



A Woman's Place is in the... Building Industry

by Trey Garrison

Part 1 of 2 series

Time for flashback to your SAT tests -- specifically, the comparison and contrast questions.

Question No. 1 --

Women are to the construction business as:

- A) Eskimos are to Australia
- B) Men are to cosmetics counters
- C) The president is to honesty
- D) None of the above

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the correct answer is D.

Surprised?

According to a report on Women-Owned Businesses from the Census Bureau, about **230,000 construction businesses are owned by women.**

Of the 603,000 women employed in the construction industry during 1996, about 22 percent worked for residential building contractors, 10 percent for nonresidential contractors, 11 percent for heavy construction and highway contractors and 56 percent for specialty trade contractors.

"Many women today get into the business as part of a family business, or they start it with their husbands," said Carmel Nayman, executive director of the Women's Council at the National Association of Builders. **"I think that will start to change as more women get in by starting working in the office at a builder, and then realizing they can go on to do it themselves."**

The data in this report was collected as part of the 1992 Economic Census from a large sample of all nonfarm businesses filing 1992 tax forms as individual proprietorships, partnerships or corporations with receipts of \$500 or more.

More and more women are breaking tradition by entering the male-dominated world of the construction industry.

The number of women who became employed in the construction industry increased from 181,000 in 1976 to 603,000 in 1996.

This increase in women who are interested in construction as a career has opened the way to more women owning their own home building or remodeling businesses.

According to career analysts, women usually begin their careers in construction because they are not interested in such jobs as a secretary, nurse, teacher and occupations traditionally held by women.

Still other women start their construction careers with a background in real estate. However they begin, their career helps provide shelter for Americans throughout the country.

Nayman said contrary to what even she expected, her interviews with members of the NAHB Women's Council - who are mostly owners -- found that there are fewer obstacles than one would expect in a historically male industry. **"Except for a few anecdotal challenges, like being asked to go up on a roof just to prove they can, women owners don't face that many challenges to their position because they are the ones signing the paycheck,"** Nayman said. **"Women in the trades have more obstacles."**

They prefer more physically active work where they can create something with their hands or manage its creation. Some women take courses to develop their building skills and become carpenters on building sites. Others get degrees in construction management and work for large building companies.

The numbers on women-owned corporations in the construction fields include construction, retail trade and services. According to the Census Bureau, general economic growth in the Western region of the United States also is an important factor. **The number of women-owned firms has doubled in the past decade in the Phoenix area, with the greatest growth in such nontraditional areas as construction, manufacturing and agri-business.**

This change from the traditional service-related businesses women used to pursue demonstrates a greater willingness for financial institutions to make loans to women for start-up costs.

Because more often than not in a home buying situation,

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the wife makes most of the decisions, women-owned construction companies are often better at communicating, Nayman said.

"Women buyers like to work with women owners, because they feel there's a better understanding of certain needs -- the placement of the electrical plugs, the arrangement of the kitchen or bedroom or bathroom," Nayman said. **"You're going to see a lot more women in this business."**

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http://realtytimes.com/rtnews/rtnpages/19990217_buildingindustry.htm

Changes in Number of Women-Owned Construction Companies in Minnesota

	Building Construction	Heavy Construction	Specialty
	General Contractor	not Building Construction	Trades
1999	111	41	280
2003	112	36	284

The Small and Disadvantaged Business Opportunity Council (SADBOC) invites you to the annual Government Procurement Fair.

Date: November 13, 2003

Time: 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Location: Earle Brown Heritage Center, Brooklyn Park

Cost: Free to the Public

Register online: www.sba.gov/mn

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Contractor/Consultants	Total Contract Amount	Total Paid to Date	DBE Paid to Date	(1) DBE % Actual to Date	(2) DBE % Total Contract Value	Target DBE % Goal
Minnesota Transit Constructions (MnTC)	318,146,312	251,403,772	36,439,026	14.49%	11.45%	15%
Other Contractors	5,819,825	5,616,318	739,754	13.17%	12.71%	
O'Brien Kreitzberg (OBK) (3)	14,411,331	14,671,342	2,760,626	18.82%	19.16%	15%
Marsh	545,000	395,000	115,612	29.52%	21.40%	5%
Other Consultants	31,532,241	28,724,763	1,339,677	4.66%	4.25%	
SUB-TOTAL	370,454,709	300,811,195	41,395,695	13.76%	11.17%	
Other Commitments *	87,408,496	79,357,586	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	457,863,205	380,168,781	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* ROW Cooperative Agreements, Other Direct Costs, etc. (1) Calculates DBE percentage based upon DBE dollars expended vs. contract dollars paid to-date (actuals). (2) Calculates DBE percentage based upon DBE dollars expended vs. total contract value. (3) Value as of August 2003 - Preliminary