

WOMEN TAKE POWER: UNIONIZATION AS A STRATEGY  
TO INCREASE WAGES IN MASSACHUSETTS

by

JENNIFER LLEWELLYN AMORY

Bachelor of Science  
New York University  
1982

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF URBAN  
STUDIES AND PLANNING IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER IN CITY PLANNING

at the

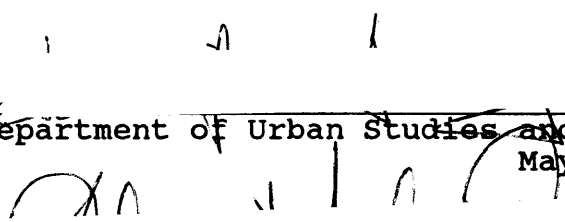
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

June, 1987


(c) Jennifer Llewellyn Amory 1987

The Author hereby grants to M.I.T.  
permission to reproduce and to distribute publicly copies  
of this thesis document in whole or in part.


Signature of Author

  
Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
May 15, 1987

Certified by

  
Edwin Meléndez  
Assistant Professor  
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by

  
Phillip L. Clay  
Chair  
Master of City Planning Committee

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE  
OF TECHNOLOGY

JUN 08 1987

LIBRARIES

Rotch

**WOMEN TAKE POWER: UNIONIZATION AS A STRATEGY  
TO INCREASE WAGES IN MASSACHUSETTS**

by

Jennifer Llewellyn Amory

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
on May 18, 1987, in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Degree of Master in City Planning.

**ABSTRACT**

This thesis identifies the systematic nature of women's low wages as one result of the intersection of capitalism, patriarchy, and racism in the United States. Unionization is examined as a strategy to increase women's wages. A study of workers' earnings in Massachusetts by sex and union affiliation provides evidence to support the hypothesis that unionization increases women's wages.

To illustrate the impact of unionization on women's wages, I analyze the May Current Population Survey data on full-time median weekly earnings in 1978 and 1984 for both men and women. My findings indicate that although unionization does not alter wage segregation between men and women, unionization increases women's earnings and decreases the gender gap between men and women. Furthermore, a comparison of Massachusetts data to similar national data reveals that unionization impacts Black women differently from White women.

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Edwin Meléndez  
Title: Assistant Professor

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thanks to all my friends in D.U.S.P.

While writing my thesis, I most appreciate the support and friendship of Tarry Hum, Susan Matteucci, and Becky Stevens. Also, I thank Carla Alonso-Vélez for her warmth and encouragement during the thesis process. In fact, I can not thank all of them enough for their laughter and friendship throughout M.I.T. May the "support group" live on!

I thank an extremely supportive and challenging advisor, Edwin Meléndez, who gave an extraordinary amount of time and energy to this project. To my two readers, Louise Dunlap and Bennett Harrison, I appreciate both the critical feedback which helped me to develop my ideas as well as their support of feminist research. In addition, my thanks to Mel King, who has been my academic advisor and an important inspiration to my work.

From the beginning to the end, a special thanks to Betty Radwanski who helped me develop many of the ideas in this thesis. Maureen O'Donnell also gave her kind support to this project. I also thank the women I interviewed who generously shared their time and union organizing experiences with me.

Carol Eschrich, Meg Gross, and Jeanne Washington deserve special recognition for their continual and unending support during my two years at M.I.T.

A special thanks to Chris Tilly for providing the CPS data. During the computer crunch, I thank Rodolfo Vázquez-Fuertes who provided invaluable technical assistance with the data analysis. At the final stages of the writing process, I appreciate help in editing from my sister, Debby Amory, and Leslie Townsend.

Finally, my love and appreciation to my parents for their eternal support. Especially, I thank Victor with whom I share a truly rare partnership which encourages and inspires dialogue and commitment to change.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	6
CHAPTER	
1. A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF WAGE INEQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN	9
A. Explanations of Earnings Differences Between Men and Women: A Literature Review	10
B. Women's Economic Oppression: The Relationship Between Patriarchy, Capitalism, and Racism	17
C. Unions' Function in Increasing Women's Wages	19
2. MASSACHUSETTS: A CASE STUDY OF UNIONS' IMPACT ON WOMEN'S WEEKLY EARNINGS IN 1978 AND 1984	22
A. The Massachusetts Economy and Workers' Earnings	23
B. Union Membership in Massachusetts	25
C. Wages: Unions Make a Difference for Women	30
D. Limitations of the Data	32
E. Summary of Findings	33
3. UNIONIZATION FOR WOMEN: A STRATEGY FOR POWER	45
A. The Family Wage Ideology	46
B. Women's Resistance to Exclusion	48
C. Feminist Perspectives on Unionization	49
CONCLUSION	54
APPENDIX A,B	57
BIBLIOGRAPHY	61

## LIST OF TABLES

		PAGE
TABLE 1	Membership of Local Labor Organizations in Massachusetts: 1978 and 1984	26
TABLE 2	Percent of Workers Unionized in Massachusetts and the United States 1974 to 1980	27
TABLE 3	Median Weekly Earnings of Full-Time Workers in Massachusetts	34
TABLE 4	Massachusetts Gender Gap Ratio	34
TABLE 5	United States Gender Gap Ratio	37
TABLE 6	Percentage Change in Median Earnings from 1978 to 1984 by Gender and Union Affiliation	38
TABLE 7	Wage Premium in Massachusetts by Gender	39
TABLE 8	United States Wage Premium	41

## INTRODUCTION

Statistics on women's wages show a systematic picture of women's low earnings relative to men's. According to the most recent U.S. Department of Labor report on women workers in the United States, 67% of full-time female workers earn less than \$15,000, while 69% of full-time male workers earn \$15,000 or more [WB (a) 1983]. Although these particular statistics are not analyzed by race, a comparison of median full-time earnings reveals that women of color earn even less than White women. In 1981, Black and Hispanic women earned \$11,440 and \$10,922, respectively; White women earned \$12,672 [WB (a) 1983]. These statistics indicate not only wage inequality between men and women, but wage stratification based on race as well.

In this thesis, I identify the systematic nature of women's low wages as one result of the intersection of capitalism, patriarchy, and racism in the United States. This theoretical discussion serves as a framework for the study of workers' earnings in Massachusetts by sex, and in the United States by sex and race. My interest is not only to explain this reality, but to explore strategies that challenge women's economic oppression. Thus, I examine unionization as one strategy, focusing on its impact on wages as an indicator of successful change.

My initial analysis of the three systems of oppression concludes with an explanation of low wages for women as a result of the economic system embedded in the history of racism and sexism in the United States. My conclusion therefore is that low wages are in fact functional for these systems of oppression. I compare my analysis to a contrasting theory which explains women's (or men's) low wages as a result of individual workers' behavior in the marketplace. Rejecting this theory in favor of a more structuralist approach, I then discuss how unions' function to increase wages within capitalism.

To illustrate the impact of unionization on women's wages, I describe in Chapter 2 the earnings for men and women by union affiliation in Massachusetts. This analysis compares 1978 and 1984 information on Massachusetts with national data. My findings confirm the hypothesis that unions increase wages for women. In addition, evidence from the Massachusetts data illustrates that although unionization does not alter the wage segregation of men and women, the gender gap in earnings between men and women decreases when workers are unionized. The national data highlights the differing impact of unionization on Black women and White women.

Lastly, in Chapter 3, I elaborate on unionization as a strategy for women by examining the complex historical relationship between women and the labor movement. Within

this discussion, I outline two feminist perspectives on unionization. One view provides a critique based on sex; according to this "male protectionist" view, unions are exclusive organizations controlled by men. Alternatively, the "class solidarity" view considers unions to be a potential means of reform, unifying workers to eliminate the subordination of women in the workplace. My own view is that unions can be an important vehicle for change; women must develop a progressive feminist labor agenda which changes not only individual workplaces but the institutional structures of capitalism, racism, and patriarchy. To complete this discussion, I explore the implications of unionization as a strategy for change with regard to both women and the labor movement.



## CHAPTER 1

### A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF WAGE INEQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

Almost all women working in the labor force know from personal experience that they earn less than men. A comparison between women's and men's earnings reveals that low wages are more than just a personal phenomenon. National statistics indicate that women, as a group, and women of color, in particular, are systematically segregated into low wage jobs. This observation requires a theoretical explanation to describe the wage inequality between men and women within a systematic or institutional framework.

There is a fundamental dichotomy in contemporary theoretical explanations of earnings inequality by gender dividing explanations based on structural relationships from those based on individual characteristics of workers. My own theoretical analysis of wage differences between men and women posits that low wages for women are a result of the structural relationships between capitalism, patriarchy, and racism; these three systems combine to segregate women into predominantly low wage, unstable work in the labor force.

Feminist literature often notes the inadequacy of current theories on wage inequality between men and women. In particular, there is little research on women of color's

experience in the labor force [Glenn 1985, Milkman 1985]. Evelyn Nakano Glenn's analysis of "racial ethnic"<sup>1</sup> women's economic oppression is one exception. Glenn explores the intersection of capitalism, racism, and patriarchy with women of color's experience.

To generally illustrate women's position in the economy and the role of unions in increasing women's earnings, I provide an overview of the dual labor market theory. From a discussion of this theory, unionization emerges as a strategy to increase women's wages because women who organize can potentially transform their low-paying and dead-end jobs into higher-paying jobs with better benefits or gain access to male-dominated labor markets. This chapter diagrams a theoretical framework for the concrete analysis of earnings for Massachusetts workers by gender and union affiliation in Chapter 2.

#### **A. Explanations of earnings differences between men and women: a literature review**

A review of the literature shows two fundamentally opposed explanations of earnings differences between men and women -- individual characteristics of workers versus structural relationships. The "individual" view is most clearly exemplified by the human capital theory which explains differences in earnings of workers according to their

---

<sup>1</sup> Glenn's term "racial ethnic" describes groups that are both racial and ethnic minorities.

personal characteristics or skills. This view is most often associated with a neoclassical analysis of the economy. By contrast, the "structural" view is exemplified by the dual labor market theory. Job or occupational segregation, industry characteristics, and labor market discrimination are associated with the structural view; all of which are centered on a radical analysis of the economy.

