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Life Insurance Selling

**CAREERS
for
WOMEN
as
LIFE
UNDERWRITERS**

U.S. Department of Labor
Arthur J. Goldberg, *Secretary*

Women's Bureau
Mrs. Esther Peterson, *Director*

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Beyer, Sylvia Stehnoff.

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U.S. Government Printing Office : 1961

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington 25, D.C. - Price 20 cents

331.4
Un3
No. 877

FOREWORD

Life insurance is a vast and expanding industry, employing almost one-half million persons. Women constitute about one-third of this employment and are engaged primarily in the numerous clerical operations so essential to the industry's smooth operation. Thus far, however, women have accounted for only a small proportion of some 200,000 full-time life insurance underwriters (as the agents are called) and number about 6,000. Nevertheless, many of them are successful and highly regarded within the industry.

Life insurance underwriting is a field open to mature as well as younger women, since experience, stability, good judgment, and a sense of responsibility are recognized as valuable characteristics. It therefore seemed appropriate and timely for the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor to cooperate with the Committee of Women Underwriters of the National Association of Life Underwriters by surveying opportunities for women in this field and publishing the findings as one of its series of career bulletins. The project was undertaken and completed during Mrs. Alice K. Leopold's term of office as Director of the Women's Bureau. It is our hope that counselors, teachers, parents, and the women themselves will find useful information in this bulletin in assisting others in their decisions or for their own consideration of possible vocational choices.

ESTHER PETERSON,
Director, Women's Bureau.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was prepared by Sylva Beyer, who participated in its initial planning and in the collection of data, and by Sarah F. Leiter, who was responsible for the analysis and presentation of the material. They worked under the general direction of Stella P. Manor, Chief of the Division of Program Planning, Analysis, and Reports in the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Special acknowledgment is due the Committee of Women Underwriters of the National Association of Life Underwriters which cooperated closely with the Women's Bureau from the inception of the project. With the Committee's assistance, pertinent data on women life underwriters were obtained by questionnaire from women members of the National Association of Life Underwriters.

Grateful acknowledgment is also made to the following associations and organizations whose members and staff variously provided the Bureau with statistical data, other information, and review of the manuscript: National Association of Life Underwriters, Institute of Life Insurance, Life Insurance Agency Management Association, American College of Chartered Life Underwriters, and Life Underwriters Training Council.

A number of individual companies were most cooperative in responding to the Bureau's request for statistical data and related information.

The Women's Bureau is indebted to the National Association of Life Underwriters for the pictures included in this bulletin.

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The Life Insurance Industry

Importance of the Industry

By all standards life insurance is one of the great industries in our economy. Its activities reach into every community; its contribution to the financial security of individuals and families is widespread and increasing; and its assets provide one of the largest sources of investment capital.

Life insurance is an industry of big figures. In this country, 127 million policy holders owned life insurance amounting to \$600 billion in 1959.¹ About 90 percent of them were insured by legal reserve companies (those operating under State insurance laws specifying minimum financial reserves to be maintained on policies). The remainder were insured by fraternal and assessment organizations, savings banks, and the United States Government's veterans' insurance program. The legal reserve companies at the close of 1959 also accounted for 90 percent of the insurance in force, the aggregate face value of all active policies.

In 1959, private companies had assets totaling almost \$113.7 billion and paid \$7.5 billion in life insurance benefits and annuities to policyholders and their beneficiaries.

More than 1,400 life insurance companies (considered legal reserve by their respective States) were operating in mid-1959. They ranged in size from very small companies to very large ones. Most of the sales and service activities, however, are conducted in the field through the medium of thousands of local agencies, which generally are fairly small units.

The Institute of Life Insurance estimated life insurance employment in 1959 at about 450,000, exclusive of part-time agents who are numerically not insignificant.

¹ These and subsequent statistics relating to the industry as a whole are from the 1960 Life Insurance Fact Book, Institute of Life Insurance, New York, N.Y.

History and Recent Trends

The notion of group sharing of risks, the underlying concept of all types of insurance, is probably as old as man. But life insurance as we know it today is of fairly recent origin. The first life insurance company in the United States was founded in Philadelphia in 1759. Known as "A Corporation for Relief of Poor and Distressed Presbyterian Ministers, and of the Poor and Distressed Widows and Children of Presbyterian Ministers," it obviously offered coverage to a very restricted few. The company still exists and is now known as the Presbyterian Ministers Fund.

It was not until close to the middle of the 19th century that life insurance organizations bearing greater resemblance to current ones began to develop. It was the period when mutual companies (which the policyholders own), as distinguished from stock companies (which the stockholders own), were formed. The mid-1800's also saw the emergence of the sale of life insurance through individual agents, the key people in the impressive growth of the industry. Soon after, general agencies were established as expanding companies sought to do business in other States and found it legally desirable and otherwise convenient to delegate power to local representatives.

Industrial insurance, which is issued in small amounts almost always less than \$1,000, and with weekly or monthly premiums generally collected by the agent in the policyholder's home, was first issued in this country in 1875. This method of selling life insurance was introduced some decades earlier in England where it was designed to meet the needs of industrial workers. It is still a popular program among low-income groups.

Total life insurance in force with legal reserve companies has risen every year since 1900 with the exception of 1932 and 1933, although the 1931 level was not attained again until 1937.

Group insurance, which insures a group of people—predominantly employees of one establishment or company—under one policy, with each person covered receiving a certificate, has been a very important stimulant to the 20th century rise in life insurance in force and life insurance purchases. The first such contract was introduced in 1911. From that time on group insurance became increasingly significant in the total life insurance picture.

Types and Changing Emphasis of Life Insurance

There are four general types of life insurance—ordinary, industrial, group, and credit. Of these, the oldest type is *ordinary*, which is is-

sued in units of \$1,000 or more with premiums payable annually, semiannually, quarterly, or monthly. Ordinary insurance includes the following three basic types of life insurance:

1. **WHOLE LIFE.** Under this plan the policyholders are insured for their entire lives, with premiums payable throughout life, for a specified number of years, or at one time and with the face value of the policies payable at death.
2. **ENDOWMENT.** Under such a plan the value of the policy is paid to the policyholder in a specified number of years. If the policyholder dies before that date, the beneficiary receives the value of the policy.
3. **TERM.** Under this plan a person is insured only for a specified number of years with insurance payable only if death occurs during that period.

There are probably thousands of different combinations of these three basic kinds of life insurance available in the innumerable policies offered by life insurance companies. Ordinary insurance can be purchased on the life of an adult, a juvenile, or an infant. It is virtually always sold by individual life underwriters or agents² and may be used for family or business protection.

Industrial insurance is also sold by agents.³ It is written in modest amounts determined by the size of the weekly or monthly payment. The average policy written in 1959 amounted to \$560. Industrial insurance—like ordinary—may be whole life, endowment, term, or combinations of these.

Group life insurance is generally in the form of term insurance. Although over 80 percent of the total amount of group insurance in force was with the groups of 500 or more, these large transactions accounted for only 8 percent of the contracts. More than 70 percent of the contracts cover groups of fewer than 100 members.⁴ Group insurance is sold by individual underwriters, usually to small or moderate-size firms, but home offices generally assist with and participate in larger sales.

