to carry out the prohibitions against sex discrimination in education which were adopted in general language as Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

The changes will affect schools from primary grades through the graduate level, and apply to both public and private education with regard to admissions policies, scholarships and other financial aid, curfews in dormitories, counseling and testing, financial aid for one-sex organizations like sororities and fraternities, and ban sex-segregated classes in all subjects, except those portions of an overall health or hygiene class devoted explicitly to sex education. The proposed regulations also embody the general principle that "equal opportunity" for athletic training and competition must be offered to both sexes.

While affirmative action programs have done much to open campus recruitment of women as educators, other changes have had the consequence of decreasing the number of women in important college posts. Between 1960 and 1972, 152 of the nation's 298 women's colleges closed or became coeducational. (When a women's college becomes coed, experience has shown that its women administrators and faculty are progressively replaced by men.) In 1974 there were 95 women

college presidents, compared with 1,500 men, 84 of the women presidents were nuns, and at least two more were former nuns.

Although the presence of women on faculties has increased, the overall percentage is still disproportionately low. A study of graduate departments of sociology, authorized by the American Sociological Association Council, found that in 1974, 5.6 percent of scholars with the rank of full professor were women, up from 4 percent in 1970.

Some changes on campus have other significance. The young women now in academia are more likely than their older sisters to marry, and they no longer automatically leave their own jobs when their husbands have an opportunity to improve their careers by moving. In this case, many young academic couples either seek joint appointments on a faculty, or establish commuting lifestyles. They may work at different universities and meet only on weekends and holidays. While not yet typical, these alternatives show clearly the new attitudes toward the value of women's employment. This development has provided models of new family structures for college students. Not many young people may choose to adopt commuting lifestyles but, observing them in others, they see that women's careers are important enough for a whole family to adjust to their needs.

Some educational institutions now definitely encourage women to try nontraditional fields. In the past, a woman in a science or engineering program often dropped out when she found herself alone among scores of men. She soon learned that despite her ability, and good work, there would be little opportunity for her later in those occupations. Since more young women today choose to specialize in male-dominated fields, they are less isolated, and their prospects are better. Male professors also have become more guarded in their expressions of prejudice. Organized support programs at a number of colleges give these women students counseling and other assistance. New counseling programs at Purdue University have cut down the number of women dropouts in its science and engineering departments by about 90 percent.

Many colleges attempt to improve the opportunity structure for women students by monitoring the recruitment policies of future employers. College administrators refuse to let representatives of firms which are known to discriminate against women job applicants interview graduating students. Of course, because companies today need to meet affirmative action hiring

goals, there is a lively market in some fields for women recruits—notably engineering and science—because so few women were hired in them before. The various procedures instituted lately by colleges to counter female discrimination should help women even in fields which have a high percentage of qualified women, such as the social sciences.

A phenomenon of the times is the return to school of many women who had left for family reasons without degrees or advanced degrees. They seem to fall into two categories: those who return in their forties and fifties, after their children are grown, and women under 35. The younger group comprises women who continue their education as soon as their children are in school, and others who go on to a professional school because their jobs have proved to be dead ends. (Women with liberal arts degrees often realize after working as publishing assistants or secretaries that they will have little chance to move ahead without graduate training in a specific area.)

More than one million women returned to school or college in 1972. Nearly half (475,000) were over 35 years old. Obviously, the half under 35, if they have young children, have the same needs for child-care assistance, and for the cooperation of husbands, as do working mothers. Both young and older women returning to school are highly motivated persons who look forward to significant positions when they finish the second phase of their education. They constitute both a new resource and a new problem for business and the professions. Their talents can add much in a vigorous economy; in a faltering one, they could easily become a new rank of the unemployed.

Women and Money

Women's increased income-producing ability is having positive effects upon their self-image, and is strengthening their financial power within and outside the family. Women may be expected to have more of a say in deciding how family money is spent and how it is invested.

In a recent poll on financial behavior, most married women respondents said their savings and investments were held jointly with their husbands. A greater percentage of married women than others reported following the stock market. It may not be too large a jump from following the market quotations for more women to engage in market activity on their own, using paycheck money they can define as legitimately theirs.

Women could not borrow in their own names until almost the present time. Discriminatory practices made it extremely difficult for them to get credit or even business advice from banks, lawyers and business people. This situation has improved and may be expected to change more. legally, as the women's movement and supporters of equal rights fight the credit problem through Congress and the courts, informally, as the idea is grasped and accepted that women can be good business risks.

