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Bulletin No. 133

EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS  
IN BEAUTY SHOPS

A STUDY OF FOUR CITIES

Pamphlet

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EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS  
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A STUDY OF FOUR CITIES

By  
ETHEL ERICKSON



BULLETIN OF THE WOMEN'S BUREAU, No. 133

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EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS IN BEAUTY SHOPS

A STUDY OF FOUR CITIES

Part I. INTRODUCTION

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,  
 WOMEN'S BUREAU,  
 Washington, February 9, 1935.

MADAM: I have the honor to transmit the report of this Bureau's survey of wages, hours, and conditions of employment in beauty shops, made in response to a request from the National Hairdressers and Cosmetologists Association and a petition from employees in the industry.

The spectacular increase from 33,000 in 1920 to 113,000 in 1930 in the number of women in this type of work, and the scarcity of data relating to their employment conditions, make the findings of the survey especially significant.

I extend my thanks to the employers, employees, and other persons who cooperated by supplying the information desired.

The field work was conducted and the report written by Ethel Erickson, industrial supervisor.

Respectfully submitted.

MARY ANDERSON, *Director.*

Hon. FRANCES PERKINS,  
*Secretary of Labor.*



# EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS IN BEAUTY SHOPS

## A STUDY OF FOUR CITIES

### Part I.—INTRODUCTION

Hairdressing and manicuring, beauty culture, cosmetology, and cosmetic therapy are a few of the terms designating activities of a service trade that made rapid strides in the 15 years immediately preceding this study. Changes in coiffure, beginning with the bobbed-hair craze, have been popular with women since about 1920 and have provided the background for the upswing of beauty culture to vocational importance for women. At first, as bobbed hair gained approval, there was an influx of women into men's barber shops, but as it became evident that this type of coiffure required as much attention as long hair, or even more, cutting and trimming were supplemented by many different operations not available in barber shops. It was here that beauty shops came into their own, so to speak, for marcelling and many other types of waving—to mention only one, permanent waving—came to be most important. Permanent waving of both long and short hair, with its follow-up treatments, was the technological boomerang that sent the business of beauty parlors onward to profitable heights.

Before 1920 relatively few women patronized beauty parlors, but by 1930 these services had a place in the time and the money budget of women of all groups and ages. Shops were operated in department stores, office buildings, hotels, as independent businesses on every commercial street, or in apartment buildings or homes in residential neighborhoods. In the early years of the century many women hairdressers went to the homes of their customers, in a sense plying their services from house to house, while now, with the demand for elaboration of equipment and service, hairdressers and beauty operators have to be regarded chiefly as shop employees. Along with developments in waving hair, manicuring, facial treatments, and hair dyeing all have been improved in technique and kind and are offered now in most beauty shops. The hairdresser of the early years of the century has become the beautician or beauty culturist of the present.

#### Growth of employment

Beauty parlors or shops are of such recent development in terms of business activity that little in the way of comparative statistics is available. From estimates made at the hearings in Washington in regard to a proposed code for the industry in 1934 there were close to 42,000 shops, more than 300 schools of training, and considerably over 125,000 employees.

*Census data.*—In 1930 the United States census still grouped hairdressers and manicurists with barbers, under "personal service."



The proportion of the women so classified who are employed in men's barber shops on work other than manicuring undoubtedly is small. On the whole, the figures reported by the census probably are fairly indicative of the employment of women in beauty parlors.

That the business of improving women's appearance has expanded greatly is shown by the fact that the number of women barbers, hairdressers, and manicurists in 1930 was 3½ times the number reported in 1920. Considering a longer period, census figures show that in 1870 about 1,200 women were listed as barbers and hairdressers, in 1900 about 5,500; in 1910, when the occupational classification first included manicurists as well as barbers and hairdressers, the number exceeded 22,000; in 1920, 33,000; and in 1930, 113,000.<sup>1</sup>

Another statistical aspect of the number of women employed in beauty culture is the data in regard to cities shown in the 1930 census report referred to. In 1930 there were 13 cities in which more than 1,000 women reported their occupation as manicurist, hairdresser, or barber. The cities with more than 1,000 women in these occupations and the numbers reported follow:

City:	Number of women in 1930	City:	Number of women in 1930
New York.....	9,579	San Francisco.....	1,436
Chicago.....	5,599	Boston.....	1,247
Los Angeles.....	3,197	Washington.....	1,144
Philadelphia.....	2,866	Baltimore.....	1,040
Detroit.....	2,309	Minneapolis.....	1,025
Cleveland.....	1,472	Kansas City (Mo.).....	1,010
St. Louis.....	1,464		

Next in rank in numbers employed in beauty culture are 16 cities with from 500 to 1,000 women in these occupations.<sup>2</sup>

The census figures do not separate men in barber shops from those in beauty parlors, but the Women's Bureau survey and the estimates of key men of the trade indicate that men comprise roughly about 10 percent of the persons employed in beauty shops.

### Scope and purpose of survey

The scarcity of data relating to employment in beauty shops and requests for information of this sort from those interested in improving working conditions were the reasons for the Women's Bureau studying factors of employment in four cities—Philadelphia, New Orleans, St. Louis, and Columbus. The survey was carried on from early December 1933 to April 1934—4 months when conditions in the industry were thought to be representative of the period. Spring and early summer were regarded as the peak seasons, late summer as the most inactive. The data set forth in the following report were secured through scheduling shop managers and men and women employees, and by visiting schools for beauty operators in each of the cities.

<sup>1</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census: Twelfth Census, 1900, Special Report on Occupations, p. 1; 15th Census, 1930, Population, vol. IV, Occupations, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> The United States Census reports the following numbers:

Seattle.....	920	New Orleans.....	642
Buffalo.....	900	Cincinnati.....	626
Milwaukee.....	771	Dallas.....	625
Pittsburgh.....	747	Memphis.....	596
Denver.....	721	Oklahoma City.....	562
Houston.....	720	Columbus.....	560
Indianapolis.....	718	Rochester.....	549
Portland (Oreg.).....	709	Oakland.....	548

Names of shops were selected more or less at random from the city telephone directories. As a basis for inclusion in this study the shops had to have at least one employee; for this reason, no entirely owner-operated shops were scheduled. Almost as large a number of these owner-operator shops as of those with employees were found. In addition to these was a different type of shop, that of booth renter, in which a section of a shop is rented. Booth renting was much more common among the Negroes than among the whites. The owner-operator exercises a great influence in this trade and is always a marginal factor to be reckoned with in price competition, long shop hours, and occasional Sunday work.

In Philadelphia and St. Louis, records were obtained for approximately one-fourth of the women reported in the occupational group in 1930. In the other 2 cities, New Orleans and Columbus, efforts were made to visit every shop listed in the classified directory or suggested by those acquainted with the trade. From such canvassing it was possible to secure data for approximately one-half of the women reported in these two cities in 1930, though of course only shops having at least one employee were scheduled.

Fifteen Negro women were found working in shops operated for white customers, but as their earnings and conditions of employment corresponded quite generally with those of the white women they are not considered separately in the discussions and tabulations presented in this report. Negro shops for Negro customers were included in the survey and analyses of the findings appear in part III (pp. 37 to 46).

In all, the Women's Bureau survey covered 465 white and Negro shops that were employing 1,655 persons. A summary by city of the number of shops and employees—men and women—follows:

City	Number of shops			Number of employees in—					
				White shops			Negro shops		
	Total	White	Negro	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
All.....	465	390	75	1,496	181	1,315	159	2	157
Philadelphia.....	132	100	32	523	91	432	66	2	64
New Orleans.....	83	78	5	307	22	285	18	-----	18
St. Louis.....	151	117	34	408	39	369	63	-----	63
Columbus.....	99	95	4	258	29	229	12	-----	12

<sup>1</sup> Includes 15 Negro women—3 in New Orleans, 3 in St. Louis, and 9 in Columbus.