Finally, there is *credit* insurance, which is issued by life insurance companies, on individuals who have incurred financial obligations such as cash loans or installment purchases. First issued in 1917, credit insurance began to be widespread only after World War II. This type of insurance is sometimes sold by individual agents, usually with the assistance of a home office representative.

Record highs for the number of policies and the amount of insurance in force were noted for ordinary, group, and credit insurance in

² The two designations are used interchangeably in this report as they frequently are in the industry, although the term "underwriter" may also apply to home office employees who review life insurance applications to determine whether they meet the company's standards of insurability.

³ Industrial underwriters are known as debit or more often as combination agents, since most of them sell ordinary as well as industrial insurance.

⁴ 1959 Life Insurance Fact Book. Institute of Life Insurance, New York, N.Y.

1959. The rate of growth since 1950 was more marked in group and credit, both having, of course, a smaller base from which to register their gains. In absolute numbers, however, ordinary insurance (with legal reserve companies) rose from 64 million policies in 1950 to 92 million in 1959; the amount of insurance in force rose from \$149 billion to \$316 billion over the same period. This increase dwarfed the actual rise from 1950 to 1959 in credit insurance (from \$4 billion to \$27 billion) and considerably outstripped the gain (from \$48 billion to \$160 billion) in group insurance (see table).

Industrial insurance, however, seemed to be tapering off with slight declines in the number of policies and the amount of insurance in force in the past few years. This is probably due in part to increasing coverage under group and ordinary insurance programs, particularly monthly debit ordinary which is written as ordinary insurance but with monthly premiums collected by the agent.

Ordinary insurance in force at \$316 billion in 1959 was overwhelmingly predominant, although industrial insurance policies accounted for a larger proportion of the policies. Group insurance certificates in 1959 comprised 15 percent of all policies and nearly 30 percent of the life insurance in force.

NUMBER, AMOUNT, AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES IN FORCE IN 1959, BY TYPE OF INSURANCE

Type of insurance	Policies and certificates		Amount	
	Number (millions)	Percent distribution ¹	Dollars (millions)	Percent distribution ¹
Total.....	² 275	100. 0	\$542, 128	100. 0
Ordinary.....	92	33. 6	315, 953	58. 3
Industrial.....	102	37. 1	39, 688	7. 3
Group.....	41	15. 0	159, 807	29. 5
Credit.....	39	14. 3	26, 680	4. 9

¹ Based on data rounded to thousands.

² Total somewhat higher than sum of detail because of rounding.

SOURCE: 1960 Life Insurance Fact Book. Institute of Life Insurance, New York, N.Y.

II

Women in Life Insurance

Women Life Underwriters

How do women fit into this vast and still expanding industry? Women constitute a significant proportion of the industry's employment. In 1956, they numbered 133,200 and comprised almost a third of life insurance personnel, according to the Institute of Life Insurance. They accounted for more than 90 percent of the agency cashiers and clerks and 65 percent of the home office staff, typically, but not entirely, in clerical jobs.

Women agents numbered 5,900 or about 3 percent of the 195,800 full-time underwriters in 1956. At the same time, women made up only 1 percent of the agency managers and assistants. Combination or debit agents accounted for 56 percent of all women underwriters; 44 percent were "ordinary" agents.⁵ The number of women agents in combination agencies increased from an estimated 2,000 in 1950 to 3,300 in 1956. During the same period, women ordinary underwriters declined from 2,800 to 2,600.

Insurance employment has risen since 1956. The Institute of Life Insurance estimated total personnel at the close of 1959 at about 450,000 and the number of full-time agents at 200,000. Data on women agents are not available for 1959.

The high point in the utilization of women as life underwriters occurred during World War II when acute manpower shortages prompted special recruitment of women, many of whom became debit agents. In some cases, wives took over their husbands' insurance activities when they entered military service. Even in 1945, however, women full-time agents accounted for only slightly more than 5 percent of the total number of life underwriters.

⁵ Tally of Life Insurance Statistics: March 1957; Institute of Life Insurance. It should be noted that debit agents usually sell ordinary insurance and sometimes sell group as well as industrial insurance; ordinary agents sell group in addition to ordinary insurance but do not handle industrial.

Demand for and Supply of Women Agents Limited

Although life underwriting is an occupation well suited to women, traditionally, very few have been in this area of work. Why this situation prevails is not clear. Women in the field are enthusiastic about life underwriting as a career. Of approximately 450 women who participated in the survey of the National Association of Life Underwriters (NALU) and the Women's Bureau, only 4 specifically remarked that they would not recommend this field as a career for women because the work was too hard or the competition too rugged.

Many companies are quite proud of their outstanding women underwriters and offer "woman of the year" and similar awards. Relatively few have imposed restrictive recruitment policies regarding women. But the actual recruitment of local staff, including underwriters, is done by agency managers, whose attitudes have a bearing on opportunities for women to enter this field. While many welcome a suitable woman applicant, some do not give her consideration. Few of these company-authorized representatives make a positive effort to recruit women agents. At the same time it appears that the idea of life underwriting as a possible career occurs to few women. It is very likely that far more women would be life underwriters if they were aware of the opportunities available to them.

This is overwhelmingly a man's field, largely by custom and not because of any demands of the job itself. The relatively few women life underwriters are accepted by their companies, by their clients, and by their fellow agents according to the same criteria as are men. Their success depends, as with men, on their ability to serve with intelligence, resourcefulness, and application.



Some Facts About Life Underwriters

Nature of Work

Life underwriters or agents are the field representatives of the companies to which they are under contract either directly or through the general agent, who operates a local outlet for a company. Their role in the industry is to sell life insurance. The many other activities they engage in, apart from sales interviews, are designed to improve the volume and the quality of sales.

Agents spend much of their working time consulting with prospective clients in their homes or places of work where the actual sales are made. Underwriters must know and be able to describe in clear, non-technical language the variety of policies their companies offer.

Underwriters should be able to counsel their clients regarding the suitability of different policies to meet individual needs. They must inspire confidence in their judgment and honesty. They should achieve a good personal relationship with their clients, since an appropriate sale depends on having an intimate knowledge of the clients' financial status and requirements.

The underwriter assists in preparing the application form, collects the initial premium, arranges for a medical examination, and delivers the policy to the client. Thereafter, underwriters provide service for their clients, such as assisting with the settlement of benefit claims, changes in beneficiaries, conversion of policies, and similar matters.

Agents also spend time in their own homes or offices preparing reports, keeping records, developing lists of prospects, making appointments, and sending out information and promotional literature. Underwriters inclined toward the more complex aspects of life insurance spend time at their desks planning and designing insurance programs of a more difficult nature including the creation, conservation, and distribution of estates; business insurance; group insurance; and pension plans. In the course of developing such programs they may cooperate with the client's attorney, accountant, and broker.



Members of four professions—a CPA, a life underwriter, a trust officer, and a lawyer—pool specialized skills and ideas to design a business life insurance program for a mutual client.