Much credit discrimination in the past grew from a stereotypical view that women's commitment to work was undependable, since their jobs might be interrupted at any time by a pregnancy. As a result, women were turned down independently for home mortgages, and working couples were refused when husbands could not qualify with their earnings alone. A 1972 survey of banks' practices revealed that 64 percent of the bankers interviewed admitted considering the marital status of loan applicants, and about 25 percent said they would not include the income of a working wife when passing on mortgage loan applications.

In December 1973 things changed, when the Federal Home Loan Bank Board decreed that savings and loan institutions could no longer refuse to approve mortgage loans secured entirely by a woman's earnings. The Federal Home Loan Bank Board made its ruling largely in response to a three-year campaign by a coalition of 13 civil rights and feminist organizations.

In 1972-1973, at least 16 states and the District of Columbia enacted laws to prohibit discrimination based upon sex in credit transactions made by lending institutions and department stores. Both the Veterans Administration and the Federal Housing Administration revised their mortgage loan guarantee practices in 1973, to recognize the full income of the spouse. When President Ford signed a bill on October 29, 1974, to prohibit corporations from denying credit to women on the basis of sex, he said, "This legislation officially recognizes the basic principle that women should have access to credit on the same terms as men."

Possible inequities in insurance practices are presently being investigated by feminists, with the cooperation of government agencies. In New Orleans, in August 1974, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ruled favorably for the American Nurses Association, which had charged sex discrimination in the payment of smaller retirement benefits to women than to men, when both paid the same premiums for an equal number of years. The EEOC suggested unisex actuarial tables.

A policy statement of the EEOC, reported in June 1974, takes the stand that if group health insurance plans are provided at the expense of the employer, and hospital and surgical benefits are available to the dependents of employees, identical coverage must be available to all employees, without a "head of household" restriction. Any maternity benefits included in such a plan should likewise be open to all employees without restrictions based upon marital or "head of household" status. And in the view of the Commission, age requirements for pension and retirement plans, optional or compulsory, should not differ because of sex. The entire problem of equality of insurance benefits is now in the hands of the courts.

Women and Politics

A clearly visible change in women's efforts toward equality may be seen in their increased political involvement. Politics has long surpassed other American domains of power in its effective exclusion of women. Over the past half century, so few women held office in the House of Representatives, the Senate, or Statehouse that a 50 or 100 percent change in total number might signify merely the election or defeat of one or two women.

Political forecasts called 1974 "The Year of the Woman." Women actually were elected to important posts, but their numbers remain small. Ella Grasso—after long, able service as a legislator and as Secretary of State—became Governor of Connecticut, a significant victory because she was the first U.S. woman to "make it on her own." (The three women governors before her had succeeded their husbands in office.)

Mary Ann Krupsak of New York won the office of Lieutenant Governor in 1974, the first woman to fill that post in any state. And the United States now has the third woman Cabinet member in its 200-year history; President Gerald Ford appointed Carla A. Hills to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in March 1975. Ms. Hills, a lawyer, had been head of the Justice Department's Civil Division. No woman currently serves as a U.S. Senator, and there are presently fewer women in both houses of Congress than in 1962, the record year, when there were 20.

A new political force has been formed to promote women candidates, which may be expected to increase their representation in office: The National Women's Political Caucus, an amalgam of 300 groups, put together in 1971 by Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem and others. It has spread throughout many states, devoting its main attention to raising campaign funds, to working for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment and other legislation important to women, and to bringing about the seating of women delegates at political conventions. It has built strength to the point where women candidates seek caucus endorsement by subscribing to its position on issues of women's equality.

The caucus has strong backing from many young women, for whom political volunteer work in the traditional sense is losing its prestige.

They will work hard and intelligently for candidates, but are no longer willing to limit themselves to the customary mailing assignment to "lick and stick."

Women who seek important political offices today have backgrounds for executive and legislative tasks that more closely match those of male candidates. Formerly women who ran for state offices had backgrounds in volunteer service, activity in church and school affairs, and tended to be older than the age at which men candidates ran for the first time. Women candidates now are younger, and those who run for high office are usually lawyers. (A survey of women candidates in New York State in 1972 found that all the winners were lawyers, while candidates whose experience had been in community service only, lost.)

Financing their political campaigns has been unusually difficult for women. Part of the problem is that in their young and middle years women do not have much access to wealth, even if they are from prosperous families. They also lack experience in making political contributions. Women are not apt to be in political or business networks where they might be asked for funds, so they are without contacts who are useful to them, or who will find them useful. They don't give money, so they don't get money, processes of reciprocity have not been a part of their social system. But this is changing.

