

Canada, compared to the U.S. (witness the success of the Charter of Rights fight here, compared to E.R.A.) and, the fact that "improving the status of women" is viewed as an appropriate political goal by all three parties.

This does not mean that high enough priority is placed on equality issues by governments, or that policies to improve women's economic security win out in the battle for scarce new government dollars, but it does mean, at very least, that there's concern enough to discuss them and the decision-making process of government has a legitimate avenue through which they must be aired.

The fact alone that there is a minister responsible for the Status of Women at the federal level and in many provinces, ensures at least one voice in Cabinet mandated to put before ministerial colleagues the policy concerns of women.

There are important differences in this legitimation process comparing the federal government and most provinces, other than Quebec. Only Quebec has produced an equivalent to the Royal Commission report, focussing on provincial jurisdiction. In most provinces, there are not the bureaucratic structures to ensure airing of women's issues in an organized fashion through the decision-making process. These differences themselves are worth analyzing for impact on the development of equality policies. We urgently need a Canadian equivalent to Boneparth's useful approach to *Women, Power and Policy*.

Maureen O'Neil
Status of Women Canada

Women in Top Jobs 1968-1979. Michael Fogarty, Isobel Allen and Patricia Walters. London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981. Pp. 273.

In 1971 Fogarty, Allen and Walters published their study *Women in Top Jobs: Four Studies in Achievement*, which was part of the "Sex, Career and Family" series produced under the auspices of Political and Economic Planning in Britain. Ten years later, the follow-up study by the same authors appeared, *Women in Top Jobs 1968-1979*. This book examines the progress made by women in various levels of professional and managerial positions in Britain over the ten-year period. The authors analyze the extent to which sexual barriers have been overcome in organizations, and assess, from a practical point of view, what still remains to be done.

The methodology used is never clearly elaborated but it appears to be the following: three groups of informants, i.e. women and men in middle and senior positions, young women management trainees and personnel managers and department heads (both men and women) were interviewed and in some cases answered a questionnaire. Statistical data are presented in the book. However, due to the small numbers employed, the authors rely mostly on qualitative material.

Women in Top Jobs 1968-1979 focuses on case studies of women in four milieux: civil service administration, two industrial companies, the B.B.C. and the architectural profession. The findings indicate that although the number of women recruited in junior positions has increased substantially, there has been little or no change in the numbers of women in top jobs.

In the two industrial companies, as well as in the B.B.C., there was a fractional increase in the proportion of women holding management positions, but among the highest managers and department heads, no change was found. In the Civil Service, the proportion of women among deputy Secretaries increased only minimally and there were very few to begin with (2 out of 80 in 1968 compared to 4 out of 149 in 1978). No woman was appointed Permanent Secretary over

the ten-year period. Comparisons over time of the architectural profession were not made, since it was not included in the 1971 publication.

The studies point out that the principle of equal opportunity has generally been accepted in the business world but the implementation of this principle is still problematic. Why have women been unable to make any significant career progress in top jobs in Britain over the past ten years? The authors suggest several reasons. Those who are married find it extremely difficult to reconcile career and family. The studies indicate that the vast majority of them leave their job when they have children and do not return to the paid labour force. Management and unions don't seem to do much to incite them to resume their career after an interruption.

Another handicap women face in organizations is employers' perceptions of their career commitment. Women are said to show more interest in job content than in advancement per se and have less flexibility in terms of long working hours than their male counterparts. This is interpreted as lack of career commitment. Women also seem to lack perspective about managing their careers, particularly when they consider establishing a family. The authors found that family responsibilities had the opposite effect on careers for men and women. For men these responsibilities sharpen their ambitions and increase their determination to rise in the organizational hierarchy, whereas for women family duties restrain their career progression. Fogarty, Allen and Walters conclude their study in recommending a "relaunch of the movement towards equal opportunity in professional and managerial careers" which should be brought about by a three-pronged drive through activist groups in trade unions, women's pressure groups in industrial organizations and the professions and on a national level, by a more systematic action on the part of the Equal Opportunity Commission.

Women in Top Jobs 1968-1979 is an eye-opener. One would have thought that the Equal Opportunities Act of 1970, and the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 in Britain would have led to an increase in the numbers of women in elite positions. In order to verify this hypothesis the follow-up study was undertaken. The findings show an increase among lower level female managers, but a decrease among those in senior positions. Figures cited in the case studies are in line with British national statistics - the percentage of women among high salary earners in Great Britain fell from just over 2.1% in the late 60's to under 1.85% in the late 70's.