Combination or debit agents spend part of their time collecting weekly and/or monthly premiums in addition to selling insurance policies. They are rarely concerned with developing elaborate insurance programs for the sale of industrial insurance since the amount of insurance involved is modest.

Most full-time underwriters devote some time to agency or branch office training meetings and other work conferences; many read and study extensively the ever-changing legal, social, and economic aspects of life insurance; and many participate in company, and in local, regional, or national conventions and meetings of the NALU.

Brokers Sell for More Than One Company

Life insurance brokers are independent operators who represent their clients and buy insurance for them from any one of several companies, as distinguished from agents who represent specific companies and sell only their companies' products. Although many brokers concentrate their business with one or two companies, others may distribute their sales among a number of companies.

A great many life insurance agents, on occasion, operate as brokers placing "surplus" business with other companies, when their own company does not offer or has a higher rate for some types of policies or does not accept a particular risk.

Full-Time and Part-Time Agents

The life insurance industry has three types of contracts for those who sell insurance—a part-time contract, a full-time contract, and a broker's contract. Unlike most workers, insurance agents' full-time or part-time status is not determined primarily by the number of weekly hours they work but by the type of contract they hold.

In general, the industry considers full-time agents as those who devote their total work time and effort to selling insurance for any one company, except as they incidentally and occasionally place business with other companies on a brokerage basis. Part-time agents are commonly viewed by the industry as having other employment as their primary occupation.

In actual practice, however, there are many deviations from these general concepts. Some companies require their full-time agents to meet specific production levels (usually modest), and thus they establish volume of business as the distinguishing characteristic between the full-time and the part-time underwriter.

A good many agents with full-time contracts do not devote their total work energies to selling life insurance. Occasionally, the reverse

Members of National Association of Life Underwriters Committee of Women Underwriters discuss contributions women can make to further professional standards of the industry.



is true. For example, if an underwriter is by virtue of his or her age or for some other reason not eligible for the company's retirement program, which may be available only to full-time agents, the underwriter must accept a part-time contract regardless of how much business is produced or how many hours are worked.

Full-time underwriters enjoy certain advantages over part-time agents. For example, their compensation provisions set by contract may be at a slightly higher top level. Renewal commissions may not run for the full number of years if contract-specified production requirements are not met, which may easily be the case with part-time agents. Generally, part-time agents are not eligible for the small lifetime service fees some companies offer or, in many cases, for the various fringe benefits such as company sponsored life insurance, health insurance, and pension programs.

Many persons in the industry feel that life insurance is too important and too complex to be sold by casual agents who do this as a sideline to other work. Despite the preference for full-time underwriters, the part-time agent has by no means disappeared from the scene.

It should be emphasized that many part-time agents have much more than a casual attachment to this field of work. Thus, for example, in small communities or sparsely settled areas, the life insurance sales potential may be sufficiently limited to make it both necessary and desirable for agents to supplement their life underwriting with other work. And, in the case of women, many with part-time contracts probably have no other job commitments but devote less than full time to life insurance selling because of home responsibilities.

Just how many women had part-time contracts compared with the 5,900 women who were full-time underwriters in 1956 is not known. Industry representatives believe, however, that the number of women part-time agents is fairly substantial.

Among the NALU survey respondents, more than four out of five were full-time agents in 1957. The overwhelming majority of both full-time and part-time women underwriters surveyed devoted their total work allegiance to the insurance industry, and concentrated their efforts on life insurance selling.

Of the 450 women life agents participating in the survey, only 28, or about 6 percent, held additional jobs not associated with the insurance industry, and a good many of these appeared to take up relatively little time compared with the insurance activities. Some of these occupations were owners or partners of other businesses, teachers, realtors, sales-persons, and secretaries. In only a very few cases did life insurance selling appear to be a secondary occupation.

Women Not Restricted to Special Markets

Women are considered by some agency managers to be especially valuable in selling insurance to other women. Some of the surveyed women underwriters felt similarly, but not too many reported the major portion of their sales to women clients. Three out of five of those submitting information indicated that fewer than a fourth of their sales in 1957 were to women; only one out of five reported at least half of their sales were to women. The survey data also revealed that women agents in the higher earnings brackets tended to make proportionately fewer sales to women.

Women, as well as men agents, can choose their clients and develop their own markets. Some do not concentrate on any special groups; others may direct a great deal of their selling to particular age or occupational categories.

More than half of all full-time women life underwriters are associated with combination agencies and sell industrial as well as ordinary life insurance. Among surveyed women NALU members, about three-fourths sold ordinary insurance only; another 16 percent also sold group. Only a fourth of the small number of reporting combination agents handled industrial insurance exclusively; the others also sold ordinary policies and a few negotiated group contracts. Women agents also sold individual annuities. Although not strictly life insurance, annuities are handled by life insurance companies.

There appeared to be no limitation on the types of life policies women underwriters sell. The surveyed agents occasionally and variously indicated their own specialties and these included family protection and juvenile insurance, endowments, business insurance, retirement income, and estate planning. Some felt women were particularly suited to handle (1) family protection programs, because of their understanding of the financial needs of a widow; and (2) retirement income for professional and business women, because they can be more readily approached by a woman agent. Others saw no need to limit their activities and a fair-size number who were successful in estate planning and conservation felt more women agents should choose this financially rewarding specialty.

Life Underwriters Sell Other Insurance

Health insurance, one type of insurance other than life, is frequently sold by life underwriters. Life insurance companies account for about 80 percent of the health insurance business. Many offer all or some forms of health insurance and expect and encourage their agents to sell such policies. Others, which do not offer health in-

insurance usually permit their underwriters, operating as brokers, to place such business with other companies. Many life underwriters, if their companies permit, also sell casualty insurance as a service to their clients. Such business is usually handled on a brokerage basis.

Among NALU survey respondents, about 30 percent of the women agents sold no insurance other than life in 1957. Of those who did some business in other types of insurance, some 63 percent wrote health insurance only (almost entirely policies on individuals with a negligible number of group contracts). Another 28 percent wrote health and casualty, whereas 9 percent wrote casualty only, in addition to life.



The bulk of an agent's sales is made in the home. Here a woman life underwriter, seated between a husband and wife, discusses the benefits of life insurance.