Regardless of the choice of analysis, there is no consensus on how much particular factors affect wage differentials between men and women. A review of studies on the earnings gap between men and women between 1964 and 1979 concluded that different variables explain from little or none to as much as 71% of the gender gap in earnings [Mellor 1984]. Mellor notes that explanations for differences in earnings between men and women depend on the particular variables selected for analysis, the measure of earnings used, and the source of the data.

According to the individual view, researchers identify particular characteristics of workers that influence earnings' capacity such as age, education, occupation and hours worked, gender, history of work experience, marital status, and race. Furthermore, the human capital theory states that a worker's ability to obtain a job is dependent on one's investment in training, skills, and education. The resulting conclusion from this rationale is that in the free market, a worker's position in the economy is a function of

his or her investment or lack of investment in training opportunities. Because this theory assumes both a "free market" and an individual's "free choice," constraints such as a person's income -- and therefore his or her ability to purchase training -- and discrimination in the market place, which may preclude access to higher paying jobs, are not addressed as central concerns. The human capital theory explains low earnings as the result of an individual's behavior, thereby suggesting that women themselves are responsible for their earnings, or conversely, poverty.

Although human capital theory purports to explain wage differences between men and women, Shack-Marquez [1984] shows that studies which explore hypotheses about individual characteristics of workers explain less than 20% of the earnings differential between men and women. In addition, discrimination, which is most often associated with a structural view of the economy, is often cited as an explanation in studies which can not account for the complete earnings gap between men and women [Shack-Marquez 1984].

In contrast to the human capital theory, a structural analysis of wage differentials centers on forces outside of the individual which act to shape his or her work experience. The dual labor market theory provides the central analysis of the structural view and in particular, describes unions' relationship to wage differentials. Other major explanations include job or occupational segregation, industry characteri-

stics, and labor market discrimination.

### Dual or Segmented Labor Market Theory

The dual or segmented labor market theory divides the labor market into two distinct sectors: the primary and secondary markets. The nature of the control utilized by a firm to obtain desired work behavior from workers is fundamental to Edwards (1979) discussion of segmented labor markets. His basic premise is that different forms of structural control contributed to the redivision and segmentation of working people in the United States.

In the primary market, jobs are usually in well-defined occupations with established paths of advancement generally characterized by high wages, general or specific skills, worker control, and unionization. In contrast, jobs in the secondary market require few general or specific skills and are characterized by a lack of job security and low wages. Secondary jobs can be broadly described in five major categories: low-skill jobs in small, non-union manufacturing, many "service" jobs (janitors, waitresses, personal care workers), lower-level positions in retail and wholesale trades (sales clerks, check-out clerks), lowest level clerical jobs, and migrant labor.

The primary market is divided into two categories: subordinate and independent. The subordinate primary includes some traditionally secondary market jobs such as lower level sales, clerical, and administrative work that are

unionized. In addition, the subordinate primary market includes unionized jobs in the mass-production industries. The independent primary is characterized by worker self-pacing, a greater role of the public sector, well-defined occupations with job advancement possibilities, and mobility for workers from one occupation to another. Independent primary jobs include long-term clerical, sales, and technical staff, craft work, and professional positions [Edwards 1979].

Two particular characteristics of these segmented labor markets are critical to the discussion of wage differentials. First, the secondary labor market, characterized by primarily low wage work, is composed largely of women and people of color. Second, unionization is a characteristic of the higher-wage subordinate primary labor market. Because the higher wage segment of the labor market is associated with unionization, the dual labor market theory implies that a union can be a useful vehicle for women to gain access to higher paid, more stable occupations in the primary market.

Researchers focus on job or occupational segregation as a major explanation of wage inequality, whereby women and men are concentrated in distinct sectors of the labor market. In 1984, almost 50% of all women work in only 20 of the 200 possible occupations [Center for Popular Economics 1986]. Everyday observation illustrates this job segregation: women are predominantly the low-paid child care workers,

secretaries, and social workers, whereas the better-paid construction workers, senators, and firefighters are usually men.

As much as 88% of the earnings gap is explained in the distribution of men and women among different jobs, and as such, job segregation is the most substantial explanation about earnings differences found in the literature [Shack-- Marquez 1984]. Even within particular occupations characterized by a female workforce, a closer examination shows stratification in earnings: in office work, women occupy almost 8 out of 10 lower paid clerical work positions, but less than 3 out of 10 of the higher paid management positions [Sieling 1984]. Similarly, job segregation by race and national origin is evident from the disproportionate number of women of color in the lowest paid and most unstable jobs. For example, Glenn (1985) notes the racial stratification in earnings in public sector reproductive work (i.e. work that helps to reproduce the labor force); women of color work in the more menial, less desirable, and lower paid jobs caring for older people, preparing food, and providing emotional support.

Hodson and England [1986] note that the characteristics of industries determine differences in earnings between men and women. By examining four sets of industrial characteristics -- organizational factors (average company size and level of unionization), market factors (concentration, foreign

dividends, and government purchases), technological factors (primarily capital intensity of production), and measures of organizational success (profits, productivity and growth of the industry) -- they attribute the largest share of the gender gap to women's employment in industries with less unionization and less capital investment.

Another major factor in wage differentials is labor market discrimination, defined as "unequal access to higher paying occupations" [Shack-Marquez 1984:15]. This view is widely noted in research articles explaining differences in earnings; discrimination by gender and race in particular prevent White women and women of color from gaining access to higher paid jobs, admissions to schools, and apprenticeship programs and unions [Bowles and Edwards 1985]. Consequently, women and people of color are disproportionately hired in low wage and unstable jobs with little mobility. In this sense, sexism and racism also help to explain the phenomenon of job segregation.

The preceding explanations of wage differences based on job segregation, industry characteristics, and labor market discrimination explain more of the effect rather than the cause of wage differentials. Feminist critics cite the need for a more integrated explanation of wage inequality through an analysis of the intersection of patriarchy, capitalism, and racism.



## B. Women's Economic Oppression: the relationship between patriarchy, capitalism, and racism

The relationship between capitalism, patriarchy, and racism created and maintains systems of economic oppression for women. These systems reflect women's oppression as workers, as women, and as women of color. Capitalism is an economic system based on profit in which one class of people own the means of production and extract surplus labor of another group of people. Patriarchy is a system in which men as a group, have authority and power over women. Racism is a system in which one group of people dominate and exploit another based on ascriptive characteristics of race and ethnicity. Although the intersection of these three systems is central to understanding women's economic oppression, a complete theoretical framework has not yet been articulated in the literature.

Evelyn Nakano Glenn develops an insightful conceptual framework to understand women of color's experience in the labor force based on the patriarchy and internal colonialism models:

In this model [of patriarchy] the main mechanism by which control is achieved and maintained by men is the sexual division of labor, which places men in positions of authority over women and permits them to reap disproportionate benefits. Similarly, at the center of the internal colonialism model is a system of power relations by which subordinate minorities are kept politically and economically weak so they can be more easily exploited as workers. The main mechanism by which economic dependency is maintained is a colonial labor system, characterized by a segmented labor market, discriminatory barriers and separate wage scales [Glenn 1985: 87].

Glenn further develops these two models to provide a more complex and thorough understanding of women's oppression.<sup>2</sup> Rarely debated in feminist literature, her analysis culminates with a discussion of the involvement of White women in the exploitation of racial ethnic people through the "three-way" division of labor in the home where White middle class women employed White immigrant women or racial ethnic women as servants. Through this division of labor, racial ethnic women most often worked in the most difficult and menial jobs [Glenn 1985].

It is through the understanding of discrimination against women of color, not only as women and workers, but as people of color, that racism is identified as an essential force in women's economic oppression.

Even though feminists criticize the dual labor market theory's lack of historical analysis of gender and race, this theory is still a useful vehicle for explaining women's job segregation and low wages as an intrinsic component of the structure of labor markets. The dual labor market theory not only illustrates women's position in the labor market, but examines the particular role of unions within the labor market structure.

---

<sup>2</sup> In particular Glenn redefines three concepts in marxist-feminist theory -- "the separation between private and public spheres, the primacy of gender conflict as a feature of family, and the gender-based assignment of reproductive labor" [Glenn 1985: 101].

### C. Unions' function in Increasing Women's Wages

By identifying the causal relationship between capitalism, patriarchy, and racism and women's economic oppression, a critical question is -- do unions challenge or reproduce these three systems? In this section, I focus on how unions function in the capitalist economy which defines the theoretical framework for testing the hypothesis that unions increase women's wages in Chapter 2. I further address the broader question of whether unions challenge or reproduce capitalism, patriarchy, and racism in Chapter 3.

Unions are associated with higher wages. Freeman and Medoff, who have compiled the most comprehensive account of unions' function in the economy in their book What Do Unions Do?, describe two central characteristics of unions: monopoly power and collective voice. Monopoly power refers to the ability of unions to raise wages above competitive levels through negotiation with management. Moreover, unions' power to raise wages is directly related to the extent to which unions can organize industries or sectors of the economy. Collective voice refers to workers' ability to change work conditions through the collective process of a union. As one office worker stated "When we organized a union, our employers were forced to sit down and negotiate with us at the bargaining table".<sup>3</sup> It is this collective

---

<sup>3</sup> Interview with office worker and ex-organizer of a Local 925 union.

action and power of workers to unite that challenges the structure of the capitalist system. "The collective nature of trade unionism fundamentally alters the operation of a labor market" [Freeman and Medoff 1984: 9].

