WOMEN AT LILLY
The Role of Female Labor in an American Industry, 1910 -- 1950

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By
James Ronald Newlin

Thesis Director

Ball State University
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During the twentieth century, the economic status of women in the United States has improved considerably. Studies have repeatedly proven that female workers enjoyed greater access to the labor force and more equitable wages as the century progressed. Certain historical events and the ensuing trends in public opinion played undeniable roles in the woman worker's struggle for equality.¹ This study is an examination of how those events and trends affected the lot of the female employee in one factory in the first half of the century.

Eli Lilly and Company, of Indianapolis, Indiana, is one of the world's foremost pharmaceutical firms. At the turn of the century it was a small concern with a mere 24-year history, employing fewer than 150 individuals. Today it is a multi-national corporation with almost 25,000 employees. The first half of this century was an important and formative period for the business and its employment policies, as it was for the American female labor force. Lilly lends a valuable perspective to the study of female labor for a number of reasons. The pharmaceutical industry is neither seasonal, as are many agricultural and textile businesses which have historically employed women, nor subject to tremendous fluctuation in total employment, as is the war munitions industry. Thus it provides a reasonably stable and constant sample.

Also, Eli Lilly is not and never has been unionized; thus women at Lilly received neither the benefit of union wages nor the discrimination against women of which many unions in the early twentieth century were guilty. The company's employment policies were largely the product of management decisions as shaped by current popular opinion, and not by legislation or arbitration.

This study begins with the year 1910 because that is approximately the time that the first great wealth of documents now in the company archives appeared. The first substantial wave of report and record-keeping coincided with the entry into the Lilly management of Eli Lilly and J. K. Lilly, Jr., grandsons of the founder of the company and sons of then-president, J.K. Lilly, Sr. J. K. Sr., Eli, and J.K., Jr. all played crucial roles in the development of the company personnel policy, and the period of their active involvement in the company corresponds to the chronological limits of this study.

This study concludes with 1950, thereby discussing World War II and its immediate aftermath, a period commonly considered as crucial to the development and the history both of Eli Lilly and Company and of the female work force.

American historians who have studied the progress of women at work in this century have reached a general consensus that conditions have improved a great deal and that the most significant factor in that improvement was the Second World War. One of the most complete chronological studies of women and work in this century is William Chafe's The American Woman. Chafe briefly

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2 Chafe discusses the interaction between organized labor and women workers throughout The American Woman.
described the scope of employment opportunities and conditions for women around 1910:

Most women in industry were clustered in low-paying, unskilled jobs in candy factories, textile mills, apparel centers, and commercial laundries. The seasonal nature of their occupations caused them to change jobs repeatedly, preventing the development of a stable, cohesive work force which a union activist could organize effectively.

Chafe repeatedly linked improvement in working conditions for women to unionism, but few unions would or could organize female workers in the 1910s and 1920s. In fact, since unions generally ignored women workers throughout the pre-World War II period, Chafe concluded that the only hope for female laborers was another interventionary force: "In the absence of labor interest in recruiting women, government action offered the best hope for safeguarding female industry workers." According to Chafe, the greatest boon to female labor prior to World War II was the New Deal with its minimum wage legislation. Despite that progress, Chafe wrote that, in 1940, "On balance, however, persistent economic deprivation remained the most striking characteristic of women workers." Against this backdrop, Chafe contended that World War II was the most significant development of the half-century:

In 1940 the percentage of females at work was almost exactly what it had been in 1910, and there seemed little reason to expect any change in the future.

4 Ibid., p. 79
5 Ibid., p. 87
Within five years, World War II had radically transformed the economic outlook of women. The eruption of hostilities generated an unprecedented demand for new workers, and, in response, over 6 million women took jobs, increasing the size of the female labor force by over 50 percent. Wages leaped upward, the number of wives holding jobs doubled, and the unionization of women grew fourfold. Most important, public attitudes appeared to change. Instead of frowning on women who worked, government and the mass media embarked on an all-out effort to encourage them to enter the labor force. The war marked a watershed in the history of women at work, and, temporarily at least, caused a greater change in women's economic status than half a century of feminist rhetoric and agitation and been able to achieve.\footnote{Ibid., p. 135-6.}

Chafe acknowledged that women's gains in the 1940s were neither qualitative nor permanent. The number of women earning wages had increased sharply, but,

A permanent change in women's economic status, however, required a continued redistribution of sexual roles, a more profound shift in public attitudes, and a substantial improvement in the treatment and opportunities afforded the female worker. On that score, there was somewhat less reason for optimism.

Other historians tend to agree with Chafe's assessment, although most are not as adamant that the Second World War was paramount in importance in the development of the female labor force. In *Women and Work in America*, Robert Smuts suggested that "every generation of Americans seems to think that the most recent war was responsible for introducing women into the factory."\footnote{Robert Smuts, *Women and Work in America* (New York: Shocken Books, 1971), p. 17.} Smuts did admit, however, that World War II was somewhat more significant than previous wars. "The proportion of women working for pay or profit has been increasing ever since the Civil War, if not before,"
he reiterated, "but until World War II the change was relatively slow..." Smuts differed slightly from Chafe over the significance of the Depression on women's work. Attitudes, not wage legislation, were the important changes of that decade. "The most obvious effect of the depression of the 1930s was to throw many women out of work and to intensify the feeling that working women took jobs away from male breadwinners," Smuts wrote, but,

a great many women who would not have thought of working in normal times took whatever odd jobs they could get to help replace income lost because husbands, fathers, and brothers were unemployed. In spite of the scarcity of jobs, the female labor force appears to have grown more rapidly between 1930 and 1940 than it had in either of the two previous decades.

Thus by forcing many women to seek employment, the Depression might have had as substantial an effect on changing attitudes of and about working women as did World War II.

Two essays in Robert Lifton's The Woman in America concurred with Chafe's evaluation of the significance of World War II. Esther Peterson claimed that, historically,"the greatest influx of women into the work force came in time of war... World War II widened the scope of women's employment even further and set a new high for the number of women employed." That high—19,570,000, or 36 percent of the total labor force—comprised a greater percentage of the total labor force than ever before or after until 1965. Carl Degler, in another essay, set these gains in proper perspective.

9 Ibid, p.3.
10 Ibid., p. 145.
The Second World War, with its even more massive demands for labor and skills, brought almost four million new women workers into the nation's factories and offices. . . . Measured in the number of women working, the changes in the economic position of women add up to a feminist success. But weighed in the scales of quality instead of quantity, the change in women's economic status is not so striking.12

The statistics assert that the role of the woman worker has been growing throughout the century and that the Second World War was a considerable catalyst in that growth. Was World War II an unmatched "watershed" in the history of women's labor, as Chafe and others suggested, or was it, as Smuts implied, just the most recent and obvious in a series of events which had been affecting female labor? The experience of the woman worker at Eli Lilly and Company in the first half of this century seems to favor the latter interpretation. Women's wages increased gradually throughout the period, and the improvement in status for female laborers brought about by World War II proved to be temporary. If Chafe's thesis is correct, the policies of Lilly suggest that that pattern was not necessarily valid for every business in America.

12 Ibid., p. 200-1.
Throughout the early history of industry in America, the role of women in business was synonymous with the role of women in the factory. Women were routinely employed by manufacturing concerns to do light manual labor that was often tedious and repetitious. The wisdom of hiring women was that they could be paid consistently lower wages than were men.