IV

Requisites for Success in the Field

Personality a Significant Factor

Too much stress cannot be placed on the importance of personal traits, interests, and aptitudes in the success of the life underwriter. Education, training, and hard work are not enough, according to the surveyed women underwriters. The potential life insurance agent should also have or be able to develop—

- ☆ *A genuine liking for people*, an interest in their problems, a desire to help and serve as well as the ability to get along with others.
- ☆ *Aggressiveness* without being brash or rude so that contacts are made with confidence; an outgoing personality.
- ☆ *Facility for speaking* because there is no product to demonstrate, no other means of making a sale.
- ☆ *Integrity* to put the client's needs before the size of the premium, to respect a client's trust and confidence.
- ☆ *Ambition* to motivate the agent to a desired level of achievement.
- ☆ *Patience, persistence, and resilience* to keep at it and not get discouraged and to bounce back from disappointments.
- ☆ *Self-discipline and organization* in order to boss yourself, to organize your time, to establish and follow a schedule, to avoid diversions and delays.
- ☆ *Willingness to work hard*, to get out and hustle.
- ☆ *A firm belief in the value of life insurance* so that others may be similarly convinced and persuaded to buy.
- ☆ *A thorough knowledge of life insurance and related fields* to permit top-notch counseling and to inspire confidence in the agent's advice.
- ☆ *An alert, receptive, and inquiring mind* for acquiring knowledge in this and related fields. A willingness to continue learning and studying throughout one's career.
- ☆ *Good health* because this is hard work entailing physical strain.
- ☆ *Resourcefulness and imagination* to sell more insurance, to serve clients better, and to solve the problems that are bound to arise from time to time.

These are not rare qualities but they are all needed in great abundance for a successful life underwriting career.

Education Increasingly Important

Educational requirements for the field continue to be flexible. Although many companies prefer college graduates, none limit their recruitment to college people. A college degree has greater weight among young appointees who lack a background of work experience that might be helpful to an insurance underwriter's career.

Women members of NALU included in the survey reflected a higher level of schooling than generally prevails in the industry. Virtually two out of three respondents had some college education. About 45 percent of the college women had received at least a bachelor's degree, about 27 percent had also done graduate study, and 10 percent held graduate degrees. Only 10 percent of all the surveyed women had not completed high school.

Although survey respondents with different levels of education were represented in all earnings brackets, a far greater proportion of the college women reported incomes of \$10,000 or more. Twelve of the fifteen women respondents who sold \$1 million or more of life insurance in 1957 had at least some college background.

The young woman looking ahead to a career in life underwriting will find courses in insurance offered by many universities. It is also helpful to take courses in related fields such as economics, government, sociology, psychology, and business law.

The NALU college women included in the survey reported a great variety of fields of concentration. Those with degrees had majored rather numerously in English and education. The social sciences were represented by economics, history, political science, business administration, sociology, and psychology; the physical sciences, by agronomy and chemistry. Still other disciplines were mathematics, journalism, speech, home economics, physical therapy, and law.

Work Experience May Be Helpful

Unlike many occupational fields there is no preemployment training or educational major which can completely prepare a person for a career in life underwriting. Certain courses of study are helpful, but specific on-the-job training is needed. For this reason, previous work history (and the industry recruits mature people) is important.

In general, companies look with favor on those who have successfully held jobs that involved dealing with people. Past experience in sales work is an asset. General agents and managers look for a record of progress, achievement, and stability in the applicant's previous employment.

NALU's women participating in the survey were in a wide variety of occupations prior to becoming life underwriters. Some had been clerical workers, typists, receptionists, bookkeepers, secretaries, and salespersons. From the professional rank were accountants, dietitians, dental hygienists, lawyers, librarians, nurses, social workers, statisticians, and many teachers. Women also moved to careers in life underwriting from jobs in banks, in factories, on newspapers, in government, and from other jobs in insurance. They came from managerial and executive posts, from the Armed Forces, from their own businesses. Many, however, were housewives with no previous work experience.

Age Specifications Flexible

Unlike many fields of work, which, because of employer specifications, offer few opportunities for mature women, life underwriting is a career available to them. Although efforts to recruit young agents directly from the colleges have been stepped up in recent years, this practice has not restricted recruitment of suitable mature persons.

The responses of NALU surveyed women members on this subject were particularly revealing, although how representative their experience is cannot be determined.

Age on Becoming Life Underwriters

<i>Age</i>	<i>Percent distribution</i>
Total	100
19 and under 25 years.....	4
25 and under 30 years.....	10
30 and under 35 years.....	17
35 and under 40 years.....	27
40 and under 45 years.....	22
45 and under 50 years.....	12
50 years and over.....	8

About 7 out of 10 of these women became life underwriters at or after age 35; more than 4 out of 10 were at least 40; and almost 1 out of 12 was at least 50 years old.

V

Income and Methods of Compensation

Earnings Depend on Production

Experienced ordinary life underwriters are paid on a commission basis and therefore their earnings are directly related to production. Insurance selling is a field of work in which women consistently earn at the same rate as men. Compensation schedules are fixed by each company. They appear in the contract and apply equally to both sexes.

Combination or debit agents also earn commissions on the life insurance they sell, as well as a commission against their debit which is the aggregate of their weekly and monthly premiums. Some companies have established guaranteed minimum compensation to the combination agent for servicing the debit, which mainly involves the collection of premiums. Such guaranteed minimums are sometimes considered salaries.

There are many variations in the schedule of commissions among the different companies. First year commissions for popular insurance plans may run about 50 percent of the premium, and renewal commissions may then be about 5 percent of the premiums for each of the following 9 years. It is not uncommon to have lower or higher first year commissions with corresponding adjustments in amount and duration of subsequent commissions. In the long run, these differences tend to be eliminated. After renewal commissions cease, some companies pay a small annual service fee as long as a policy is in force.

Debit agents' earnings from servicing debits range from about 10 to 15 percent of the weekly premiums and 6 to 8 percent of the monthly premiums. If companies provide a guaranteed minimum compensation, this compensation replaces commission-type payments when they fail to meet the minimum.

Some 85 percent of surveyed NALU women members were compensated on a straight commission basis. Only about 5 percent were operating under a drawing account arrangement. Most of the others worked on a salary and commission basis with the salary usually representing earnings for managerial and related responsibilities and guaranteed minimum payments to debit agents.

Renewal commissions which build up after a few years of selling, constitute a fairly important factor in the earnings of life underwriters. Renewals not only supplement new commissions to raise the level of earnings, but represent current income requiring relatively little current expenditure of time and effort. They provide a continuing source of income in periods when new sales may drop off because of personal circumstances such as illness or slacken because of unfavorable economic conditions.

Comprehensive data are not available on the income of life underwriters, but earnings are known to range from very modest to very substantial sums.

Earnings of Surveyed Women

Some facts on earnings are available for the women NALU members who participated in the survey. The distribution of income from life underwriting in 1957 was reported as follows.

<i>Income</i>	<i>Percent of respondents</i>
Total.....	100
Under \$2,500.....	14
\$2,500 to \$4,999.....	29
\$5,000 to \$9,999.....	41
\$10,000 to \$14,999.....	9
\$15,000 and over.....	7

Included among those with lower incomes were some part-time agents who had managerial or other responsibilities, a goodly number who had been selling insurance for less than 3 years, and a number who because of advanced age were tapering off their activity. For the group as a whole, higher earnings were reported by those with more years of selling experience. More than 70 percent of the women in insurance for 6 or more years earned at least \$5,000, while one-fourth of those with 10 or more years' experience earned at least \$10,000.

It must be remembered, however, that the number of respondents compared with the total number of women agents is very small and that these data may not reflect the picture for all women underwriters. Nevertheless, the figures do offer some indication of what might be achieved in the way of earnings.