. . .in the economic sphere, unions reduce wage inequality, increase industrial democracy, and often raise productivity, while in the political sphere, unions are an important voice for some of society's weakest and most vulnerable groups, as well as for their own members [Freeman and Medoff 1984:5].

Freeman and Medoff also point out the common notion that there is an increase in inequality induced by unions' power to increase members' wages at the expense of unorganized workers. They counter this analysis with the theory that unionization reduces inequality in three distinct ways:

union wage policies lower inequality of wages within establishments; union wage policies favor equal pay for equal work across establishments; and union wage gains for blue-collar labor reduce inequality between White-collar and blue-collar workers [Freeman and Medoff 1984:78].

In summary, unions not only increase wages, but help to reduce inequality in earnings within, across, and between certain job classifications. Given the preceding description of unions' function in the workplace, unions appear to be a critical strategy for women to increase their wages. Not only can unions raise women's wages, but they can theoretically address issues of inequality between groups of men and women in the workplace. In Chapter 2, I examine the

median earnings of workers in Massachusetts and the United States in order to empirically test the preceding theory that unions increase women's wages.

## CHAPTER 2

### MASSACHUSETTS: A CASE STUDY OF UNIONS' IMPACT ON WOMEN'S WEEKLY EARNINGS IN 1978 AND 1984

Wage inequality is a phenomenon recently receiving public attention through a national study which notes an alarming trend; the numbers of low wage jobs are increasing which is creating a polarization in earnings between workers. This trend suggests a shrinking middle class and expanding working poor [Bluestone and Harrison 1986].

The economic restructuring of the 1980's -- including the loss of jobs in the manufacturing sector, the continued growth of the service economy, and the reorganization of work towards more part-time schedules -- left in its wake a proliferation of low-wage jobs. If this pattern of development continues, the standard of living of a growing proportion of the American workforce will be significantly jeopardized [Bluestone and Harrison 1986:7].

Although Massachusetts revels in a booming economy with recent job growth and a corresponding low unemployment rate, average annual wages do not seem to reflect this economic "miracle." Moreover, during periods of economic expansion, wages are expected to increase.

In this chapter, my analysis will focus particularly on women's earnings in the Massachusetts economy examining unionization as a strategy for women to transform low wage jobs into higher wage jobs. An analysis of 1978 and 1984 median weekly earnings of full-time workers in Massachusetts by union affiliation illustrates that there is a wage

advantage associated with union membership for women. In addition, a comparison of Massachusetts data with national data illustrate differing affects of unionization on weekly earnings between White women and Black women.

### **The Massachusetts Economy and Workers' Earnings**

Massachusetts experienced an employment growth rate of 5.9% between 1983 and 1984, the highest rate of growth in the state since World War II [DESCLMS (a) 1985]. This explosive growth was concentrated in the service sector.

The 46,500 jobs added in 1984 pushed service employment above the three-quarter-million level, maintaining its dominance as the state's largest sector. The state's proportion of service-sector employment also leads the nation's and is highest among the large industrial states [DES (f) 1985:3-4].

Paralleling this job growth in the service sector is the declining unemployment rate which fell from 6.1% in 1978 to 4.8% in 1984. But the prosperous Massachusetts economy does not seem to affect wages. A report from the Division of Employment Security compares 1984 Massachusetts relative average annual wages to wages of all states, industrial states, and the nation. Massachusetts average annual wages are ranked twelfth among all the states, eighth among the 11 industrial states and only .4% above the national average while in the same year, Massachusetts unemployment rate ranked fifth among the 11 industrial states, was the lowest among all states, and was 2.7% below the national average [DES (f) 1985].

For 96,508 Massachusetts workers in 1984, employment meant low wages and poverty. In absolute numbers, women were more likely to be part of the working poor; 55,539 women (58%) and 40,970 men (42%) were employed and poor.<sup>4</sup> For a state touted by its administration as a model of "full employment," work and poverty is a reality for tens of thousands of workers. This reality contradicts a fundamental American notion that hard work is the route out of poverty [DESCLMS (a) 1985].

#### Where Are The Future Jobs?

In general, the majority of future jobs will also be in the service sector.

In 1984, over seven of every 10 jobs in Massachusetts were in the service producing industries, (i.e. transportation, communications, and utilities; finance, insurance, and real estate; wholesale and retail trade; services; and government). Over the decade, this sector is expected to provide nearly 9 out of every 10 new jobs [DES (e) 1987:39].

In Massachusetts, this trend in service sector growth is similar to that of the United States. The state's service sector is projected to grow by 25.1% which is slightly more than the projected 24.5% growth rate for the nation [DES (d) 1986]. The growth of the service sector is directly connected to the proliferation of low wages: in the Northeast, 91% of the net new employment for 1979 to 1984 paid annual wages of \$7,000 or less (in 1984 prices) [Bluestone and

---

<sup>4</sup> Statistics were not reported by race.



Harrison 1986].<sup>5</sup>

In summary, the Massachusetts economy is expanding in the mostly low wage non-unionized service sector. Characterized by a large female workforce today, the service sector's growth will most likely lead to future low earnings for women.

#### B. Union Membership in Massachusetts

In 1984, there were approximately 1,981 local unions for all industries, trades, and groups in Massachusetts [DOLI (b) 1984]. The total reported membership was about 501,568 workers of which 35% were women and 65% were men.<sup>6</sup> Table 1 illustrates union membership by sex in the selected industries, trades, and groups in 1978 and 1984.

From 1973 to 1981, Massachusetts was one of the few states experiencing a growth in the percentage of workers unionized [Kokklenberg and Sockrell 1985]. Table 2 shows this growth compared to a relative national decline in the percentage of workers unionized. This growth in the percentage of workers who are unionized, however, has recently reversed. In 1978, data from two different sources indicate that 21.2% or 28% of workers were unionized. In 1978, statistics indicate that 18% of workers were unionized. Therefore, I estimate

---

<sup>5</sup> Bluestone and Harrison will release updated information from 1978 to 1985 in a forthcoming publication.

<sup>6</sup> Statistics were not reported by race.

TABLE 1

## MEMBERSHIP OF LOCAL LABOR ORGANIZATION IN MASSACHUSETTS: 1978 AND 1984

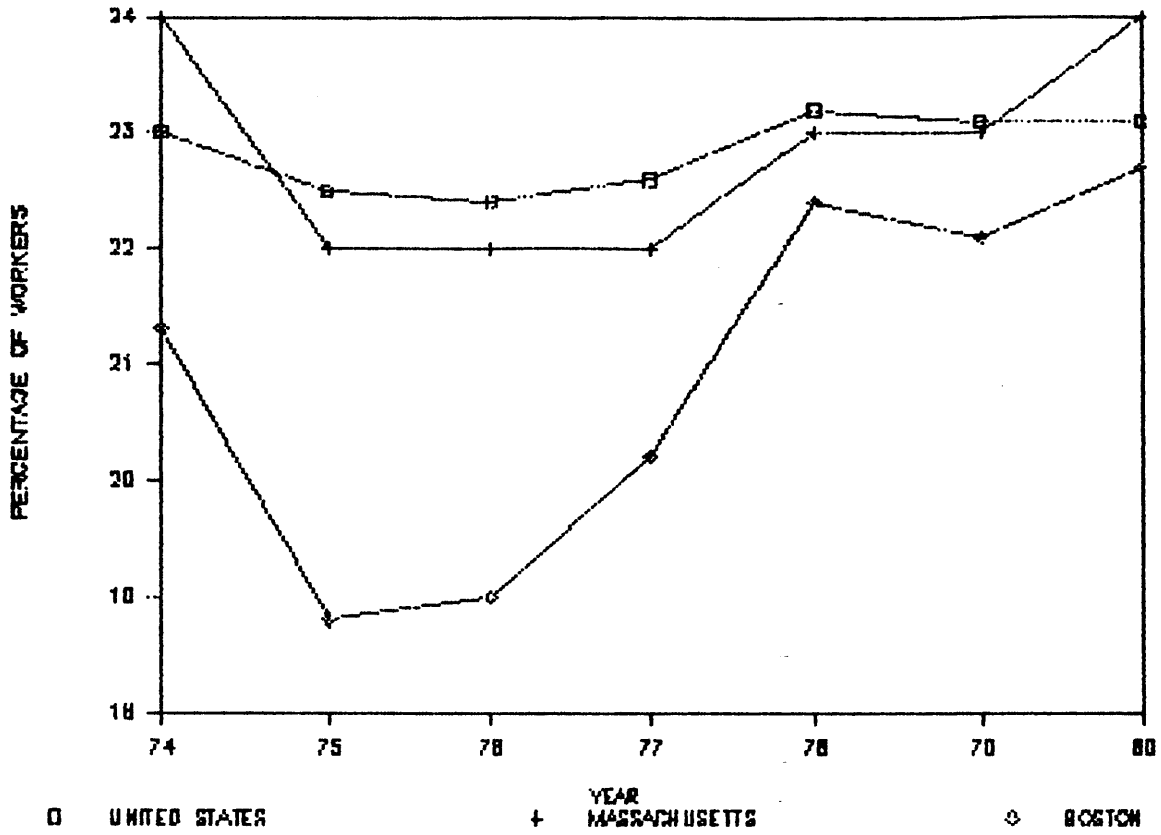
Industries, Trades, and Groups	1978			1984		
	Total Membership	% Male	% Female	Total Membership	% Male	% Female
Boot & Shoe Industry	4,183	48	52	1,475	50	50
Building Trades	55,460	100	--	40,055	98	2
Clerks, Wholesale & Retail	26,711	48	52	8,651	60	40
Clothing and Garment Trades	32,009	21	79	25,686	32	68
Gas & Electric Workers	11,070	82	18	6,435	70	30
Hotel & Restaurant Workers	5,744	42	58	6,266	50	50
Metal and Machinery Trades	87,577	78	22	37,511	89	11
Municipal & State Employees	161,565	55	45	141,473	54	46
Paper and Allied Industries	10,780	82	18	7,676	79	21
Printing & Allied Trades	11,551	83	17	7,776	77	23
Rubber Workers	5,119	87	13	1,227	72	28
Teaming & Trucking	36,920	91	9	31,253	89	11
Telephone Operators and Workers	18,682	56	44	14,844	50	51
Textile Industries	6,960	75	25	4,780	70	30
Railroads	6,033	93	7	2,380	93	7
St. Ry. & Passenger Bus Companies	8,120	96	4	1,676	90	10
All Other Industries, Trades & Groups	104,029	70	30	162,404	61	39
<b>TOTAL ALL INDUSTRIES, TRADES &amp; GROUPS</b>	<b>592,013</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>501,568</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>35</b>

Percentages have been rounded.