Eli Lilly and Company was no exception to this practice in the early twentieth century. While the company's labor forces at the Indianapolis plant grew from 140 in 1900 to 5,415 in 1950, the ratio of female employees to males remained essentially equal. Most of the women, however, were employed in a few select departments, such as bottling, capsule filling, and gelatin coating.

It is sometimes difficult to determine the exact duties of such positions, but company records do provide an interesting estimate of the relative value of each job. Beginning in June of 1938, the company instituted an "Occupational Rating Plan" to measure the importance of every job in the plant. The plan assigned job points on a scale of 0 to 125 to each position. Job value was determined by the following criteria: job conditions (responsibility, comfort, health hazards), 44 percent; physical requirements (ranging from endurance to dexterity), 14 percent; and mental requirements (including education, judgment, and ingenuity), 42 percent. Apparently these points were originally assigned by the management, although in 1941 employees were allowed to contribute their eva-

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14 John McConnell, report to E. Beck, July 1, 1938. Ms. in Lilly archives.
The Occupational Rating Plan was initially used to establish a maximum (but not a minimum) wage for each position. In 1941 Efficiency Department Staff Assistant E. Hardy Adriance proposed that the same scale be used to assign deserving individuals to the period payroll:

If the job rating plan accurately evaluates the overall relative importance of jobs to the Company for the purpose of one form of recognition (maximum pay), it also accurately evaluates them for purposes of payroll classification, because payroll recognition should be a recognition of an operating contribution to the Company's welfare. The Occupational Rating Plan, then, was used not only for purposes of determining wages, but as a means of assigning prestige in the form of a monthly salary. The job rating system was, in a sense, a form of social recognition.

DESCRIPTIONS OF WOMEN'S JOBS

A good description of the work done in typical predominantly-female departments can be found in a 1913 efficiency report. Intrigued by the labor-relations trend of the day, scientific management, Lilly executives had contracted the Emerson Company of Chicago, Illinois, to send a team of efficiency engineers to Indianapolis to conduct a time study. The report, designed to, among other things, reduce waste in each of Lilly's production departments, reveals a great deal about working conditions of the time.

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15 E. H. Adriance, memo to E. Beck, Aug. 11, 1941. Ms. in Lilly archives.
16 Ibid.
In the Bottling department, the requirements of one job, that of "Filler", are described as follows: "Filler counts pills by paddle, fills bottles, stuffs with cotton where necessary, and corks bottles." 17 Her duties were more varied than those of her colleague, whose untitled job was described, "Girl on the other side later takes (the bottles) out of coop and puts on labels. This girl must examine all labels to see whether or not they are correct. This girl wraps and places in cartons open." 18 Most of these jobs were performed while sitting down. Since most payment in the department was on piece rate, 19 it can be assumed that there was little rotation of jobs to relieve the monotony. These jobs were not considered challenging or rewarding; the 1938 rating system classified these jobs at 34 to 38 points on the 125-point scale. 20

A common department for new female employees was the capsule filling department, where hard gelatin capsules were filled, polished, and sorted by hand. The department regularly was among the worst in the factory in terms of labor turnover, a result in part of the fact that, "... the work is dirty and the odor bad; tapping the capsules works a callous on the finger and a cracked skin often develops." 21 Job points ranged from 34 for hand-filling to 45 for sorting. 22

18 Ibid.
19 Ibid., p. 145
20 McConnell, op. cit.
21 Emerson Company, op. cit., p. 207.
22 McConnell, op. cit.
Men tended to be directed to more physical work, such as that in the all-male fluid extract division. The Emerson study described the extent of this drug-mixing department's activities. "Two men pack the percolators, one handles all the alcohol, one does miscellaneous work, and one washes all the barrels and cans."\(^{23}\)

The job conditions for men were probably no better or worse than those of women, although fluid extract work was somewhat more delicate and demanding than capsule filling. In this department job rating points ranged from a low of 46 to a high of 66.\(^{24}\)

Of course, many of the jobs described in the 1913 Emerson report had been phased out or replaced by automation by the time of the 1938 Occupational Rating study. Those jobs described above, and many others, however, remained essentially unchanged. Despite the ever-increasing effects of automation and progress, Lilly continued to employ approximately equal numbers of men and women in the factory, with occasional fluctuations.

The greatest fluctuation in female employment occurred, of course, during the Second World War. The concept of "men's work" and "women's work" was still a very accepted reality in 1942 when the following memo was circulated by the Employment Department:

> During the war emergency the company will eliminate the hiring of men as far as possible by adopting a substitution plan whereby women will be trained to do men's work. Operation of this plan will involve:
> 1. Replacing men with women . . .
> 2. Transferring men from jobs that can be performed by women to jobs unsuited for women. . . .\(^{25}\)

\(^{23}\) Emerson Company, op. cit., p. 261.
\(^{24}\) McConnell, op. cit.
\(^{25}\) Employment Department memo, unsigned, April 29, 1942. Ms. in Lilly archives.
To describe this phenomenon as a great emancipation of the working woman, as Chafe implied, is to overstate the case. While it is true that the war did allow women greater employment opportunities and greater mobility within the labor force, the company did maintain that there still some jobs "unsuitable for women." Although the company had always before been able to justify its policy of paying women lower wages on the basis that women performed less important jobs (which they did, at least according to the Occupational Rating Plan), assignment to men's jobs did not ensure equal pay. Lilly compromised on that point, granting women on men's jobs either a 10¢/hour raise or guaranteeing a minimum wage of 60¢/hour for men and 50¢/hour for women, neither plan quite brought women up to men's pay on men's jobs. Interestingly, men transferred to "jobs unsuitable for women" to make room for female replacements never took wage cuts, even if their new assignment had a lower job point rating. "In no circumstances should an individual transferred to the 'Men's War Assignment Corps' be asked to take a reduction in earnings..." If anything, the experience of the Second World War suggested that management based wage policy not on job value but on gender.

Nonetheless, Lilly plunged into the reassignment program and its effects were extensive. By June, 1943, 145 women had replaced

26 Ibid.
27 Employment Department report, unsigned, June 1, 1941. Ms. in Lilly archives.
28 Employment Department memo, April 29, 1942. Ibid.
men in 21 different departments. Many transfers came in the pharmaceutical production division, where women assumed jobs ranging from the 32-point bottle wash operator to the 65-point tablet machine operator. In the research division eleven women became day process operators, an 82-point job. Perhaps the greatest height of responsibility came in the chemical control division, where two women assumed positions as assistant inspectors, which bore 109-point values. On the other hand, it is not known whether many women took cuts in job value, if not pay, to assume such unsavory men's jobs as the 27-point liver-cutting process. 29

But the Women's War Assignment Corps was never intended to be permanent. The original memorandum specified that

> Employees transferred to the Women's or Men's War Assignment Corps shall be given to understand that such change is of a temporary nature arising out of the war situation and that in the normal course of events they will be expected to relinquish the temporary assignment and the special rate connected with it at the conclusion of the war or whenever requested. 30

And temporary the WWAC was. On October 10, 1945, just two months after the end of the war, Employment Department Assistant Manager Irma Gloyd sent out a memo suggesting that the last seven women on men's jobs in pharmaceutical production be transferred. 31

At the height of the war that division alone had had 27 women on men's jobs.

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29 Employment Department report, unsigned, June 9, 1943. Ms. in Lilly archives.

