OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION

DEFINITION

SEX SEGREGATION IN THE WORKPLACE:
- Different distributions of men and women across occupation, jobs, and places of work (Padavic and Reskin, 2002).

Basic Questions about Occupational Segregation:
- How does occupational segregation occur?
- What occupations tend to be those most heavily occupied by women (and minorities)?
- Why these particular occupations?
- Why do they change?
**Social Consequences of Sex Segregation**

- Inequality at work -> inequality in society:
- Starts with employers assigning men and women to different types of work -> differences in earnings, social status, authority -> more subtle expressions of inequality such as paternalism, invisibility, sexual harassment.

**Job/Establishment Level**

- More difficult to measure
- Example of job-level: Female investment bankers assigned to non-profit sector & Male to M&A
- Example of establishment: Male vs. female wait staff

**3 Models**

1) Crowding Model
2) Queuing Theory
3) Ideology of Separate Spheres/Pollution Theory
Crowding Model: Increases Male Wage

Pre-Segregation

Wages - Plumbers
W - No segregation

D_L

Pre-Segregation

Wages - Secretaries

D_L

Secretaries
Plumbers

Queuing Theory

- **Dual Queues:**
  - Labor
  - Job queues
- **Match:**
  - Employers hire from top of labor queue:
  - Workers choose from top of job queue
  - Best jobs to preferred workers

Basis for Queue Preferences

- **Employer rankings**
  - Factors
  - Productivity
  - Stability
  - Taste
  - Stereotypes
- **Worker rankings**
  - Maximize: income, social standing, autonomy, job security, working conditions, interesting work, advancement.
Ideology of Separate Spheres/Pollution

• Ideology of Separate Spheres
  - Separated men’s work from women’s work
  - Distinction resting eventually on paid versus non-paid
  - Reinforced by images about responsibility to support family vs. responsibility to raise family

Ideology of Separate Spheres/Pollution (2)

• Pollution
  - Prestige of occupation is polluted if individuals who belong to a group with lower average productivity enters the occupation.
  - Even if the new entrant is qualified, she may be seen as qualified outside of the occupation and thus lower its prestige, i.e., polluting it

Changes in the Labor Queue

• How employers rank employees
  - New information about true productivity
  - Real change in productivity

• Intensity of preferences
  - EEO may lessen aversion
Changes in Job Queue Characteristics

- Decreases in share of full-time, year-round jobs.
- De-skilling: a change in job content
- Some subjected to new regulations that eroded earnings
- Some changes with rise of ownership patterns

Mechanisms for sorting

- Social expectations: vicious circle
- Employer decisions
  - Stereotyping
  - HR practices
- Self-sorting
  - Socialization
  - Human capital investment decisions

Trends: Index of Segregation

- Tells us what percent of women or men would have to change occupations for distribution to be equal.
- \[ I = 0.5 \sum |m_n - f_n| \]
- 0 = complete integration; 100 = complete segregation
- \( I_{2000} = 52.9 \) (52.1 in 2000)
- \( I_{1980} = 59.2 \)
- \( I_{1970} = 67.9 \)
Patterns in decline of Index

- Women moving into Male-dominated Occupations
  - Potential for resegregation
- Males moving into Female-dominated
  - Little of this sort of movement
- Change in job structure
  - Fewer male-dominated or female dominated jobs in economy

Question re: Future

- True integration
- Re-segregation
- Ghettoization
- "Micro" Occupational Segregation