Dashes denote that percentage is less than one-half of one percent.

Source: Massachusetts Department of Labor and Industries  
Directory of Labor Organizations 1980, 1984

=====  
**TABLE 2**  
**PERCENT OF WORKERS UNIONIZED IN MASSACHUSETTS AND U.S.**  
**1974-1980**  
**Three Year Moving Averages**  
 =====



that from 1978 to 1984, there was a decrease of between 3 to 11% in union membership in Massachusetts. The variation in estimates is attributable to a comparison of different data sources.<sup>7</sup> However, all sources point to a decline in union membership. Nationally, the percentage of unionized workers fell from 23% in 1980 to 19.1% in 1984 [Adams 1985].

In Massachusetts, women fared relatively better than men during the period of decline in union membership; the percentage of women union members slightly increased from 32% to 35% from 1978 to 1984 [See Table 3]. Women are important in the future of the labor movement both because of their increasing numbers in the labor force, their location in growing sectors of the economy, and in terms of equity -- that is that the labor movement should reflect the actual composition of the workforce by gender and race. In order to increase membership, unions future survival greatly depends upon unions' ability to organize the women and the service sector.

---

<sup>7</sup> The 3% decline is based on a comparison of Kokklenberg and Sockrell's calculation of the percent of workers unionized in 1978 to the author's calculation of percent of workers unionized from the Division of Employment Security's (DES) data on average employment and the Department of Labor and Industries (DOLI) data on union membership. The 11% decline is based on the author's calculation of percent of workers unionized from the same DES and DOLI data for both years. A comparison of combinations of these three data sets provides variations in results because the information is varied; Kokklenberg and Sockrell use CPS household data, DES uses data from employers, and DOLI compiles information from unions.

## Women's Representation in Union Membership

Although women workers constituted about 43% and 45% of the civilian labor force in 1978 and 1984, respectively, an examination of union membership in the industries, trades, and groups identified by the Massachusetts Department of Labor and Industries reveals women's severe underrepresentation in these categories [BLS (a) 1978, BLS (b) 1984].

In 1978, women were represented at least as much as their proportional representation in the state labor force in only 6 out of 17 union member categories. In 1984, the same was true for 5 out of 17 categories. For both years, the five categories in which women were represented are the Boot and Shoe Industry, Clothing and Garment Workers, Hotel and Restaurant Workers, Municipal and State Employees, and Telephone Operators and Workers. The sixth category in 1978 was Clerks, Wholesale and Retail. As these categories indicate, it is apparent that women are segregated in traditionally "female" jobs within union membership. Women's job segregation in the economy and unions' traditional focus on organizing "male" jobs help to explain this pattern [Milkman 1980].

## B. Wages: Unions Make A Difference for Women

In this section I examine increased wages for workers as one particular benefit. Specifically, I explore differences in wage benefits for men and women. Using Massachusetts as a case study, I compare 1978 and 1984 median wages of full-time male and female workers who are union members or covered by contracts to median wages of workers who are non-union members and not covered by contracts. In addition, I compare findings in Massachusetts to national data. To undertake this analysis, I use Current Population Survey (CPS) data from the Bureau of the Census that is the only existing appropriate and comprehensive source.<sup>8</sup>

The Current Population Survey is a national survey of about 60,000 households which collects information on demographics, household income, educational background, and labor force participation which supplements data to the decennial census.<sup>9</sup> My analysis uses 1978 and 1984 data collected in May on Massachusetts individuals. To determine union membership, respondents are asked: "On this job, are you a member of a labor union or of an employee association similar

---

<sup>8</sup> Data on wages and union affiliation are not collected at the state level in Massachusetts. Consequently, the only available information is from the CPS. The lack of union data on earnings at the state level and the limited information at the national level significantly limits research and inquiry.

<sup>9</sup> See "Redesign of the Sample for the Current Population Survey" by Kathleen P. Creighton and Robert Wilkinson in Employment and Earnings, May 1984: 7-10 for a discussion of how the sample is conducted and has changed over time.

to a union?"<sup>10</sup> If respondents answer "no," they are asked if their jobs are "covered by a union or employee association contract." Tables in this thesis compare earnings between workers who are union members and represented by contracts to workers who are neither union members nor covered by a contract. I name these two categories "union" and "non-union," respectively. I compare these two particular groups because the unpublished 1978 national data used in this analysis only provides information on workers who are union members and covered by contracts. Appendix B also provides workers' median earnings who are just union members.

The Massachusetts sample includes 1610 and 394 individuals in 1978 and 1984, respectively. The relative difference in size between these two samples is primarily attributable to a change in the administration of the survey. From 1973 to 1980, questions on union affiliation were only asked during the survey in May. Beginning in January of 1983, one-fourth of the monthly households were asked about union affiliation every month.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> In 1978, the question on union affiliation did not include the phrase "similar to a union." Therefore, a bias towards higher non-union wages in 1978 may occur when comparing 1978 and 1984 data. For a more detailed discussion of the biases inherent in comparison of CPS samples over time, see "New Data on Union Members and Their Earnings" by Paul O. Flaim in Employment and Earnings, January 1985: 13 - 14.

<sup>11</sup> For more detailed information on union membership and earnings, see Paul O. Flaim's article "New Data on Union Membership and Their Earnings" Employment and Earnings January 1985: 13-14.

Of those individuals in these two sample groups, I selected full-time<sup>12</sup> workers who provide information on weekly earnings that is 55% (1978) and 86% (1984) of the sample groups. It is with this essential data that I constructed tables to analyze unionization's impact on men's and women's median earnings in Massachusetts. The comparative national data used in this chapter are published yearly in Employment and Earnings by the Bureau of Labor Statistics beginning in 1985.<sup>13</sup> Earlier unpublished data from the May 1978 CPS were obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

#### D. Limitations of the Data

In general, CPS data can be subject to both nonsampling and sampling errors. Nonsampling errors are generally a result of errors of response and nonreporting. As Mellor [1984] notes, nonsampling errors are difficult to quantify and the full extent of these errors is unknown.<sup>14</sup> Sampling errors occur because a sample rather than the entire

---

<sup>12</sup>Because no information was provided for part-time male workers in union jobs in 1984, comparisons between full-time and part-time workers would be incomplete. Therefore, I only analyzed data for fulltime workers.

<sup>13</sup> Information first published in 1985 included 1983 and 1984.

<sup>14</sup> See Earl F. Mellor's article "Earnings Statistics from the Current Population Survey" BLS Measures of Compensation, Bulletin 2239, 1986: 34-40 for a detailed discussion of nonsampling errors in general, and in particular for CPS data.



population is surveyed. The variance between the sample and the entire population is measured by statistical tests which measure the standard errors of the sample groups. To test for the sampling errors, I conducted variance analysis on different sample groups in order to test the hypothesis that union affiliation (i.e. membership and coverage by a contract) for women is significantly related to their mean earnings.

In both 1978 and 1984, the analysis of union and non-union mean weekly earnings for women gives a probability of 1 and .9646 that the earnings are not equal. From this, I conclude that union affiliation for women is significantly related to average weekly earnings. Refer to Appendix A for the results of the variance tests.

#### E. Summary of Findings for Massachusetts

From my analysis of median earnings, several inferences are possible for Massachusetts full-time workers:

- Both union and non-union median wages of men are more than median wages of women.
- The wage disparity between men's and women's median union wages is less than the disparity between men's and women's median non-union wages.
- Women benefit proportionately more than men from union affiliation. In 1984, the median union wage for women was 29% more than the non-union wage for women, while the median union wage for men was less than the median non-union wage.
- From 1978 to 1984, the wage benefit of union affiliation remained about the same for women and decreased for men.

I will discuss and elaborate on each of these inferences

comparing Massachusetts data to similar national data.

In Massachusetts, regardless of union affiliation, men earn more than women.

Even though union affiliation within a gender group increases wages, median wages of union and non union women are still lower than those of men.

=====

TABLE 3

MEDIAN WEEKLY EARNINGS OF FULL-TIME WORKERS IN MASSACHUSETTS

=====

	Union Male	Non-Union Male	Union Female	Non-Union Female
1978	\$269.00	\$250.00	\$200.00	\$156.00
1984	\$431.00	\$444.00	\$304.00	\$236.00

=====

Source: Calculations from May CPS, Bureau of the Census.

-----  
The pattern is evident for weekly earnings: the highest median wages in 1978 were earned by union and non-union men (\$269 and \$250) and the lowest by union and non-union women (\$200 and \$156), respectively. In fact union women earn less, even, than non-union men. In 1984, the pattern is identical. Although unions clearly impact wages within a gender group, women's wages in comparison to men's illustrate a fundamental difference in earning power between the sexes.

Nationally, this pattern is true for women, as a group, and White women. Black union women, however, earn more than Black non-union men. In 1978 and 1984, Black union women

earned \$198 and \$301, respectively, while Black non-union men earned \$171 and \$254. Thus Black union men and women earn more than Black non-union men and women [See Appendix B].

The wage disparity between men's and women's median union wages is less than the disparity between men's and women's median non-union wages.