30 Employment Department memo, April 29, 1942. Ibid.

In the aftermath of the war, with hundreds of thousands of veterans returning to the labor force, there was some decrease in the number of women employed at Lilly. The annual personnel estimate for 1947 requested a total of 160 additional men and only 47 additional women for the coming year.\(^\text{32}\) In June of 1947 Lilly employed a total of 2,760 men and 2,643 women; by December 1949 the count of men had risen to 2,929 while the number of women had dropped to 2,227.\(^\text{33}\) This is a deceptive statistic, however, because all but 22 of the 416 women's jobs lost in the period were in the production department. In the same period, the number of women in such departments as research and marketing actually rose,\(^\text{34}\) suggesting that women were finally beginning to shed their role in business of being nothing more than factory help.

**WORKING CONDITIONS AND JOB BENEFITS.**

Eli Lilly and Company's concern with improving working conditions for all employees appears to have been genuine, even if progress was gradual. Around the turn of the century, new company president J. K. Lilly, Sr. once noted on a tour of the plant that women employees worked all day while sitting on backless stools, and quickly ordered the stools to be replaced by chairs with backs.\(^\text{35}\) At this time, conditions in the plant were fairly spartan:

"...twice a day they [workers] had a brief rest period, when water in a bucket was passed around, with a single ladle for all hands."\(^\text{36}\)

\(^{32}\) E.N. Beesley, memo to E. Beck, June 12, 1947. Ms. in Lilly archives.


\(^{34}\) Ibid.


\(^{36}\) Ibid.
Improvement of working conditions continued sporadically. Shortly after the company had instituted an experimental bonus plan in 1912, women in the capsule filling department discovered they could fill their quota by mid-afternoon. A letter from Mr. Eli Lilly was required to bring a halt to the ensuing "sewing parties" by specifying that all employees must continue at their jobs on bonus pay until closing time. 37

Provisions for creature comforts for employees were made as demands dictated. In a report compiled by sales apprentice Robert Blakeman in November 1925, 10-minute rest periods numbering as many as four per day were described. Related to these breaks, Blakeman reported, "Another feature has recently been added; that of placing cots about the factory for the use of the women workers during rest periods." 38 This practice apparently remained in effect for at least twenty years, because an equipment requisition for January 6, 1944, lists a request for "10 Hospital Beds and the necessary bedding for women's cot room ...." 39 Also at the time of Blakeman's report, the company had just opened its first cafeteria, serving lunch to over 400 employees a day. 40

Most company benefits applied to all employees and did not specify different treatment for men and women. Nonetheless, men were much more likely to take advantage of many of these opportunities

37 Eli Lilly, memo to Miss Reibel, Sept. 3, 1912. Ms. in Lilly archives.
39 Earl Beck, memo to W. A. Hanley, Jan. 6, 1944. Ms. in Lilly archives.
40 Blakeman, op. cit. p. 6.
than were women. Records of the emergency loan fund from 1930 to 1943 show that loans were granted to ten times as many male employees as female. 41 Similarly, the company's policy of rewarding valuable suggestions by employees resulted in monetary awards and recognition to an average of 27 men but less than seven women per month between 1939 and 1947. 42 It can not be determined whether men were more likely to apply for these benefits or were just more likely to be accepted.

An interesting distinction between male and female employees was made in the company's group insurance and pension plan which was first offered in 1927. Company-paid pensions were provided for "all male employees in good standing who have reached the age of sixty-five years, and have been twenty years or more in the service, . . ." and to "female employees in good standing who shall have reached to age of fifty-five and have had twenty years or more in the service. . . ." 43 In addition, an employee-funded retirement annuity first offered in 1932 provided that any female employee who . . . starts paying $5.00 a month at age 20 is guaranteed at least $37.50 a month for life, starting payments at age 60." 44 Men paying the same premium were" . . . guaranteed at least $69.40 a month for life, starting payments at age 65." 45

41 C. W. Jones, reports to Earl Beck, Jan. 5, 1932 to July 21, 1943. Ms. in Lilly archives.
42 Suggestions reports, unsigned, to J. S. Wright, May 18, 1939 to March 10, 1947. Ms. in Lilly archives.
45 Ibid.
The policy brochures do not give explanations for these distinctions, but they were probably based on demographic data of the 1930s, when women were expected to outlive men by several years. Given the fact that female employees retired sooner and often survived longer, the lower monthly annuity sum was probably in their favor.

Some policies changed along with current social mores. In 1920 the Rules and Information booklet distributed to all employees strictly prohibited smoking at all times. In 1928 the booklet read, "Smoking, lighting or carrying lighted cigars, cigarettes, etc., in any of the Company Buildings, except in the Cafeteria and in the men's lounge room during the lunch hour, is prohibited." By 1938 the rules were relaxed to allow smoking "... in the cafeteria and in the recreation rooms." Apparently this indicates that by the late 1930's women were allowed to smoke in their lounges, also. Actually, Lilly was something of a leader in the pharmaceutical industry in providing niceties for female employees. As late as 1945, Abbott Laboratories reported at the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Industrial Relations Conference that "coffee is proved free to male employees at 9:30 a.m., but as yet the company has not extended this privilege to female employees."

That industrial relations involving women were often linked to prevailing moral codes is nowhere more obvious than in the debate

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46 Rules and Information for the Guidance of Employees, company publication. 1920. p. 47. Ms. in Lilly archives.
47 Ibid., 1928. p. 52
48 Ibid., 1938. p. 62
in the 1940s over women working on the night shift. Indiana State Law did its part by ruling that "no boy between 14 and 16 and no girl between 14 and 18 shall be employed . . . before 6 o'clock in the morning nor after 7 o'clock in the evening."\(^{50}\) Apparently the idea of 17-year-old girls walking home alone at 7:30 p.m. offended the legislators' senses of propriety.

The war emergency, of course, changed the popular conception of appropriate working hours for women. The Acts of 1945 extended the state legislature's approval of work "around the clock" for women but included the provision that the act would expire with the end of the war. The state's personnel relations newsletter reminded employers that

> The following restrictions on employment will again be in effect with the official termination of the war:
> 1. Women may not be employed in any capacity for the purpose of manufacturing between the hours of 10 o'clock at night and 6 o'clock in the morning. . . .\(^{51}\)

Employment of women on the night shift continued after the war, however. The Industrial Relations department conducted a study in April, 1947, on "The Human Aspects of Night Shift Work," compiling information from external sources. Among other things, the study found that 57 percent of female night shift employees saw only disadvantages to night shift work,\(^{52}\) that "frequent shift


\(^{51}\) Wilfred Bradshaw, *Personnel Relations in Indiana*, No. 29, August 18, 1945.

\(^{52}\) New York Dept. of Labor: *Long Hours and Night Work*, May 1946.
changes will contribute to mass post-war physical breakdowns among women war workers," and that "moral delinquency seems to be more prevalent among night workers." The Industrial Relations department concluded its study with the statement: "The general conclusion from observation is night work for women should be only under very exceptional circumstances and should not be allowed during peacetime." However, women proved to be ensconced on the graveyard shift to stay. Despite the recommendations of earlier studies, a 1948 memo from Employment Department Manager concerning expanding personnel services for night shift workers was sent not only to men's employment assistant manager R.M. Yoho but also to women's assistant manager Irma Gloyd.