### SUMMARY

#### Date of survey

December 1933 to April 1934.

#### Scope

In the 4 cities visited—Philadelphia, New Orleans, St. Louis, and Columbus—390 white shops and 75 Negro shops were covered. The former employed 1,315 women and 181 men; the latter, 157 Negro women and 2 Negro men.

The typical shop of the survey had no more than 3 employees. Though most of the men were specialists, the great majority of the women were all-round operators.



**Hours worked by employees**

In the white shops half the women and three-fifths of the men worked a week of under 48 hours. This was true, however, for only one-fourth of the women in Negro shops. Two in 5 of the Negro women were on the job more than 54 hours.

**Earnings**

The median of a week's earnings of white women in the four cities is \$14.25; of white men, \$22.50. Women in Negro shops had a median of \$8.

Philadelphia shows the highest median of earnings for white women (\$15) and New Orleans the lowest (\$10.25).

Tips, commissions, etc., added little to the earnings of beauty-shop workers, for including these extras the medians were \$16 for women and \$25 for men in white shops; for women in Negro shops the median was \$1 higher than the median without such gratuities.

Significant contrasts in earnings are emphasized in the proportions of workers receiving (exclusive of tips, etc.) less than \$15 as their week's wage. The proportion of white women was 3½ times and the proportion of Negro women was 6 times the percentage of white men earning less than \$15. Further, no woman in the Negro shops and only about 1 in 8 of those in white shops received as much as \$20 for the week's earnings, though 3 of every 5 men had earnings as high as this.

Manicurists, the poorest paid of the employee groups, received more in tips than did women in the other occupations of the industry.

**Personal history**

The women—white and Negro—were young, fewer than 1 in 13 having reached 40 years. Over 1 in 4 of the men, however, reported their age as 40 years or more.

Three-fifths of the white women, but fewer than one-half of the Negroes, were single; fairly large proportions of the women were married.

Experience of 5 years or more in the trade was reported by more than one-half of the white women and by two-fifths of the Negro women. Close to nine-tenths of the men reported such time in the trade.

**Type and cost of training**

The women had received their training chiefly in beauty schools; the men, as shop apprentices. This is reflected in the contrast in percentages of men and women who had made no cash outlay for their training, one-third of the women and three-fifths of the men so reporting.

**Part II.—WHITE SHOPS****Type and size of shop**

The typical beauty shop of the survey is the small independent establishment with one or two employees. Its make-up does not require much organization nor any well-defined managerial policies, but even allowing for the possible simplicity of business arrangements, this survey revealed that often there was an absolute lack of even simple business records, while financial planning seemed to be confined to disbursements from the cash drawer as long as the cash held out. Planning, budgeting, and cost accounting were in general avoided by many of the shop managers. Because some shops were cutting prices, others cut theirs without regard as to whether or not the charge covered the costs. Except in parlors with 5 or more employees the agents found that pay-roll records seldom were kept, and as only 1 in 4 of the white shops scheduled had as many as 5 workers, this fact may be considered typical of the whole industry.

Of the 390 shops, less than 10 percent had as many as 10 employees, and most of these were concessionaires in department stores. In New Orleans and Columbus, the two cities in which every beauty shop known was visited by Women's Bureau agents, the owner-operator shops—with no employees and therefore not included in the study—comprised respectively 56 percent and 52 percent of the entire number. Philadelphia shows a greater proportion of large shops than do the other cities, but in Philadelphia the 1-employee shop was much less generally visited than establishments of other sizes. While only 1 in 7 of the Philadelphia shops scheduled had but 1 employee, the other cities had 1 in 3, or 2 in 5 of this size. Only about one-half of the shops visited in Philadelphia, compared to approximately three-fourths of those in the other cities, had from 1 to 3 employees.

The following tabulation shows the size of the 390 white shops scheduled:

Number of employees	Four cities		Philadelphia		New Orleans		St. Louis		Columbus	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total.....	390	100.0	100	100.0	78	100.0	117	100.0	95	100.0
1.....	128	32.8	15	15.0	27	34.6	46	39.3	40	42.1
2.....	79	20.3	18	18.0	17	21.8	24	20.5	20	21.1
3.....	58	14.9	15	15.0	15	19.2	18	15.4	10	10.5
4.....	31	7.9	15	15.0	1	1.3	10	8.5	5	5.3
5, less than 10.....	57	14.6	22	22.0	9	11.5	10	8.5	16	16.8
10, less than 15.....	18	4.6	7	7.0	5	6.4	3	2.6	3	3.2
15 or more.....	19	4.9	8	8.0	4	5.1	6	5.1	1	1.1

In a business with so many small shops, independent management and ownership is, of course, most usual. The independent type of shop constituted slightly over three-fourths of the 390 white shops



reported in the survey. Local chains—that is, establishments with one management controlling two or more shops in a city—were met much more frequently than intercity chains, and the concessionaires' field seemed to be dominated by 4 or 5 large firms with headquarters in New York. About one-fifth of the shops that were scheduled in department stores were operated by the store, the others being under the management of concessionaires. Eight of the nine shops in hotels had no connection with the hotel but that of tenant. Two school shops where the shop was entirely separated from the school and the operators were placed on a regular employee basis also form part of the study.

The type of establishment in the several cities from which data were secured is shown in the following summary:

Type and location of shop	Four cities	Philadel- phia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Colum- bus
Total.....	390	100	78	117	95
Independent.....	297	68	63	93	73
In commercial quarters.....	211	57	33	70	51
In dwelling.....	57	8	20	17	12
In barber shop.....	21	2	7	3	9
In hotel.....	8	1	3	3	1
Chain.....	59	22	6	18	13
National <sup>1</sup> .....	6	-----	1	1	4
Local.....	53	22	5	17	9
Concessionaires.....	25	7	8	5	5
National.....	18	5	5	5	3
Local.....	7	2	3	-----	2
Department store owned or hotel owned.....	7	2	-----	<sup>2</sup> 1	4
Shop and school.....	2	1	1	-----	-----

<sup>1</sup> National chains other than concessionaires.  
<sup>2</sup> The only shop owned and operated by a hotel.

### Location of shop

Because of its predominating size the independent group has been subdivided. Seven-tenths of these establishments were in store quarters or office buildings in business districts and nearly one-fifth were in the house or apartment of the owner. Though a residence is much more often used for business when the shop is owner-operated, this survey includes as many as 57 shops directly connected with living quarters and employing operators. Barber shops with beauty shops in the rear or on the floor above are not uncommon and 21 of these were visited.

The national chain shops other than concessionaires usually specialized in permanent waving. The number included in this investigation is small. In Philadelphia there were a large number of shops belonging to local chains; in fact, the latter appear to be outranked in number only by the independent stores in commercial quarters.

### Length of time established

The newness and rapid growth of beauty culture as a trade precludes any supposition of long business histories, and it is surprising that nearly one-half of the shops (48.1 percent) had been operating under

the same management and in the same locality for at least 5 years and that over one-fifth (22.6 percent) had a background of 10 years. One-third (33 percent) of the 385 shops reporting time established had been in business less than 3 years, and one-seventh (14.3 percent) less than 1 year. The only city that showed a marked variation from the general pattern in the time established was New Orleans, where 21 percent of the shops had opened for business in the year preceding the study and 45 percent in the period from 1931 to 1934. In Philadelphia 12 percent of the shops had been operating 20 years or more, in Columbus 8.5 percent, and in St. Louis and New Orleans slightly less than 4 percent.

