

**CASE STUDIES**

**IN**

**EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN**

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**  
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**Washington 25, D. C.**

**D-16**  
**September 1951**

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# CASE STUDIES IN EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN

## I. SUMMARY

The payment of lower wage rates to women than to men doing the same work has a long history, and efforts have been made for many years to secure for women the same remuneration that men receive when they do equal work. The railroads, first industry known to have adopted an equal-pay policy on an industry-wide basis, employed women as early as the 1830's, but did not establish equal pay until 1918, when directed to do so by the Federal Government. The first State equal-pay law was adopted in 1919, and by 1949 12 States had adopted equal-pay laws.

During World War II, when millions of women went into industry, the practice of paying the rate for the job, regardless of the worker's sex, became increasingly common. This policy was continued in many cases after the war. To find out how equal pay has worked in practice and what management's attitude toward it was after a period of experience, the Women's Bureau in the Spring of 1951 undertook case studies of eight firms with 5 to 25 years of experience with equal pay.

All of the companies visited were paying the same rates to men and women doing the same work, but all had in addition some jobs that were considered "men's jobs" or "women's jobs." The "women's jobs" were not only lower paid, as a rule, but there were indications that they were sometimes much underrated in comparison with "men's jobs." Although this practice of reserving certain jobs for either men or women had not been completely abandoned by any of the companies at the time of the study, it was becoming less common. The wartime experience of finding women performing satisfactorily in certain jobs that they had not held before the war led to their retention on such jobs, and at the same rates that were paid to men. Although some women in all eight companies were highly paid, relatively few of them held higher-level jobs.

Despite initial resistance by some of the employers, management in all of the plants visited felt, after 5 or more years of experience with equal pay, that it had been successful. All agreed that it was an equitable pay policy that contributed to good employee relations.

## II. COVERAGE AND METHODOLOGY OF WOMEN'S BUREAU STUDY

In March and April of 1951, the Women's Bureau made case studies of eight firms that had an equal-pay policy for at least 5 years to find out how equal pay has worked in practice and what its major advantages have been. One of the eight firms was in Maryland, which has no equal-pay law; the others were in New York State, which has a law prohibiting discrimination in rate of pay on the basis of sex. The industries represented were: Aircraft manufacturing, one establishment; electrical and electronics manufacturing, two; banking, two; department stores, two; and precision instruments manufacturing, one establishment.

Women's Bureau agents visited each firm and obtained from management representatives information on the development and application of the equal-pay policy, and management's evaluation of its success and advantages. Data on employment, rates of pay, and other pertinent factors that helped to show the effects of the equal-pay policy were also secured. When there was a collective bargaining agreement between the employer and a labor union, the union was also visited, and similar information was obtained. In addition, information was secured on equal-pay experience in the railroad industry and on the effectiveness of the equal-pay law in New York State. The data obtained on the eight establishments were secured from statements made in interviews and were not based upon actual records or plant surveys.

## III. CURRENT STATUS OF EQUAL PAY IN FIRMS VISITED

### Department stores

In the two department stores visited, men and women in both sales and non-sales jobs were paid the same rate when they did the same job, and in many cases men and women were doing the same job. But there was a tendency for certain higher-paid jobs in various departments to be filled entirely or chiefly by men, either because of tradition or because men were supposedly better qualified for those jobs. Examples were the furniture and fine jewelry departments, in both of which earnings were high and men were in the majority. Women as well as men were employed as buyers, section managers, and in some other higher-level jobs, but top administrative jobs in the department stores were held by men, with certain notable exceptions.

Management in both stores considered the equal-pay policy the only fair system of wage payment and felt that it made wage administration easier. The personnel director of one store said, "It is criminal to think that men and women should receive different rates for the same work." She noted that, "In jobs at the lower levels, management gets more out of women than out of men. At the executive level, women have a greater sense of responsibility toward their jobs than men have."

### Banks

The employment of women in anything but routine clerical jobs was recent in both of the banks visited, dating back only to World War II. At that time, the banks started hiring women for such jobs as tellers, teller-trainees, junior examiners, and IBM operators. One bank started paying women hired for such jobs the same rates as men from the beginning. The other at first paid lower rates to such women but, as all salaries were raised, equalized men's and women's rates.

Management of both banks felt that the equal-pay policy was just, and there was a feeling that it might have resulted in a greater interest in their work on the part of women.

### Airplane manufacturing

In the airplane manufacturing plant visited, women had been employed for 10 years or more as production workers. In all of this time, equal rates were paid to men and women doing the same work. There was a single seniority list, and men and women had the same opportunity for advancement. Job classifications were in terms of job content, rather than the worker's sex. According to a management representative, "A foreman doesn't know, when a new worker is being sent to his department, whether it will be a man or a woman. The only consideration is whether the person can do the job." Nevertheless, women tended to cluster in the lower labor grades.

Management considered an equal-pay policy the only fair wage policy and has never considered any other.

### Electrical manufacturing and precision instrument manufacturing.

The payment of equal rates to men and women doing the same job was recent in the two electrical manufacturing plants and the one precision instrument manufacturing plant visited, dating only from the end of the World War II period. In each case, equal pay resulted from the union's activity and, in at least two of the plants, the company was initially opposed to equal pay.

In these plants women worked on many of the same assembly-line jobs as men; they even worked in tool rooms and machine shops. Many were employed, as were men, as drill press and lathe operators, and in testing and inspection. But in all of these plants there were many women on operations for which only women were employed, such as assembling and light packing. (It is especially true in the electrical industry that, although there is a large proportion of women among the production workers, the women tend to be doing what are considered women's jobs.)