Backing a woman for even a moderately important office has traditionally been considered a poor investment by the major parties. Party leaders collect funds and acquire power through supporting winning candidates and then relying upon their obligations of patronage. It would be premature, certainly, to assume that women's gains at the polls are evidence of the eradication of prejudices against them, or the end of men's resistance to sharing political power.

Attitudes toward women candidates are often hostile and condescending. Women still suffer pointed personal inquiries about their management of the household if elected, about what their husbands think of their running for office, and about their abilities to handle a "man's job." An example of the belittling kind of personal attack men never face was the experience of Cynthia Kukor when she ran for alderman in Milwaukee. She was opposed by a group who called themselves "Concerned Mothers for the Kukor Children."

Most women candidates have not conducted campaigns that could be labeled feminist, however, in winning the Lieutenant Governorship of New York, Mary Ann Krupsak did effectively use the slogan, "Not just one of the boys."

Enormous resistance still exists to women's further participation in government, but there is one shift in public attitude that is very promising. the husbands of wives holding office are no longer ridiculed. And, with the sorting out of sex-role divisions in the family, young men- who usually are less frozen into set attitudes- may be expected to accept more home responsibilities while their wives concentrate on newly acquired civic duties.

Both the women's movement and the leadership of major political parties expect a sizable increase in women's attempts to participate in government in the presidential year of 1976. There should also be an attainment of more "firsts" in high political office. Furthermore, there will be more women, like their male counterparts, who will combine family life with political careers.

Changes in the Family

The traditional social model of man as breadwinner and woman as homemaker, while still followed by many people, is less and less representative of what actually goes on in American family life today. Over several decades, and increasingly in recent years, married women and young mothers have entered the work force in large numbers. Not all the changes in the family are attributable to this, but the contributions to family income by working wives have brought a readjustment in what had been considered the ideal division of labor in the family.

During the childbearing years, the traditional family model may be followed by some young couples. However, this is uncommon before they have children, and again at later stages of family life. Furthermore, a young woman who takes part in family decision-making early in her marriage, while she is working and contributing financially to the household, may feel cheated when she leaves the work force to care for a child, if her husband no longer consults her about money matters.

Sociological studies have disclosed that the more equal the earning power of husband and wife, the more likely they are to have an egalitarian marriage. The power in the family is based to no small degree upon mutual economic contribution. The greater a wife's input, the more her feelings, requirements, and work commitments need to be considered when strategic decisions are to be made.

Fertility

Lower fertility (14.9 children per one thousand population in 1973, the lowest birthrate in history) is both consequence and cause of the altered lifestyles of families. Besides having fewer children, most couples now try to postpone their first child. This allows young wives more time to establish a firmer commitment to a career before they drop out of the labor force to bear and raise children.

According to the Institute's 1974 Youth Survey, 45 percent of young women in the sample (aged 14 through 25) felt that a couple should wait three or more years before having a child. This opinion runs counter to the American pattern up until now, in the years 1965-69, of those women in their first year of marriage, 36 percent gave birth to a child.

The women's movement has stood against the view, quite current during the fifties and bolstered by psychoanalytic theories, that women can only be truly feminine and psychologically healthy if they have children and bring them up personally. Although the women's movement is responsible for some changing attitudes toward small families, many young women have been more persuaded by the problems of overpopulation in the world. Three in five women sampled in a recent Roper Poll pointed to overpopulation as a reason to limit families, others mentioned economic pressures.

Childless marriage, as a concept, is approved for those who want it by a growing number of people, however, as in the past, only a very few couples intend to be childless themselves. A national survey in 1974 among young people aged 14 through 25, sponsored by the Institute of Life Insurance, found that while 84 percent agreed that it is all right to be married and choose not to have children, only 4 percent of females and 5 percent of males planned to be childless. Ten percent of those interviewed said they wanted one child, 46 percent preferred two children. (A recent Roper Poll found that half the women surveyed believe the two-child family is ideal.) This is a distinct change from survey findings in 1952 and earlier years, when it was more popular to have large families, and only 1 in 4 women thought of a two-child family as ideal.

Thus the new norm of the small-size family is likely to persist, particularly since it is made easier by general use of the pill and other effective methods of contraception. It is not just that the pill exists, but its use is supported by strong social approval, and by negative sanctions when nonuse results in large families. Even Roman Catholics are coming close to Protestants and Jews in acceptance and use of contraception, despite the papal ban. Short of a major cultural upheaval, or a national crisis during which government asks for a larger population growth, the small-size family seems certain to be normative for a long time.