What are the implications of this downward trend? Legislation may be a necessary step in the direction of equal opportunity, but it is far from being a universal panacea. The American experience provides a vivid example of what legislation can and cannot do. Affirmative Action has produced results. Employers were required to set numerical goals and timetables with respect to inclusion of minorities, and the percentage of women managers rose from 10.2% in 1970 to 18.1% in 1979.¹ Nevertheless, in 1980, the median salary for women managers and administrators was \$12,936, as compared to \$23,558 for their male counterparts.² It is difficult to assess how the situation will evolve in view of the Reagan administration's new policy. As of September, 1981, companies are no longer required to draw up detailed plans for hiring and promoting women and Blacks.³

In Canada, affirmative action is voluntary. Not surprisingly, progress has been very slow, particularly in the private sector. In the Public Service definite efforts have been made, although the higher echelons remain almost entirely male dominated (4% of senior managers are women).⁴

It is clear that we must seek answers to the problem of equal opportunity for women in other spheres besides the law. The three-pronged approach suggested by Fogarty, Allen and Walters

will remain ineffective as long as the structure of organizations permit only one career model, the "two-person career." This model is predicated on a traditional work/family pattern in which husband and wife, in their different ways, enhance one career, namely the husband's.⁵ Extremely high involvement in work is required in the early years of the career. However, this coincides with the period during which couples begin to establish a family. The model is workable in so far as each member of the couple responds to different sets of demands. Since women are called upon to assume responsibility for domestic labour and childcare, when they attempt to establish careers as well, they are faced with tremendous pressures and difficult choices. One author⁶ has suggested the utilization of multiple career models which permit the flexibility necessary to accommodate the needs of employees at different stages of their life cycle.

In my opinion, the central issue of *Women in Top Jobs 1968-1979* is the management of family and careers. The authors' solution to this problem is clearly "work-oriented." They fail to make the link between the structure of work in organizations and the structure of work in the family. Some victories have been won in the struggle for equal opportunity, but an impasse has been reached. Work-oriented solutions will not suffice. We must also look to a redefinition of family roles.

The "symmetrical family" offers an interesting possibility. In this family form both husband and wife share the economic support for the family, as well as share household responsibilities and childcare duties. However, as Lupri and Symons⁷ point out, the symmetrical family exists only in a very limited stratum of the population. It will become the trend of the future only when structural changes are made simultaneously in the division of labour at home and in the economy.

One thing is certain. Once men begin to accept joint responsibility for children and household, they, along with women, will put pressure on organizations to address important quality of life issues. The current economic recession is constraining people's success drive, and forcing couples to reevaluate their lifestyle and look for other models to more effectively combine marriage and career. Changes might occur faster than we think.

If social researchers are interested in effecting social change, they must take seriously the medium they employ. In the book under consideration, the authors' writing style leaves much to be desired and their convoluted method of data presentation forces the reader to search throughout the 273 pages for coherent information. For example, comparisons of the four organizations under scrutiny are extremely difficult to make since the authors have an annoying tendency to describe the results of their study in terms of generalities. In spite of these technical criticisms, the findings of this book merit to be taken seriously.

Marie-Françoise Marchis Mouren
Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales

NOTES

1. EEO-1 Reports 1970 and 1981.
2. US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports. Series p.-60. no. 132, 1982, p. 195. Caution must be used when interpreting median salary data. They tell us nothing about important variables which may explain some of the differences, for example, level of the managerial position, number of years of experience, educational qualifications, etc...
3. Target: Working Women. *Working Woman*. December, 1981.
4. *Présence des femmes dans la Fonction publique du Canada 1980*. Commission de la Fonction publique du Canada, 1980.
5. Papanek, Hanna. "Men Women and Work: reflexions on the two-person career," pp. 90-110 in Joan Huber (ed.), *Changing Women in a changing society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
6. Bailyn, Lotte. "The Apprenticeship Model of Organizational Careers: a response to changes in the relation between work and family," pp. 45-58, Phyllis A. Wallace, *Women in the Work Place*, Auburn House Publishing, 1982.
7. Symons, Gladys and Lupri Eugen, "The Emerging Symmetrical Family Fact or Fiction? A cross national analysis," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, vol. 23, no. 3-4, 1982.