To further explore wage segregation by gender and union affiliation, I calculated the "gender gap ratio." The gender gap ratio is the ratio of women's wages to men's wages. In the early 1980's, many women publicized this ratio by wearing a button stamped "59c" to illustrate that, at that time, women earned only 59 cents to every dollar men earn.<sup>15</sup> The following table illustrates the result:

=====

TABLE 4

MASSACHUSETTS  
GENDER GAP RATIO

Ratio of Median Weekly Earnings: Male to Female

=====

	Union	Non-Union
1978	0.74	0.62
1984	0.71	0.53

=====

Source: Calculations from May CPS, Bureau of the Census

-----

---

<sup>15</sup> The gender gap ratio is calculated by dividing the median female wage by the median male wage which then equals the percentage of women's median wage of men's.

If union or non-union median wages were equal for men and women, the gender gap ratio would be 1. For example, the ratio .74 indicates that the median union female wage is 74% of the median union male wage. As indicated in the above chart, there is not a single category in which the median women's wage is equal to the median men's wage -- indicating the wage disparities between men and women. For national data, this is also true.

The ratios suggest that while unionization benefits women more than men in absolute terms, unionization does not benefit women in relative terms. That is, when union and non-union women's wages are compared, unionization benefits women more than men. When women's wages are compared to men's wages by union affiliation, however, men benefit more than women as illustrated by the gender gap ratios.

How does union affiliation affect wage disparities between men and women? The data reveals an interesting pattern: the ratio is greater for median union earnings than median non-union earnings. That is, the median wages of union workers are approaching greater equality than nonunion wages.<sup>16</sup> For example, in 1984, the median non-union woman is earning 53 cents to the dollar of the non-union man, while the median union woman is earning 79 cents to the dollar of

---

<sup>16</sup> Examination of median wages is but one determinant of wage equality (or inequality) because the median wage measures the fiftieth percentile which is only one point on the income distribution. For an interesting discussion of how to measure inequality see E. M. Beck (1980) page 796.

the median union man. In practical terms, these statistics point to unions' positive impact -- increasing equality in wages between men and women. When comparing these observations to national data [See Table 5], the gender gap in earnings for women, as a group, and White women, in particular, also decreases with union affiliation.

=====

TABLE 5

UNITED STATES  
GENDER GAP RATIO

Ratio of Median Weekly Earnings: Male to Female

=====

	--All Workers--		--White--		--Black--	
	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU
1978	.71	.62	.70	.60	.76	.81
1984	.74	.69	.74	.67	.77	.86

=====

Source: [BLS (a) 1986]. U=Union, NU=Non-union.

-----

As noted above, the gender gap ratio for Black union women (.77) in 1984 is less than that for Black non-union women (.86). This means that wage disparities for Black union men and women are greater than for Black non-union men and women. This finding is related to the fact that Black union men's wage premiums are higher than Black union women's.

Over time, does the gender gap ratio in earnings increase or decrease? In every category in Massachusetts, the 1984 gender gap ratio is less than it was in 1978 which illustrates greater disparity in wages between men and women over time, an indication of a polarization of earnings between men

and women in Massachusetts.

The national data, however, illustrate the opposite finding: in every category the gender gap ratio is greater in 1984 than in 1978 indicating greater equality in earnings between men and women. In order to understand these trends, I calculated the percentage change in median earnings for men and women by union affiliation for 1978 and 1984 which is shown in Table 6.

=====

TABLE 6

PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN MEDIAN EARNINGS FROM 1978 TO 1984  
BY GENDER AND UNION AFFILIATION

=====

	Union	Non-union	Total
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>			
Men	60%	78%	74%
Women	52%	51%	52%
<b>UNITED STATES</b>			
Men	47%	45%	44%
Women	53%	60%	60%

=====

Source: Analysis from 1978 and 1984 CPS data, Bureau of the Census and [BLS (a) 1986].

=====

The percent change in men's earnings and women's earnings from 1978 to 1984 helps to explain the growing disparity from between men's wages and women's wages in Massachusetts and growing equality at the national level. Nationally, women gained more than men, while at the state level, men gained relatively more than women.

Unions increase wages for workers - but women benefit more.

Despite the gloomy comparative picture, the literature overwhelmingly confirms the hypothesis that unions increase wages for workers [Freeman and Medoff 1984]. A commonly used measure of the impact of unionization on workers' wages is a calculation of the wage "premium." The premium is the percentage difference between union and non union wages that represents the increase in wages obtained by unionized workers.<sup>17</sup>

The following table presents the wage premiums for 1978 and 1984.

=====

TABLE 7  
WAGE PREMIUM IN MASSACHUSETTS BY GENDER

=====

	UM/NUM	UF/NUF
1978	8%	28%
1984	-2%	29%

=====

Source: Analysis from 1978 and 1984 CPS data, Bureau of the Census

UM=Union Male, NUM=Non-union Male, UF=Union Female, NUF=Non-Union Female. Percentages are rounded.

-----

This table illustrates that in Massachusetts, union women

---

<sup>17</sup> Other factors, such as a worker's occupation, age, or length of time in the labor force, affect wage increases. Therefore, in order to analyze the particular impact of unionization on wage increases, all other factors would need to remain constant. Since my analysis of union and non-union median wages by gender does not control for other factors, we can only infer conclusions about unions' impact on wage increases for men and women.

benefited from unionization three times more than union men in 1978. But what do these percentages really mean? For 1984, the wage premium for the median weekly earnings of union and non-union women is 29% meaning that the union median wage is 29% more than the non-union median wage. The premium is calculated from the actual median weekly wages of union and non-union female wages. In this particular example, the median wages are \$304 and \$236, respectively for 1984. In real dollar terms, the median union female in 1984 earned \$68 more per week, or an estimated \$3,536 per year than the non-union female [See Appendix B for weekly earnings data].<sup>18</sup>

A comparison with national data illustrates similar results for women, as a group, and White women. There is a notable difference for Black union women who, in 1984, had a greater wage premium than White union women, but a smaller wage premium than Black union men. Table 8 illustrates these differences:

---

<sup>18</sup> The premium is calculated by the following formula: (Union median wage - non-union median wage/non-union median wage) \* 100. In this particular example, the calculation is  $(304-236/236)*100=28.81$



TABLE 8

UNITED STATE WAGE PREMIUMS

	UF/NUF	UM/NUM	WUF/NUWF	UWM/NUWM	UBF/NUBF	UBM/NUBM
1978	35%	19%	36%	17%	42%	52%
1984	29%	21%	30%	19%	37%	52%

Source: [BLS (a) 1986]

UF=union female, NUF=non-union female, UM=union male, NUM=non-union male, WUF=White union female, WNUF=White non-union female, BUF=Black union female, BNUF=Black non-union female, BUM=Black union male, BNUM=Black non-union male. Percentages have been rounded.

Nationally, wage premiums, which are also calculated by race, range from 17% to 52%. These percentages indicate that, at the least, White union men's median earnings were 17% more than White non-union men's median earnings in 1978 and, at the most, Black union men's median earnings were 52% more than Black non-union men's median earnings in 1984. When comparing wage premiums by race and gender, Black union women in 1978 and 1984 had higher wage premiums than White union women, but lower wage premiums than Black union men.

In summary, Table 7 and 8 illustrate that with the exception of male workers in 1984, union workers in this state and nationally earn more than their particular gender

group who are unorganized.<sup>19</sup> Women in particular benefited from unionization in all categories at the state and national levels. At the national level, Black women benefited even more than White women.

In Massachusetts, the wage benefit from union affiliation remained about the same for women from 1978 to 1984, while the wage benefit decreased for men.

Looking at earnings over time, the benefit of union affiliation in terms of wage increases for men and women can be evaluated. From 1978 to 1984 in Massachusetts, the wage premium for union men decreased to the point where non-union median wages were slightly higher than union median wages. The wage premium for women's weekly earnings in 1978 and 1984 remained about the same.

The national data illustrate a different pattern. The wage premium for union women, as a group, decreased from 1978 to 1984 [See Table 7]. The decrease applied to both White union women and Black union women. Union men, as a group, and White union men, however, obtained increased wage benefits from 1978 to 1984. Black union men's wage premiums remained the same for these two years.

---

<sup>19</sup> Because of the high percentage of managerial and professional jobs for men in the 1984 CPS Massachusetts sample, union affiliation indicates a wage disadvantage. This result is similar to published disaggregate national data by occupation [BLS (a) 1986]. When the 1984 Massachusetts sample is divided into two occupational groups (Managerial, Professional and all other occupations), a wage premium of 7% is associated with "all other" occupations.

In summary, wage premiums for women in Massachusetts remained about the same from 1978 to 1984, whereas, nationally, wage premiums decreased for women and increased or remained the same for men during this time period.

#### A Summary of the analysis of Massachusetts median earnings by gender and union affiliation

In conclusion, unions do make a difference. A closer examination by gender reveals important differences in median wage earnings and union affiliation for Massachusetts full-time workers. In particular, dramatic differences emerge when median wages are compared across gender or within a gender group.

When comparing wages across gender, sex segregation is evident in the fact that the highest wages are still earned by men regardless of their union affiliation. When comparing union and non-union median wages differences by gender, however, unions have made a difference in lessening wage disparities between men and women.

When comparing wages and union affiliation within gender groups, women benefit proportionately more than men. In particular, from 1978 to 1984, the union wage premium has remained about the same for women and decreased for men in Massachusetts. In terms of organizing women workers in this state, this trend is appealing -- the implication from the 1984 data is that union women earn 29 cents more than non-union women; a pattern has emerged from 1978 to 1984 which illustrates that the wage premium for women had

remained stable while it has decreased for men. If union women's median wages continue to remain stable while union men's median wages decrease, union women could possibly earn as much as non-union men thereby reducing the gap among union members in Massachusetts.