Liberalized abortion laws allow unmarried women who become pregnant to have an option other than marriage, and married women to have greater control over family size. Abortion continues to be an area of great concern to the women's movement because of the implications for women's rights over their own bodies, and thus their freedom. Women's groups have fought for legal abortion strongly and effectively. On this issue they gathered considerable support from educated, middle-class, white men,

the men who hold the most power and could easily have defeated such legislation if they had felt it was in their interest to do so.

Changing Needs

Men and women living together without marriage are looked upon with greater public tolerance now and the practice often has acceptance from the families of young people who choose to live this way. Eventually most of these couples do marry. The informal living arrangements may give the young women involved more opportunity to investigate alternatives which early marriage and early childbearing would curtail, such as more reasoned choices about partners, education, training and careers.

This change does not imply any weakening of marriage or the family. Eighty-five percent of the young women questioned in the Institute's 1974 Youth Survey felt positively about marriage, the rest rejected it for various reasons, including the notion that marriage is an "outmoded" institution.

But most women have altered their outlooks on their rights and needs. Formerly, women were brought up to believe they must serve others, and told that this would give them the greatest satisfaction. They now have given themselves the option to consider personal goals to be as important as and coordinate to, not subordinate to, family life, just as men have always done.

When asked about goals, almost 1 in 2 young women respondents to the 1974 Youth Survey placed first the opportunity to develop as an individual. In answer to another question, 3 in 10 expected to combine a career with marriage.

When wives hold more important jobs which pay substantial salaries and offer work satisfaction, corporations will face constraints on transferring their male employees around the country as freely as in the past. One avenue to executive mobility has been said to be frequent change of location, to familiarize middle management with company operations in varied situations. This custom has been followed at considerable cost to families, and when wives' economic contribution was negligible, they had little power to protest the practice. In future, employers will be

faced with the possibility that they are dealing with two careers, not just one.

These two-income family economic units can make the difference in profit margins for many sectors of the economy, because it is the extra things people can buy on top of necessities that make for a thriving business climate. The "new families" usually require more services and innovations in home care and maintenance, in food provision, and in child care.

Good examples of attractive new services may be found in other societies. In Cuba, there is extensive delivery of cooked dinners to homes in the evening, at low prices. Presently "meals on wheels" in the United States are a part of programs for the housebound aged. But there is no reason why this convenience could not be geared to the needs of working mothers and fathers, at various levels of cost, from everyday meals to special occasions.

The changed requirements of modern working families might be filled through the enterprise of the groups most affected. Some women are already running small businesses to provide services for which they uniquely know the need. Employment of the elderly in programs to assist in food provision, child care, and tutoring might be mutually pleasant and profitable.

Pressures on the Family

The picture would be incomplete without looking at the stresses produced by the changes in attitudes toward the family and family life, and noting the cost of such changes. No doubt, as traditional authority patterns are disrupted, those who have been in authority, generally older persons and men, experience a sense of loss, both actually and psychologically. But there is scarcely any evidence that family changes have resulted in men's withdrawal to any extent from economic activity or decision-making.

Many men do not know how to react to working wives who expect to share decision-making in the home, and look for a new level of respect. Many feel confused about how to treat such women, and don't know what to expect in treatment from them. They realize that the older models of male behavior are now considered wrong, but they do not have new models to emulate.

When both husband and wife have aspirations for work achievement and each needs relaxation and solace at home, inevitably there will be problems of priorities. However, egalitarianism is best served in the family where both husband and wife work, rather than only one or the other.

For the dynamics of family life differ when the husband is forced to leave his job because of disability or layoff, and his wife must step in to support the family. In this culture, a man's identity is geared to his occupation, his failure in it simply makes him feel bad, it does not make him prize his wife's ability to take over. When this circumstance occurs, quite a few psychological problems are created for both husband and wife—feelings of resentment, of guilt, of failure.

Many sociologists think that the present American nuclear family is overly weighed down with expectations to be all things to all members. Spouses must be each other's emotional support, sexual partner, ideal parents to the children, aggressive in the work place, and coordinate in leisure-time pleasures. Presumably these many role demands contribute to the high divorce rate. Some of the tensions in the nuclear family, however, arise from a lack of adjustment by other institutions to today's different family needs.

Older corporate views of efficiency may be inappropriate to the new values and lifestyles of young people, who want to live by more humanitarian rules, and to have a family life which—ironically—fits an older, more nostalgic image of family sharing. Business is adjusting to such requirements through flexible work hours, which enable employees to meet the new demands for flexibility in their home lives.

