

Davenport and Jensen have alluded to a situation which is present in many fields . . . if the expectation of less job mobility in males is considered an important asset, over and above the current performance for which pay is ostensibly given, an easy solution is possible. At present, what happens if the male, paid at a preferred rate because of statistical expectation of longer employment, leaves for another job after a couple of years? Well, for one thing, he gets to keep the extra money.

If there is going to be a differential in rate of pay, it should be based on an enforceable expectation. That is, a bonus rate should be paid to anyone, male or female, who is willing to sign a long-term contract binding him or her to remain with the employer for a period of years, barring involuntary physical disability (this wouldn't include pregnancy), with a penalty clause providing that the extra pay over and above that of persons not signing such a contract, must be repaid to the employer if he defaults.

Some persons might be reluctant to sign such a contract, feeling that they were selling themselves into slavery. But at least it would mean that the person who claims a right to preferential pay on the basis of hypothetically greater job stability would have to either deliver or forfeit the extra proceeds.

The principle which Davenport and Jensen appear to accept is reminiscent of the man who gave his three sons a good whipping every day after breakfast, on the grounds that they were sure to do something to deserve it before the day was over. If we are going to punish occupational infidelity, it would be better to adopt the more generally accepted corrective principle of exacting the penalty after rather than before the crime is committed.

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Some hypothesis might be tested to the satisfaction of all participants. Assume the validity of the following statements: (i) women receive lower salaries than men, all things but gender being equal; (ii) such a situation would be rational if, in fact, the "job mortality" would be higher for women than for men (due to sex-specific factors). Both of these statements should receive grudging agreement from all parties. Further, assume that past and present behavior is the best predictor available

for future behavior (most behavioral scientists would accept this); specifically, it should be possible to stipulate a period of employment (N years, say, where $N = 4$ or 5 ?) which would indicate that a specific woman had a "job mortality" factor at least as low as that of a typical man in the same position.

If the above assumptions are accepted, then an employer should be willing to give parity to prospective or current women employees (in terms of hiring preference or salary) if such employees had completed N years of continued performance as a professional. Do the employers who write to *Science* have salary parity for women who have been employed N years? Are they as likely to hire women with N years of employment as men with equivalent experience? If the answer is "yes," then the employers are behaving rationally, and women must argue the tenability of the "job mortality" assumption. If the answer is "no," then the employers are merely rationalizing irrational behavior in their letters to *Science*, and are hoist by their own petards (in the Middle French meaning of the term). Empirical tests can discriminate the good guys or gals from the bad.

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Amen

Several letters dealing with the properties, preparation, and use of yogurt have appeared in *Science* during the past few months (1). I have recently been informed of some less technical studies which the researcher has compiled and plans to publish in a modest manual entitled "60 Things You Can Do With Yogurt" (2). Then too, his research assistants have prepared a short follow-up paper entitled "One More Thing You Can Do With Yogurt" (3).

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References

1. E. F. Segal, *Science* 169, 425 (1970); M. Krogger, *ibid.*, p. 816; J. Goodman, *ibid.* 170, 123 (1970); B. H. Bagdikian, *ibid.*, p. 582; G. A. Garabedian, *ibid.* 171, 847 (1971).
2. Private communication.
3. An even more private communication.

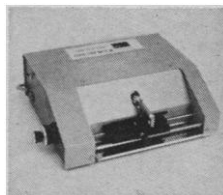
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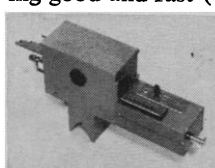
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