One distinct advantage that female employees at Eli Lilly and Company held over women at other businesses was, apparently, job security. During the bleak years of the depression, Lilly management took great pride in the fact that no Lilly employees were layed off. President Eli Lilly claimed in his annual report for 1932 that "probably the greatest satisfaction derived from the year 1932 is that not a single person was discharged or laid off [sic] on account of the depression and not a wage or salary was reduced." Throughout the 1930's this no lay-off policy applied to women as well as men, thanks in great part to the efforts of the Company's colorful vice-

54 U. S. Dept. of Labor: Bibliography of Night Workers, 1942.
In March, 1932, the management first began to discuss the possibility of layoffs, a policy proposed by both government and labor, and one which was gaining acceptance in many industries. Personnel manager Charles Jones formulated a suggested procedure for permanent dismissal of married women first. The second group to be dismissed was divorced women receiving alimony. Next, single girls living with their parents were to be laid off. The fourth group scheduled for layoffs consisted of single and divorced women who lived alone or had dependents. Next came the layoff of single men. The sixth group to be laid off was to be all married men who had no children or who had working wives, and the last and most secure group consisted of married men with children. Of course, no part of the plan ever went into effect, but the procedure makes an interesting comment on the status of women. Since the primary intent of the plan was to avoid releasing employees with families, it is an anomaly that single men with no family were more secure than divorced women with children.

The following month when Jones and Efficiency Manager Earl Beck presented their plans for reducing the payroll to President Eli Lilly, they had placed their recommendations in the following order:

1. Close at twelve o'clock on Saturday.
2. Five day week.
3. Extra vacations without pay.
4. Lay-offs.
5. Excluding married women from our organization.

59 Ibid., April 29, 1932. Ms. in Lilly archives.
Only the first two were even seriously considered at that time.

As the grip of the depression tightened, however, the idea of dismissing married women from the company resurfaced. In April of 1934, President Eli Lilly sent the following memo to a few of his advisors, reporting a suggestion by his father, Chairman of the Board, J. K. Lilly, Sr.

Mr. J. K. Lilly suggests that we promulgate a new rule which I would like you to think about and give me your advice on.

He thinks that in the future any woman in our employ who gets married should be automatically dropped. This would not apply to women who are married and now in the employ of the house.

He further suggests that no married woman should be employed in the future who has an able-bodied husband.60

Eli's brother, vice-president J. K. Lilly, Jr., quickly constructed this reply:

I am heartily in favor of following the suggestions outlined in your memorandum of April 30 that "in the future any woman in our employ should be automatically dropped" only, however, in the event that we place also in effect the following rule: "In the future any man in our employ who gets married should be automatically dropped."

... It seems to me that it would be rather a return to barbaric times to adopt a ruling which would place women in our employ who get married into a classification which might be termed household chattel only.61

J. K., Jr., evidently than thought better of his hasty reply, for he decided not to send it. Instead, he composed a somewhat more formal rebuttal, but one no less sarcastic. He stated that

60 Eli Lilly, memo to J. K. Lilly, Jr., et al., April 30, 1934. Ms. in Lilly archives.

61 J. K. Lilly, Jr., memo to Eli Lilly, May 1, 1934. Ms. in Lilly archives.
"I rise to remark that I am strenuously opposed to such a ruling," explaining that "such a ruling will promote prevarication on the part of women who are actually so indiscreet as to get married," and that dismissed employees would harbor "... a feeling of resentment toward this house and its products forever after, amen!" He suggested furthermore that "there is no question but that the entry of women into industry has raised the standard of living for thousands and thousands of small households," and repeated his contention that such a ruling would reduce women to "household chattel."62

Subsequently, Charles Jones and Earl Beck submitted extensive reports on the issue. Jones concluded that "exclusion of married women smacks of paternalism and interference with personal affairs of individuals,"63 but recommended that

1. We continue our present policy of not employing women who are married when they apply.
2. We continue to employ women who marry after they are employed here.
3. We attempt to educate and persuade married women to resign voluntarily. 64

Earl Beck added a suggestion that ". . . consideration be given to a plan whereby women married after employment should be asked to resign sometime within the first five years, immediately after being married."65

62 Ibid., May 3, 1934.
63 C. W. Jones, report to Eli Lilly, May 24, 1934. Ms. in Lilly archives.
64 Ibid.
65 Earl Beck, memo to Eli Lilly, May 29, 1934. Ms. in Lilly Archives.
J. K. Lilly, Jr., stuck to his guns. He rifled a memo to his brother stating that "I wish to go on record as being in no way, shape, or form, in agreement with the recommendation set forth in Mr. Beck's memorandum..." President Lilly gave up the struggle and informed his father, who had initiated the controversy, "Unless you very seriously object, I shall tell the boys in the Employment Department to continue their present policy... and let it go at that."67

With considerable indebtedness to the efforts of J. K. Lilly, Jr., the position of married women at Lilly was secure. They were still not assured equality—the 1942 Employment Manual included a clause that "single girls shall be given preference and married women employed only when they have better qualifications" 68—but neither were they excluded. This can be seen almost as a stance of liberalism on the part of Eli Lilly and Company, when compared to the policies of other employers of the time. A 1930 report by W.A. Hanley to Eli Lilly on the Industrial Relations department of the Ford Motor Company stated that "the Ford idea is that the man should be the wage earner, and the woman the home maker. A girl in the employ of the Ford Company, who marries, automatically loses her position."69 At least at Eli Lilly and Company women had advanced beyond treatment of that sort by the 1930s.

66 J. K. Lilly, Jr., memo to Eli Lilly, May 31, 1934. Ms. in Lilly archives.
67 Eli Lilly, memo to J. K. Lilly, Sr., June 1, 1934. Ms. in Lilly archives.
69 W. A. Hanley, report to Eli Lilly, May 18, 1930. Ms. in Lilly archives.
PRODUCTIVITY OF WOMEN WORKERS

An important consideration in evaluating the role and treatment of the female employee is the value to the company of that employee. As was the accepted practice, women were consistently placed in jobs of relative unimportance, and were paid less than men. These differences, however, were rationalized by companies who claimed that a woman's output was not worth as much as that of a man. Companies had many ways of estimating the value and productivity of a worker.

One indicator of an employee's value was the level of education. Although the job rating plan placed considerable emphasis on the amount of education required to qualify for a particular job, the company has preserved no consistent records of the average level of its employees. One such study was conducted in 1946, however. It revealed that at that time, 70 percent of all male employees and 68.9 percent of all female employees were high school graduates. By the end of the war, if not before, the female laborer had achieved virtual educational parity with her male counterpart in the factory at Lilly.

Far more important, once the employee was hired, was the continuity of that employee's contribution, in terms of both regularity and longevity. Hospital Report records from 1917 to 1924 show that female employees were more than twice as likely as males to lose time during accidents and illnesses. In one typical month in 1918, Lilly first aid nurses treated 458 employees for various maladies--

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319 women and 139 men. In physical injuries to limbs and extremities, men were almost as likely as women to require aid. The difference came in the "miscellaneous" category, where 80 women were treated and only 29 men; in "headache," with 48 women and 5 men; and in "cramps," with 21 women and no men.

Another cause of lost time which afflicted women exclusively was, of course, pregnancy. The traditional policy regarding maternity leaves was that "women who become pregnant are not permitted to work longer than four and one half months during the pregnancy . . . , because it has been found to be the best policy for the employee and for the company." The leave was not to exceed one year and was without pay. This rule was still in the Lilly employment manual in 1950.

The company placed great emphasis on length of service. Ideally, labor turnover should be kept low to reduce the expense of training new employees. In this respect, women were by no means a safe bet. During the First World War, Eli Lilly and Company averaged 150 dismissals a month, representing an annual turnover rate of over 150 percent. In a typical month in 1917, the 145 employees who left or were fired included 65 men and 80 women. The overwhelming majority of separations occurred with employees under 21 years of age; the most common reasons for their departure were better pay elsewhere and dissatisfaction with their jobs.