National earnings data by race, sex, and union affiliation reveal striking differences between Black women and White women. When comparing Black women's and White women's earnings in union and non-union categories, Black women earn less than White women. However, a comparison across union categories indicates that Black union women earn more than White non-union women. In addition, unionization decreases wage disparity between White men and White women, but increases disparity between Black men and Black women. Both Black women and White women benefit from unionization in terms of the wage premium and Black women benefit proportionately more than White women. Through these comparisons, unionization's impact on Black women and White women is notably different.

## CHAPTER 3

### UNIONIZATION FOR WOMEN: A STRATEGY FOR POWER

In the preceding chapter, an analysis of women's earnings in Massachusetts illustrates that a wage advantage is associated with union affiliation. But exclusion from unions has historically prevented women from obtaining higher wages. In fact, the relationship between women and the labor movement is filled with contradictions for this very reason.

This chapter will examine unionization as a potential strategy of women's economic empowerment by examining this contradiction. In this chapter, I focus on the impact of the family wage ideology on the labor movement as well as two current feminist perspectives on unionization. In addition, I identify women's resistance to the past exclusionary practices of the trade union movement and provide an example of a union today which was successful in addressing both job segregation and low wages for women. Finally, I describe the implications of adopting a strategy of unionization for women.

Unions are powerful mechanisms for change in a workplace, representing one avenue of collective action that workers use to bargain for higher wages, more benefits, and better working conditions. In the forefront of the struggle for adequate wages, the trade union movement organized for the

enactment of a minimum wage and to end twelve hour work days and wage cutbacks [King and Hoffman 1984]. Women and people of color, however, have not always benefited from unions as the following discussion of the family wage illustrates.

#### A. The Family Wage Ideology

A rallying point for the early trade union movement was the "family wage," the concept that a male worker should be paid a wage large enough to provide for his family. This ideology supported the sexual division of labor by supporting (and assuming) the position of men in the labor market as the "breadwinners" and women in the home as caretakers [May 1985]. An 1867 speech by William Sylvis of the National Labor Union vividly exposes this ideology:

It will be fatal to the cause of labor, when we place the sexes in competition, and jeopardize those social relations which render women queen of the household. Keep her in the sphere which God designed her to fill, by manly assistance [May 1985:5].

Unfortunately, this ideology lives on today as the following story illustrates. In 1986, Jane, an office worker for thirty years, began organizing women in her job around the issue of pay raises. In her Boston workplace, wage increases must be appropriated by the Board of Aldermen and the Mayor. Consequently, wage increases depend upon the political and fiscal climate as well as the personality of the public officials involved. Tired of this arbitrary system, she argued for regular annual increases at a Board of

Aldermen's public meeting. The response from the officials to her request was that women did not need more money, they were only supplementing their husbands' incomes. When she further explained that many of the clerks were single or divorced and supporting families by themselves, the officials' solution was that these women should get married.<sup>20</sup> This scenario reflects the deeply embedded notion of the family wage: women need only "pin" money as income to supplement their husbands' wages.

Rooted in a White male middle class bias, this ideology does not validate the economic and social importance of women's work. Also, it is blind to the fact that the great majority of women work in order to support themselves and/or their families [Kessler-Harris 1982]. Moreover, this ideology does not account for the fact that people of color, out of necessity, generally need two incomes in order to survive. The "luxury" of staying home was (and is) not a reality for workers of color who are disproportionately placed in low wage jobs and unemployment lines.

The family wage was a policy of protectionism, supported by unions in order to increase their White male members' own wages in the short run [May 1985]. Further, the

family-wage demand ultimately exacted a higher price from its advocates. It worked against the interests of working-class men, women and families, by accepting and deepening the sexual double standard in the labor market. The family-wage ideal gave employers an easy means of

---

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Local 925 organizer.

undercutting wage rates and fostering competition among workers. It also confined both males and females to gender roles which impeded individual opportunity and expression. Equally important, the family-wage ideology discouraged any attempt to explore new, more egalitarian family arrangements within the context of industrialization [May 1985:7].

A consequence of the family wage ideology is the sexual division of labor which reinforced the exclusion of women from unions, against the class interests of all workers. Men who accepted the family wage ideology were able to preserve their own positions of privilege in a patriarchal system illustrating how unions who supported this ideology served to reproduce patriarchy within a capitalist system.

#### **B. Women's Resistance to Exclusion**

A result of the practice of the family wage ideology was the exclusion of women from unions, which women resisted.<sup>21</sup> Through White women's organizing efforts in 1869, the Typographical Union changed its constitution to admit women and soon after became the first union to elect a woman to a leadership position and demand equal pay for equal work [Wertheimer 1977]. In 1897, Black women developed their first formal workers' organization called the White Rose Industrial Association which protected domestic workers [Terborg-Penn 1985]. In this example, Black women created their own organization in response to their exclusion from other workers' unions. In recent years, women and people of

---

<sup>21</sup> For a descriptions of women's resistance, see Tax [1980] and Milkman [1985].



color have organized the Coalition of Labor Union Women (1974), the Labor Council on Latin American Advancement (1973) and the Coalition of Black Trade Unions (1973), three organizations committed to working within the labor movement itself to address racism and sexism.

### C. Feminist Perspectives on Unionization

Two particular feminist perspectives on unions reflect the historical experience of exclusion, resistance, and creation of women's unions. One view is that unions are a patriarchal tool of oppression; I name this the "male protectionist" view. Others argue the "class solidarity" view that unions are a worker membership organization in need of reform. These two views are united in recognizing that unions are not yet fully equal organizations in terms of membership, and especially in leadership positions [Cockburn 1984, Bergquist 1974, LeGrande 1978].

#### The Male Protectionist View

Heidi Hartmann's position supports the "male protectionist" view of unions. In "Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Job Segregation by Sex," she describes unions as a tool of oppression against women. She bases her analysis on the relative privilege male workers have enjoyed through the exclusion of women from unions. Hartmann points out that the participation of women in unions would challenge men's domination over women in the workplace and in the home.

Men acted to enforce job segregation in the labor market; they utilized trade-union associations and strengthened the domestic division of labor, which required women to do housework, child care, and related chores. Women's subordinate position in the labor market reinforced their subordinate position in the family, and that in turn reinforced their labor market position [Hartmann 1982:460].

This article sets out the centrality of patriarchy in women's labor market position through a detailed analysis of patriarchy's relationship to capitalism. That is, how capitalism reproduces patriarchy and how patriarchy reproduces class exploitation.

The male protectionist view is similar to the "White protectionist" view which asserts that unions are instruments that maintain the privileged positions of Whites in the labor market [Beck 1987]. The literature on the White protectionist view, however, exclusively focuses on men of color's experience, women of color's positions on unions is yet to be published in the literature.

#### **Class Solidarity View**

Weir and McIntosh [1982] who support the "class solidarity" view, note that trade unions are

by definition, workers' organizations and are not inherently or intrinsically male. . . unions are membership organizations, and women are a growing part of that membership. They can change and they are already changing as those women make themselves felt [Weir and McIntosh 1982:5-18].

These authors continue by pointing out that the feminist and labor movements need each other; one strategy or movement alone could not comprehensively address the issue of women's

economic oppression.

One recent case in Massachusetts provides a successful example of the class solidarity view. Within a predominantly male union, women successfully organized at General Electric (GE). In "Women Taking Leadership in Male-Dominated Locals," Marcia Hams outlines women's struggle in Local 201 of the International Union of Electrical, Technical, Salaried and Machine Workers (IUE). This local represented about 10,000 employees in four plants near Boston. Two of the plants predominantly employed women and two had 91% male employees. In 1978, GE and the Equal Employment Opportunity Council (EEOC) entered into a consent decree which was intended to settle all past charges of sex and race discrimination against GE in all of its plants for two groups: women and men of color. Two weeks after the announcement of the EEOC-GE consent decree, the membership held a meeting in which 200 women from the West Lynn and Wilmington plants passed a resolution criticizing GE and EEOC for not addressing their primary concern: segregated jobs with low wages. Consequently, many women pursued greater relief through another consent decree (from the Krikorian suit) which covered only sex discrimination. Through this struggle involving legal suits and countercharges, organizing, strikes, and negotiating efforts, the women and the local won an

out of court settlement with GE, providing 'comparable worth' wage increases in the two predominantly female

plants, training opportunities for women, backpay awards for retired women, initial assignment protections, child care leave, and many other gains [Hams 1984:71].

Success in this case depended upon broad-based organizing of both women employees and the whole union membership. Not only were material benefits recognized as critical because of low wages, but the connection of low wages and job segregation was made explicit.

Although successful for all women in terms of pay increases, women of color did not fully benefit from training or recruitment programs because the connection between race and sex discrimination was not addressed or fully incorporated into the EEOC-GE consent decree (which was negotiated without union input) or in the Krikorian case. Recognizing these facts, the lawyer for the Krikorian suit attempted to negotiate specific guarantees for women of color. GE, however, refused to agree because race discrimination had not been charged in any of the cases filed [Hams 1984]. Another important aspect to this case is that one year after the settlement, GE sold the West Lynn business to a Japanese company thereby escaping payment on almost one-third of the rate increases mandated by the agreement. Hams (1984) concludes that

it is vital that women's organizations that are fighting for pay equity, as well as labor unions, be involved in supporting laws to restrict the right of companies to walk out on communities and their employees [Hams 1984:82].

In summary, all women obtained some benefits by creating a broad-based support between feminist and labor issues.

Because racism was not fully addressed, however, women of color's segregation into the lowest paid "female" jobs was not addressed.

Creating a feminist theory on unions role in addressing women's economic oppression is difficult because women are oppressed in three distinct ways: as women, as workers, and as women of color. Feminist debate therefore often focuses on which oppression is primary. Both of the views cited above focus on one type of oppression as primary. The male protectionist view targets patriarchy, while the class solidarity view emphasizes class. Both perspectives fail to cite racism as a central oppression and dynamic in the economy. These two views are used to represent women's distinctly different positions towards a strategy of unionization. Clearly, feminist perspectives encompass a range of opinions within these views as well as other views which are not represented in the literature.