Financing New Underwriters

An estimated 80 percent of the new agents are financed by their companies for periods ranging from 1 to 3 years. But industry representatives believe that a smaller proportion of new women agents are financed as compared with men. Financing is usually determined according to budgetary needs.

Financing may take the form of (1) the simple advance against commissions; (2) the simple advance against commissions plus a training allowance which is not repayable; and (3) straight salary with no obligation to repay. There are many variations to these plans, but in all of them specified minimum production requirements must usually be met.

Business Expenses of Underwriters

Life insurance companies absorb to a varying degree some of the business expenses of their agents. The companies through their field offices typically, but not uniformly, provide office space and supplies, clerical and secretarial assistance, promotional materials, postage, and some financing of educational costs. Nevertheless, most life underwriters incur business expenses which are not reimbursed by the companies. Such expenses may include a car, office space in the home, additional secretarial help, promotional activities beyond those taken care of by the company, attendance at conventions and seminars, educational costs, and others.

Since some of these expenses are incurred at the option of the underwriter, they understandably ranged from relatively small to quite significant proportions of the agents' earnings. More than a fourth of the NALU women members who provided information on this topic reported that their unreimbursed expenses amounted to no more than 10 percent of their income. For about two-thirds of the women surveyed, unreimbursed expenses did not exceed 25 percent of their earnings; for the remaining third unreimbursed expenses amounted to more than 25 percent and in a few cases exceeded 50 percent.

Supplementary Benefits Available

Most full-time agents are covered by one or more types of benefit programs which the companies finance in varying degrees. Coverage and extent of benefits may depend on meeting certain production standards.

The questionnaire sent to NALU women members included an item on insurance and pension programs. The responses indicated that almost half the full-time agents were covered by group life and health

insurance and by group pension plans. More than 20 percent had life and health insurance; another 7 percent were under life insurance and pension plans. Some 15 percent had protection in only one of these three programs. Relatively few were not covered by any benefit plans, and included among these were some who had not yet met qualifying production goals.

Part-time agents were covered to a much lesser extent, with virtually half the responding part-time underwriters not receiving any type of protection under company-participating programs.



A national committee of NALU in session. As members, women underwriters participate in making policy recommendations. These committees play an important role in furthering NALU's program.

VI

Hours of Work

Wide Range in Working Hours

It is often emphasized that life underwriters, as independent operators, punch no time clocks. Their time is committed by others only to the extent that they may have to attend agency or branch office conferences.⁶ Otherwise, experienced underwriters put into their work as much time as they choose, as long as their production is acceptable to the companies. Career life underwriters, women as well as men, emphasize that this is a full-time activity calling for full-time effort.

Census data for 1950 show that 88 out of 100 men insurance agents and brokers (including casualty) worked at least 40 hours a week; 30 out of 100 worked more than 48 hours. Corresponding hours for women were somewhat lower; 63 out of 100 worked 40 hours or more and only 7 percent worked more than 48 hours.⁷

Data on average weekly hours worked are available for NALU women members who participated in the survey. The few combination agents included reported longer average weekly hours than the ordinary agents. No combination agent worked fewer than 30 hours a week on the average during the year, with the median number, 44.6.

About three-fifths of the full-time ordinary agents averaged 35 or more hours a week during 1957; one-fourth averaged weekly hours in excess of 40; 17 percent reported that they worked 50 hours or more. At the other side of the scale, two-fifths of the full-time agents averaged fewer than 35 hours a week, which is commonly considered part-time work in our economy. The median number of hours worked by surveyed ordinary full-time women agents was 37.8; for part-time agents, 16.0.

⁶ This is less applicable to combination agents who have a definite commitment to collect premiums, but their new sales are made whenever they choose.

⁷ Figures exclude part-time agents whose major occupation is in another field.

Relationship of Hours to Earnings

Survey data revealed, as might be expected, that there is some correlation between hours and earnings. Among the women underwriters responding, earnings were higher as hours were longer although there were many exceptions to this general pattern.

Of those earning \$2,500 during 1957, three-fourths averaged fewer than 30 hours a week, and a large majority of these, fewer than 20 hours. Three-fifths of those earning between \$2,500 and \$4,999 averaged fewer than 40 hours a week, one-fourth averaged 40 hours, and relatively few reported longer hours. Three out of five earning \$5,000 to \$9,999 worked from 30 to 50 hours a week on the average, although in this earnings interval about as many reported fewer than 30 hours as did more than 50 hours.

The high-income women underwriters, earning at least \$10,000 in 1957, were well represented among those reporting short-to-average workweeks, but more than three-fifths of them worked at least 40 hours and almost a third reported an average of 50 hours or more.

Evening and Weekend Work Common

The great majority of life underwriters conduct some of their sales interviews, and many of them do much related work, evenings and weekends. But there is great variation in the extent to which evenings and weekends are taken up by insurance activities—at least among NALU women members who provided survey information.

Many of these women tended to limit their evening and weekend work; for about half it amounted to fewer than 10 hours each week. A third spent from 10 to 19 hours on evening and weekend work; a few reported that they did most of their work at these times. A greater proportion of the debit agents, among the respondents, appeared to devote more hours to evening and weekend work.

Although well-established women underwriters may be quite successful producers and earn a good income working fewer than 35 hours a week, and with a minimum of evening and weekend hours, many NALU respondents warned that the new agent must be prepared to work long hours, including many in the evenings and weekends, in the early years of her career.

One advantage life underwriting offers women is the flexibility in working hours, particularly for the ordinary agent. It is possible to schedule interviews at hours mutually convenient to the agent and the client, with desk work fitted in accordingly.

VII

Place of Employment and Working Arrangements

Geographic Distribution and Type of Community

Since life underwriting is a service to people, underwriters sell insurance in all populated places. Consequently, agents are more numerous in the States and areas with the greater concentrations of population.

An analysis of the geographic distribution of all NALU women members shows an unusually high proportion of women life underwriters in the South (42 percent), with particular emphasis in the South Atlantic States, and proportions lower than might be expected in the Northeast and West. The NALU survey data follow a similar pattern, as shown in the following tabulation.

		<i>Percent distribution of—</i>	
<i>Region</i>		<i>All NALU members</i>	<i>Surveyed NALU members</i>
Total	-----	100.0	100.0
Northeast	-----	18.2	21.5
North Central	-----	25.5	28.5
South	-----	42.0	32.8
West	-----	14.0	15.7
Territories	-----	.3	1.5

NALU women members live in more than 600 cities and towns and sell insurance in these and surrounding areas. Again, the South is represented strongly with the largest number of different communities—257, compared with 119 in the Northeast, 153 in the North Central States, and 91 in the West.

These figures seem to point to the greater prevalence of women life underwriters in the South, but since the data relate only to NALU members, the evidence is not conclusive.

Women life underwriters sell insurance in large cities and small communities; in urban centers, and in suburban and rural areas.

Many NALU members (42 percent) who returned questionnaires

worked in cities of 100,000 to 999,999 population. Another 31 percent were in communities of 5,000 to 99,999 population; only 12 percent were in cities with 1,000,000 or more people.

