The Gender Equity in Museums Movement

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Myth #1

Feminism is all about women being in power.
Myth #2

The contributions of women in museums are evident.
Painting of the Florence Griswold House in Old Lyme, Connecticut, oil on canvas, 39.2 × 36.1 in. (1906), Willard Metcalf [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Photo: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, Massachusetts, by Carol M. Highsmith [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Photo: Berkshire Museums, C. 1911. [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Photo: Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk ME by John Phelan (Own work) [CC BY 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

Photo (detail): Painting the Ceiling of the Children’s Room[Grace Lincoln Temple watches from the scaffolding the painting of the ceiling of the Children's Room in the South Tower of the Smithsonian Institution Building.], c. 1900 (Smithsonian Institution Archives Record )
Photo: Mrs. Patterson the first Director of Gore Place, Waltham, MA. (Gore Place Society Archives)
Sophie Lutterlough, hired in 1943 as the Smithsonian's first female elevator operator, sits in front of a microscope in the Department of Entomology. After 40 years of service to the National Museum of Natural History, Lutterlough retired in 1983. For 14 years Lutterlough ran the elevators, but moved on to a second career after asking Dr. J. F. Gates Clarke if there were any openings in his department. Clarke hired Lutterlough as an insect preparator. During the next 26 years in the department, she took college level courses to increase her knowledge of entomology and learned German to help with her work.
Myth #3

The salary disparity between male and female museum workers is a thing of the past.

Photo: Doris Mable Cochran (1898-1968), herpetologist in the Division of Reptiles and Amphibians of the United States National Museum (now the National Museum of Natural History), 1954, [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons.
Myth #4

There are so many women in the museum field now that gender equity will happen on its own.

Photo: Office scene in Delgado Museum (now New Orleans Museum of Art), 1937; Uncredited WPA photographer [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons
Myth #5

It’s not about gender anymore.
Myth #6

Change only happens from the top down.

Photo: Viola Shelly Shantz (1895-1977), a Biologist, and Systematic Zoologist and Curator of the North American mammal collection of the Bird and Mammal Laboratories housed in the National Museum of Natural History Smithsonian Institution Archives [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons
Why the Numbers Matter

Women in the museum workforce

- 2014: 339,000 workers of which 45% were women
- 2015: 353,000 workers of which 47% were women
- 2016: 364,000 workers of which 41% were women

Women tend to cluster in certain departments/job titles

For every dollar a man makes

- Women now make 79.6 cents across all industries
- Women AAM directors earned 71 cents in 2014
- Women art museum directors earned 75 cents in 2016 (in institutions with budgets greater than $15 million; earnings almost equal in institutions less than $15 million)

Statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; the National Committee on Pay Equity; the AAM 2014 National Comparative Museum Salary Survey; and the 2017 Association of Art Museum Directors Gender Gap Report.
What Happens When a Field Goes Pink

- Loss of respect
- Less visibility
- Lower salaries/less benefits
Working Towards Equity

- Organization Culture
  - self-awareness of the issues
  - institutional commitment at the CEO and board levels
  - institutional values

- Raising visibility of women in museums
  - stand up for yourself and your colleagues
  - share the stories and what works
  - recognize positive action

And remember: A rising tide lifts all boats
Policies and Practices

Equity and diversity policies

hiring practices

AAM LBGTTQ guide
Gender Equity Agenda

- Professional Associations
- Museum Studies Programs
- Funders
GEMM

- What it is
- What we want to accomplish

A Call for Gender Equity in the Museum Workplace
Joyful Museums: Worker Engagement Survey

- Tracking museum worker engagement year to year
- Engagement Survey
- www.joyfulmuseums.com
- Deadline March 31, 2017
Photo: Staff of Anthropology Conservation Lab. National Museum of Natural History’s Anthropology Conservation Laboratory’s Supervisor Bethune Gibson (center) with Conservator Carolyn Rose (left) and volunteer Edith Deitz (right) looking at an artifact in the laboratory. 1977. (Smithsonian Institution Archives Record)
How to Find Us

● www.genderequitymuseums.com

● gemmuseums@gmail.com

● https://www.facebook.com/groups/GenderEquityInMuseumsMovement/

● At AAM, St. Louis:
  ● Women in the Museum Workplace Session on Monday, May 8th, 8:45 - 10 am
  ● Open Forum on Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion on Tuesday, May 9th, 9 - 11 am