One union representative said that it is the women who do the

production work and "make the money for the company" in this industry. A 1945 War Labor Board opinion in a case involving one of the firms visited included the following remarks which bear out this statement:

"If men were to be substituted for women on the so-called women's jobs, there would probably be a very real loss in efficiency and productivity since it is recognized that men are not as well adapted as women for light, repetitive work requiring finger dexterity. The productive work of women on the jobs to which they are customarily assigned, if fairly weighed, might well offset any added production costs resulting from such factors as absenteeism, transient character of service, etc."

Asked why there had been a system of paying lower rates to women than to men doing the same work, the management representative in one electrical and electronics manufacturing firm said that this practice probably dated back to the time when women had very limited opportunities for employment in industry and could therefore be hired for less than men, whose opportunities were greater. The same War Labor Board opinion cited above also bore out this point, with the following words:

"The true source of the sex differentials is probably to be found in history rather than in any objective tests or cost calculations."

#### IV. DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL PAY IN THE FIRMS VISITED

In all of the firms visited, men and women doing the same jobs were receiving the same rate of pay. Current job classifications in each case were based on a job evaluation made about the time of World War II.

The department stores, even before the war period, were well on their way to paying the rate for the job regardless of the worker's sex. The equal-pay policy was initiated in the aircraft manufacturing company when women were first hired as production workers. In the banks and in the electrical and the precision instruments manufacturing companies, however, this policy was started in the mid-forties.

Before World War II, comparatively small numbers of women in the firms visited did the same work as men and, when they did, their rates of pay were generally lower than those paid to men doing the same work. In one plant, for instance, women were paid about 5 to 24 cents per hour less than men doing the same jobs. In another plant, women packers were paid only 47 cents an hour, while men were receiving 65 cents per hour for the same work. Most women, however,

were employed on jobs that were either designated as "women's jobs" or, without being so designated, were actually filled by women only. These jobs paid substantially less than "men's jobs" that required no more and sometimes even less skill and effort.

During the war, manpower shortages forced the plants to hire women, at men's rates, for some of the jobs formerly held by men only. In many cases, the employment of women on such jobs and the practice of paying them the same rates paid to men continued after the war.

#### V. MANAGEMENT REACTIONS

Management in each of the plants visited expressed approval of an equal-pay policy and considered it the only fair system of wage payment. Advantages of equal pay cited were:

1. That the equal-pay policy reduced friction over rates;
2. That it improved employee morale;
3. That women's attitude toward their work improved and their efficiency increased;
4. That equal pay protected men's rates from undercutting by women; and
5. That an equal-pay system was easier to administer than a dual rate structure based on sex.

Although each firm visited approved an equal-pay policy, the reasons for approval varied. All the persons visited considered it simple justice for men and women to receive the same pay for the same work. Some based their approval entirely on this principle. Others stated that, as a result of adopting an equal-pay policy, women actually did more and better work, and that their efficiency and morale were much helped.

#### VI. HISTORY OF EQUAL PAY IN INDUSTRY

The first major step forward for equal pay was made during World War I, when equal pay for men and women railroad employees was established. Women had been employed by the railroads as early as the 1830's, at first as charwomen, and later in railroad offices. By the time World War I began, the railroads were employing significant numbers of women. This number increased tremendously during the war.

Great progress was made in 1916 and 1917 in the standardization of wages in the railroad industry and in the elimination of

many differentials through negotiations between employers and labor unions. According to the annual report of the Director General of Railroads in 1918, however, women were in many cases not paid the same wages as men. In a December 1917 message to Congress, the President of the United States advocated equal pay for women in the railroad industry on the grounds that women deserved fair treatment and that in the past exploited female labor had served to depress men's wages. On May 25, 1918, following a report by the Railroad Wage Commission, General Order No. 27 was issued. Article 5 of the Order stated, with reference to women workers on the railroads, "...their pay, when they do the same class of work as men, shall be the same as that of men."

This was an important precedent in establishing the principle of equal pay for equal work. In the words of Pauline Goldmark, Manager of the Women's Service Section of the U.S. Railroad Administration from 1918 to 1920:

"It was, indeed, a new experience for women to enjoy the same economic advantages as men. The very first order of the Director General established a policy of equal pay for men and women when they do the same class of work. This was a significant step in the industrial history of women in this country, because it was the first announcement by the Government, in any department, that it considered women on an equality with men in all the different forms of work which they were called on to perform." 1/

A help to women in retaining this advantage after the war was their admission into labor unions on the same terms as men in most railroad occupations. The practice of paying women the same rates as men when they did the same work was continued and has never been changed in this industry. Management has never, in the more than 30 years that the equal-pay policy has been in effect, even considered reopening the equal-pay question in its negotiations with the union.

In 1919, the States of Montana and Michigan passed equal-pay laws. Despite this and other advances over the years in obtaining equal pay for women, it was the World War II situation that brought about substantial progress in this area for women in industry. For instance, all of the ten States besides Montana and Michigan that have equal-pay laws passed such legislation either during or after World War II. In a statement to a Congressional committee, the New York State Department of Labor reported, "Entrance of large numbers of women into war industries during World War II accelerated the movement of paying women 'the rate for the job' regardless

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1/ Goldmark, Pauline. "Women in the railroad world." The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 86:214-221, November 1919.

of sex and gave an impetus and a background to broadspread compliance with the State's new Equal-Pay Law." (New York State Equal-Pay Law, adopted in 1944.)

