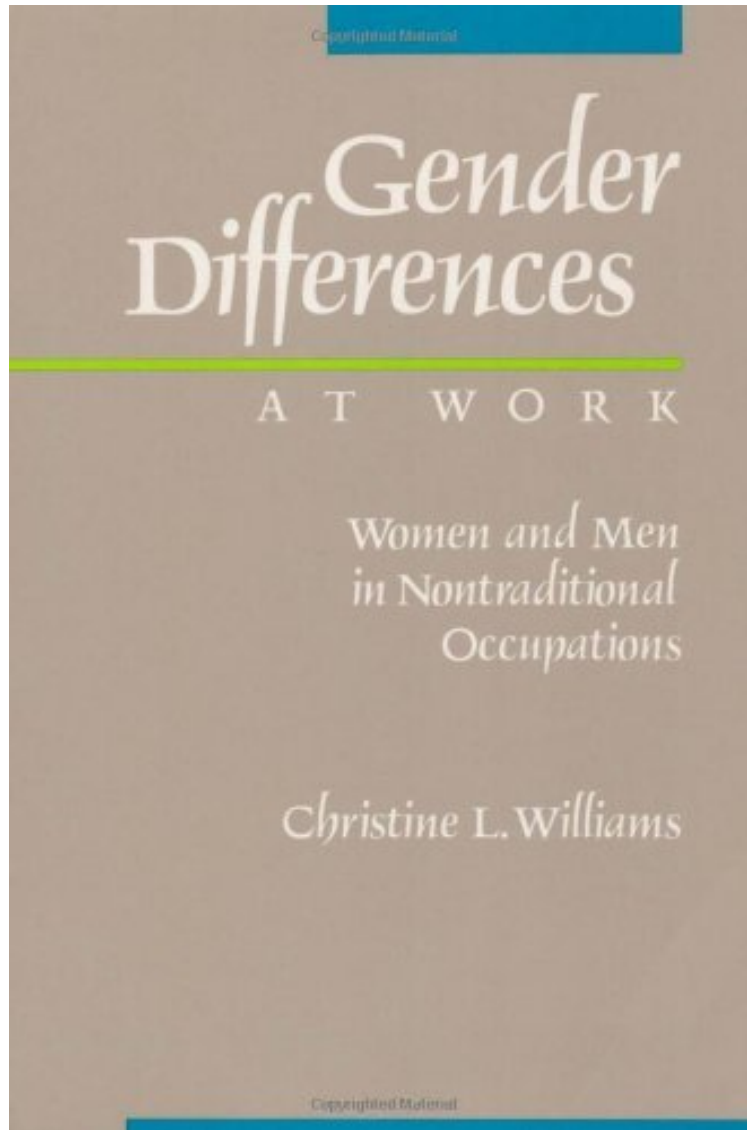


Gender Differences at Work: Women and Men in Non-traditional Occupations

Christine L. Williams

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Christine L. Williams : Gender Differences at Work: Women and Men in Non-traditional Occupations before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gender Differences at Work: Women and Men in Non-traditional Occupations:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Gender (Nonconformity) Matters! By Jeffery Mingo Dr. Williams studies women in the Marine Corps and men in nursing to discuss what it is like to be a gender minority in an occupation. Her most important point is that the experience differs based upon biological sex. If women in a male-