About two-thirds of the surveyed women agents limited their selling activities to city and/or suburban areas, 3 percent handled rural business exclusively, and the remainder had some rural customers along with urban clients.

Types of Working Arrangements

In addition to the home office, all the large companies have either general agencies or branch offices. A company's home office performs many centralized activities, but the selling and servicing functions are decentralized to the thousands of local agencies which are in the field. Most of these field offices are of modest size with a staff of perhaps 10 agents. Large offices may have as many as 50 underwriters, whereas many small ones have only 2 or 3.

The Branch Office System. Some companies direct their field operations through branch offices. These serve a specific territory and are run by company managers who are salaried employees. Managers and their assistants recruit, train, and supervise the field staff and are responsible for the operations of the branch offices. The branch office usually provides office space, office supplies, promotional materials, some clerical and secretarial assistance, and other services for its full-time agents.

The General Agency System. A general agency is more of an independent business run by a general agent who is not a salaried employee of the company. These agencies may or may not have exclusive rights to represent a company in a specified area. Most general agents are now subsidized in varying degrees by their companies and are supervised rather closely in many cases. They have much the same responsibilities as the branch manager—recruiting, training, and supervising the field staff and directing the field operations. The general agency, like the branch office, also provides facilities and services to its agents.

Direct Reporting Agents, Brokerage Firms. Some of the smaller companies have all their functions and responsibilities emanate from the home office. Underwriters under contract to such companies are direct reporting agents. They comprise a small proportion of all agents.

A small number of life insurance underwriters are attached to brokerage firms which handle business for more than one company.

VIII

Outlook and How To Get Started

Market for Life Insurance

All indicators point to a continued rise in life insurance sales in the coming years, and to a continued need for additional agents. Our population is increasing. There are more families who need protection, more young people going to college, more homes being purchased, more elderly people who want retirement income.

There is still a vast potential market among those not covered by life insurance and those who have some life insurance but, by their own admission, feel that they are not adequately covered.

Agency outlets have increased considerably since World War II, as population has risen and shifted to new areas. There is a trend toward more and smaller agency and branch office outlets outside metropolitan centers.

New agencies recruit new underwriters, of course, but most well-established general agencies and branch offices are constantly recruiting as well.

Turnover Creates Demand for Personnel

Even more numerous than openings resulting from expansion, will be those resulting from persons who leave the field. Turnover among life underwriters is high despite increasing attempts to achieve suitable appointments. A study conducted by the Life Insurance Agency Management Association covering selected companies reveal that of each 100 full-time agents hired in 1950 only 45 were still with their companies after the first year; 28, after the second year; 21, after the third year; 16, after the fourth year; and 14, after the fifth year. Turnover rates varied considerably among the individual companies surveyed, with some reporting a far lower rate of agent personnel loss. Unquestionably some of the underwriters who leave their companies continue their attachments to the industry as agents with other companies, but just what proportion is not known. Nevertheless,

replacement needs for those who quit life insurance selling create many opportunities for new personnel to enter the field.

In an effort to reduce turnover many companies and their agencies have become very selective in their recruitment. It is not uncommon for agency managers to interview many applicants in order to place a few under contract.

Outlook for Women

The preceding statements in this section apply to both women and men potential underwriters. But women are not sought after in quite the same manner as men.

Agency managers, who do most of the recruiting (usually subject to the final approval of the home office), entertain widely different attitudes regarding the desirability of utilizing women as life underwriters. Some wax enthusiastic; others consider them on the same basis as men; still others although uncertain may give them a try; whereas some refuse to have women underwriters associated with their agencies. Although many agency recruiters would not encourage a woman's entry into this career, there are many others who are receptive to the idea.

These differences of opinion generally reflect no company bias, no geographic origin. Just as in other occupational fields, recruitment practices depend on the attitude of the hiring official, in this case the individual general agent or branch manager. At the same time, few companies appear to have made serious efforts to encourage the recruitment of women or to dissipate current barriers to their utilization.

Perhaps the most effective encouragement a woman needs is the successful performance of women underwriters already in the field. And after she becomes a life underwriter, a woman has equal opportunity with men in pursuing her career.

How To Get Started in the Industry

Women interested in life underwriting should seek advice from those in the field—friends, relatives, their own or their families' agent, and officials in the local associations of the National Association of Life Underwriters. They should learn first hand from other agents what the job is like and should attempt to get introductions to general agents or branch managers.

Large metropolitan areas have many general agencies and branch offices and a direct request for an interview with the agency manager can be made. Public and private employment offices sometimes have

openings for life underwriters. Newspaper classified advertising is commonly used for recruitment, although, at times, "blind" ads are difficult to identify as openings for insurance agents.

Women still in college should arrange to see the recruiters who represent insurance companies when they visit the campus.

If a woman is interested in becoming associated with any particular company, information may be obtained from its home office, or from the general agency or branch office in the local community, if there is one. State insurance commissioners have available the names and addresses of all companies authorized to operate in their States.

Aptitude tests are now used by most companies to determine applicants' suitability for this work. The most widely used test is the one developed by the Life Insurance Agency Management Association.

Choice of Company and Agency Important

A great many of the surveyed NALU women members emphasized the importance of becoming associated with a company that offers a comprehensive training program and with an agency that, in turn, applies the training program effectively.

Good training and supervision can make or break an agent in the early stages of her career. Furthermore, experienced as well as new underwriters benefit from continued assistance and encouragement from their agency managers. The professional tone they set and the emphasis they place on topnotch career standards may mean the difference between a run-of-the-mill job or an outstanding career.

The woman who is considering a life underwriting career should be particularly careful in the selection of an agency and should attempt to become associated with one whose manager or training supervisor has a constructive attitude toward women underwriters.

Licensing Requirements

Agents must be licensed in each State where they sell insurance. In 41 States and the District of Columbia the regulations covering the qualifications and licensing of agents provide for written examinations, although in several States an applicant may offer the completion of an approved company course in lieu of the examination. Some States permit temporary licensing without examination varying in length of time from 30 days to 6 months. Agents must be sponsored by the companies they represent in order to obtain a license. The companies generally pay the licensing fees.

IX

Training Opportunities and Advancement

Company Sponsored Training

At one time in the history of the industry an agent was put under contract, given a rate book, and sent out to sell. No such situation prevails today. Potential agents may be given some precontract training, new agents are given intensive company-developed training, and both company- and industry-sponsored courses are available to the agent of limited experience and to the advanced underwriter.

Precontract Orientation. A recent survey reveals that quite a few companies have in recent years introduced precontract training curriculums or outlines.⁸ Adapted mostly from basic training materials, this orientation program is designed to give agency managers a means of further evaluating applicants and eliminating potential misfits. The training also gives applicants a better picture of what their work as agents will be.

Study items are more prevalent than field work, but many companies include observing or delivering sales talks. Most precontract training is of short duration, consuming fewer than 25 hours. Precontract training is not required by all the companies which have developed such programs, but most either require or encourage it.