I think unions are a critical strategy to challenge women's economic oppression. Although unions are also clearly an arena of struggle for women and people of color, unions are also membership organizations in which women can take power to increase wages and improve working conditions. The struggle for women begins with the development of a progressive feminist labor agenda and moves forward as women continue to create unions and/or integrate and challenge existing unions.

## CONCLUSION

As noted in Chapter 1, the theoretical basis for wage inequality between men and women is the intersection of patriarchy, capitalism, and racism. Economic justice for women, therefore, depends upon challenging and changing all of these systems. In this thesis, unionization is examined as a strategy to increase wages for women. Data on both the state and national levels support the hypothesis that unions' increase women's wages.

By its focus, this thesis examines unions' impact on one particular result of these three systems: wage inequality. To truly challenge capitalism, patriarchy, and racism, unions must adopt both short and long term strategies to effectively pursue economic justice for women. I name this blueprint for change the progressive feminist labor agenda.

A progressive feminist labor agenda must include both a theory and practice which centers on race as well as gender and class. As noted several times in this thesis, both a complete theoretical framework and available statistics most often lack an analysis by race.

Women must create their own unions, such as Service Employees International Union Local 925, and/or join the membership and take leadership positions in existing unions. Women will then be able to articulate and act on their own needs in the workplace.

The work of women garment workers in Mexico exemplifies the concept of the progressive feminist labor agenda through their development of an organizing strategy which links their local struggle with global struggles. The struggle began after the 1985 earthquake which devastated the garment district in Mexico City where thousands of women were employed. One worker described her experience during the earthquake:

We could hear the women moaning inside, but the army roped off the area and kept us from going in. When the owners arrived, I thought surely they would help us. But they just pulled out their equipment and left our loved ones to die [Ratcliff 1987:16-18].

Women organized after witnessing their employers interest in capital rather than women workers. Through successful organizing, women created the first independent, all-women's union in Mexico and then negotiated for severance pay for about 80% of the women who lost their jobs from the earthquake.

In 1987, Mexican women organized the Conference for Solidarity and Interchange. The goal of this conference illustrates the development of a progressive feminist labor agenda:

We feel that the need for struggle such as ours to be connected internationally. . .we need to exchange ideas, information, and experiences with other activist women -- to discover the global tendencies of the garment industry, to learn methods of struggle that working women are employing in different countries, and to develop tactics of local and global resistance [Ratcliff 1987:18].

Unions must organize women and women must organize unions.

Several facts indicate that it is in both unions' and women's interest to do so. First, data in Chapter 2 indicates that union membership is declining. Second, the decline is in the traditionally organized sectors, such as manufacturing and craft work, and growth is in the service sector where women are represented in large numbers. By organizing women, the labor movement can increase membership and influence future workplaces in the service sector.

Similarly, it is in women's interest to organize or join unions. Because women are overrepresented in low wage unstable jobs and the predictions for future jobs indicate low wages, it is in women's economic interest to increase their earnings, job security, and better working conditions and benefits.

A progressive feminist labor agenda must develop short and long term strategies that challenge the structure of individual workplaces and institutions of capitalism, patriarchy, and racism. Short term strategies for unions must address change crucial to women within a particular workplace, occupation or industry. Examples of short terms goals include wage increases, child care centers, and health insurance. Other short term strategies, such as consciousness raising and political organizing, are essential to building support for long term strategies to construct links between national and international progressive movements.



=====  
 MEAN WEEKLY EARNINGS IN MASSACHUSETTS: AN ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE  
 =====

-----1978-----		1978 # Cases		--Between Groups-- F Ratio Significance	
MALE	Union	\$282.04	168	0.4086	0.5230
	Non-union	\$291.36	357		
FEMALE	Union	\$209.26	90	25.0114	0.0000
	Non-union	\$166.61	273		
"PRIMARY OCCUPATIONS"					
MALE	Union	\$337.03	39	2.5476	0.1121
	Non-union	\$365.01	80		
FEMALE	Union	\$269.56	34	13.3723	0.0004
	Non-union	\$205.34	73		
"SECONDARY OCCUPATIONS"					
MALE	Union	\$265.41	129	21.7044	0.0000
	Non-union	\$216.64	205		
FEMALE	Union	\$172.64	56	6.6700	0.0103
	Non-union	\$152.48	200		

Primary Occupations refer to Managerial and Professional Occupations.  
 Secondary Occupations refer to all occupations other than Managerial and Professional.  
 See Appendix B for definitions of Union and Non-union.

=====  
 MEAN WEEKLY EARNINGS IN MASSACHUSETTS: AN ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE  
 =====

	-----1984-----		* Cases	F Ratio	Significance
MALE	Union	\$423.34	74	2.2985	0.1313
	Non-union	\$470.95	102		
FEMALE	Union	\$323.51	35	4.5121	0.0354
	Non-union	\$265.90	105		
"PRIMARY OCCUPATIONS"					
MALE	Union	\$568.33	12	0.5909	0.4455
	Non-union	\$623.95	42		
FEMALE	Union	\$392.33	15	0.1188	0.7323
	Non-union	\$369.36	25		
"SECONDARY OCCUPATIONS"					
MALE	Union	395.27	62	1.2692	0.2622
	Non-union	363.85	60		
FEMALE	Union	282.91	22	4.8789	0.0295
	Non-union	233.56	80		

Primary Occupations refer to Managerial and Professional Occupations.  
 Secondary Occupations refer to all occupations other than Managerial and Professional.  
 See Appendix B for definitions of Union and Non-union.

MEDIAN WEEKLY EARNINGS OF FULL-TIME WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS, 16 YEARS AND OVER BY SEX AND UNION AFFILIATION  
 MASSACHUSETTS AND UNITED STATES: 1978 AND 1984

	1978				1984					
	Total	Union 1	Non-union 2	Union/Non-union	Total	Members of unions 3	Union 4	Non-union 2	Member of Union/Non-union	Union/Non-union
MASSACHUSETTS										
Total	\$205.00	\$235.50	\$200.00	117.75%	\$327.50	\$376.00	\$365.00	\$300.00	125.33%	121.67%
Men	\$250.00	\$269.00	\$250.00	107.60%	\$435.00	\$442.00	\$431.00	\$444.00	99.55%	97.07%
Women	\$164.00	\$200.00	\$156.00	128.21%	\$250.00	\$304.00	\$304.00	\$236.00	128.81%	128.81%
W/M	0.66	0.74	0.62		0.57	0.69	0.71	0.53		
UNITED STATES										
Total	\$227.00	\$273.00	\$203.00	134.48%	\$326.00	\$405.00	\$402.00	\$302.00	134.11%	133.11%
Men	\$272.00	\$298.00	\$251.00	118.73%	\$391.00	\$441.00	\$439.00	\$364.00	121.15%	120.60%
Women	\$166.00	\$211.00	\$156.00	135.26%	\$265.00	\$326.00	\$323.00	\$250.00	130.40%	129.20%
W/M	0.61	0.71	0.62		0.68	0.74	0.74	0.69		
White	\$232.00	\$279.00	\$209.00	133.49%	\$336.00	\$415.00	\$411.00	\$310.00	133.87%	132.58%
Men	\$279.00	\$305.00	\$260.00	117.31%	\$400.00	\$450.00	\$448.00	\$377.00	119.36%	118.83%
Women	\$167.00	\$214.00	\$157.00	136.31%	\$268.00	\$334.00	\$331.00	\$254.00	131.50%	130.31%
WW/WM	0.60	0.70	0.60		0.67	0.74	0.74	0.67		
Black	\$181.00	\$237.00	\$155.00	152.90%	\$269.00	\$353.00	\$347.00	\$233.00	151.50%	148.93%
Men	\$213.00	\$260.00	\$171.00	152.05%	\$302.00	\$389.00	\$386.00	\$254.00	153.15%	151.97%
Women	\$156.00	\$198.00	\$139.00	142.45%	\$241.00	\$301.00	\$299.00	\$218.00	138.07%	137.16%
BW/BM	0.73	0.76	0.81		0.80	0.77	0.77	0.86		

- 1 Data refer to members of a labor union or an employee association as well as workers who report no union membership but whose jobs are covered by a union or an employee association contract.
- 2 Data refer to workers who report no union membership or coverage.
- 3 Data refer to members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union.
- 4 Data refer to members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union as well as workers who report no union affiliation but whose jobs are covered by a union or an employee association contract.

[See additional notes on the following page]

W/M=Women/Men, WW/WM=White Women/White Men, BW/BM=Black Women/Black Men.

NOTE: Definitions 'Represented by unions' vary because CPS survey questions on union membership and coverage by a union or an employee association contract changed over time.  
Data refer to the sole or principal job of full-and part-time workers.  
Excluded are self-employed workers whose business are incorporated although they technically qualify as wage and salary workers.

Source: Calculations from May CPS, Bureau of the Census and [BLS (a) 1986].