The New York State Department of Labor also noted that the rapidly increasing membership of women in trade unions, accelerated by the war, had contributed to the growing acceptance of the equal-pay principle. By 1943 a number of unions had equal-pay clauses in their contracts. For instance, the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America had about 150 signed agreements, covering at least 800 factories, which included the equal-pay clause; the United Rubber Workers had such a clause in about 142 of its agreements, and the United Automobile Workers of America had about 50 agreements embodying the equal-pay principle.

Further impetus to widespread adoption of equal pay during World War II was given by the National War Labor Board, which ordered establishment of such a policy in a number of dispute cases. The Board also provided, in General Order No. 16, that employers might grant pay increases without War Labor Board approval when such increases were for the purpose of equalizing men's and women's rates of pay.

As had happened with the railroads earlier, many of the firms that began paying the rate for the job, regardless of the worker's sex, during World War II found this policy successful and continued it after the war. The position of many working women has improved as the equal-pay principle has gained wider acceptance. The New York State Department of Labor was able to report at a Congressional hearing, "The Equal-Pay Law of New York State has been effective in establishing the principle. More and more employers of the State have accepted the principle of 'equal pay' and have made necessary changes in their procedures in order to be in compliance with the law. Workers individually and in their associations recognize its value. Its enactment has been a big step forward in labor legislation, affecting both men and women." The following statement from a May 1942 bulletin of the National Association of Manufacturers would seem to sum up the attitude of forward-looking employers and workers on this subject:

"There is little difference between men and women as regards their satisfactory performance in industry. Sound employment and personnel practices are applicable to both men and women and no emphasis should be placed on any distinctions between them as workers."

VII. THE EIGHT FIRMS STUDIED

Case A

Industry: Retail - Department store.

Employment: Approximately 2,650 full-time selling and non-selling staff, about 65 percent women. Also 400 part-time selling staff, mostly women.

Union: Independent.

1. PRESENT STATUS OF EQUAL PAY

State law: Discrimination in rate of pay because of sex prohibited. Domestic and farm labor and non-profit organizations exempt. Law adopted in 1944.

Union contract: "The Employer shall continue the past policy of no discrimination against any employee because of union activity, sex, race, creed, color or political belief."

Present wage and occupational structure: In 1938, on the basis of a job evaluation, all selling and nonselling jobs were classified into 11 grades without sex differential. Later all jobs were reclassified, and 3 regular grades were established, plus 1 grade for higher-level jobs at individual rates. The bulk of the jobs are in grades A and B, the two lower grades.

Grade	Selected departments	Weekly rate <sup>1/</sup>		
		:Hiring :60 days: 6 mos.		
<u>Grade A</u>				
Sales	Drugs, hosiery, notions, stationery, etc. ....	\$36	\$38	\$38
Non-sales:	Most office jobs, other non-sales jobs .....	36	38	40
<u>Grade B</u>				
Sales	Ready-to-wear, yard goods, etc.	40	42	42
Non-sales:	Stenographers .....	40	42	44
<u>Grade C</u>				
Sales	Millinery, coats, better dresses, china, etc. ....	46	48	48
Non-sales:	Some office jobs .....	46	48	50
<u>Grade D</u>				
(Unclassified)	Window trimmers and stylist artists, retouch artist, expensive jewelry, higher level jobs ....			
		: Individual rates for jobs		

<sup>1/</sup> Plus commission, for salespeople.

## 2. OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION BY SEX

Most jobs are in grades A and B. Although both men and women are found in many departments, there are certain departments where either men or women are entirely excluded or are in a minority because of the nature of the work or because of tradition. For instance, there is only one woman in the furniture department, a high-paying department with substantial commissions. Traditionally, men have been employed in this department, and because of low turn-over there are few opportunities for new people to move into the department. The woman who now works there earns as much as \$9,000 to \$10,000 per year.

Packing is divided into light and heavy packing and women do only the lighter packing, handling articles that weigh a maximum of 10-12 pounds. These women are called semibulk packers; men, at a higher rate of pay, do the bulk packing. However, the packing done by women involves much handling of small, fragile articles that require careful handling and packing.

In the office, most of the higher-level administrative jobs are held by men. All of the window trimmers are men. Women are not employed as trimmers, partly because night-work legislation prevents their working the late hours necessary to this work, and partly because the work involves much heavy lifting. However, there is a woman display stylist who has the same rating, in the grade D classification, as the display trimmers. Another woman is employed as a retouch artist, also in the grade D classification.

## 3. DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL-PAY POLICY

There has been a trend in the department stores in this area to pay women the same rates as men when they do the same work. Consequently, by the time the first union contract was negotiated in 1938, the equal-pay policy was well established in this store, as the wording of the nondiscrimination clause indicates: "The Employer shall continue the past policy of no discrimination against any employee because of...sex..."

Although equal pay has not been an issue at this store, there has been and is the related problem of equal opportunity. Women are not represented in proportion to their total number in the store in certain higher-paying jobs. Both management and the union are aware of this situation, and both seem interested in correcting it. This, then, is a case in which there is a well-established equal-pay policy, initiated by management and supported by the union, and in which both are interested in helping women to realize the full benefits of such a policy by permitting them to advance to high-paying jobs in which they are not yet fully represented.

#### 4. ADVANTAGES OF EQUAL PAY

Both management and the union fully endorsed the policy of paying men and women equally for the same work. The equal-pay policy has come to be taken for granted by the company and, as far as management is concerned, problems of wage administration are much lessened with a single rate structure. It was felt by both management and the union that it was only fair that women be paid the same rate as men when they do the same work, and that the policy has been successful.

#### Case B

Industry: Retail Trade - Department store.

Employment: 3,600 employees, about 60 percent women.