### Prices for services

Price competition was a Pandora box to most shop owners. It was the generally lamented curse of the trade and the same tenor of price complaints was met in every city. Shops in the cut-price class would loudly complain that costs were not covered by these prices, which had been lowered because the shop in the next building or square had cut. Low earnings denounced in one statement were vindicated in the next on the grounds of low prices and the fact that the business was going in the hole. The residential shops—many of them owner-operated with a low overhead—were regarded as the worst offenders, and shop owners assigned them an importance that did not seem warranted. The shop owners' interest in securing an N. R. A. code centered in the possible price-fixing provisions. A price-fixing code was anticipated as a new lease for business survival. It was not expected that one set of prices could apply to all shops, but minimum standards were desired to constrain those with the cut-rate urge.

In the hope of learning something of the relation that prices bear to the earnings of the women, minimum prices of four basic services were secured. These covered a plain shampoo, a finger wave, a hair cut, and a manicure. In Columbus, in addition, the minimum prices for a permanent wave were ascertained. In recent years a tendency has developed toward a flat or blanket scale for the chief services and a shop is classed as a 25-cent, 35-cent, or 50-cent shop. Places with higher prices than these show less uniformity in prices. A 25-cent shop implies to its customers that a plain shampoo, a finger wave, waving other than permanents, a hair cut, an eyebrow arch, a manicure, and a few other services are offered at a flat rate of 25 cents. Some marcel cost more but they had lost in favor to finger waves. However, as all shops did not have such blanket rates, the present study has considered prices from two angles: First, the minimum price charged for any of the four services of hair cut, shampoo, manicure, and finger wave; second, the most common price. For example, if the price scale in a shop was 35 cents for a hair cut, a shampoo, or a manicure, and 25 cents for a finger wave, this particular shop would be listed as a 35-cent shop in the most common price tabulations, while it would fall in the 25-cent group when the tabulation presents the minimum price for any one service.

The highest minimum price for any of the services covered was 85 cents, in a Philadelphia shop. In Columbus a shop that gave only special treatments, usually on a doctor's recommendation, charged a minimum price of \$1, but this could not be considered a typical shop.



Fifty-cent shops and 50-cent prices were the most common. About one-third of the shops reported this as the minimum price of any of their services. The 35-cent scale of prices was next in frequency, this being the most usual service in one-fourth of the shops; in New Orleans more shops offered services at 35 cents than at any other level. A summary of the minimum and the most usual prices as reported by the 390 shops shows the following distribution:

Price of service (cents)	Percent of shops charging specified price in—				
	Four cities	Philadel- phia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Colum- bus
<b>MOST USUAL PRICE<sup>1</sup></b>					
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 25.....	.5	-----	1.3	.9	-----
25.....	13.8	17.0	24.4	11.1	5.3
35.....	24.6	26.0	35.9	17.9	22.1
50.....	44.9	39.0	32.1	50.4	54.7
75 and more.....	4.1	7.0	-----	2.6	6.3
No usual price.....	12.1	11.0	6.4	17.1	11.6
<b>MINIMUM PRICE</b>					
Total.....	<sup>2</sup> 100.0	100.0	100.0	<sup>2</sup> 100.0	<sup>2</sup> 100.0
Less than 25.....	.8	-----	2.6	.9	-----
25.....	27.7	19.0	37.2	31.6	24.2
35.....	34.9	33.0	43.6	33.3	31.6
50.....	32.6	42.0	16.7	29.1	40.0
More than 50.....	3.1	6.0	-----	3.4	2.1

<sup>1</sup> Practically all prices are as listed, so no range is shown.

<sup>2</sup> Percents do not total 100, as 2 shops in Columbus and 2 in St. Louis that charged a minimum of 30 or 40 cents do not appear in summary.

The lowest price scale was in New Orleans, with two-fifths of the shops selling some service at 25 cents or less and one-fourth reporting 25 cents as their most usual price. No shop in New Orleans had a minimum price of more than 50 cents. Philadelphia had a greater proportion than St. Louis of shops whose most usual price scale was 25 and 35 cents, but the latter city shows a larger proportion when these are the minimum prices. Since the low price is almost always for finger waving, the service most in demand, the higher price scales for some services in St. Louis may have less effect on total receipts than the low prices for finger waving.

Shampooing and finger waving usually were a combined service, and as these constitute the major activity of the trade, much of the competition was based on the prices for these services. In some shops the price for a finger wave included a shampoo; in others, it did not. The lowest price recorded was that of a New Orleans shop that did finger waving for 5 cents. Next at the bottom of the scale were two shops, one in St. Louis and one in New Orleans, that offered finger waves for 15 cents.<sup>3</sup> Loquacious managers contended again and again that numerous shops with employees were charging below 25 cents, but when followed up these clues were found to be fallacious or the shops were in residences with only the owner concerned, and not many of the owner-operators valued their services so low.

<sup>3</sup> These prices do not cover drying under artificial heat nor a shampoo.

### Minimum prices for permanent waves in Columbus

Shop owners in Columbus were questioned as to their lowest permanent-wave prices. This was to include a completed wave with the final shampoo and set. Of 80 shops from which prices were secured, practically one-fourth sold permanent waves for \$2 or less, while about one-third reported their minimum price as \$5 or more. More than three-fifths of the shops charged \$3 and under \$5. Most of the shop owners who discussed costs believed that many permanents were sold for less than cost if first-class supplies were used and salaries based on as much as \$15 a week. One shop owner who had studied her costs gave the following figures for a recognized standard permanent wave (including shampoo and finger wave) that she sold for \$5. These figures were assented to and approved of by several shop owners.

Pads and oil.....	\$1.33 to \$1.50 (varies with quantity)
Labor.....	1.40
Electricity.....	.20 (includes drying)
Overhead.....	.75
Soap, towels, nets, pins, etc.....	.12

Total..... \$3.80 to approximately \$4

These figures probably are representative, as the information on prices in this city shows that over three-fifths of the shops charged \$3.50 or less for some of their permanent waves. If the charge is below a reasonable level, it involves not only the shop owner's profits but the earnings of the operator, and, through inadequate attention and inferior supplies, the welfare of the customer.

### Prices in owner-operator shops and shops with employees in New Orleans

From 81 owner-operated shops in New Orleans, data in regard to the minimum price for a service—usually a finger wave—were secured so that a comparison of their prices and of those of shops with employees might be made. Minimum prices of these shops and of the 78 white included in this survey follow:

Minimum price of a service (cents)	Percent of women in—		Minimum price of a service (cents)	Percent of women in—	
	81 owner-operated shops	78 shops having employees		81 owner-operated shops	78 shops having employees
5.....	-----	1.3	25.....	58.0	37.2
15.....	2.5	1.3	35.....	32.1	43.6
20.....	1.2	-----	50.....	6.2	16.7

It is apparent that prices in New Orleans are lower in the owner-operated shops than in the more commercial type of establishment employing operators. Slightly more than three-fifths of the owner-operated shops, compared to about two-fifths of those with one or more employees, offered some service for 25 cents or less. The competition of the low-priced residential shop is an economic factor in the trade, though the consideration that militant members assign to it in price cutting does not seem wholly justified.



## OCCUPATIONS

## Women

Four of every 5 women designated their job as that of an all-round operator. In all shops, shampooing and finger waving comprise the bulk of the work, though the all-round operator must be proficient in all other kinds of waving and ready at any time to do manicuring, eyebrow arching, facials, hair cutting, and hair dyeing as well. In this study, if an employee was expected to do three or four services he or she has been classified as an all-round operator. (Incidentally, it may be said that the 15 Negro women employed in the white shops all fell in this occupational grouping.) If a single service as hair dyeing, hair cutting, permanent waving, or facial and make-up work was specialized in to a large degree, the operator so designated has been tabulated as a specialist. Manicurists and shampooists, however, have been classed separately, as less training is required than in the other branches of the industry. Many State laws recognize manicurists separately from the other workers in cosmetology and carry special provisions for licensing them.