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Larry. "Changing Employment Patterns of Organized Workers." Monthly Labor Review 108 (1985): 25-37.
- "Admission of Women to Union Membership (Great Britain and U.S)." Monthly Labor Review 55 (1942): 1006-1007.
- Albelda, Randy. "Nice Work If You Can Get It: Segmentation of White and Black Women Workers in the Post-War Period." Review of Radical Political Economics 17,3 (1985): 72-85.
- Albers, Patricia C. "Autonomy and Dependency in the Lives of Dakota Women: A Study in Historical Change." Review of Radical Political Economics 17 (1985): 109-134.
- Antos, Joseph, Mark Chandler and Wesley Mellow. "Sex Differences in Union Membership." Industrial and Labor Relations Review 33 (1980): 162-169.
- Ashenfelter, Orley. "Racial Discrimination and Trade Unionism." Journal of Political Economy 80 (1972): 435-64.
- Bader, Naomi. "Development an Agenda: Expanding the Role of Women in Unions." Labor Studies Journal 10 (1986): 229-249.
- Barat, Kathleen and Barbara Fields. "The Sexual Division of Labor: Women's Place in No Man's Land." Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, 1984.
- Beatie, Margaret. "The Representation of Women in Unions." Signs Autumn 1986: 118-129.
- Beechey, Veronica. "What's So Special About Women's Employment? A Review of Some Recent Studies of Women's Paid Work." Feminist Review Winter 1983: 23-45.
- Beck, E. M. "Labor Unionism and Racial Income Inequality: A Time-Series Analysis of the Post-World War II Period." American Journal of Sociology 85 (1980): 791-814.
- Bell, Deborah E. "Unionized Women in State and Local Government." In Milkman (1985): 280-299.
- Bergquist, Virginia A. "Women's Participation in Labor Organizations." Monthly Labor Review 98 (1974): 3-9.

- Bluestone, Barry and Bennett Harrison. The Deindustrialization of America. New York: Basic Books Inc., 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Great American Job Machine: The Proliferation of Low Wage Employment in the U.S. Economy. Research Report prepared for Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress (1986).
- Blumrosen, Ruth Gerber. "Update: Wage Discrimination Revisited." Women's Rights Law Reporter 8 (1984): 109-131.
- Bowles, Samuel and Richard Edwards. Understanding Capitalism: Competition, Command, and Change in the U.S. Economy. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1985.
- Boyer, Richard O., and Herbert M. Morais. Labor's Untold Story. New York: United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America, 1955.
- Center for Popular Economics. Economic Report of the People. South End Press, 1986.
- Charles, Nicola. "Women and Trade Unions in the Workplace." Feminist Review Winter 1983: 3-22.
- Cockburn, Cinthia. "Trade Unions and the Radicalizing of Socialist Feminism." Feminist Review Summer 1984: 43-73
- Creighton, Kathleen P. and Robert Wilkinson. "Redesign of the Sample for the Current Population Survey." Employment and Earnings May 1984: 7-10.
- Davis, Allen F. "The Women's Trade Union League: Origins and Organization." Labor History 5 (1964): 3-17.
- Defina, Robert H. "Union-Nonunion Wage Differentials and the Functional Distribution of Income: Some Simulation Results from a General Equilibrium Model." Journal of Labor Research 6 (1985): 263-277.
- Edwards, Richard. Contested Terrain: The Transformation of the Workplace in the Twentieth Century. New York: Basic Books, 1979.
- Fiorito, Jack and Charles R. Greer. "Gender Differences in Union Membership, Preferences and Beliefs." Journal of Labor Research 7 (1986): 145-164.
- Flaim, Paul O. "New Data on Union Members and their Earnings." Employment and Earnings January 1985: 13-14.

- Freeman, Richard B. "In Search of Union Wage Concessions in Standard Data Sets." Industrial Relations 25,2 (Spring, 1986): 131-145.
- Freeman, Richard B. and Jonathan S. Leonard. "Union Maids: Unions and the Female Workforce." Paper presented at the Conference on Gender in the Workplace, Washington, D.C., 1984.
- Freeman, Richard B. and James L Medoff. What Do Unions Do?. New York: Basic Books Publishers, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "New Estimates of Private Sector Unionism in the United States." Industrial and Labor Relations Review 32 (1979): 143-174.
- Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. "Racial Ethnic Women's Labor: The Intersection of Race, Gender, and Class Oppression." Review of Radical Political Economics 17 (1985): 86-108.
- Gregory, Judith, George Kohl, Leslie Loble, Louise Novotny and Karen Sacks. Women's Wages: A Key to Preserving Middle Income Jobs November 1986: 1-26.
- Golberg, Roberta. Organizing Women Office Workers: Dissatisfaction, Consciousness, and Action. New York: Praeger 1983.
- Hans, Marcia. "Women Taking Leadership in Male-Dominated Locals." Women's Rights Law Reporter 8 (1984): 71-82.
- Hartmann, Heidi, 1982. "Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Job Segregation by Sex" in Anthony Giddens and David Held (eds), Classes, Power and Conflicts: Classical and Contemporary Debates. Berkeley: University of California Press, 446-469.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Family as the Locus of Gender, Class and Political Struggle: The Example of Housework." Signs 6 (1981): 366-394.
- Hill, Richard Child. "Unionization and Racial Income Inequality in the Metropolis." American Sociological Review 39 (1974): 507-522.
- Hodson, Randy and Paula England. "Industrial Structure and Sex Differences in Earnings." Industrial Relations 25 (1986): 16-32.

Kessler-Harris, Alice. Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States., New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

King, Kathleen and Ann F. Hoffman. "Comparable Worth: A Trade Union Issue." Women's Rights Law Reporter 8 (1984): 95-103.

Kokklenberg, Edward C., and Donna R. Sockrell. "Union Membership in the United States, 1973-1981." Industrial and Labor Relations 38 (1985): 477-543.

Koziara, Karen S., and Patrice J. Insley. "Organizations of Working Women Can Pave the Way for Unions." Monthly Labor Review 106 (1982) 53-54.

LeGrande, Linda H. "Women in Labor Organizations: Their Ranks are Increasing." Monthly Labor Review 102 (1978): 8-14.

Leonard, Jonathan S. "The Effect of Unions on the Employment of Blacks, Hispanics, and Women." Industrial and Labor Relations Review 39 (1985): 115-132.

Massachusetts. Department of Labor and Industries. or (DOLI) (a). Directory of Labor Organizations in Massachusetts 1980. Boston: 1980.

\_\_\_\_\_. DOLI (b) Directory of Labor Organizations in Massachusetts 1984. Boston: 1984.

Massachusetts. Division of Employment Security. or (DES) (a) Employment and Wages State Summary 1978. Boston: 1979.

\_\_\_\_\_. DES (b) Employment and Wages State Summary 1984. Boston: 1985.

\_\_\_\_\_. DES (c) Labor Market Information for Affirmative Action Programs Massachusetts. Boston: 1984.

\_\_\_\_\_. DES (d) Massachusetts Industrial Employment Projected Changes 1984-1995. Boston: 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_. DES (e) Massachusetts Outlook Occupational Employment Projected Changes 1985-1995. Boston: 1987.

\_\_\_\_\_. DES (f) Recent Performances of the Massachusetts Economy. Boston: 1985.



- Massachusetts. Division of Employment Security and Center for Labor Market Studies. or (DESCLMS) (a) Creating a Window of Opportunity in the Mid-1980's. Boston: 1985.
- May, Martha. "Bread Before Roses: American Workingmen Labor Unions and the Family Wage." In Milkman (1985): 1-21.
- Mellor, Earl F. "Earnings Statistics from the Current Population Survey." BLS Measures of Compensation, Bulletin 2239, (1986): 34-40
- Mellor, Earl F. "Investigating Differences in Weekly Earnings of Women and Men." Monthly Labor Review 107, (1984): 17-28.
- Milkman, Ruth Women, Work and Protest A Century of U.S. Women's Labor History, Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1985.
- Milkman, Ruth. "Organizing the Sexual Division of Labor: Historical Perspectives on Women's Work and the American Labor Movement." Socialist Review 49 (1980): 95-150.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Women Workers, Feminism and the Labor Movement since the 1960s." In Milkman (1985): 300-322
- Moore, William J., Robert J. Newman and James Cuninghnam. "Unionism or Union and Nonunion Wages." Journal of Labor Research 6 (1985): 21-44.
- Needleman, Ruth. "A World in Transition: Women and Economic Change." Labor Studies Journal 10 (1986): 207-228.
- Norwood, Janet L. "The Male-Female Earnings Gap: A Review of Employment and Earnings Issues". Report 673. Washington, D.C: U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 1982
- O'Sullivan, Judith, and Rosemary Gallick Workers and Allies: Female Participation in the American Trade Union Movement, 1824-1976. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1975.
- Ratcliff, Rebecca. "Women United Across Borders." Sojourner. December 1987, 16-18.
- Rytina, Nancy F. "Earnings of Men and Women: A Look at Specific Occupations." Monthly Labor Review (April 1982) 25-32 Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

- Shack-Marquez, Janice. "Earnings Difference by Sex: An Introductory Note." Monthly Labor Review, 107,6 (June 1984): 14-33
- Simms, Margaret C. and Julianne M. Malveaux, ed. Slipping Through the Cracks: The Status of Black Women. New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1986.
- Tax, Meredith. The Rising of the Women. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1980.
- Tepperman, Jean. Not Servants, Not Machines: Office Workers Speak Out. Boston: Beacon Press, 1976.
- Terborg-Penn, Rosalyn. "Survival Strategies Among African-American Women Workers: A Continuing Process." In Milkman (1985): 139-155.
- Tilly, Chris, Barry Bluestone, and Bennett Harrison. The Reasons for Increasing Wage and Salary Inequality, 1978-1984. Boston: University of Massachusetts, 1987.
- U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. or (BLS) (a) Employment and Earnings. Washington, D.C.: 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. BLS (b) Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment. Washington, D.C.: 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_. BLS (c) Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment. Washington, D.C.: 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Women's Bureau. or (WB) (a) Time of Change: 1983 Handbook on Women Workers. Washington, D.C.: 1983.
- "Union Growth Stopped in the Seventies." Dollars and Sense May/June (1983): 8-9.
- Weir, Angela and Mary McIntosh. "Towards a Wages Strategy for Women." Feminist Review Spring 1982: 5-20.
- Wertheimer, Barbara Mayer We Were There: The Story of Working Women in America. New York: Pantheon, 1977.
- Women's Trade Union League. The History of Trade Unionism Among Women in Boston. Boston: Women's Trade Union League, 1906 .
- Women for Economic Justice. Beyond Growth: The Underside of the Economic Miracle in Massachusetts. Boston: Women for Economic Justice, January 1987.