71 Department Hospital Report, unsigned, August, 1918. Ms. in Lilly archives.
72 On the Job With Lilly, company publication, 1950. p. 34. Copy in Lilly archives.
74 Ibid., Sept. 1917.
Labor turnover dropped considerably in the 1920's; by 1926 it was down to 23.8 percent. During the depression, of course, almost all hiring ceased, and turnover fell to 7 percent in 1934. During the Second World War the economy righted itself and as mobility returned to the labor force, it became apparent that women were still less likely than men to remain on the job long enough to build seniority.

In 1943 the Employment Department instituted the practice of conducting separation interviews with all departing employees. In 1943 and 1944, Assistant Employment Manager R. M. Yoho conducted interviews with an average of about 5 male employees a week. About half the men departing were being discharged for unsatisfactory work or poor conduct. Very few had been employed longer than one year. During the same period, Yoho's counterpart Irma Gloyd conducted some 20 to 30 interviews a week. Very few female workers were actually fired; most separations were the result of voluntary resignations.

The extent to which men were more likely than women to accrue seniority can be seen in figures compiled for the purpose of paying length-of-service bonuses. On January 1, 1946, there were 1,404 men and 409 women with five or more years experience on the Lilly payroll--a ratio of more than 3 to 1. At the same time, however,

75 Earl Beck, report to Eli Lilly, Jan. 5, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
76 J. K. Lilly, Jr., memo to E. Beck, Jan. 2, 1936. Ms. in Lilly archives.
78 Irma Gloyd, reports to E. Beck, May 25, 1943 to Dec. 26, 1944. Ms. in Lilly archives.
the number of men with 25 years of service to their credit was 147 and the number of women with that seniority was 74—a ratio less than 2 to 1. These figures tend to indicate that while women were less likely than men to make a career out of their job at Lilly, the greatest attrition occurred before the fifth year of service. Women who stayed on the labor force for more than five or ten years were much less likely to leave the employ of Eli Lilly and Company. More specifically, a 1950 payroll project conducted to indicate at what point of service the average female employee left the company determined that there was a sharp decline in female personnel at the eighth year. The study did not mention what the average length of service was for male employees.

One of the best ways of determining an employee's value to the company was the efficiency report. Many departments at Lilly paid employees on the basis of a base rate plus a bonus for efficiency. This bonus was based on the percentage of the expected degree to efficiency achieved by each worker, and therefore reports on both individuals and entire departments are available.

The 1913 study by the Emerson efficiency experts judged two all-female departments, capsule-filling and gelatin-coating, to operate at 85.7 percent and 98.7 percent efficiency, respectively. Two all-male departments, bulk bottling and fluid extract, were rated at 74.8 percent and 75 percent respectively.

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80 Ibid.
81 H. G. Brannen, report of meeting with J. K. Lilly, Jr., April 24, 1950. Ms. in Lilly archives.
83 Ibid., pp. 201, 262.
Individual efficiency reports show the same trend. From 1927 to 1934, the personnel department issued a semi-annual list of the 10 percent most and least efficient employees in each division. Lilly computed the efficiency of most employees for the purpose of paying a bonus. Efficiency percent was determined "by dividing the total number of standard minutes on orders completed in a period, by the total number of actual minutes spent in doing the work." These reports are largely inconclusive in comparing male and female efficiency, since almost every department consisted exclusively of only one sex. However, they did lead to the eventual development of a marginal employees list, a semi-annual report on the progress of chronically inefficient employees, complete with summaries of interviews with these employees. With the exception of the August 1940 report, which listed 15 women and 8 men as marginal, these reports regularly found twice as many inefficient male employees as females from 1936 to 1942. The trend then reversed, until by the time of the August, 1947 report, marginal women employees outnumbered their male counterparts, 59 to 22. It can be assumed that a majority of the inefficient employees were relatively new on the job, and therefore the sudden influx of women into the work force sparked by the war could account for the increase in marginal female employees in the 1940's.

It is also conceivable that, since men and women rarely did the same jobs, the means of evaluating their performances were not

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85 J. C. Schade, reports to E. Beck, Nov. 18, 1938 to Oct. 30, 1942. Ms. in Lilly archives.
86 Ibid., August 5, 1947.
necessarily equal. The method of evaluation for non-bonus workers is not mentioned and could have been more subjective than simple percentages of bonus requirements. A November 1945 study showed that 222 of 383 female employees on the bonus system were below efficiency requirements. A follow-up study the next month reported 176 of 333 women workers were under efficiency requirements. Considering that women had historically proved themselves at least as efficient as men at Lilly, these results are puzzling. Two consecutive months in which the majority of workers were below the required average could mean that the employees were unsatisfactory or that the standard of evaluation was inadequate.

WOMEN'S WAGES

The data on worker evaluation may or may not justify the practice of paying different wages to men and women, but the practice was followed throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Although there was no consensus on what a woman should be paid, relative to men's wages, Lilly received criticism on several occasions from internal as well as external sources for paying inadequate women's wages. Nonetheless, the practice persisted at Lilly, in Indianapolis, and in the pharmaceutical industry in general throughout the period.

The Emerson efficiency experts contended in 1913 that Lilly's wages for women were too low. The report cited one example which

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88 Ibid., Dec. 8, 1945.
described the degree to which pay inequities existed:

We understand that the success attending the present making of capsules is in large manner due to the efforts of your forelady in that department, she having, so we are told, practically perfected the process. While it is true that in the business world, women do not seem to command salaries equal to those commanded by men of corresponding ability, nevertheless, comparing her salary to that of the head of the Bottling Department, it would seem that 1 to 2½ is possible an unjust ratio.

The Emerson study determined that average rates for women in the pharmaceutical industry ranged from $6.80 to $9.00 a week. In 1913 Lilly's average starting wage was $6 a week for women and $10 a week for men. These figures led the Emerson engineers to conclude, "It would appear that you are paying your department heads, that is, certain ones, too much and your female employees too little."

That Lilly began to increase women's wages relative to men's in the next decade can be attributed both to this report and to J. K. Lilly, Jr.'s assessment of incentives for women in his massive 1916 Report on the Subject of Employment:

Girls who enter industry look forward quite generally to matrimony, or at least take the traditional view that it is impossible for women to get far into business. Their feeling reacts upon their efficiency and makes them largely indifferent to the appeals which move men, such

89 Emerson Company, op. cit., p. 33.
90 Ibid., p. 34-5.
91 Earl Beck, memo to J. K. Lilly, Jr., April 26, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
92 Emerson Company, op. cit., p. 35.
as promotion, and permanence in employment. However, money and the rewards it will bring deeply attract women. Any plan for developing feminine efficiency is therefore well linked with the payroll. 93

By 1926 women's wages at Lilly had increased somewhat, relative to both the cost of living and to men's wages. While the cost of living had risen 75.6 percent in the thirteen years since the Emerson study, Lilly's minimum wage for women had increased 114 percent, from $6 to $12.83 a week. During the same period, starting wages for men at Lilly had increased from $10 to $19.95 a week—a 99.5 percent increase. 94 Furthermore, the efficiency bonus system allowed women to move up their admittedly limited pay scale with reasonable speed—in June of 1927, although the minimum wage for women was still just 25¢/hour—about $12 for a 47½ hour week—the factory-wide average for women was 43¢/hour, or $20.38 a week. In fact, the previous month only 33 women in the entire plant had earned less than $15 a week. 95

