



Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group

A Note on the Status of Women in Economics

Author(s): William Spellman and Gary Holland

Source: *The Journal of Economic Education*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Spring, 1976), pp. 124-125

Published by: [Taylor & Francis, Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1182778>

Accessed: 23/09/2014 14:56

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Taylor & Francis, Ltd. is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Journal of Economic Education*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

22. H. E. Russell and A. W. Bendig, "Investigation of the Relations of Student Ratings of Psychology Instructors to Their Course Achievement when Academic Aptitude is Controlled," *Education and Psychological Measurement*, 13 (1953), 626-635.
23. P. A. Schwarz, "Prediction Instruments for Educational Outcomes," in R. L. Thorndike, Ed., *Educational Measurement*, 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1971.
24. J. Siegfried and K. J. White, "Teaching and Publishing as Determinants of Academic Salaries," *Journal of Economic Education*, 4 (Spring 1973), 90-99.
25. J. Soper, "Soft Research on a Hard Subject: Student Evaluations Reconsidered," *Journal of Economic Education*, 5 (Fall 1973), 22-26.
26. U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office for Civil Rights, *Higher Education Guidelines, Executive Order 11246*, 1972.
27. H. H. Villard, "Some Reflections on Student Evaluation of Teaching," *Journal of Economic Education*, 5 (Fall 1973), 47-50.
28. K. Vogt and H. J. Lasher, "Student Evaluations: Myths and Realities," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the AACSB, New Orleans, May 1972.
29. P. R. Werdell, *Course and Teacher Evaluations*, 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: United States National Student Association, 1967.
30. G. Whitlock, "Evaluating Instruction: Learning/Perceptions," *Teaching Learning Issues*, Learning Research Center, University of Tennessee, Spring 1971.

A Note on the Status of Women in Economics

William Spellman and Gary Holland

In 1972 the American Economic Association established the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession to gather data on the number of women economists and to develop programs for affirmative action. Reports have been published in each *Papers and Proceedings* issue of the *American Economic Review* since 1973. Through the use of surveys of academic institutions, the committee has accumulated data which, indeed, have initiated an affirmative action newsletter and aroused the consciousness of the profession.

In the spring of 1973 the authors commenced an evaluation of the status of women in the economics profession, using the biographical data of the 1969 *Handbook of the American Economic Association*—regardless of its obvious shortcomings—to obtain some significant insights about the training, distribution and status of women. The 1975 report of the committee also used the *Handbook*, but previous data were gathered by survey questionnaires only.

The *Handbook* shows that women economists occupy only 5.1 percent of the academic positions and provide 9.2 percent of the federal government economists. The survey data from 1972 indicated that 6 percent of economics faculty positions were held by women, and the

William Spellman is Associate Professor of Economics and Gary Holland is Student at Coe College. The NSF funded the computer expenses of this project.

report on employment of economists by the federal government indicated that 14 percent of the positions were held by women. The difference in these results can be explained by assuming that a smaller percentage of women belong to the A.E.A. or complete the biographical questionnaire. The data from the *Handbook* also showed that 59 percent of the academic women held ranks below that of associate professor, but that less than 40 percent of the men were concentrated in these lower ranks. Less than 8 percent of the listed graduate students were women, but the 1972 survey showed that 12 percent of graduate students in economics were women. Again, this indicates that fewer women join the A.E.A. Since the "old chum" method and the A.E.A. "slave market" at the annual meetings are the main employment search vehicles, the need for the affirmative action program by the A.E.A. is obvious for entry employment and job mobility of women economists.

The age distribution by decade of birth of the A.E.A. membership does show women increasing from 5 percent of those born before 1940 to 7.1 percent for the 1940-1949 group. An absolute increase is noted for Ph.D.'s earned during the 1960's by women—more women earned their degrees in this decade than did in the five previous decades together. The relative increase of women as a percentage of Ph.D.'s earned increased from 3.8 percent in the 1950's to 4.3 percent in the 1960's; this slight relative increase is explained by the "Ph.D. explosion" of the latter decade which accounts for one-half of the Ph.D.'s listed by members. The 1975 survey by the committee shows an increase by women to 8 percent of doctoral students.

The *Handbook* also allows an opportunity to compare the fields of specialization or major research interests of women economists with the men economists. Of the 12 fields listed, four fields have a significantly different composition. Women are underrepresented in the business administration and the agricultural economics classifications; these two fields represent 17.4 percent of the listed economists, but only 5.2 percent of the women. Conversely, the fields of labor economics and welfare programs represent the areas of specialization of 17.4 percent of the women and only 8.1 percent of the total sample. Women constitute over one-fourth of all economists specializing in welfare and consumer economics.

The data from the *Handbook* provide a good base to evaluate the status of females as well as to evaluate other aspects of the training, distribution and structure of the profession. It should not be overlooked as a data source.

Effective Instruction in Principles of Economics

Ron Hosen

Students frequently are unenthusiastic about introductory college economics courses and retain over time little of what they learn. This suggests the desirability of an instructional strategy directed toward necessary motivation and retention.

Ron Hosen is a Graduate Student at the University of Houston.