

Women and gender studies research paper examples

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The Role of Women in MSE

(Mathematics, Science, and Engineering)

The late 19th century to the early 20th century will be an interesting era in the United States of America to observe regarding the progress of women in the MSE (Mathematics, Science, and Engineering) field. It was when the MSE fields are shaping into definite forms as highly-structured disciplines, producing its first doctoral degree holder in 1862 from Yale University (powerpoint on Women Educ). Coincidentally, it was when the women's rights movement was also intensely active.

Women's Role in MSE (late 19th to early 20th century)

It took activism and much struggle from women and the people around them for them to participate in the MSE field. In the United States, education was closed to women until the 19th century, and Lucy Stone became the first woman to receive a baccalaureate degree in United States in 1847 (powerpoint on Women Educ). Fifteen years after the first doctorate degree was achieved in Yale University in 1862, Boston University produced the first woman PhD holder (powerpoint on Women Educ).

Slowly but surely, women began to be visible in the MSE field. They served as lecturers and instructors, data gatherers in research (powerpoint on Women Educ.), but many give up the field altogether to give way to motherhood and family life (Entry into Science. 1-3-4. pdf, p. 35). Women are not known to be idea creators in MSE (powerpoint.) But there are remarkable women in MSE from that era that left a important tracks in the field and

placing women in a more strategic role in the development of the MSE disciplines,

Lillian Gilbreth

Lillian Moller Gilbreth (document) rose above the stereotypical demands from a woman during her time by excelling in both career and home life. She was mother to 12 children and is said to be remembered best for her motherhood. Nevertheless, she is renowned for her contributions to industrial psychology and the engineering field and is known to be the mother of modern management. She was recipient of more than a dozen honorary degrees including becoming the first woman member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in 1924, and winning the Hoover Medal of the American Society of Civil Engineers in 1966. The California Monthly in 1994 called her " a genius in the art of living" for her ability to combine career and family life.

Christine Ladd-Franklin

Christine Ladd-Franklin (powerpoint) faced much discrimination in order to participate in the discipline of MSE. Despite being her alma mater she was denied position as lecturer in John Hopkins University when she applied upon receiving the equivalent of her PhD in 1893. After much struggle she was finally accepted to lecture at Clark University and Harvard University in 1913, and in 1914 at the University of Chicago, and lectured without pay often. She published several papers in the American Journal of Mathematics, and in 1929 published Color and Color Theories, featuring her work of four

decades. As a psychologist, logician, mathematician, physicist, and astronomer, is known best for her with vision, and her theory of color vision.

Barbara MaClintock

Barbara MaClintock of Hatford, (pdf) Connecticut, known for her work in Genetics, obtained a PhD in Botany in 1927 at Cornell University because women were not allowed to major in genetics at that time. In the late 1930s, she became Assistant Professor of Genetics in the University of Missouri at Columbia. She was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1944, and was elected President of the Genetics Society of America in 1945. She later won the National Medal of Science in 1971. And, in 1983, she won the Nobel Prize in Physiology for her work in the discovery of genetic transposition.

Sheila Evans Widnall

Sheila Evans Widnall (Powerpoint) of Tacoma, Washington, is a Post Doctoral Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She served as Institute Professor for Aeronautics and Astronautics.

She gave critical evaluations of how the university accepts students with regards to gender bias, still considered a given in a technological school. In a study conducted by a colleague, she pointed out that women outperform the predictions of their math SAT score. " The effective predictive gap is about 30 points." Because of these findings, the admission criteria for women were altered accordingly. As a result, the number women entering the university increased and is almost of the same number as that of the men.

Factors in the Progress of Women in MSE

These women, generally speaking, are supported and hindered by particular factors to succeed in their respective fields. Most obvious is the educational and work opportunities available to them. More often than not, they make do with what is available to them, even if they are paid less or have to choose a second choice of educational degree.

An important factor that supported women in their pursuits in a career in MSE are the people around them who supported them, fathers, mothers, husbands, relatives, and social circle. Statistics show that these supportive relationships were more vital to the women than men (Entry into Science. 1-3-4. pdf, p. 43). All the women above are one way or another have this kind of support, although some of them opposed as well, like Barbara McClintock's mother and Christine Ladd-Franklin's father.

And as years go by, the numbers have helped encourage women to participate more in the MSE field. When the women are few in the field, there are treated more as representative of the women rather than as compatriots (Entry into Science. 1-3-4. pdf, p. 37). This is still true today in most MSE field, but the increasing number of participating women helps minimize this form of discrimination.

At Present

Today, the women have moved “ from scarcity to visibility”. Women are welcome now to pursue careers. There is no educational field that is restricted to them, and everywhere in the US women are active in all areas

of profession. The basic civil rights of women in the US have improved and now there are more opportunities to gender equality in the work force.

Sheryl Sandberg, COO of the Facebook, gave a talk on the status of women in the workforce (TED, 2010) and her views are interesting. She says that although women are visible in every profession, they are not on top of the profession. Women today still lack the self-confidence that they can " raise their hands" and " sit at the corner table" and if ever they do, they are not liked for it. She encourages that there is lot more room for women to exhibit their capabilities and that these capabilities are by no means second rate to that of men.

Conclusion

As the world changes, we are beginning to see just what are the capabilities that the generations before us has repressed and boxed by stereotyping them at home and with the children. Even worse is saying that this capabilities lacked quality compared to that of men. If women are allowed to grow and excel as they want to be, who knows it the world will not be a much better place because it. Basing from the women who have done it already, it does not seem to be an unrealistic projection of the future.

Works Sited

Sandberg, S. Sheryl Sandberg: Why we have too few women leaders. TED: Ideas

Worth Spreading. Dec 2010. Web. 10 June 2012

Powerpoint Women Education

Entry into Science. 1-3-4. pdf

Pdf on Barbara MaClintock

Document on Lillian Gilbreth

Powerpoint on Christine Ladd-Franklin

Powerpoint on Sheila Windall