Nonetheless, there were those in the Lilly management who were not satisfied with these modest gains. In April, 1927, vice-president J. K. Lilly, Jr., initiated a spirited debate over the minimum wage for women. After studying lengthy reports by the Employment Department, he wrote to his father,

For a long time now it has been my hope that at some not too distant date we could adopt the minimum wage rates of $15 per week for women and $25 per week


94 Earl Beck, memo to J. K. Lilly, Jr., April 26, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.

95 Earl Beck, memo to J. K. Lilly, Jr., and Eli Lilly, June 6, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
for men. Particularly in the case of women do I recommend that we bring our minimum wage to to $15. 96

Earl Beck disagreed with J. K., Jr.'s suggestion, contending that, ... the writer does not see that we would be justified in any way in increasing the starting rate for men or girls, inasmuch as we have no difficulty at the present time in employing high grade labor at the rates which we are using at the present time. 97

J. K., Jr., then submitted a report to his father in which he indicated that Lilly's minimum wage for women barely covered current living expenses, leaving just 66¢ a week for clothing and luxuries. 98 J. K., Sr., turned the matter over to Eli Lilly: "Please consider this matter of minimum wage for girls. I must confess that I am thoroughly sold on the idea...." 99 Beck continued to protest, arguing that Jr.'s figures were inaccurate and that even at minimum wage, 22 percent of a female Lilly employee's income was dispensable. 100 He also contended that such a pay raise would increase the payroll budget tremendously. Eli Lilly ended the debate, however, when he sent a brief memo to Beck stating simply, "You are hereby instructed on September 1 to increase the starting rate for girls from 25¢ to 27¢ per hour. Any girls drawing 25¢ should be brought up to 27¢ at that time." 101

96 J. K. Lilly, Jr., to J. K. Lilly, Sr., May 2, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
97 Earl Beck, memo to J. K. Lilly, Jr., April 26, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
98 J. K. Lilly, Jr., memo to J. K. Lilly, Sr., May 10, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
99 J. K. Lilly, Sr., memo to Eli Lilly, May 12, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
100 Earl Beck, memo to Eli Lilly, May 21, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
101 Eli Lilly, memo to E. Beck, June 8, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
All men in the plant were granted a 2¢ raise at the same time, but the action represented a victory of sorts for the female employee, since J. K., Jr.'s main intent was keeping women workers' standard of living above the subsistence level.

At the time of this debate, Lilly employees were already being paid more than the average worker in Indianapolis. The average starting rate for men at five comparable factories in 1927 was 36.6¢/hour; at Lilly the starting rate was 40¢/hour. The average women's starting rate at these plants was 22.8¢/hour, compared to Lilly's 25¢.  

Inequities between men's and women's wages continued in the 1930's, but despite the depression, Lilly wages continued to rise. The men's starting rate increased from 42¢/hour in 1933 to 55¢/hour in 1935. In the same period women's minimum rates increased from 30¢ to 43½¢/hour. Lilly's wages also continued to be higher than those of other factories in Indianapolis. In August of 1935 eight other Indianapolis concerns paid average starting rates of 40¢/hour to men and 34.3¢/hour to women. Interestingly, while Lilly was far ahead of other local companies in wages paid, it actually lagged behind in wage equality. While the average difference between men's and women's starting wages in Indianapolis was less than 6¢ (in fact, one company, Real Silk Hosiery, was already paying all employees the same minimum in 1935), there was a 12½¢

102 Earl Beck, memo to J. K. Lilly, Jr., April 26, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
103 Employment Department Report, unsigned, n.d. Ms. in Lilly archives.
104 Earl Beck, report to Eli Lilly, Aug. 15, 1935. Ms. in Lilly archives.
differential at Lilly.

Lilly management continued to be ambivalent about these discrepancies. In 1934 J. K. Lilly, Jr., proposed and eventually procured a 5¢/hour raise for men and an 8¢/hour raise for women, stating in a memorandum to his brother, "I don't think any of us should be satisfied with our present minimum rate for women. . ."\(^{105}\) In 1935, however, Earl Beck, discussing the average pay differential of 23¢ an hour in the Paper Packaging Company, a Lilly subsidiary, declared, "The differential between the earnings of the men and women seems to be quite in order."\(^{106}\) Obviously the attitude of Lilly management toward women's wages varied between executives; however, it can be assumed that the changes in the wage schedule which Lilly underwent in the 1920s and '30s were inspired more by the desires to increase the material welfare of the employee and to ensure the attraction of a quality work force than by a desire to pay men and women equally.

The 1940s were a period of severe wage inflation. In September of 1940, Lilly's minimum rates stood at 58¢/hour for men and 44½¢/hour for women.\(^{107}\) A year later these minimums had been raised to 65¢/hour for men and 50¢/hour for women.\(^{108}\) Wage levels remained

\(^{105}\) J. K. Lilly, Jr., memo to Eli Lilly, Sept. 28, 1934. Ms. in Lilly archives.

\(^{106}\) Earl Beck, memo to J. K. Lilly, Jr., Nov. 21, 1935. Ms. in Lilly archives.

\(^{107}\) Minimum Hourly Starting Rates, unsigned report, Sept. 1, 1940. Ms. in Lilly archives.

\(^{108}\) John Modrall, report to E. Beck et al., June 1, 1941. Ms. in Lilly archives.
stable throughout most of the Second World War, and Lilly wages continued to compare favorably with those of other employers. One interesting comparison is that another pharmaceutical company, Sharp and Dohme, paid its war-time workers rates almost identical to Lilly's—except that Sharp and Dohme paid men's rates to women doing men's jobs.104 Lilly, it has been seen, paid women on men's jobs somewhat less than the regular men's rate.

By the end of the Second World War, Lilly's women's rates had fallen below the Indianapolis average. An October, 1945 wage data report listed Lilly's starting rate of 50¢/hour last among thirteen local businesses. Lilly's factory-wide women's average compared more favorably; at 88¢/hour, Lilly ranked eighth in the study.110 Compared to other pharmaceutical firms around the nation, Lilly's wages were typical. Lilly's starting rate for men of 78¢/hour was well above the average of 70.3¢/hour. The industry sported an average women's starting rate of 55.2¢/hour; this report credited Lilly with a women's minimum of 55¢/hour. Lilly's maximum rates for men and women were the highest in the industry, at $1.35/hour and $1.16/hour, respectively.111

After the war, of course, inflation skyrocketed. Between September 1945 and October 1947, Lilly's factory-wide average for

109 Eli Lilly, memo to E. Beck, Oct. 12, 1943. Ms. in Lilly archives.
111 E. N. Beesley, op.cit. No explanation is given for the apparent discrepancy between women's starting rates at Lilly given in this report and the report cited in footnote 98.
men increased from $1.05/hour to $1.42/hour. Women's average wages increased in the same period from 83¢/hour to $1.23/hour.  

By September, 1947, Lilly had established minimum wages of $1.00/hour for men and 85¢/hour for women, but evidence indicates that few employees were actually earning that small an amount. In August of 1947 Earl Beck reported that in a recent period, the company had hired 22 new men at an average rate of $1.14/hour, and 9 women at an average rate of $1.04/hour. At any rate, from 1947 on, personnel records were more concerned with average rates than with starting rates. These average rates continued to climb. By June 1948 the factory average for men was $1.55; for women, $1.33. Two years later the men's average had risen to $1.67 and the women's to $1.37.