Union: None.

#### 1. PRESENT STATUS OF EQUAL PAY

State law: Discrimination in rate of pay because of sex prohibited. Domestic and farm labor and non-profit organizations exempt. Law adopted in 1944.

Union contract: None.

Present wage and occupational structure: Jobs are classified on the basis of a job evaluation fitted to store's special needs. There are minimum and maximum rates for each job, and increases are on a merit basis. They are based on the average of two ratings--a personal and a selling rating. When the merit rating is being made, names of workers are covered so that neither sex nor any other personal factors will affect the rating.

The minimum hiring rate in this store is \$38 a week. This is the minimum for the hosiery, accessories, stationery, and some other first-floor departments.

#### 2. OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION BY SEX

The furniture, shoe, and rug departments are the only ones noted in which workers are paid on a commission basis. There are women in both the shoe and the furniture departments, and their drawing account is the same as the men's.

Women are represented in many departments throughout the store, and

some of them are section managers and assistant section managers. Most buyers are women, and there are women supervisors. The credit manager, a merchandise manager, and an assistant merchandise manager are women. In every case, the equal-pay policy applies.

The company is beginning to recognize that women are needed in management, and there has been emphasis upon giving women opportunities to advance to management jobs. The personnel director and another woman are on the company's board of directors.

### 3. DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL-PAY POLICY

For many years, there has been a trend toward paying equal rates to men and women for the same work in this area's department stores. By 1939, most differentials had been eliminated, and the few that still existed were small. One of the personnel director's first concerns was to eliminate the existing differentials and to provide greater opportunity for women to advance to higher-level jobs.

As a result, women are now represented in most departments throughout the store and more women than before hold such jobs as section manager and assistant section manager, and a policy of equal pay for equal work prevails throughout the store.

It was pointed out that, even when management has an equal-pay policy, inequities might arise as a result of lack of sympathy with this policy on the part of some supervisory personnel, or as a result of error somewhere along the line. Only the women's own alertness and insistence upon fair treatment can prevent this, and sessions have been held with the women in order to discuss with them the equal-pay policy and their part in making it work.

### 4. ADVANTAGES OF EQUAL PAY

The personnel director considered it only fair that women be given equal pay for equal work and said that, "It is criminal to think that men and women should receive different rates for the same work," and that, "In jobs at the lower levels, management gets more out of women than out of men. At the executive level, women have a greater sense of responsibility toward their jobs than men do." The personnel director pointed out, however, that women have to be better than men to make equal progress and that the real problem in such organizations as department stores, where the principle of equal pay is quite well established, is one of equal opportunity.

Case C

Industry: Banking.

Employment: 280 employees, about 37 percent women.

Union: None.

1. PRESENT STATUS OF EQUAL PAY

State law: Discrimination in rate of pay because of sex prohibited. Domestic and farm labor and non-profit organizations exempt. Law adopted in 1944.

Union contract: None.

Present wage and occupational structure: Job classifications and rates of pay are based on a job evaluation, and there is no distinction on the basis of sex. Increases are on the basis of merit ratings, which are reviewed without reference to the worker's name or sex.

2. OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION BY SEX

Both men and women are hired as tellers and teller's clerks, order clerks and junior examiners, and IBM operators in the controller's department. The following brief summaries give the rates and some indication of the distribution of men and women in these jobs:

Teller's clerk, \$1,800 - \$2,800. There are 10 or 12 of these jobs. This is a training job for tellers. Before the war, men were hired for this job, but recently only women have been hired.

Teller, \$2,400 - \$3,940. There are about 10 men and 10 women on this job.

Controller's dept.:

Order clerk, \$2,100 - \$3,600. More women than men are being hired.

Jr. examiner, \$2,700 - \$4,100. Only one woman at this level.

IBM operator, \$2,400 - \$3,600. One man and one woman, who is at a slightly higher rate than the man.

Such higher-paid personnel as accountants, investment specialists, appraisers of loans and collateral, and vault custodians are all men.

### 3. DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL-PAY POLICY

Before 1942 or 1943, equal pay was not an issue in this bank, because men and women were not being employed on the same jobs. Women were hired almost exclusively for stenographic, filing, and routine clerical jobs, but not for any of the banking areas. During World War II women were hired for the first time as tellers and teller's clerks at the same rate of pay as men, and this policy has been continued.

### 4. ADVANTAGES OF EQUAL PAY

Management considered it just that women receive the same pay as men for the same work, and thought they might be more content and more likely to work a little harder than men when they were treated fairly. On the whole, an equal-pay policy was considered fair to the women and was accepted by the men--especially younger men who took the policy for granted, and management felt that it had a favorable effect upon women's work and attitudes.

#### Case D

Industry: Banking.

Employment: 190 employees, about 42 percent women.

Union: None.

#### 1. PRESENT STATUS OF EQUAL PAY

State law: Discrimination in rate of pay because of sex prohibited. Domestic and farm labor and nonprofit organizations exempt. Law adopted in 1944.

Union contract: None.

Present wage and occupational structure: A job evaluation is the basis of the present job classifications and rates of pay. There is no distinction on the basis of sex, but actually the only jobs on which both men and women are employed are teller, teller-trainee, and junior clerk.

#### 2. OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION BY SEX

Jobs on which both men and women are employed:

Junior clerk, Start at \$30 per week, if no previous experience.  
Advance as abilities and job openings permit.

Teller-trainee, Starting rate is \$35 to \$50 per week, depending upon previous banking experience. Eight or nine women and smaller number of men on the job.