Child Care

The need for child-care assistance is critical. Comparatively few facilities have been provided to service the large numbers of mothers in the labor force and in other active sectors, such as education and politics. With the exception of the special provisions for child care in factory nurseries during World War II, most American mothers who work have been forced for many years to make their own arrangements for surrogate help.

A survey conducted in 1969 found that most children of working mothers were being cared for by "other family members"—fathers

(whether they were working on different time schedules or were unemployed is not known), grandmothers or older siblings. An alarming number had no care, they were "latchkey" children who were unsupervised between the time they arrived home from school and when their parents came from work.

In 1973, there were about one million places for children in day-care centers, and six million children under the age of six with mothers who were working. This lack of institutional arrangements reflects both the general cultural inattention to the fact that so many mothers work, and society's lingering disapproval of it.

The women's movement has directed much effort to attempting to solve the child-care problem, which it feels does much to defeat mothers' efforts to become full members of the professions or occupations. Usually, child-care centers are custodial agencies, restricted to lower-income families and operated on very limited budgets. Middle-class working mothers have typically had to resort to private nursery schools or to untrained household help. Part of the problem in setting up adequate centers is the strict government regulation of such facilities, which reflects society's former negative attitudes toward child care outside the home.

Of course, this reinforces the traditional sex division of labor and makes it difficult for married couples to carry the changes they have made in their private lives out into the working world. Profit and non-profit organizations will have to do something comprehensive soon about child care, if both men and women are to maintain strong personal commitments to work.

The presence of child-care centers is particularly important to divorced mothers. The U.S. divorce rate is at an all-time high, reflecting changing attitudes toward the suitability of terminating unhappy marriages. Young people may be as romantic as formerly, but they do not all necessarily expect to live happily ever after with the same spouse. A recent Roper Poll found 3 in 4 American women willing to accept divorce as the way out of a marriage that is not working. More women and men favored divorce in 1974 than did in 1970. This means that the extent to which a husband and wife view themselves as an indivisible unit over time has probably changed drastically, and this includes their children.

An Interpretive Note

There have been considerable changes in the direction of women's equality with men, and these changes are a continuing phenomenon. But there is also evidence that substantial impediments to genuine equality remain.

The emphasis of this report has been on economic changes, because that area is overwhelmingly important in defining women's equality in the United States. Women's access to occupational opportunities has given them significant leverage in politics as well as in the home. Their attitudes toward work have stimulated new and brighter visions about marriage and family life, and their hopes and expectations include every aspect of life.

Nevertheless, resistance remains high to the opening of occupational opportunities to women, because of old traditions and prejudices. These prejudices include outmoded views of women's competence and "nature." There is also a fear of the competition they offer men who hold or aspire to positions women are now demanding.

Furthermore, real barriers continue to exist for women in the labor market, because the culture still assigns them the primary responsibility for child care, with few alternate solutions. Some families are seeking their own answers by adopting marriage styles where husband and wife share child-care responsibilities and try a flexible approach to their occupational needs. But in a society where men, though often willing to share home responsibilities, are still subject to the demands of their own occupations, individual couples may not be able to succeed in translating their attitudes into reality.

Nonetheless, there are rising pressures to reorganize the structure of work for both men and women. The cost may be high for industry and society, but the new concept of an ideal lifestyle is obviously changing older modes of behavior. Unfortunately, many people cannot make even simple adjustments to new needs because they seem to fear change, even when it brings improvements in their lives. In other cases, the costs come from the transition between old norms of "proper" behavior between the sexes and new behavior which does not yet have clearly defined norms.

Much is to be gained from the efficient use of women's talents and productivity, and from their sharing economic burdens with men. Women will have to be accorded full occupational opportunity and full dignity and support if they are to take a complete role in society and a full share of its burdens.

The problems examined in this paper do not apply to any one institution, nor can they be solved by any one means—they affect everyone's lives and every institution. This means that adjustments in the direction of equality for women must be explored by each one. Planning must look beyond the short-term trends of inflation or recession. The changing attitudes of women and toward women will not follow old models. There is no turning back.

There has been a lag between—on the one hand—the major improvements in the economic status of women and their growing commitment to the labor force, and—on the other—the practices of the business community toward women. Yet women are the new co-partners in the business community. They no longer see themselves as economic appendages of their husbands, but as autonomous persons with individual needs for recognition in occupationsl rank and pay. This is inextricably linked to women's new visions of their rights in both private and public domains. Basic changes in the law support these views. The status of women is evolving towards co-equality with men in the occupations, in families, and in every aspect of human life.