

“Leaping From Our Spheres”

The Impact of Women
on Unitarian Universalist Ministry

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Generated by the UUMA CENTER Committee

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Survey of UU Ministers for CENTER Program

Preliminary Statistics

June 21, 1998

Survey constructed by Helen Lutton Cohen and Dorothy Emerson. Many, many thanks to Don Cohen and Marry Kvaal of First Parish in Lexington for their hours of volunteer work and expertise, and to Beth Bradley, Emily Taylor, Rebecca Cohen, and Danielle Zariboni for their work.

1,373 surveys were sent out to all ministers in fellowship, including retired. Responses received: 565 (288 female, 276 male, one transgender).

Some Historical Statistics on Women Clergy in the U.S.

1910	685
1950	6,824
1993	11.6%

(from Barbara Brown Zikmund, Adair T. Lummis, and Patricia Mie Yin Chang, *Clergy Women: An Uphill Calling*, 1998)

1900	3.3% of European-American clergy
	1.1% of African-American clergy
1910	numbers dropped nearly 80%, from 3,400 to 700
1950	4.1%
1970	3.0%

(from Paula D. Nesbitt, *Feminization of the Clergy in America*, 1997)

From Unitarian Universalist Records

1957-58 Unitarian Yearbook: 538 ministers: 529 male, 9 female (2%)-no women settled as parish ministers

1959-60 Universalist Yearbook: 335 ministers: 317 male, 18 female (5.4%)-3 women settled as parish ministers

1968 UUA Directory: 616 full ministers + 166 associate ministers = 782
599 male full ministers + 162 associates = 761

17 female full ministers + 4 associates = 21 (2%)

1978 UUA Directory: 916 ministers, 859 male, 57 female (6.2%)

1988 UUA Directory: 1,108 ministers: 832 male parish ministers + 8 male M.R.E.s = 840

223 female parish ministers + 53 M.R.E.s = 276 (24.9%)

Current Statistics

1,035 ministers in active service: 531 males, 504 females (49%)

Community Ministers: 37 males, 60 females (62%)

M.R.E.s: 9 males, 49 females (85%)

Parish Ministers: 508 males, 413 females (44.8%)

UUA Headquarters Staff: 9 male ministers, 8 female ministers
 Field Staff: District Executives: 10 clergy men, 3 lay men, 7 clergy women, 6 lay women
 District R.E. and Program Coordinators: 4 clergy women, 3 lay women

Survey Statistics

Marital status: Married or partnered: 195f 232m
 Single, divorced, or widowed: 92f 39m

Sexual Orientation: Heterosexual: 218f 232m
 Gay: 16m
 Lesbian: 34f
 Bisexual: 15f 1m
 1 transgendered: "Depends"

Ministry Track: Parish: 228f 226m
 M.R.E.: 29f 5m
 (4m are both M.R.E. and parish, 3f are also parish, 1f is also community)
 Community: 30f 15m
 (7m are also parish, 1f also M.R.E., 8f also parish)

Ages:
 20-29 4f 1m (5)
 30-39 37f 16m (53)
 40-49 95f 54m (149)
 50-59 85f 73m (158)
 60-69 48f 70m (118)
 70-79 14f 47m (61)
 80-89 3f 12m (15)
 over 90 0f 1m (1)
 Average Age: 51.3 58.5

Date of Ordination:
 before 1950: 0f 22m
 1951-1960 2f 55m
 1961-1970 4f 52m
 1971-1980 48f 57m
 1981-1990 96f 47m
 since 1990 127f 39m

Age of Ordination (estimates based on time that training began)
 25-35: 126f 186m
 36-40: 52f 19m
 41-50: 65f 25m
 51-60: 24f 2m
 after 70: 1f 9m

Average number of positions:

Ordained before 1970: 5.6f 5.66m
 Ordained after 1970: 2.74f 2.86m
 Ordained after 1970 (ages 25-40) 2.64f 2.91m

Myers-Briggs:

I: 112f 85m E: 122f 62m
 N: 219f 131m S: 12f 11m
 T: 48f 57m F: 179f 83m
 J: 124f 76m P: 84f 61m

Size of congregation:

under 100: 77f 60m
 101-200: 78f 64m
 201-300: 42f 42m
 301-400: 17f 27m
 401-700: 22f 33m
 >700: 10f 19m
 (including 4f M.R.E., 2f Assoc., 1f interim; 1m M.R.E., 2m Co-Min, 1m Ass't and 1m Assoc)

Theology: (respondents could check as many as they wished among Theist, Pantheist, Naturalist, Christian, Humanist, Pagan, Deist, Jewish, Buddhist, Agnostic, Atheist, and add others)

Theist: 130f 96m
 Pantheist: 69f 66m
 Naturalist: 93f 101m
 Christian: 57f 75m
 Humanist: 146f 155m
 Pagan: 48f 28m
 Deist: 11f 15m
 Jewish: 11f 10m
 Buddhist: 40f 40m
 Agnostic: 51f 62m
 Atheist: 6f 28m

Other:
 "Panentheist" 32f 15m
 "Universalist" 8f 8m
 "Unitarian" 1f 3m
 "Henotheist" 1f
 "Secular humanist" 1m
 "Cosmic humanist" 1m
 (Respondents checked anywhere from one to all, some said there weren't enough options. Combinations included "Christian and pagan," "Christian and atheist," and probably everything else.)