On-the-job Training. Life insurance companies have a compulsory basic training course for their new agents which is usually conducted at the agency level, and which may be of fairly short duration or take up to a year to complete. In this stage of training, agents study the needs for and the uses and functions of different kinds of life insurance; learn to conduct sales interviews, to develop lists of prospects, to establish work schedules, and to know the variety of policies offered by their companies.

Intermediate or follow-up training offered by companies is not always compulsory; often the underwriter is recommended for such

⁸ Precontract Orientation—1959, Life Insurance Agency Management Association.

training. Advanced training is usually limited to "select" agents meeting specified production requirements and other qualifications. Intermediate courses may be conducted locally or at the home office or a combination of both. Advanced courses are often given at the home office or by some large companies at regional training conferences.

Intermediate and advanced training variously include insurance programming, estate planning and conservation, business insurance, pension planning, benefit trusts, and taxation (including Federal estate taxes, State death taxes, gift taxes).

Although the tripartite division of training into basic, intermediate, and advanced curriculums has been used here for convenience, many companies do not classify their training programs in this fashion. Nor do all companies, once past the basic induction training, offer additional training with equal thoroughness, emphasis, and completeness.

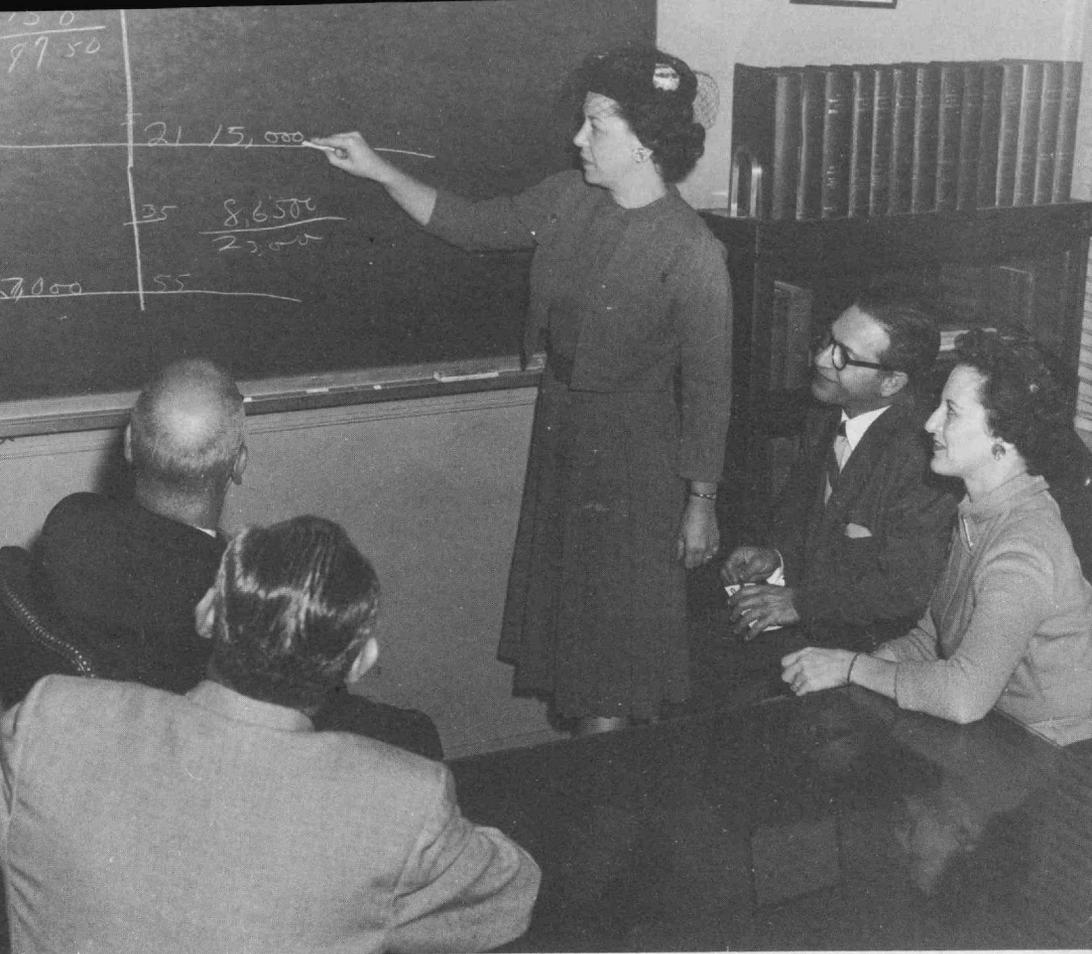
Institutional Programs

Life Underwriters Training Council. The Life Underwriters Training Council (LUTC), founded in 1947, is an independent organization established and originally financed by the National Association of Life Underwriters, the American Life Convention, the Life Insurance Agency Management Association, and the Life Insurance Association of America.

The LUTC, supported by company and agent organizations, offers a 2-year classroom training program at an intermediate level. The courses emphasize practical selling techniques. The first year's work covers such topics as the underwriter's job, product, customer needs, programming, sales process, and selection of a market. The second year includes expanding one's business, problems of business ownership, the corporate client, estate creation and conservation, estate distribution, and total need selling.

To be eligible for the first course, the students must have at least 1 year's experience as a life insurance agent, have completed company training required during the first year, and be recommended by the agency manager. For second year admission, the student must have successfully completed the first year's course or have had 2 years' experience in life insurance selling and have met a specified minimum production.

Students attend classes for 2½ hours each week for 25 weeks in each of the 2 years, generally from October to May. Instructors are drawn from successful local life underwriters and agency or home office officials. Citation certificates are awarded to those who successfully complete both years of the course.



Underwriters in a local agency get together for training. Here a group engages in an exchange of ideas.

During the first year LUTC was in operation, 5 pilot classes, with a total of 133 students, were set up in 3 cities. In the 1959-60 school year, 647 first-year and 410 second-year classes were offered in 590 cities and were attended by almost 20,000 students, including 160 women. The LUTC program had graduated 31,580 students by the spring of 1960. This phenomenal growth attests to the important need filled by this form of institutional training. Students usually pay the moderate cost of this program of study. Occasionally, companies may finance the training.

Insurance Marketing Institutes. Two universities, Purdue and Southern Methodist, offer courses in life underwriting on campus combined with field work to agents under contract.

The programs at both universities take about a year and include several 4-week periods of classroom work on campus alternating with

periods of several months of supervised selling experience in the student's agency. Most of the students, but not all, are first-year underwriters.

The Institutes were founded in the mid-1940's and have since been attended by several thousand students. In addition to the on-campus programs, the Institutes also conduct seminars, generally of 1-week's duration, in various sections of the country. Both Purdue and Southern Methodist have held seminars for women underwriters. These seminars have been sponsored by The Women Leaders Round Table with an outstanding woman underwriter joining the university professors who make up the teaching staff.

American College of Life Underwriters: The CLU Designation. The American College of Life Underwriters was founded in 1927 by the National Association of Life Underwriters under a separate charter to establish high standards of education which would provide underwriters with the knowledge and attitudes to serve their clients on a professional level. The college also encourages research in life insurance and related fields and promotes life insurance education in colleges and universities. It offers no instruction, but acts as an examining board.

