

ANALYSIS OF HIGH-TECH EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS IN EIGHT LEADING U.S. HIGH-TECH CENTERS—1990

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September, 1992*

New data confirms that the U.S. electronics manufacturing workforce remains **sharply stratified**, with white men in positions of power and high income, and women and non-whites holding down the low-level positions, such as operatives—that is, semi-skilled production workers. The attached table and chart summarize the race and gender employment patterns for 644 facilities in six high-tech industries, as reported to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in eight U.S. metropolitan areas.

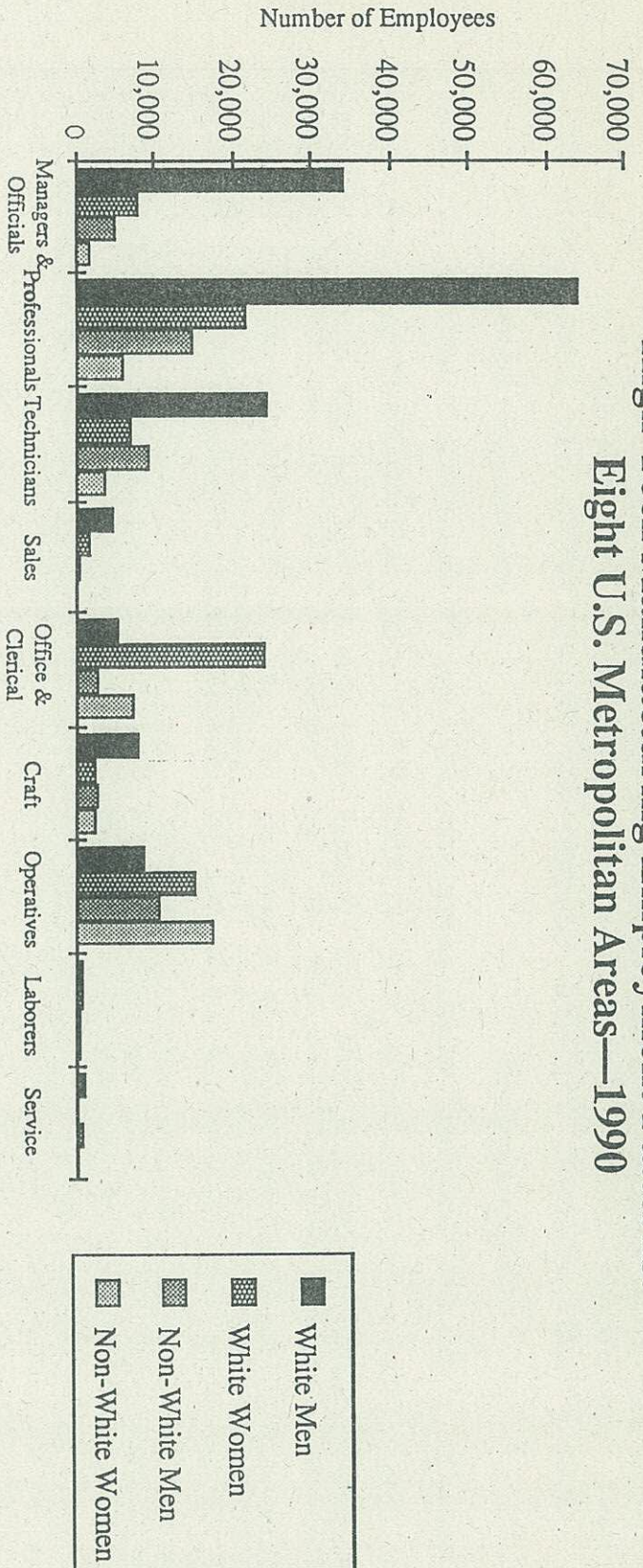
White men make up 69.6% of the officials and managers and 60.0% of the professionals, but they only account for 16.9% of the operatives. Women of all races make up 79.1% of the clerical workers and 63.0% of the operatives, yet they comprise only 38.0% of the high-tech manufacturing workforce. Non-white women account for 33.7% of the operatives, although they only represent 12.5% of the workforce at the same companies. Non-whites (men and women) account for 53.9% of the operatives.

Non-white men account for 13.9% of the professionals in this sample, but that already low number is even less significant in social terms. More than half of those non-white male professionals (52.6%) are Asians or Asian-Americans in Silicon Valley. While Southeast Asian and Korean production workers in Silicon Valley tend to be treated like other non-white ethnic groups, professionals of Japanese, Chinese, and South Asian (Indian) descent tend to be treated as "honorary whites."

The data illustrates what activists and other observers already know. When high-tech comes to a community, it doesn't bring in good jobs for the people already living there. It imports highly trained workers and provide low-pay, low-status employment to the residents.

Many factors contribute to the segregation of the high-tech workforce by race and gender. Education plays an important role, since most of the high-level employees have one or more college degrees. However, even among wage workers companies often practice race and gender discrimination. While employers do not openly admit such discrimination in the U.S., where it is illegal, they overtly discriminate when hiring at their overseas plants.

High-Tech Manufacturing Employment Patterns: Eight U.S. Metropolitan Areas—1990



This chart was prepared from U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission data for 1990 for the following metropolitan areas: Albuquerque, New Mexico; Austin, Texas; Boston, Massachusetts; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Dallas, Texas; Phoenix, Arizona; Portland, Oregon; and Silicon Valley (San Jose), California. Industries covered include: Office and Computing Machines, Communications Equipment, Electronic Components and Accessories, Engineering and Scientific Instruments, Measuring and Controlling Devices, and Optical Instruments & Lenses.

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