

Summaries of articles

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SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES

Women at work : presentation

Hélène Lee-Gosselin et Claudine Baudoux

The articles in this issue of *Recherches féministes* underline changes in feminist questions and methodologies pertaining to women's work and its relation with private life. They also propose strategies to fight systemic discrimination in the work place. A.-M. Daune-Richard and A.-M. Devreux develop the sociological concept of « rapport social de sexe » while J. Collin and F. Dufort analyse respectively the feminization of the pharmaceutical and medical professions. C. Baudoux documents the inverse phenomenon of masculinization of higher administrative posts in educational establishments through implicit selection criteria that are discriminatory against women and D. Bellemare, L. Poulin Simon and D.-G. Tremblay examine the situation of aging women in the labor force. Two notes by M. Lortie-Lussier and D. Gaucher present and discuss respectively the aspirations of young female university students and innovative axes of analysis for a non-sexist job evaluation system.

« Rapports sociaux de sexe » and sociological conceptualization

Anne-Marie Daune-Richard et Anne-Marie Devreux

The deconstruction of a biocentrist conception of the sexes in sociology and the demonstration made by feminist researchers in the seventies on the existence of a sexual system opened avenues of research which led to the elaboration of a theory of gender relations. This theory criticizes and redefines certain key concepts (work, production, mobility), crosses disciplinary boundaries (sociology of work, sociology of the family), and widens the debates on fundamental sociological issues : relations between the social relation and social categorization, social reproduction and change, structures and actors, social practices and meanings. Today this work of theorization is being pursued through the elaboration of sociological analytical tools (operative concepts), susceptible of expressing the dynamic characteristic of a social relation, and especially of taking the social gender relation into account.

Women in the pharmaceutical profession in Québec : a rupture or continuity ?

Johanne Collin

At first glance, the growing presence of women in the liberal professions has led to *contradictory interpretations*. For some, it represents a major victory in women's struggle for equality. For others, it is rather a new version of a familiar story : we see the perpetuation of divisions between men and women, with the same pattern of subordination as in other sectors. Break or continuity ? That is the question. But is this the best way to deal with the topic ? Aiming to move away from those contradictory interpretations, this article proposes a new reflection on feminization of professions by using the pharmaceutical profession in Quebec as an example.

Symbolic interactionism theory and the issues underlying the massive entry of women in medicine

Francine Dufort

The massive increase in the number of women entering medicine in Quebec may help modify the role and status of the medical profession. Women may encourage the humanization of this professional role ; they may also contribute to an increase in the number of salaried physicians and accentuate the segmentation of the profession between general and specialized care fields. Until now most of the studies about women in medicine were empirically based and did not make it possible to outline meso and macrosystemic factors which must be taken into account in the acquisition and evolution of this highly institutionalized professional role. In this paper, the author presents a framework based on symbolic interactionism theory to analyse the process of acquiring the physician's role. The conceptual framework identifies factors influencing the acquisition of this professional role by women and leads to a better understanding of the issues underlying the massive entry of women in medicine.

Family and career : the case of female administrators in education

Claudine Baudoux

This article presents partial results of a research concerning the importance of a number of variables related to family life that are used during the recruiting process of school principals in Quebec. These results indicate that for a given criteria, female candidates are evaluated differently from male candidates. In *particular, during the selection process, female candidates' marriage and the fact that they care about their family while at work are seen as negative for women but positive for men.*

The situation and the stakes for aging working women

Diane Bellemare, Lise Poulin Simon et Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay

This article, based on the results of a research on the characteristics of aging women workers, presents the main observations of the study. It starts by a brief review of human resources management regarding aging workers, and goes on to present data which highlight some important differences between aging men and women's situations at work. The article then goes over the main demographic trends in Canada in order to describe the larger context in which aging women and men evolve. The main characteristics of the population aged 45 to 64 years old are then presented, with the situation of women being addressed more specifically. Finally, the article tries to indicate what is at stake in terms of the present and future demographic evolution and presents a few possible solutions, that might make aging women workers' situation somewhat better.

Will their aspirations come true ? Social roles at 30 years of age expected by female students

Monique Lortie-Lussier

The expectations about life at 30 years of age of 140 single female students under the age of 25, according to the « futures diary approach » method, are examined. While most of the students intended to work full-time, mostly in traditionally female occupations, nearly half of them had vague career plans. The majority wished to have then started a family and carry on with their paid work. The respondents' idealized conceptions of happiness are discussed to highlight the importance of early vocational guidance and career counseling, respect for the expectations of the students and nurturing of self-confidence.

Are we still far away from a non-sexist job evaluation system ?

Dominique Gaucher

In this text, the author presents, parallel to the realization of an inquiry by the « ministère du Travail » relating the evaluation of jobs and pay equity in Quebec, some reflections on the importance of the comprehension of social interaction between genders, and particularly of their relation to the object of work, hoping to achieving a real neutrality in job evaluation. She describes five axes of analysis for the social interaction between genders applied to work and discusses their eventual use in the revision of job evaluation systems.