After the end of the war, there appeared for the first time some sentiment for paying women and men equal wages. This was somewhat reluctantly admitted by John Modrall of the Industrial Relations Department in an August, 1945, memo to Earl Beck:

> Whether we believe that it is right or wrong, the theory of equal rates for both men and women has gained wide acceptance during this war period; no doubt it will carry over long after the war emergency is passed. In view of this, there is no doubt in my mind that the 15-cent differential between our starting rates for men and

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114 Earl Beck, memo to E. N. Beesley et al., September 1, 1947. Ms. in Lilly archives

is too great. 116

There were attempts at legislating mandatory equal rates for women during the post-war period. In 1949 the Indiana legislature considered H.R. 470, the "Equal Pay" bill. 117 Earl Beck believed that such legislation would hurt women rather than help them, because forcing employers to pay women as much as men would induce the employers to forego hiring women altogether. He reasoned,

I imagine other companies have found out what we found out during World War II that when we place women on jobs previously occupied by men, the content of the job has to be shifted or changed in order to accommodate the women operators. 118

Implicit in Beck's argument was the assumption that at any given job, a man was a better employee than was a woman.

In terms of earnings, the plight of the woman worker improved considerably in the first half of the Twentieth century at Eli Lilly. In 1913 women's starting wages were just 60 percent of men's starting wages. By 1947 starting rates for women had risen to 85 percent of men's rates. But women were still far from equality. The Second World War might have drawn more women into the work force and raised their standard of living, but it did not permanently alter management's conception of "a woman's place."

WOMEN IN SUPERVISORY POSITIONS

In 1913 the Emerson efficiency report found female supervisors

116 John Modrall, memo to E. Beck, August 18, 1945. Ms. in Lilly archives.
in eight of 21 departments. Lilly had established an unwritten policy of placing foreladies at the head of all-female departments at least this early in its history. The report did list a few departments in which both men and women worked under a foreman, but no men were mentioned to be under the direction of a female supervisor. 119

Another means of determining the number of women at Lilly in positions of some authority initially appeared in 1913--the first company telephone directory. The 1913 phone directory listed 100 numbers, 23 of them assigned to women. 120 By 1925, the company's system had more than doubled, and 39 women were listed in the 204-number directory. 121 Interestingly, until 1929 the directories listed men by their full names and women only by "Mrs." or "Miss."

The 1938 directory listed 237 men and 56 women. 122 By 1949, the company directory listed 479 men and 97 women. 123 Thus, at least in terms of access to private telephones, women had gained relatively few positions of authority by the end of the Second World War.

Lilly's trend toward placing women in positions of supervisory capacity over other women was exemplified in the career of Irma Gloyd. Employed as a typist in 1923, Miss Gloyd was transferred

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120 Lilly Phone Directory, July, 1913. Copy in Lilly archives.
121 Ibid., August 1, 1925.
122 Ibid., Oct. 1, 1938.
to the Employment Department in 1924, where she served as Assistant Manager from 1932 until her retirement. As Assistant Manager, she was responsible for hiring, dismissing, and conducting personnel interviews with all female workers at Lilly. "My job," she told the Indianapolis Star in 1946, "is to see that the principles of the management, which are carried down through every department, are applied to the women who work here." 124 Judging from the volume and significance of her correspondence with Lilly executives, Assistant Employment Manager Irma Gloyd was probably the most influential woman in the company in the 1930's and 1940's.

Surprisingly, the traditional authority at Lilly of female supervisors in all-female departments was challenged rather than strengthened following the Second World War. When the labor turnover rate at Lilly rose dramatically in 1943 and 1944, Gloyd determined that the high drop-out rate among new employees was due in part to the impatience of older supervisors. As an example she cited one 61-year-old forelady who "... lacks the capacity for considering the human element among new employees." 125 Part of the department's solution to the problem was to "... eliminate some of the older individuals who are being used as instructors." 126

The majority of foreladies probably remained on the job in all-female departments after the war. Some of these positions

124 Irma Gloyd, interview with Louis Benning Stewart, Indianapolis Star, n.d. (from an undated clipping in Irma Gloyd's personal file.)
125 Irma Gloyd, memo to E. Beck, Feb. 24, 1944. Ms. in Lilly archives.
126 Ralph M. Reahard, memo to E. Beck, Feb. 29, 1944. Ms. in Lilly archives.
were threatened, however, by a 1953 re-organization of the finishing control department. The Personnel Assignment Committee asserted that, under the new scheme, female inspection supervisors would have to be replaced.

Since most of the production departments are highly mechanized, it is necessary for the supervisor to have good mechanical knowledge and ability, which makes the placement of male personnel on these jobs essential. 127

The Committee suggested that the replaced foreladies be transferred to "lower supervisory positions." Obviously, distinctions were still being made in the early 1950s concerning "women's work."

WOMEN IN THE OFFICE

The role of women in business first expanded beyond factory work late in the nineteenth century, and the catalysts behind this change were the inventions of the typewriter and the telephone. Daniel Boorstin has contended that

The typewriter was destined to become an important force in American life. By providing a socially acceptable employment for women in the commercial world, it opened new office careers, and (with the telephone) helped bring women out of the kitchen into the world of affairs. 128

Lilly was not averse to hiring women to fill office and clerical jobs, although it is interesting to note that as late as 1913 the President and the General Manager of the Company


apparently shared the same secretary. Nonetheless, the number of women in the office at Lilly grew, and at first the alleged "social acceptability" of secretarial work was reflected in higher wages. In 1927 Lilly employed 210 girls in the office and paid them a starting wage of 30¢ an hour, compared to 25¢ for factory women.

American Business magazine conducted a survey in 1936 to determine the average national wage of office workers. The results of this 250-business study showed Lilly to be above average in the remuneration of its office workers. Lilly's starting rate of $27.20 a week for secretaries was within the average range of $20 to $30 a week; its starting rate of $17.40 for a typist was above the average $15.00. In fact, no Lilly office worker received less than $17.40 for a 40-hour week. Essentially, office workers were paid a minimum hourly rate of 43¢/hour, which was identical to the current factory minimum wage.

Factory and office wages continued to be roughly equal through the Second World War. In March 1946 Lilly's average hourly rate for men in the office was $1.10; for men in the factory, $1.11. Female office workers averaged 86¢/hour, compared to 85¢/hour for their factory counterparts. During the period of wage inflation that ensued, factory wages left office wages behind.

129 Lilly Phone Directory, July 1913. Copy in Lilly archives.
130 Aimee Graham, report to J. K. Lilly, Jr., April 19, 1927. Ms. in Lilly archives.
131 Eli Messenger, report to Eli Lilly, May 10, 1937. Ms. in Lilly archives.
132 Payroll records, March 24, 1946.
By May 1949, the 83 men who worked in Lilly offices were averaging $1.50/hour while the 2,021 men in Lilly factories averaged $1.63/hour. Lilly's 519 female office workers commanded an hourly rate of $1.29, compared to the average rate of $1.39 compiled by the 1,384 female factory workers. If by 1950 women were exerting influence in more facets of the business world, it was not without cost to the traditional status of the secretary.

Donald Hoke echoed Boorstin's comment on the "social acceptability" of office work for women when he wrote, "A particularly important factor in the feminization of the office work force was the status of office work with respect to alternative employment opportunities for women." By the late 1940's this status was no longer reflected in higher wages for office workers, and it is doubtful if much status was ever evident in intra-office relations. From 1946 to 1950 Lilly management toyed with the idea of initiating a secretarial training program. The outline of the resulting program which went into operation in 1951 was quite efficient and dealt only with specific manual duties. The supplementary literature included in the Secretarial Training Program folder, however, was almost comically condescending. One pamphlet, How to Be a Super-Secretary, included such suggestions as, "If you originate a good idea, you give the credit to your boss . . ."

and, " . . . give him encouragement when he is feeling low; put

133 Ibid., May 8, 1949.

up with his bad humor when he has to let off steam; make him feel he's a pretty wonderful person." The booklet listed 26 "don'ts" for secretaries. Five concerned performance on the job; and the remainder ranged from "Too much make-up" to "Her slip always shows" to a simple "B.O." Even by 1951, the female office worker was considered a woman first and an employee second.