The preponderance of small shops in the trade prevents the feasibility of much specialization. Only the larger shops have sufficient patronage to allow much division of labor from the functional standpoint. The occupational distribution of the women operators by cities is as follows:

Occupation	Percent of women				
	Four cities	Philadel- phia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Colum- bus
Women—Number.....	1,297	432	282	364	219
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All-round operator.....	79.7	76.2	72.7	80.8	94.1
Manicurist.....	13.4	9.7	24.8	15.7	2.3
Shampooist.....	.3	.9			
Specialist.....	6.6	13.2	2.5	3.6	3.7

Four-fifths of the women were all-round operators. Columbus shows the highest proportion of these workers and New Orleans the lowest. It would be expected that manicurists would predominate in the groups showing a specialized trade activity, yet the figures for Philadelphia and Columbus have somewhat larger proportions of women in the group classified as specialists than of manicurists. Manicurists form such a large proportion of the workers in New Orleans because this occupation is not covered by the State's law regulating beauty parlors. Unlike the general operators in this city, manicurists are not required to take an examination for a license, and department stores and larger shops obviously recruit workers for this job to a greater extent than was found in the three other cities. In fact, two-fifths of the manicurists included in this study were in New Orleans. Columbus, with a high proportion of small shops, shows only 5 women manicurists; Philadelphia reported 42 among 432 women, and St. Louis 57 among 364.

In the four cities, specialists doing hair dyeing, facials, permanent waving, or similar services made up less than 7 percent of the total.

Philadelphia, which had more large shops than had other cities, shows by far the greatest proportion of women specialists.

## Men

Men, on the other hand, tend to be specialists rather than all-round operators. In this survey 86 percent of the men, in contrast to only 7 percent of the women, specialized in the type of service they rendered. It was found that men specialists were almost always concerned with the coiffure. Hair cutting was most often the specialty of the men. A few, however, considered themselves general hair stylists, doing dyeing and permanent, finger, and marcel waving. In Europe, hairdressing is primarily a man's occupation, but in this country only the larger shops have a man operator.

## WAGES

## Method of pay

Salaries usually were on a time basis, but payment on a straight commission or piece basis was encountered frequently and was reported to have been increasing until the advent of the President's Reemployment Agreement. A large number of establishments had agreed in 1933 to operate under conditions of employment set forth in this agreement, commonly spoken of as the P. R. A. The P. R. A. with the amendments as made for barber and beauty shops set certain standards of wages, hours, working conditions, and so forth, standards that still held, as no code had been approved for beauty shops.

After the general acceptance of the conditions of the P. R. A. there was a tendency to allow a weekly guaranteed minimum, with commissions after a stipulated quota has been reached. However, employees on a time-quota basis plus a commission reported that they drew their guaranteed salary but seldom made a commission.

Frequently employers stated that operators preferred a commission basis to a guaranteed salary, for when the worker has a large following her earnings are swelled in direct proportion to the number of customers and the amount of service given. On the other hand, relatively fewer operators than employers seemed to appreciate the benefits of a straight commission basis. The worker's preference seemed to be for a salary with a service quota above which commission is paid. Usually the quota requires that an operator shall double her salary in services, and that all work in excess of this shall pay her a commission varying from 25 to 50 percent of the service charge. In bad times shop owners naturally prefer the straight commission basis because part of the risks and uncertainties are shifted to the employee.

The method of pay and the proportion of women are shown by city in the following:

Basis of payment	Four cities	Philadel- phia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Colum- bus
Women reported—Number.....	1,278	416	282	364	216
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Time.....	40.9	56.5	22.0	45.9	27.3
Time plus commission.....	31.9	31.7	32.6	29.9	34.7
Straight commission.....	22.2	9.9	39.7	14.6	36.1
Other method.....	3.6	1.4	4.3	6.9	1.4
No salary—apprentices.....	1.3	.5	1.4	2.7	.5



As appears in other figures, almost seven-tenths of the women were on weekly salaries, receiving either a straight time rate or a time rate plus a commission. Straight commission was the most usual basis of pay for women in New Orleans and Columbus, these two cities showing far greater proportions in this class than did the other cities visited.

A comparison of earnings received under different methods of pay shows that in 1933-34 workers paid on a commission basis fared worse than those on a time basis, whether daily or weekly. The differences in median earnings<sup>4</sup> between women on a time basis and women paid by this method with a supplementary commission are not so marked as the differences that appear when the comparison is with the earnings of women on a straight commission basis.

A summary of the median earnings correlated with method of pay and locality follows:

Method of pay	Median of a week's earnings of women				
	Four cities	Philadel- phia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Colum- bus
Time.....	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$10.75	\$15.00	\$14.75
Time and commission.....	15.00	15.00	12.75	14.75	16.50
Commission.....	10.25	( <sup>1</sup> )	8.50	12.25	12.25

<sup>1</sup> Not computed; base less than 50.

The proportion of men on a commission basis—over two-fifths—was slightly more than twice the proportion of women so paid. It was thought nothing unusual for a man to receive 40 or 50 percent of the amounts the shop obtained for the services he rendered. Pay on a straight-time basis affected a far smaller proportion of men than of women. In fact, the situation here is reversed, for the percent of men is only half that of women.

There were too few men on a time basis of pay to make a median representative; the midpoint of earnings of those on time plus commission is \$25.50; for those on commission only, \$21.25.

### Week's earnings

The fact that employees frequently earn less in a specified time than the rates established has long been accepted. This is true because of lost time due to personal reasons, to lay-offs, or other forms of unemployment. Rates of pay as well as earnings for these beauty-shop employees were secured from the women themselves, from managers, or from both.

If job income has any bearing on status, the earnings of beauty-shop operators would hardly justify considering the group a professional one. The pronounced lack of pay rolls in the shops, on the whole, made it necessary to secure wage data from any available source, and, as previously mentioned, employers and employees both gave wage information.

The median of the week's earnings of all women in the present study is \$14.25. Except for New Orleans there was no marked variation in the medians for the cities; all were around \$15. At one extreme

<sup>4</sup> Half the women were paid more and half were paid less than the amount quoted. Throughout the report earnings are stated at the nearest quarter of a dollar.

were the 18 women classed as apprentices and, though apparently doing the work of full-fledged operators, receiving no pay; at the other extreme was the all-round operator in a St. Louis shop who was paid \$43.25 for her week's work. By omitting the 10 percent of the women receiving the lowest earnings and a like proportion receiving the highest, the amounts received by the middle 80 percent (1,033 women) fell in a range of from \$5.75 to \$20.75. The following summary shows by city the median earnings of all women and the range in earnings of the 80 percent who received neither the minimum nor the maximum amounts.

City	All women		Range in earnings of 80 percent of the women	
	Number	Median of earnings	Low	High
Four cities.....	1,291	<sup>1</sup> \$14.25	\$5.75	\$20.75
Philadelphia.....	432	15.00	7.75	20.75
New Orleans.....	278	10.25	4.75	19.50
St. Louis.....	365	14.25	5.50	20.50
Columbus.....	216	14.75	6.25	25.25

<sup>1</sup> Throughout the report earnings are stated at the nearest quarter of a dollar.

That significant proportions of the women actually received low earnings is apparent from the figures in the table following. The distribution is by city.

Week's earnings	Percent of women with week's earnings as specified in—				
	Four cities	Philadel- phia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Colum- bus
Total—Number of women.....	1,291	432	278	365	216
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No earnings (apprentices).....	1.4	.5	1.4	3.0	.5
Less than \$5.....	6.0	3.9	9.4	6.0	6.0
\$5, less than \$10.....	16.7	10.0	36.0	11.2	14.8
\$10, less than \$15.....	30.4	24.1	31.7	36.4	31.0
\$15, less than \$20.....	32.0	47.7	11.9	31.8	26.9
\$20 and more.....	13.5	13.9	9.7	11.5	20.8
\$25 and more.....	4.3	2.5	3.2	3.0	11.6

Almost one-fourth of the women received less than \$10 a week. The proportion earning as much as \$20 is low, especially in view of the fact that the trade is regarded as at least quasi-professional in popular opinion and quite professional in the evaluation of the operator. Though 1 in 9 of the women in Columbus earned as much as \$25 a week, the other cities showed not more than 1 in 30 receiving as much as this.