The educational program for underwriters consists of a comprehensive course of study usually extending over a period of 4 and often more years. It involves college-level study for the passing of five examinations keyed to the following programs of studies:

- I. Fundamentals of Life Insurance and Annuities
- II. Business Life Insurance, Health Insurance, Group Insurance and Pensions
- III. Law, Trusts, and Taxation
- IV. Economics and Finance
- V. The Practice of Life Underwriting ; Comprehensive.

Candidates may prepare for the examinations in any manner they choose, although the college recommends study in formal courses offered by many cooperating colleges and universities, or in study groups sponsored by local chapters of the American Society of Chartered Life Underwriters and/or local associations of the NALU. Many companies finance the cost of C.L.U. study entirely or in part.

Candidates who pass all examinations and have at least 3 years of insurance experience are awarded the designation of Chartered Life Underwriter (C.L.U.), the highest educational distinction which can be bestowed on a life agent. It is the symbol of professional achievement in the industry. The C.L.U. designation also entitles the underwriter to membership in the American Society of Chartered Life Underwriters and to participate in its activities. The designation had

been awarded to 7,989 persons, including 157 women, by the end of 1959.

Although C.L.U. study is considered the most advanced life insurance training program, occasionally college students and graduates who have taken appropriate courses may take all or some of the examinations before meeting the 3-year experience requirement. In such cases, the C.L.U. designation is not awarded until the candidate has acquired 3 years of experience.

Women Underwriters Urge Training

More than four-fifths of the women who participated in the NALU survey had completed company basic training programs. That not all had participated in such programs reflects the fact that a goodly number of the women had entered this field of work many years ago when company training was not so widespread. In addition, some had become underwriters during World War II when manpower shortages were so stringent that the pressure to go into selling directly was very great. Furthermore, there was also a great shortage of training staff.

More than half of the surveyed women reported that they had completed both LUTC courses of study, and another 17 percent indicated that they were currently taking such training.

Almost 3 out of 10 of the respondents reported having participated in C.L.U. training, and, of this group, nearly 1 in 3 had completed the training.

Surveyed women underwriters again and again stressed the importance of taking as much training as possible. They pointed out that those in the field must keep abreast, through continuous study, of social, economic, and legal changes affecting life underwriting.

Advancement to Other Positions

Life underwriting is an occupation which offers ample opportunities for financial advancement without moving into other positions in life insurance. Some salaried agency and home office posts offer advancement potential to agents who have administrative talents and who find managerial and executive work attractive. However, most successful underwriters are not especially interested in transferring to these salaried positions.

There are a few women general agents who own their own businesses. Some women underwriters, but not many, have moved from life underwriting to supervisory and executive agency and home office posts.

X

Life Underwriters Organizations

National Association of Life Underwriters

The National Association of Life Underwriters is made up of State associations which, in turn, are made up of local associations in cities and towns having enough life insurance agents to support a local organization. Membership is confined to underwriters, general agents, and managers. The NALU and its affiliated State and local associations are active in all areas affecting the interest and welfare of its members. It participates vigorously in sponsoring training and encouraging educational programs on insurance in public schools and colleges. It works for effective insurance legislation. In 1960, membership in local associations affiliated with the National Association totaled about 80,000, including 1,500 women.

The Association promotes professional career attitudes, and its members subscribe to a code of ethics which call for conduct of high standards in handling their responsibilities to clients and companies. Members receive the Association's official monthly publication, *Life Association News*.

With the National Association setup, there is a Women's Committee of Life Underwriters which is concerned with matters of special interest to women members.

The National Quality Award. The Committee on Conservation of the NALU and the Quality Business Committee of the Life Insurance Agency Management Association sponsor the National Quality Award (NQA), with emphasis on quality of production rather than volume.

To qualify for the award in any year, candidates must show a persistency record of 90 percent by amount or number of lives insured. This means that 90 percent of the paid business not terminated by death or term conversion must still be in force for that year and the one immediately preceding. For each year the applicant must have sold \$150,000 of insurance on at least 15 lives. Certificates are



A distinguished woman life underwriter achieves a great honor. As president of the American Society of Chartered Life Underwriters, the national organization of career life underwriters, she presides at a Board meeting.

awarded successful candidates. Ten-year winners of the award receive a laminated plaque; 15-year winners a trophy.

The NQA program was initiated in 1945. Based on 1958 and 1959 production records, about 15,000 underwriters applied and qualified for NQA in 1960.

Women Leaders Round Table. Organized within the framework of the NALU, the Women Leaders Round Table was founded to recognize the achievement of women underwriters producing a considerable volume of business, to promote a friendly relationship and to provide for an exchange of ideas among these women. To qualify for membership, women must sell at least \$250,000 of insurance in 1 year, credited according to specified criteria. A woman may become a life member if she qualifies for 3 consecutive years or for 4 out of 5 consecutive years.

In 1960 (based on 1959 production), 302 women were in the Women Leaders Round Table; more than half sold well over the minimum amount required for membership. The Women Leaders Round Table does not include all women who sell a quarter-million dollars or more of insurance, however; some do not apply for membership.

Million Dollar Round Table. Also organized within the framework of the NALU is the Million Dollar Round Table, which is an organization of outstanding life insurance underwriters who produce large volumes of business—namely \$1 million or more in a year, credited as specified by the organization. In 1960, the Million Dollar Round Table had 3,040 members including some outstandingly successful women underwriters.

American Society of Chartered Life Underwriters

Membership in the American Society of Chartered Life Underwriters is limited to Chartered Life Underwriters. The Society's activities include sponsoring further education on a graduate level, providing its members with various professional services, and promoting increased public recognition of the significance of the C.L.U. designation. The Society conducts annual C.L.U. Institutes which are held at prominent universities and at which new ideas in advanced life insurance practices are studied.

The C.L.U. Journal is the official professional publication of the Society. In 1960, there were 118 local chapters, many of which were active in establishing and conducting local C.L.U. study groups.

In Conclusion

It has often been said, and quite correctly, that there is no ceiling to a life underwriter's earnings. By the same token, there is no ceiling to the underwriter's efforts. Hours can be long; evenings and weekends are frequently devoted to sales interviews. There is hard work and some unrewarded effort. There is much to learn and study never seems to end. There is competition. Mistakes are made. Beginning earnings may be low.

However, if one is willing to continue study and discipline oneself to work effectively and discuss financial needs with many well-selected prospects, the career of life underwriting offers unlimited opportunities for earnings and for service—as reporting women agents pointed out repeatedly and emphatically.

They like the challenge and stimulation life underwriting offers. They find insurance a prestige career which brings them respect in the community. They enjoy being their own bosses and choosing as clients people they want to deal with.

They emphasize the security this work offers, the fact that in most instances agents can continue to sell insurance with no compulsory retirement. Economic recessions bring no layoffs.

Finally, they stress that for the woman with the needed qualifications and with the determination to succeed, life underwriting is a career whose potential compares favorably with many others in financial reward and in satisfaction of service.

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