A Few Theology Categories by Age (respondents could check as many as applied)

	Theist	Humanist	Atheist	Total # in Age Group
25-40	38	29	1	58
41-50	67	72	8	149
51-60	59	91	11	158
61-70	40	62	6	118
over 70	20	48	7	77

Does your gender affect your ethics?

Yes	135f 62m
No	115f 175m

Style of ministry (respondents were asked to choose up to three of the following)

Pastoral	110f 97m
Prophetic	47f 53m
Teaching	73f 96m
Empowering	131f 83m
Priestly	14f 16m
Facilitating	76f 74m
Leading	27f 39m
Inspirational	75f 72m
Organizing	29f 39m

(1 person wrote in "muddling")

Focus of ministry (respondents were asked to check the top three among the categories below)

Worship	233f 229m
Pastoral counseling	117f 88m
Religious education	80f 65m
R.E. for children	20f 9m
R.E. for youth	22f 7m

Spiritual leadership	123f 102m
Religious arts	13f 13m
Chaplaincy	15f 12m
Organizational development	96f 89m
Social Service	20f 22m
Social Justice	59f 82m
Administration	49f 50m
Campus ministry	5f 5m
Program Development	51f 40m

Were you called to ministry?

Yes	249f 211m
No	21f 41m

What is your source of authority? (respondents were asked to check as many of the following as applied)

God/Goddess	144f 97m
Yourself	205f 166m
Congregation	219f 196m
Earth	44f 35m
Human community	133f 104m

ON BOUNDARY ISSUES

Do you have trouble having others cross your boundaries?

Yes	81f 52m
No	222f 220m

Do you have trouble with crossing the boundaries of others?

Yes	9f 4m
No	75f 54m

SUPPORT SYSTEMS:

Have you had a mentor?

Yes	255f 210m
No	26f 61m

Was your internship supervisor your mentor?

Yes	135f 71m
No	132f 147m

Mentor before entering ministry?

Yes	181f 127m
No	71f 91m

Study group?

Yes	63f 62m
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Mixed support group
 Yes 82f 82m
 Single gender support group?
 Yes 46f 11m
 Chapter?
 Yes 227f 171m
 Interfaith clergy?
 Yes 172f 126m
 Support of individual colleagues (average number)
 females: 3.54 female colleagues 2.56 male colleagues
 males: 2.58 female colleagues 2.90 male colleagues
 Attend usually or always
 General Assembly 202f 149m
 Chapter 222f 167m
 CENTER Day 184f 117m

Are you competitive?

Yes 81f 59m
 No 202f 206m

Are you more competitive with your own gender?

Yes 31f 38m

Have collegial relations changed in the last two decades?

Yes 75f 184m
 No 8f 28m

Do you have a spiritual practice?

Yes 266f 228m
 No 3f 26m
 by ages: Yes No
 25-40 64 1
 41-50 133 3
 51-60 142 6
 61-70 91 4
 >70 44 14

Do you have weekly lay participation in the service?

Yes 173f 164m
 No 52f 49m

Does your church have social service projects?

Yes 223f 209m
 No 13f 13m

Does your spouse/partner participate in church?

always 53f 73m
 frequently 62f 83m
 occasionally 32f 36m
 seldom 29f 13m
 never 8f 7m
 (232 males and 195 females are married or partnered)

Does your family experience a lot of stress?

Yes 42f 53m
 by ages: (Yes)
 25-40 8f 7m
 41-50 22f 18m
 51-60 11f 15m
 61-70 1f 9m
 >70 0f 4m

Are you compensated according to UUMA Guidelines?

Yes 110f 102m
 No 115f 131m

Are you fairly compensated?

Yes 148f 152m
 No 109f 89m

Have you preached a sermon on evil?

Yes 200f 225m
 No 74f 30m

If you are a community minister, do you wear clothes that indicate your clerical identity?

Yes 16f 8m
 No 29f 18m

Do parishioners comment on your clothes?

Yes 141f 59m
 No 132f 199m

Do you wear a robe (by size of church)?

Yes No
 50 and under 17 18
 51-100 38 62
 101-200 78 63

201-300	48	35
301-400	20	24
401-500	16	12
501-700	3	14
>700	21	6

(Many ministers who said "no" wear them on special occasions)

How many hours do you work/week?

<40	40f	20m
40-50	89f	69m
51-60	89f	82m
61-70	42f	41m
71-80	4f	17m
>80	3f	7m

Do you believe women ministers have had a significant impact on the nature of ministry and on congregational life in recent decades?

Yes:	245f	237m
No:	6f	6m