### Comparison of women's and men's earnings

For the week taken by the Women's Bureau the median of earnings of the 181 men is \$22.50, the median of all women \$14.25. Men also had a wider range of earnings, from \$4.25 to \$120.50, while the



maximum amount paid a woman was \$43.25 and at the other extreme were the 18 apprentices who received no money wage from the shop. After eliminating the extremes, the 80 percent range of the men is from \$13 to \$41.50, these amounts being about twice the minimum and maximum (\$5.75 and \$20.75) for the 80 percent of the women. Only about 1 in 25 women had week's earnings (exclusive of gratuities) of \$25 or more, but about 10 in 25 men had such earnings. In fact, nearly one-third of the men earned at least \$30 a week and well over one-eighth (13.9 percent) received \$40 or more. The high point in earnings, \$120.50, was received by a man in Philadelphia, the next highest amount was the \$69 reported by a man in Columbus. In New Orleans and St. Louis the uppermost earnings of the men were \$43 and \$44, respectively.

#### Earnings of women by occupation

Except for the all-round operator, the numbers of women classed by occupation are not sufficient to warrant comparison by city. Exclusive of tips or other extras, the median of earnings of all-round operators in the four cities is \$14.75, or 50 cents higher than the amount for all women in the study. In Columbus the median for these general workers is \$14.75, in New Orleans, \$12, and in Philadelphia and St. Louis, \$15.

The median of the week's earnings of 171 manicurists, \$11.25, is considerably less than the \$14.75 computed for all-round operators. In two of the 4 cities the number of manicurists was large enough to make the computation of a median worth while. New Orleans shows \$9 as the midpoint of earnings; St. Louis, \$11.75.

Earnings as reported for 85 women "specialists" in the trade show a range of from \$3.50 to \$36.25. The median for these workers, \$18.50, is one-fourth more than the average computed for all-round operators, and almost two-thirds more than the midpoint of earnings of manicurists.

#### Earnings of women and prices charged

A correlation of the medians of earnings with prices shows that in shops that charge higher prices it is customary to pay employees more than in other shops. Median earnings range from the \$12.25 for women in shops having the bulk of their services at a 25-cent level to \$18.50 in the shops charging 75 cents or more for regular service. The median earnings of the women according to the most usual prices of the shop follow:

Most usual price of service (cents)	Number of women employees	Median of a week's earnings
Less than 25.....	1	(1)
25.....	166	\$12.25
35.....	272	12.75
50.....	600	14.75
75 and more.....	53	18.50

<sup>1</sup> Not computed; base less than 50.

Undoubtedly more is expected in the way of skill and particular service of operators in the higher-priced shops than of those in the 25-cent shops, but the volume of work required of employees in the latter shops might be expected to level some of the differences in

earnings. The operator in a cut-rate shop turns out many more shampooed and waved heads than one in a more pretentious and higher-priced establishment.

#### Tips and other extras

The personal-service aspect of this trade encourages tips, and many persons believe that gratuities of this sort form a substantial part of the earnings of the beauty operator. A fairly large number of shops discouraged the practice, but none definitely refused to allow its operators to accept gratuities in some form. When money was given, there was no pooling and tips were kept by the individual receiving them. Several employees stated that they had received gifts of all sorts and of doubtful utility. Tips are reputed to have been considerable before the depression. From time to time operators told of once having received as much in this way as in regular earnings. By 1933-34, however, conditions had changed fundamentally and tipping decreased in both frequency and volume. The decline was reported as even greater than was the drop in regular earnings. Many workers regarded the subject of tips as one of little significance, and when questioned as to how much they received several dismissed the subject with a laugh and a statement to the effect that their tips were practically nothing; "not enough for my lunch" was a common answer. Further questioning by the Women's Bureau agent, however, showed the most common estimate for the week to be \$1 but less than \$4; in fact, three-fifths of the women reporting on the subject gave as their week's average an amount in the \$1-and-under-\$4 grouping.

The practice of tipping varied decidedly from city to city. Of the 1,146 women reporting on the subject, 11 percent stated that no tips had been received in the week for which earnings data were secured. Philadelphia shows only 2 percent so reporting, while Columbus had 32 percent. Between these extremes are New Orleans with only 4 percent of the women receiving nothing from this source and St. Louis with 15 percent.

In addition to the 11 percent who received no tips, 15 percent of the women estimated amounts as less than \$1 a week. In Columbus those with tips of less than \$1 constituted 38 percent; in St. Louis, 16 percent; in New Orleans, 14 percent; and in Philadelphia, 3 percent. As much as \$5 was unusual and only 6 percent of the women reported such an amount. The majority of these workers were in the Philadelphia shops, where tipping augmented earnings more than in the other places visited, as about one-third of the women received \$2 and under \$3, another third \$3 and under \$5, and one-eighth \$5 or more. In other words, 79 percent of the women in Philadelphia received tips of \$2 or more a week. In New Orleans the week's perquisites reached \$2 for approximately three-fifths of the women, and the proportion getting as much as \$5 was only about half the proportion that so reported in Philadelphia. In St. Louis, three-eighths (37.3 percent) of the 319 workers received as much as \$2 in tips; in Columbus the proportion was just under 10 percent.

Of the 165 men reporting, 8 percent received no tips in the week recorded. The most usual amounts fell in the \$1-and-under-\$4 grouping. Men reported larger amounts than women, for 1 in 6 of the men in contrast to only 1 in 16 of the women received \$5 or more.



Another addition to regular earnings is the commission paid to employees for selling beauty aids, such as creams, lotions, powders, etc., or for selling a more expensive service, for instance, a \$10 or \$12 permanent wave, when the one most used would cost only \$5. Such commissions were unusual, however, and rarely had an appreciable effect on a worker's earnings.

The following summary compares the medians when tips and sales commissions are included and the medians without such extras:

City	Excluding tips and other extras		Including tips and other extras	
	Number of women	Median	Number of women	Median
Four cities.....	1,291	\$14.25	1,128	\$16.00
Philadelphia.....	432	15.00	375	18.00
New Orleans.....	278	10.25	259	12.75
St. Louis.....	365	14.25	317	15.25
Columbus.....	216	14.75	177	15.00

When augmented by tips and extras, the midpoint of earnings in these cities is found to be from 25 cents (Columbus) to \$3 (Philadelphia) more than the median of straight earnings.

The distribution of the women in the four cities visited according to the total amount they received—that is, week's earnings plus tips, commissions, etc.—is shown in the following tabulation:

Week's earnings plus tips, etc.	Percent of women with earnings and tips etc. as specified in—				
	Four cities	Philadel- phia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Colum- bus
Total—Number of women.....	1,128	375	259	317	177
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No earnings (apprentices).....	.6	.5	.....	1.3	.6
Less than \$5.....	3.7	2.7	6.6	3.5	2.3
\$5, less than \$10.....	11.9	6.9	20.5	8.2	16.4
\$10, less than \$15.....	26.2	13.6	37.5	31.9	26.6
\$15, less than \$20.....	35.3	45.6	22.4	36.6	29.9
\$20 and more.....	22.2	30.7	13.1	18.6	24.3
\$25 and more.....	7.2	6.4	5.8	6.3	12.4

Even when gratuities and extras are added to the week's wage the amount received by about one-sixth of all the women was less than \$10. The proportions with these earnings were larger in Columbus and New Orleans than in the 4 cities as a whole. As already stated, tips were especially insignificant in Columbus, only 1.6 percent of the women reported getting as much as \$3 a week. From the data reported by establishments in this city it is seen that, excluding tips, about 21 percent of the women earned \$20 or more, and where gratuities and so forth are included, the proportion receiving as much as \$20 still is less than 25 percent. In Philadelphia, on the other hand, the percent with earnings of \$20 or over is more than twice as large when tips are included; with perquisites, 42 percent of all the women

received less than \$15 a week; without such additions the percent rises to 55.