WOMEN IN SPECIALTY FIELDS

The operations of Eli Lilly and Company extended far beyond factory and office work alone. In many of these outside fields, however, the involvement of women was small and long in coming.

Eli Lilly and Company has always been intimately involved in research, but when the first woman contributed to this endeavor is not clear. The company hired its first female M.D., Dr. Elsie Stewart, in 1913, and she spent time in the research department. But the Elsie Stewarts were in a minority throughout much of the history of Lilly. In 1948 a study was conducted to determine the number of employees engaged in research in nine drug companies. The survey, which included all employees with Ph.D., M.S., or B.S. degrees, showed that Lilly employed 122 researchers--88 male and 34 female. This ratio was fairly typical of the pharmaceutical industry at that time--only one company employed more female

135 How to Be a Super-Secretary, Sperry-Rand Corporation, 1951. Copy in Lilly archives.

136 Elsie G. Stewart, personal file, Lilly archives.

137 E. N. Beesley, report to J. K. Lilly, Jr., Nov. 9, 1948. Ms. in Lilly archives.
researchers than male, and only one employed no women at all. Lilly, however, was also representative of the entire industry in that only five of its 34 female researchers actually had advanced degrees. There were 22 male Ph.D.'s alone.

In the field of sales, women were even less represented. In fact, women were effectively, if tacitly, barred from the sales force. An editorial in the Lilly Sales Bulletin in 1940 voiced the company's opinion of saleswomen:

Women on the road bore us. They too frequently bear down with a sweet personality. In fact they depend all too frequently on the twinkling eye, cute smile technique, with a little of the soft voice thrown in. They do not depend on straight knowledge or salesmanship when they could just as well as not compete on this basis. But they don't. 138

Despite this admission that women were probably capable of the position, no women were placed on the sales force for some time. Of course, sales work at this time involved travelling for days at a time and spending many hours in train stations and hotels. Possibly, as in the case of legislation forbidding women to work late at night, there was some concern for the safety and propriety of women on such a job. At any rate, Lilly employed no saleswomen until 1973, when it assigned its first five female salespersons to various territories. 139

In at least one other endeavor, however, women were well-represented. Starting in the late 1920s, Lilly operated and

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financed a research clinic at the Indianapolis City Hospital. In 1932 this project employed ten men and seven women. The director, two M.D.s, and one Ph.D. were men, but the clinic also employed three female lab technicians and a female dietician, all of whom were well-remunerated in relation to the rest of the staff, and therefore probably held positions of some status.140

WOMEN IN SALARIED POSITIONS.

Lilly management always made clear that transfer from hourly wage to the monthly payroll was a means of conferring status or prestige on an employee. The employee who drew a salary was therefore not only eligible for certain tangible benefits, but also was granted some social recognition. Efficiency Department Staff Assistant Hardy Adriance had written, "... payroll recognition should be a recognition of an operating contribution to the company."141 A salary was the company's reward to the employee for that contribution.

In 1928 the company sought to standardize its procedure for conferring this recognition on deserving employees. The rules which were developed for transferring to the monthly payroll did not exclude women. In 1920 the company had had women on monthly payroll in nine different positions--secretaries of board members, librarian, chemists and biologists, Head of Payroll Department, Manufacturing Office Record Keeper, Financial Stenographer, Special Formula Clerk, Head of Records Department, and Head of Purchasing

140 Earl Beck, memo to J. K. Lilly, Jr., July 16, 1932. Ms. in Lilly archives.
141 E. H. Adriance, memo to E. Beck, August 11, 1941. Ms. in Lilly archives.
Department. 142 Under the new rules set forth in 1928, all of these posts remained eligible for monthly payroll, and several new positions were added: Supervisor of Women, Nurse, Cafeteria Manager, Head of Ampule Department, and Chief Biller.

Eligibility for a salary was then determined according to the following rule:

Men occupying any of the positions under the previous heading shall be eligible for consideration for Monthly Payroll classification when their earnings reach $150 per month, providing their length of service is six months or more.

Women occupying any of the positions under the previous heading shall be eligible for consideration for Monthly Payroll classification when their earnings reach $140 per month, providing their length of service is six months or more. 144

Women were therefore not unduly denied access to the status of a monthly salary. In fact, the management acknowledged the fact that women automatically received lower wages, and made an allowance for that fact, providing them eligibility at a lower level of monthly earnings than was required for men.

By 1947, the six-months length-of-service clause had been dropped and qualified employees were being paid monthly salaries as they were hired. Girls with college degrees were normally hired at $190 per month, with an eventual possible maximum of $400 a month after 15 years service. 145

142 Eli Lilly, report to Mr. Busby, Feb. 19, 1920. Ms. in Lilly archives.
143 Aimee Graham, report to E. Beck, July 20, 1928. Ms. in Lilly archives.
144 Earl Beck, report to Eli Lilly, July 27, 1928. Ms. in Lilly archives.
Even on the monthly salary level, however, women had not achieved parity with men. According to a proposed salary plan formulated in 1953, women with ten years experience on an 80 to 84 point job were to be paid a minimum monthly salary of $259. Men with nine years experience on jobs of similar rating were guaranteed a minimum monthly salary of $290. \(^{146}\) Salary inequities, then, were very much a reality in the early 1950s.

CONCLUSION

These data lend themselves to some tentative conclusions, about both the policies of Eli Lilly and Company in particular and the role of the American woman in the labor force in general.

The role and condition of the female laborer at Lilly improved consistently between 1910 and 1950, although at the end of the period women were still far from equality. Most of the improvements and changes which occurred were brought about by current need or expedience, not as part of a master scheme to grant equality to women. There is no more evidence to indicate that Lilly management was consciously striving to achieve parity between male and female workers in all respects than there is to suggest that Lilly management was intentionally oppressing women at the turn of the century when female workers labored on backless stools for six dollars a week. The steps that Lilly

\(^{146}\) "Salary Investigation Data," unsigned report, Jan. 8, 1953. Ms. in Lilly archives.
management took, however, whether motivated by social pressure, the economics of attracting quality workers, or genuine concern for the employee's welfare, all led undeniably toward a marked improvement in the condition of the female laborer.

If Lilly can be considered to be nearly representative of labor relations in the twentieth century, then the above conclusions are probably to some degree relevant to the history of the American working woman. The gradualness and consistency of the improvements at Lilly tend to suggest that the process of attaining equality for women has been a constant and perhaps inexorable process. In terms of wages, job conditions, and status, progress was not noticeably greater between 1940 and 1950 than it was between 1913 and 1923. Specific events might have slowed or aided the process, but no one event or institution initiated the process or permanently altered its course.

Distances on the road to equality are deceiving and can be difficult to measure; thus it is difficult to determine exactly how far women progressed between 1910 and 1950, or how far their location in 1950 left them from their destination. Whether or not the experience of World War II embedded in the public consciousness the idea that women could compete with men in the labor market can not be determined from this data, but it is evident that the events of the 1940s did not start women on the road to equality. It was a road on which they had been travelling for some time and on which many of their greatest advances were still in the future.