Teller, Maximum \$89 per week. No women at this rate now because men have more seniority, but progression is same for men and women. Four or five women and nine or ten men on this job.

In these jobs, women have equal chances for advancement as well as equal pay, and in the junior clerk classification the present policy is to give women greater consideration than men for advancement. Women are not employed in the higher-salaried categories, such as loans, accounting, auditing, and the controller's office.

### 3. DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL-PAY POLICY

Previous to World War II, men and women were not employed on the same jobs. Women were hired for stenographic and general clerical work only.

During the war women were employed for the first time as tellers and teller-trainees, at rates below those of men, who had greater seniority. Rates were on an individual basis. Later, as all salaries were increased and women continued to be hired for these jobs, they were hired at about the same rates as men, although individual rates depended upon the worker's experience and qualifications. A job evaluation was made after the war and the present job classifications, with a single pay scale for men and women, were set up. There have been no basic or major changes in this system since that time.

### 4. ADVANTAGES OF EQUAL PAY

Management felt that it was just that men and women receive the same pay for the same work and believed that women's chances for advancement had increased with equal pay. The equal-pay policy has been accepted and has worked successfully here.

#### Case E

Industry: Manufacturing - Electrical and electronic products.

Employment: 7,000 - 8,000 plant employees, about 55 percent women; 3,500 salaried employees, 40 percent women.

Union: CIO.

## 1. PRESENT STATUS OF EQUAL PAY

State law: Discrimination in rate of pay because of sex prohibited. Domestic and farm labor and nonprofit organizations exempt. Law adopted in 1944.

Union contract: Equal pay not mentioned in contract. An equal-pay clause was considered unnecessary because of the State equal-pay law, which the union polices.

Present wage and occupational structure: A job evaluation is the basis of the job classification system. A learner's rate and a job rate are assigned to each job. Many jobs in the plant are on a piece rate, and for each of these an "anticipated earned rate," the hourly rate that a worker is expected to make on the job, is also computed. The minimum rate in the plant now is \$1.11 per hour, and the maximum is \$1.99 per hour (no women are at this higher rate).

## 2. OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION BY SEX

Although there are no separate men's and women's jobs as such, in practice most jobs are assigned either to men or to women exclusively because of the alleged greater suitability of the job for one or the other. For instance, certain jobs are said to be too heavy or too dirty for women.

But, in this respect, the comment of the union official who went through the list of jobs with a Women's Bureau representative and checked the jobs done by men and women is interesting. He said, at one point, "Oh, these are all men's jobs on this page. They wouldn't be paying women these rates." He did not endorse this policy, but said there were different rates for jobs assigned to women and those assigned to men, and that the rates for women's jobs, as compared with rates paid men's jobs, were lower than was justified on the basis of skills required.

Of the approximately 4,000 women in the plant, about 200 are doing the same jobs as men. Among the jobs on which both men and women are employed are:

- accumulators in stockroom
- brazers
- coordinators
- drivers, station wagons (2 men and 2 women)
- inspectors
- lathe operators
- material handlers
- punch press operators

spot welders (1 woman spot welder, an instructor, earns  
more than men)  
testers  
tube workers (about 60 of 140 workers on 1st shift are  
women)  
wirers

On lines where television receivers are assembled both men and women are employed on similar jobs, even on the main or final assembly line, where women do all the operations that men do except actually putting the chassis into the cabinet. This latter job involves heavy lifting and is done only by men.

There are several women foremen. One woman has been a foreman for over 15 years. She held this job in another of the company's plants until the up-State branch was opened, when she was transferred to the new location.

The majority of the women in this plant are on jobs that are, for all practical purposes, women's jobs; and they are concentrated on the assembly lines, both subassembly and final assembly. They also do inspection, testing, and light packing.

Among the salaried personnel, there are comparatively few women doing the same jobs as men, although there are both men and women doing the same kind of work in personnel, production scheduling, simple drafting, and statistical work. But generally women do clerical, stenographic, and secretarial work, and men hold the higher-level administrative jobs.

### 3. DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL-PAY POLICY

#### a. Plant visited

Before World War II and even during the war, there were substantial differentials in the rates of men's and women's pay in the company's plants. In 1943, before passage of the State's equal-pay law, the union sued the company on the ground that it was violating the State minimum-wage law by paying women class D assemblers 37 cents per hour, when the law specified a 40-cent minimum in the State. Men were being paid 64 cents for the same job. However, no adjustments were made, because the women testified in court that the work was too heavy for them and they were taken off the job.

When the State equal-pay law was adopted in 1944, those women doing the same jobs as men were either raised to the same rate that men were getting, or their jobs were broken down or altered in some way so that they were no longer doing exactly the same work as the men.

Women on punch presses and lathes doing the same work as men were raised to men's rates for the job. Some women, who had been paid 47

cents per hour for a packing job on which men were paid 65 cents per hour, were raised to the 65-cent rate. But the regular packing department was reorganized so that men and women were no longer doing the same work. It was divided into a light packing department staffed and supervised by women and a heavy packing department staffed and supervised by men, and the men were paid a higher rate than the women.

Equal pay for men and women doing the same work has been in effect, then, at least since passage of the State law in 1944. But differentials in rates for men's and women's jobs remained and figured prominently in a War Labor Board case during World War II.

b. War Labor Board case - all of the company's plants

In 1945 this company (all plants) was involved in a War Labor Board case in which equal pay was one of the major issues. Evidence presented in the case showed that the company was paying the same rate to men and women for identical work. But there were differences in rates for men's and women's jobs, and the evidence showed that the differences were not justified on the basis of job content. For instance, in nine of the plants the minimum rate paid to women was lower than that paid to men. The differences ranged from 9 to 18 cents per hour--as little as 9 cents in only one plant, but as much as 18 cents in three plants. These were the lowest rates at which women were then employed. In some cases women's starting rates were lower, but no women in the plant were at the starting rate.