The findings indicate that manicurists as a group tended to receive more in tips than all-round operators or specialists, the manicurist—the least professional from the standpoint of training and ability—receives most in the way of cash gratuities; and the specialist—the most highly trained—receives least. A comparison of median earnings by occupation—inclusive and exclusive of tips and extras—follows:

Occupation	Median of earnings	
	Inclusive of tips and sales commissions	Exclusive of tips and sales commissions
All-round operator.....	\$16.00	\$14.75
Manicurist.....	14.00	11.25
Specialist.....	19.25	18.50

### Recent changes in salary policy

In an effort to ascertain facts about shop policies in regard to salaries, the Women's Bureau agents inquired about any changes occurring in 1933. Almost two-thirds of the approximately 400 shops reported no adjustments or changes. Slightly more than one-fifth had raised the salaries or rates of all or some of their employees. Raises were reported most frequently in Philadelphia, most rarely in New Orleans. The latter city showed a higher proportion of shops with no change in salary policy, roughly 7 of every 8, than did the other 3 places visited.

### HOURS

#### Shop hours

To some extent beauticians, like doctors, dentists, and others selling a personal service, must be ready to attend clients at times convenient to the latter. Workers in beauty parlors in department stores are fortunate in having their hours, or at least their spread of hours, determined by the schedule of the store.

In the commercial sections of large cities shops ordinarily are not open long after the surrounding stores and offices have closed. Evening hours are a problem primarily for the neighborhood shop, and to some extent for the hotel shop. Neighborhood shops must arrange their hours for the convenience of customers who work during the day. In the latter part of the week, especially Fridays, appointments pile up and service demands are heavy. At such times an operator may work from 9 to 9 and have only a sandwich for lunch. Residential shops, where the business set-up is especially informal and casual, accept customers whenever they appear, even on Sundays and holidays.

Hours—daily as well as weekly—as reported by the shops are the planned or scheduled hours of a normal period. Holidays and the permanent-wave season, however, cause considerable irregularity and overtime. Overtime before a holiday is an accepted evil, and the permanent-wave rush in the spring invariably means irregular hours and evening work.



On the grounds that many beauty shops are open for too many hours, the proposed code sought to limit operating hours to 52 weekly. Such regulation would lead to a material reduction in business hours, as only 1 in 8 of the shops included in the survey were open less than 54 hours. An operating week of under 54 hours was more usual in the Columbus shops than in those of the other places visited. Though about 1 in 5 of the shops in this city reported such a business week, the proportions elsewhere were 1 in 9, 1 in 10, and 1 in 26. On the other hand, Philadelphia had the largest proportion of shops with long business hours; approximately 3 in 5 operated as long as 60 hours, and the majority of these remained open for at least 66 hours. St. Louis ranked next with well over two-fifths of the shops reporting that they remained open 60 hours or more. In New Orleans, as in Columbus, less than one-fifth of the shops had business hours of 60 or more, and it is an interesting fact that in both cities the majority of these establishments were open 66 hours and more.

In addition to the shops that reported definite business hours is a group comprising about 1 in 5 of the 390 covered in which hours were too irregular to classify. As closing time depends largely on appointments these shops undoubtedly would mass with the long- rather than the short-hour groups. Though Philadelphia had only 1 percent of its shops reporting indefinite hours, St. Louis had 31 percent, Columbus 24, and New Orleans 22 percent. Moreover, it must be noted that overtime is not included in these percents, which apply only to the periods that the shops plan to remain open in the normal course of service activity.

#### Maximum daily hours of the shop

Spread of hours in beauty shops usually is continuous and split shifts or tricks are not a problem, though business hours vary from day to day. In most beauty shops the 3 days at the beginning of the normal 6-day week have fewer demands than the 3 at the end of the week. In trying to do away with this week-end rush and to bring about a stabilization of daily hours and of service, some shops offer lower rates or other inducements to customers who take their beauty treatments on Mondays, Tuesdays, or Wednesdays, and in some shops on Thursdays.

Only about 1 in 12 of the shops reported that on not even 1 day of the week did operating hours extend to 9. The schedule extended usually from 9 in the morning till 6 in the evening. The same proportion as for weekly hours—1 in 5—reported the daily schedule as irregular, the majority of these probably long business days. Nearly one-half had some or all of their days at least 10 hours in length.

Columbus and New Orleans had larger proportions of shops with a spread of less than 10 hours a day than had the two other cities surveyed. Three of every 7 or 8 shops in Columbus and New Orleans, as compared with 3 of 10 in Philadelphia and 3 of 15 in St. Louis, fell in this classification.

#### Lunch periods

Lunch periods are a real problem in beauty shops. In general, no regular time is assigned to the workers; the theory is that lunch periods are to be taken when convenient. Operators in down-town shops usually are rushed in the latter part of the week and the bulk of the appointments are from 11 until 2 o'clock. Lunch periods, if taken at

all, must be arranged before or after this mid-day rush. Operators frequently spoke of a cold drink and a sandwich consumed on the job as their lunch on busy days. Shops find it necessary at times to make appointments that interfere with their employees' lunch periods. One unfortunate aspect of this irregularity is that on the days that are the longest, customers appear in a steady progression, and the meal time—in many cases supper as well as lunch, and as necessary for rest as for a meal period—either is greatly shortened or entirely eliminated. The uncertainty in regard to lunch period or any break in the day's routine is productive of fatigue and strain that cannot be ignored.

#### Weekly hours of employees

Because many of the shops visited kept few if any time records, facts relating to hours were obtained from employees at the time of the interview.

A greater number of women worked in shops in which the scheduled week was 48 hours than in any other hour classification. Nine of every 20 women had this schedule. In St. Louis, just over one-tenth of the women had a 48-hour week, though such a schedule was expected of approximately half the women in two other cities visited and of three-fifths in Philadelphia. Nearly one-third of the workers in St. Louis had a schedule longer than this, and about one-sixth reported their schedule as irregular or said that they "worked till through."

Excluding the time allowed for lunch periods and so forth, actual working hours in the week preceding the interview were reported by about 1,200 of the 1,300 women covered as follows:

Hours worked weekly	Percent of women with hours worked as specified in—				
	Four cities	Philadelphia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Columbus
Women—Number .....	1,210	417	256	340	197
Percent .....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 30 .....	7.9	8.2	7.8	6.5	9.6
30, less than 40 .....	8.0	8.4	5.1	11.2	5.6
40, less than 44 .....	10.5	11.8	8.6	11.8	8.1
44, less than 48 .....	24.7	29.7	15.6	21.8	31.0
48 .....	22.0	37.2	25.4	5.3	14.2
Over 48, less than 54 .....	17.7	4.6	21.5	24.7	28.4
54 .....	1.2	.....	2.0	2.1	1.0
Over 54 .....	8.1	.2	14.1	16.8	2.0

Of the group as a whole, slightly more than one-fourth had worked longer than 48 hours in the week covered. In Philadelphia about 1 in 20 of the women exceeded 48 hours, while in St. Louis, where shops reported a much longer schedule, more than 2 in 5 of the women had a week in excess of 48 hours and more than 1 in 6 a week in excess of 54. Almost as large a proportion of the women in New Orleans (14.1 percent) had a week exceeding 54 hours.