dominated field have it rough that does not mean men in a female dominated field will have it the same way. What came across most directly to me is how much gender still matters. If this book, Dr. Williams writes that men CHOOSE to avoid nursing whereas male military leaders actively PREVENT women from entering the field. Moreover, gender is complex. Female Marines see their femininity as a strength, but male Marines see that same quality as substandard. Male nurses get called doctor because patients simply can't fathom the idea of a male nurse. In fact, some patients say the men practice "male nursing" because the idea still seems so novel and oxymoronic to them. Unfortunately, the continued reality of violence against women is documented: male nurses noted that male doctors throw things at female nurses. I was scandalized by that! At first, I was surprised that this sociology text had so many psychological underpinnings. Then again, the two disciplines are highly interrelated. Still, the Freudian idea that earliest memories and parental practices affects everything may rub some readers the wrong way. The author is clearly a feminist and not just some neutral observer. I support women's rights, so that didn't bother me. However, other readers may indict her for "having an agenda." To me, however, pointing gender inequality is a legitimate aim. Both her discussions on nursing and the Marines mentioned the military often. Thus, I am surprised that she did not directly cite the feminist military scholar Cynthia Enloe. The book starts off by saying, "In the same way studying transgendered people tells us a lot about mainstream gender, so does studying female Marines and male nurses tell us about gender in the workplace over all." I would argue that transgendered people have not been studied enough, especially as they deal with the employment settings. I hope more scholars take on that project. My biggest critique of this book is how lesbians and lesbophobia is mostly ignored. The author notes that heterosexual male nurses go out of their way to announce their sexual orientation and that gay male nurses may not receive the advantages that their straight counterparts do. She also mentions gay men being expelled from the military. However, huge numbers of lesbians get expelled from the military too. Because this book was published in 1989, Dr. Williams did not have the benefit of numerous books printed in the 1990s that spoke about lesbian oppression in the military. Still, gay rights activist Urvashi Vaid noted that discrimination against women and specifically lesbians has been a longstanding feminist issue. Dr. Williams doesn't even state that the military's discriminatory policies may be why women's inclusion in the Marine Corps is taken as a given. Dr. Williams' erasure here is quite problematic. Dr. Williams quotes several men who say that they did not have the money to attend medical school and thus they became nurses. I don't buy that one bit! You can get loans for med school if you have the grades. Getting into medical school is difficult for anybody. Undergraduate nursing courses don't stress a premedical curriculum in the way that science departments do. Getting into medical schools is such an intense weeding process that the argument the informants present here cannot possibly be true. From the start, Dr. Williams confesses that finding female Marines to talk was much easier than finding male nurses. I know it's taboo to rank oppressions, but I wish the author had spoken about how male femininity is punished in society more than female masculinity. Parents discipline girly boys and laugh off tomboyishness. Women can wear pants, but men are punished for wearing dresses. Thus, maybe men will be punished more for entering nursing than women who enter the Marine Corps. I enjoyed this book, just as I do everything Dr. Williams writes. She is an insightful and promising academic. Gender radicals and traditionalists should investigate what she has to say.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. communication tool
By D. Hastings
Great reference book for a communication class and writing a paper regarding men and women in the workplace and their communication styles
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Lysistrata Returns!
By lipservice
Dr. Williams writes that men CHOOSE to avoid nursing whereas male military leaders actively PREVENT women from entering the field. Recently a male nursing student filed a federal law suit against a female-dominated nursing school in Tennessee under Title IX (Discrimination/Retaliation). If you read about what this man went through it's not difficult to see that feminists are extremely hostile people, with an unspeakable appetite for the subjugation of males. The type of treatment men face in nursing schools is disgusting and unconscionable. Jeffrey Mindo stated in his review, "I wish the author had spoken about how male femininity is punished in society more than female masculinity. Parents discipline girly boys and laugh off tomboyishness. Women can wear pants, but men are punished for wearing dresses. Thus, maybe men will be punished more for entering nursing than women who enter the Marine Corps." Find the case *Blizzard v. Aquinas College*, in Nashville, TN. The case received media attention in the Nashville Scene paper. I haven't read this book but I was considering it until I read reviews here and realized even PHD's/medical doctors can be feminists!

Nurses and marines epitomize accepted definitions of femininity and masculinity. Using ethnographic research and provocative in-depth interviews, Christine Williams argues that our popular stereotypes of individuals in nontraditional occupations—male nurses and female marines for example—are entirely unfounded. This new perspective helps to account for the stubborn resilience of occupational stratification in the face of affirmative action and other anti-discrimination policies.

"Williams [has] done us a service by urging us to look more closely at the complex forms of identity that emerge on both sides of the sexual divide and at the interplay between them."--Alice Kessler-Harris, "The Women's of Books From the Inside Flap"
Williams' cleverly conceived study . . . makes for completely fascinating reading. This

creative and original research demonstrates for us that the maintenance and reproduction of gender identity is very different for men and for women and that it is different when men enter a female professional preserve and when women enter one that has been both male and masculine. A wonderful book!"mdash;Nancy Chodorow, author of *The Reproduction of Mothering*"In this fascinating book, Christine Williams demonstrates that a sociology informed by psychoanalysis can give us important insights into the nature of our society and culture, especially in regard to the ambiguous and ambivalent attitudes that define our gender relations."mdash;Eli Sagan, author of *Freud, Women, and Morality*