At one of the company's locations the male common labor rate was 80 cents per hour, and the highest rate for women was 84 cents. Only .4 of 1 percent of the women in the plant were paid 80 cents, and only .2 of 1 percent were paid 84 cents. All of the other women in the plant were paid 62-77 cents per hour--less than the men sweepers, the lowest-paid men in the plant. It was noted that "All but a small fraction of the women's jobs are rated substantially below male common labor despite the fact that many, if not most of these jobs, clearly involve more skill, mental aptitude, and responsibility than the male common labor jobs."

A manual, apparently descriptive of the job evaluation plan used by the company (at that time, not now), directed that the factors for each job should be rated at 100 percent of their determined value for men's jobs and at two-thirds of their determined value for women's jobs. This manual was introduced in evidence by the union at the hearings.

The company itself virtually conceded that the differentials in the men's and women's rates in the various plant locations could not be justified on the basis of job content. It was noted that "If men were to be substituted for women on the so-called women's jobs, there would probably be a very real loss in efficiency and productivity since it is recognized that men are not as well adapted

as women for light, repetitive work requiring finger dexterity. The productive work of women on the jobs to which they are customarily assigned, if fairly weighed, might well offset any added production costs resulting from such factors as absenteeism, transient character of service, etc."

Somewhat the same comment was made by one of the persons interviewed in connection with the present study, who said that in most electrical manufacturing plants it is the women who do the production work and "make the money for the company." A union representative mentioned that the paying of higher rates to men on the ground that their work involved a greater physical strain was not always justified. He pointed out that the constant arm and finger movements involved in many women's jobs in the plant were, in the course of the day, probably more wearing in many cases than the occasional lifting of a 30- or 40-pound box. He noted too that the jobs done by women often involve close attention to work and a concentration that is fatiguing.

The War Labor Board recommended, in 1945, that the company reduce the differentials over a period of time, since the gaps were too great to be eliminated at once without serious dislocations. Although some adjustments have been made, rates have still--5 years later--not been entirely equalized between men's and women's jobs. Men and women doing exactly the same job are paid the same rates. But the practice of assigning most jobs to men or women exclusively, with lower rates for the women's jobs, continues. However, there has been some narrowing of the gap between rates for men's and women's jobs.

#### 4. ADVANTAGES OF EQUAL PAY

The War Labor Board opinion states, "The true source of the sex differentials is probably to be found in history rather than in any objective tests or cost calculations." The same opinion was expressed by the management representative who was interviewed in connection with the present study. He stated that because women's job opportunities had been relatively limited in industry in the past, it had been possible to get them to work for less than men, and employers took advantage of this fact to underpay women. He felt that women had made their place in industry, that they had proved their worth as workers, and that they were entitled to be paid as much as men when they did the same work.

Management felt that there was less friction when women were paid equally for equal work, that such a pay system was easier to administer than a system of differentials, and that it was hard to justify differentials. The representative who was interviewed said, "I'd hate to be the one to have to sit across the bargaining table trying to justify differentials."

Management and the union agreed that equal pay helped to prevent undercutting of men's rates by cheap female labor; both felt too that justice demanded that women, who have proved their worth to industry, should receive equal pay for equal work.

### Case F

Industry: Manufacturing-Radio sets, radio parts, parts for communication equipment.

Employment: 296 plant employees, about 42 percent women; 54 salaried employees, 33 percent women.

Union: Independent.

#### 1. PRESENT STATUS OF EQUAL PAY

State law: Discrimination in rate of pay because of sex prohibited. Domestic and farm employment and non-profit organizations exempt. Law adopted in 1944.

Union contract: "There shall be no discrimination against any employee either in hiring, promoting, advancement or assigning of jobs or with respect to any other terms or conditions of employment because of such employees' union membership or activity, sex, race, creed, color or religious affiliation."

Present wage and occupational structure: Wage rates are established by collective bargaining for a group of radio manufacturers. There is a job classification plan, with job descriptions and rates for key jobs. These are certain selected jobs common to all of the radio manufacturing plants and are described in detail and rated as to skills required and other job factors. The individual firms rate all jobs in their plants in relation to these key jobs, using them as a gauge, to determine where in the rate and classification scale the other jobs belong.

Rates are set with reference to these key jobs, and without regard to whether they are performed by men or women. Classifying and rating is done on a city-wide basis by company and union representatives. No company may pay less than the rates set, although some shops may pay higher rates through special collective bargaining agreements.

2. OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION BY SEX

Some typical jobs on which both men and women are employed and rates for these jobs follow:

Job title	Rates	Approximate	
		<u>number of</u>	
		Men	Women
Total .....		87	56
Assembler, light and benchwork ...	\$0.925 - \$1.125	16	19
Inspector, parts .....	1.125	5	7
Operator, punch press and light machine .....	1.125	4	15
Operator, drill press and milling machine .....	1.175	40	6
Calibrator .....	1.235 - 1.335	1	3
Assembler, condensers and other units	1.175	15	5
Tester, final--in test room .....	1.835	6	1

3. DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL-PAY POLICY

In 1942 women were being paid between 42 and 55 cents per hour, and men's rates ranged from 52 cents to \$1.26 per hour. Men and women on the same jobs were paid differential rates, with women receiving 5.1 to 24.0 cents less per hour for the same job. The following table shows the jobs done by both men and women and the rate differentials in favor of men, in 1942:

	<u>Differential</u>
Bench leader	24.0 cents
Inspector, parts	17.4 cents
Operator, light drill press	14.5 cents
Shipping clerk	8.4 cents
Solderer	8.0 cents
Assembler, sub-assembly	5.5 cents
Inspector, final inspection	5.1 cents

The company and union agreed to have a job evaluation, but the company wanted to continue the sex differentials in the rates to be set, on the ground that the women's work was lighter. The union opposed this. The case went to the War Labor Board, which ruled in favor of the single

rate scale, and women's rates were adjusted to bring them into line with men's. Also, women now have the same seniority and advancement rights as men.