Part-time employment was not much of a factor in the trade. Considering as regular employees those who worked 6 or more hours a day on at least 5 days of the week, it is seen that 97 percent of the men and 90 percent of the women included in this study might



be classed as regular, full-time employees. Only 47 women apprentices (2 of whom worked part time) were reported in the shops covered.

Efforts to get concrete information on overtime were unsuccessful, for employees as well as employers had a tendency to minimize the amount of overtime. There seemed to be a feeling that the long hours worked on a few days were balanced by short schedules on other days. The operator on a commission or quota basis of payment is anxious to swell her income, and since overtime affords a means to this end she does not feel that long hours are a burden. In all, there was considerable liberty in the hour arrangements. Time for shopping, for an occasional matinee, or an emergency need was allowed with no deduction in salary. In the small shops, and most were small, working relationships were informal and flexible; if business was dull at the time of the agent's visit, operators frequently were found in the general waiting room, resting, reading, or sewing. A number of workers on commission replied, to questions on the irregularity of hours, that they made their own time. This general atmosphere of informality and indefinite policy is a characteristic of the trade that easily might lead to abuses.

#### Hours and earnings

In this study a week of less than 40 hours usually represents short time, and when much time is lost it follows that the week's earnings are reduced proportionately. It is of significance, therefore, that the median earnings of the groups who had worked more than 48 hours are less than those of workers on a shorter week. Even with the returns from tips or other extras, the medians of earnings do not advance as the longer hours would seem to justify. The following summary correlates with working hours the medians of regular earnings and of earnings augmented by tips, extra sales, or commissions.

Hours worked weekly	Median of earnings (1,210 women reported)	Median of earnings when tips and sales commissions included (available for 1,092 women)
Less than 30.....	\$5.50	\$8.25
30, less than 40.....	10.75	12.50
40.....	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )
Over 40, less than 44.....	14.75	16.25
44, less than 48.....	15.00	18.00
48.....	15.00	17.75
Over 48, less than 54.....	14.25	14.75
54 and more.....	12.75	14.00

<sup>1</sup> Not computed; base less than 50.

#### Daily spread of hours

The daily spread of hours was most commonly 9 and under 10; in fact, almost three-fifths of the women were so reported. Only about 7 percent had 10 hours or more as their most common daily schedule. In Columbus the percentages were fairly equal in the groups 8 and under 9 hours and 9 and under 10 hours.

The irregularity of hours and the long days incident to the trade are indicated in unpublished figures of the spread of hours on the longest day in the week studied. Had this survey extended into the busy permanent-wave season of May and June, undoubtedly there

would have been many more women in the long-hour groups. Even in the period covered by the survey 1 of every 3 women reported a spread of at least 10 hours on one or more days in the week preceding the interview. Proportions with such hours ranged from 25 percent in Philadelphia to 40 percent in St. Louis. About 1 in 10 of the women in Philadelphia and New Orleans and almost 1 in 8 of those in St. Louis had some days of 12 hours or more; that is, their work had spread over a period of hours such as from 9 in the morning until 9, 10, or 11 o'clock in the evening.

Time off for meals is deducted from the spread of hours to compute actual time worked, but such periods are extremely irregular and on busy days mean little. Hours off are neither definite nor established, from the standpoint of the workers.

In regard to actual time worked the study shows that 1 in 5 of the women had worked 10 or more hours on at least 1 day of the week recorded. In St. Louis and New Orleans 1 in 20 of the women reported that on 1 or more days of the week their work period was as long as 12 hours.

#### Comparison of scheduled hours of men and women

Men were found in the larger shops, principally in department stores, and hours were relatively shorter and less irregular for them than for the women. Approximately one-fifth of the men as compared to one-fourth of the women had a week of less than 44 hours, but at the other extreme the proportion of women working more than 48 hours was nearly three times the proportion of men. Less than one-tenth of the men had a spread of as much as 10 hours even on their longest day, and actual work hours of that extent were reported by less than 4 percent.

#### Recent change in hours

While no specific notation was made of the number of shops that had signed the President's Reemployment Agreement, a goodly number had agreed to abide by its provisions. Most seemed to feel, however, that there was great elasticity in the application of this agreement. In an attempt to learn the effect of the P. R. A. on hours, information was sought as to any change in the shop's policy from August 1933 up to the time of the survey. In the great majority of cases (3 of 4) the establishment had made no change; about 1 in 5 had reduced hours, while 1 in 20 claimed that overtime had been considerably curbed since the date of the President's Reemployment Agreement.

#### THE WORKERS

##### Age of women

Since beauty shops are a recent development in trade, it is to be expected that most of the women would be young. The 1930 census reported over 80 percent of the women in the occupational group to be under 40 years of age.<sup>5</sup> In the four cities included in this report the proportion is still larger, with about 94 percent under 40. This larger proportion of younger workers probably is due to the fact that older women are more likely to be owners, operating their own shops and so not covered in this study. The age distribution by city follows.

<sup>5</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census. Fifteenth Census, 1930. Population, vol. V, Occupations, pp. 134-135.



Age (years)	Percent of women				
	Four cities	Philadelphia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Columbus
Total reporting—Number	1,187	402	266	325	194
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20	13.2	14.4	13.5	15.4	6.7
20, under 25	30.6	30.8	33.5	29.5	27.8
25, under 30	25.8	24.1	26.3	26.8	26.8
30, under 35	14.3	14.7	11.7	11.7	21.6
35, under 40	10.0	10.0	8.6	10.8	10.8
40 and over	6.1	6.0	6.4	5.8	6.2

The age distribution shows much the same trend in all these cities. Columbus, where earnings were lowest, had fewer women under 20 years of age than had the other cities. For the approximately 1,200 women reporting, the median age was between 25 and 26 years.

Age was the only factor other than job ability that was regarded as of significance in the selection of new employees. In a number of shops managers stated that though an operator of over 35 or 40 years may be more skilled than a girl of 20 to 25, the public prefers service from the young. The older women in the trade are concentrated chiefly in their own shops.

#### Marital status

The following shows the marital status of the women covered in this study:

Marital status	Percent of women				
	Four cities	Philadelphia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Columbus
Total reporting—Number	1,216	411	271	334	200
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Single	62.3	68.9	57.9	65.0	50.0
Married	23.7	21.4	24.7	19.5	34.0
Widowed, separated, or divorced	14.1	9.7	17.3	15.6	16.0

It is not surprising that the proportion of single women is high, since the average age of the workers was not much more than 25 years. In Columbus the proportion of married women was higher than elsewhere, but also there were relatively fewer women under 25 in this city.

#### Experience in the trade

A new industry and a young group of workers do not presuppose long work histories. It is somewhat surprising, then, that more than one-half of the women in this survey had worked at least 5 years in beauty culture. More than one-fifth had worked 10 years or more as beauty operators. New Orleans alone of the four cities shows a variance in the general trend; about 1 in 10 in this city had been in the trade less than 1 year, and 1 in 5 less than 2 years.

Time in the trade by yearly intervals is set forth in the following table:

Time in the trade (years)	Percent of women				
	Four cities	Philadelphia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Columbus
Total reporting—Number	1,163	397	264	320	182
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 1	6.4	5.5	9.5	7.2	2.7
1, less than 2	6.6	4.3	10.6	7.2	4.9
2, less than 3	12.0	10.3	15.2	11.6	12.1
3, less than 4	11.3	13.1	12.1	8.1	12.1
4, less than 5	9.2	8.6	10.2	9.1	9.3
5, less than 6	8.4	9.8	7.6	7.8	7.7
6, less than 7	7.6	8.1	5.7	8.1	8.2
7, less than 8	6.4	4.8	7.2	8.4	5.5
8, less than 9	5.8	5.0	4.5	8.1	4.9
9, less than 10	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.4	4.9
10 and more	21.4	25.7	12.5	20.0	27.5

#### Men's age and experience

As a group the men were older than the women; the proportion 40 years or over was more than 4 times that of the women. With a group so much older, experience in the service is to be expected. About seven-eighths of the men had worked in the trade 5 years or more and considerably over one-half (57 percent) had had experience of as much as 10 years.