A comparison of the 1942 and 1951 rates for two jobs shows the elimination of the dual wage structure:

Job title	1942 rate		1951 rate
	Men	Women	Men and women
Operator, drill press .....	\$0.59	\$0.45	\$1.175
Inspector, parts .....	.649	.465	1.125

Group leaders are paid a specified amount in addition to the job rate. In 1942 this amounted to 25 cents per hour for men and 10 to 15 cents for women. In 1951 it was 10 cents per hour both for men and for women.

#### 4. ADVANTAGES OF EQUAL PAY

The union considered the equal-pay policy desirable and successful. Management felt that the equal-pay policy had helped morale in the plant a great deal; there is less friction over rates, and relations are more harmonious. Various factors, among them equal pay, have contributed to a greater interest in the job on the part of women, with a resulting increase in efficiency and a lower turnover. Average seniority in the plant is 8 years, and women's turnover may be somewhat lower than men's. Despite initial resistance, management now fully accepts the equal-pay policy and, as does the union, considers it a success.

#### Case G

Industry: Manufacturing-Aircraft.

Employment: Approximately 13,000 employees, about 20 percent women. Between 1,500 to 2,000 women production workers, about 1,000 women clerical workers.

Union: CIO.

1. PRESENT STATUS OF EQUAL PAY

State law: None

Union contract: "There shall be no discrimination against employees in rates of pay by reason of sex."

Present wage and occupational structure: Job classifications are based on a job evaluation plan. There is a rate range for each labor grade. The union did not participate in the job evaluation, but rated jobs separately, using the same system, and its ratings and the company's were compared. This same procedure has been followed every time revisions have been made in the classifications. Sometimes the union has felt that jobs were underrated and has asked for an upgrading, which the company has agreed to in every case.

Following is a list of the current labor grades and the rate ranges:

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Labor grade	Minimum rate	Maximum rate
1	\$1.67	\$1.98
2	1.56	1.88
3	1.51	1.83
4	1.46	1.69
5	1.36	1.59
6	1.30	1.54
7	1.25	1.49
8	1.20	1.44
9	1.17	1.41
10	1.13	1.29
10c	0.99	1.16

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Because of the tight labor market, the current actual starting rate is \$1.20 per hour. In-grade raises are on a merit basis, with a quarterly review of each employee's work by the foreman. The union is trying to have this replaced by an automatic increase plan. About 80 percent of the women are at the top of their labor grades.

There is a single seniority list for men and women; this guarantees to women the same opportunity to advance that men enjoy, subject to their own ability to do more skilled jobs. Job specifications are in terms of job content, not the worker's sex. A company official said of this plan, "A foreman doesn't know, when a new worker is being sent to his department,

whether it will be a man or a woman. The only consideration is whether the person can do the job."

## 2. OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION BY SEX

Both men and women are employed on a variety of jobs including professional and technical jobs; clerical jobs; skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled labor; maintenance; and cafeteria jobs. Some women are employed in each of these categories in all but the very top levels. They work as engineering aides and as engineers-in-training at salaries as high as \$450 or \$500 a month. They work on both the unskilled and some of the more skilled labor jobs, but the bulk are in labor grade 9, which includes women doing less skilled subassembly work. (Currently, as a result of considerable new hiring, men also bulk in labor grade 9. Normally, they would be more likely to cluster in labor grade 7.) Burring, filing, riveting are among the jobs done by large numbers of women.

One woman, a long-time employee of the company, is a turret lathe operator in labor grade 4 earning \$1.69 per hour; she does her own set-ups. Four women in this same labor grade make plaster models, and two women doing more skilled plaster model work are in labor grade 2 at \$1.88 per hour. Both of these women are on the second shift and so receive a differential of 15 percent, which brings their hourly earnings to \$2.16.

Despite a single seniority list and a nondiscrimination policy, women are sometimes handicapped in this plant because of their lack of skill or training in certain areas--such as blueprint reading. This is a serious obstacle to advancement in a plant where much of the work is precision work. Some of the women have never acquired this skill, and others who were familiar with it but got out of practice in the post-war period when they left the aircraft industry have returned to the plant and have failed to take refresher courses.

## 3. DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL-PAY POLICY

Women have been employed by this company in a clerical capacity for over 25 years, and they have been employed on production for 10 years at least, although no exact statistics were available on the numbers of women employed or their tenure. The first women production workers were employed in the fabric shop on what were, in a sense, "women's jobs." These included such work as sewing the fabric that covered certain airplane control surfaces--jobs that no longer even exist. During World War II, women were employed throughout the plant on all kinds of jobs.

Management reported that this company has had an equal-pay policy since women were first employed here. When the company signed an agreement with the union in October 1943, the agreement contained

an equal-pay clause, which put into writing the equal-pay principle that had always been followed in this plant. When a job evaluation was made a year or two later, a single schedule of rates for both sexes was set. Equal pay has always been accepted by this company, and no other wage plan has been considered.

#### 4. ADVANTAGES OF EQUAL PAY

Both management and the union felt that there was no justification for paying women lower rates than men for the same work. From the union point of view, equal pay safeguards men's rates from undercutting by cheap female labor. Management reported that equal pay resulted in an absence of strife over men's and women's rates. Management has found the policy satisfactory and has made no effort to change it in the more than 25 years that this company has employed women.

#### Case H

Industry: Manufacturing - Precision instruments.

Employment: 6,915 plant employees, 14 percent women; and 4,680 salaried employees, 20 percent women.

Union: CIO.

#### 1. PRESENT STATUS OF EQUAL PAY

State law: Discrimination in rate of pay because of sex prohibited. Domestic and farm labor and non-profit organizations exempt. Law adopted in 1944.

Union contract: "The Employer, either in hiring, promoting, advancing, or assigning to jobs, or any other term or condition of employment will not discriminate against any employee because of Union membership or activity, sex, race, creed, color, or religious belief."

"It is understood and agreed that female employees shall receive pay equal to male employees where work is equivalent."

Present wage and occupational structure: The company has job classifications based on a job evaluation, and there is a single rate schedule for men and women. There is a single rate, not a rate range, for each job. The worker comes in at a learner's rate and after 60 days gets a 5-cent raise. After

6 months on the job, he is raised to the rate for the job, and after that, raises are on a merit basis only. There are 17 labor grades, and current rates range from \$1.31 for labor grade 1 to \$2.26 for labor grade 17; all rates are exclusive of an 8-cent cost-of-living allowance.

## 2. OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION BY SEX

Women are employed on a variety of jobs; among those on which there are substantial numbers of men and women are the following:

- inspection (women are mostly in assembly and electrical inspection)  
(men are mostly in parts inspection)
- mechanical assemblers
- spare-parts packers
- electrical assemblers
- coil winders (150 men; 336 women)
- stator and armature winders
- cable maker
- calibrator
- filing and burring
- a few in machine shop (mostly profilers and millers)
- glass machine operators
- inspectors
- testing
- tube assembly
- tube technicians
- silver soldering
- engineering
- chemists
- engineering aides
- accounting
- supervisors (no women foremen, however)
- production control
- punch press operators

On some of these jobs rates are quite high. Among these are cable makers, who are paid \$1.86 per hour, exclusive of the 8 cents per hour cost-of-living allowance (all other rates quoted are also exclusive of this allowance); filing and burring at \$1.60 per hour; glass machine operators at \$1.65 per hour; assembly inspectors at a maximum rate of \$1.91 per hour; tube assembly at \$1.65 per hour.

When asked whether there were any women foremen in the shop, the company representative giving the information replied that there were not. He added that there had never been any women in this position and that he did not believe that they would work out satisfactorily, because both men and women preferred to work for men

rather than for women.

Few women engineers have applied for jobs here, but those who have been hired have been very satisfactory. The interviewee stated that he did not believe many women were interested in engineering or had the aptitude for it, but said that those who finished the training and were hired did very good work.

### 3. DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL-PAY POLICY

In 1940 only about 200 women, not more than 7 percent of the total work force, were employed by this firm. Most of them were considered "unskilled repetitive workers." As employment increased after the beginning of the war, however, more women were hired.

When Women's Bureau representatives visited the plant in October 1941, the following schedule of rates was in effect:

Learners .....	45-80 cents per hour
3d class: unskilled .....	50-70 cents per hour
2d class: semiskilled .....	75-90 cents per hour
1st class:skilled .....	95 cents per hour and up

At that time, all women were classified as third class workers, at a maximum rate of 70 cents; the average pay for all workers in the plant was 76 cents.

By 1943, about 10,000 women--48 percent of all workers, as contrasted with 7 percent in 1940--were employed, and some were doing more skilled work. Nonetheless, most of them were still classed as "unskilled repetitive workers," at a top rate of 75 cents per hour. Some engravers, at a top rate of 85 cents per hour, and some inspectors, maximum rate 95 cents per hour, were exceptions. These were class 2 jobs. Even in the tool room women were not graded above class 2 and no women in the plant were in class 1.

The union, which was certified as the bargaining agent in 1942, held that the existing wage structure was irrational and that there were inequities in classification. For 2 years, 1943 to 1945, a joint committee of five union and five company representatives, together with an industrial engineer as consultant, worked to develop a job evaluation plan. When the job evaluation was completed, it was found that many women who had been in class 3 had been doing semi-skilled or even skilled work. The evaluation removed to a large extent the paying of widely varying rates for similar work, and job content became the determining factor in the classification of jobs and the setting of rates for jobs. Fifteen labor grades were established and jobs held by women were classified in all but the two highest grades. (Later, grades 16 and 17 were added to the classification and rate ranges were eliminated.)

The table gives the rate schedule as established in 1945:

<u>Labor Grade</u>	<u>Rate Range</u>	
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
1	\$0.70	\$0.80
2	.74	.85
3	.79	.90
4	.83	.96
5	.88	1.01
6	.92	1.06
7	.97	1.11
8	1.01	1.17
9	1.06	1.22
10	1.10	1.27
11	1.15	1.32
12	1.20	1.37
13	1.25	1.42
14	1.29	1.47
15	1.33	1.53

#### 4. ADVANTAGES OF EQUAL PAY

Management now takes equal pay for granted and agrees with the union that it has been satisfactory and successful. Management has found that an equal-pay policy fosters better relationships among employees and better morale, since "People feel disgruntled if they are not paid equally for the same work." Also the equal-pay system is easier to administer than a system of differentials.