#### Time in the trade and earnings—women

Experience apparently has a definite money value in beauty shops, for the correlation of median earnings with years in the trade shows a steady upward progression. Women's median earnings inclusive of tips and so forth, when correlated with years in the trade show the following:

Time in the trade (years)	Median earnings of women in—			
	Four cities <sup>1</sup>	Philadelphia	New Orleans	St. Louis
Less than 3	\$11.50	\$14.25	\$10.25	\$11.75
3, less than 5	15.25	17.25	13.00	15.25
5, less than 10	17.25	18.75	14.75	16.25
10 and more	19.75	20.50	-----	18.75

<sup>1</sup> Includes Columbus, not shown separately because numbers too small for the computing of medians.

#### Time with the firm

Though almost one-fourth of the women and three-eighths of the men had worked with the present employer for 5 years or more, beauty-shop operators in general are not a stable group that tend to stay a long time with a single employer. Fairly large-sized proportions—about 30 percent of the women and of the men—had worked less than a year at their present job; many of this group had had several jobs in the year. Shop owners were reputed to be ever on the job to entice operators with a following away from competitive shops. One owner called this the "bootlegging ethics of the trade."

Even in 1933 unemployment was not a serious factor in the trade, since only about 10 percent of the women and of the men reported that they considered themselves unemployed at some time in that year. The step from employee to owner still is relatively easy, and it was generally believed that a good operator who could not find a job could set up a small shop of her own.



## EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND RELATIONS

### Prerequisites for operators

Definite prerequisites and standards of employment were reported by only a few of the shops. If the State regulation required a license, this was an accepted necessity. Unless the State law, as in Louisiana, demanded a health certificate, one rarely was required. The department stores visited that had health examinations for salespeople included operators in the beauty-shop department, but in the small shop health certificates were not a consideration. There seemed to be little preference among employers as to whether the background were school training or shop apprenticeship. Operators unknown to the shop manager and without a following were expected to demonstrate their ability in a try-out before hiring. In a very small number of shops certain characteristics were mentioned as requirements: An operator must be at least 5 feet 3 inches tall; she must have sturdy feet because of the constant standing; adept hands; straight fingers for finger waving; and in some instances a limit was placed on her weight. Good appearance, pleasing personality, and youth were mentioned much more frequently as assets than definite training or physical requirements. Customers were said to prefer young operators, and this preference was for the woman under 30. Marital status did not influence employment policies materially. A few managers preferred single women, but on the other hand a number preferred married workers. Preference in regard to marital status seemed to be a matter of personal prejudice.

### Method of securing jobs

Employment agencies were of little significance in this trade. Less than 1 percent of the women who reported on the avenues through which their job had been obtained had had the help of a commercial agency. Personal contacts, direct solicitation, and answering of newspaper advertisements had been the means used by most of the women to secure jobs. Schools were credited with placement by about 1 in 8 of the women, and 1 in 6 reported that they had served their apprenticeship in the shop where they were employed at the time of the interview. Shop owners frequently reported the use of newspapers for recruiting new employees.

### Vacations

Vacation with pay was a policy in only a negligible number of shops. Some employers who had given vacations before the depression had discontinued them because receipts had fallen. In the late summer, when work is slack, two or more weeks without pay usually were allowed if asked for by the worker. In the department stores the same policy as that applied to the salespeople prevailed even when the beauty shop was run by a concessionaire.

### Working conditions

On the whole, restrooms and such facilities as cloakrooms, toilets, and lavatories were good; except in a few isolated cases in each city, these are not a problem of the industry. If there was no regular cloakroom, the supply room or closet that is a customary part of every beauty shop was large enough to accommodate street clothes, and empty booths might be used for changing to street or work

garments. When not busy, operators generally were permitted to use the customers' waiting-room facilities, though in a few shops the workers had a room of their own.

As much of the work done by the employees of beauty shops necessitates their standing, the composition of the floors of the workrooms is very important. Most floors were of wood, linoleum, or a soft composition surface, though occasionally tile or some other form of hard surfacing was used, and in such cases rubber mats or rugs were necessary to save the operator from this extra foot strain. Lighting and ventilation seemed adequate and the general upkeep of the shops was good.

### Uniforms

Special work garments or uniforms were worn by all but a few of the employees interviewed. Requirements as to uniforms varied. In some shops, special color schemes or styles of uniforms were required, but this applied to only 6 percent of the women in the study. The majority were expected to wear a simple white over-all dress.

Uniforms were provided by more than 98 percent of the women employees. Though most women owned their uniforms, about 1 in 6 rented them from a linen service. Three clean uniforms a week was the average, though in some shops a daily change was customary. Fancy colored ones, especially if of silk, sometimes were worn for a week. Laundering was almost entirely the employee's responsibility. For the ordinary work garment laundries charged from 20 to 40 cents, but many of the women washed and ironed their own or had them done with the family laundry. Proportionately more men than women rented their uniforms from a linen service, since, in general, men do not consider it feasible to wash and iron after a day's work in the shop.

### Equipment and supplies

The operator usually provides her own tools, such as manicuring instruments, curling irons, scissors, and others needed in the work. Frequently she has such from her training, whether in school or shop, but if these are not usable she has to buy new ones. The cost of such equipment varies with the tastes, extravagances, and economies of the individual. Occasionally, small items such as emery boards, oils and polishes, or drying nets, waving lotions, and so forth, were furnished by the operator, probably working on a commission basis, rather than the shop.

Of approximately 1,000 women who reported on equipment maintained for daily use, roughly three-fourths provided all or most of their hand tools. The extent to which the operators provided their own equipment varied by cities. For example, in St. Louis slightly over one-half of the women had all their equipment provided by the management; in New Orleans about one-third of the women, in Columbus approximately one-fifth, and in Philadelphia less than one-twelfth fell in this group.

The cost of the equipment reported by the women was not exorbitant. Only 27 of the 668 who reported definite amounts stated that their personal work tools had cost as much as \$25. Well over half reported the price of their equipment as less than \$10.

The operators were questioned also as to their average monthly outlay for supplies and maintenance charges. This would include the



purchasing of nets, curlers, polishes, and so forth, and the sharpening or replacement of tools. About 3 in 8 of the women reporting on this subject said that such expenses had been borne by the management.

Of the 450 women workers who reported definite outlay for these purposes, 3 in 4 spent less than a dollar a month, 2 in 5 spending less than 50 cents. About 7 percent of the group estimated the amount spent as at least \$2.

Male operators paid more for their tools and the care of them than did women. As specialists they had, perhaps, greater dependence on the quality of their tools. Hair cutting, for example, requires several pairs of scissors and clippers, and these must be kept sharp. Approximately 1 in 4 of the men, in contrast to only about 1 in 25 of the women, reported that their equipment had cost them as much as \$25. The proportion of men who paid less than \$10 for their tools was about one-third that of the women so reporting.

Upkeep likewise was higher for men, as more than half of them, in contrast to one-fourth of the women, spent as much as \$1 a month on tools, supplies, maintenance, and so forth.

## TRAINING

### Apprenticeship

Much of the interest furthering regulation of the practices of cosmetology by the State is concerned with the setting up of definite periods of training and of regular courses of study to be pursued. Unstandardized professional ethics of beauty culture, and the ease with which shop apprenticeship could be, and in many places still can be, obtained have been partly responsible for a tremendous influx to the trade. The increased supply of operators, many of whom have not had sufficient training, has had a deterring effect on high standards and practices. Abuse of apprenticeship by short-sighted shop owners has spurred the cause, and regulatory legislation has been an incentive to the growth of schools of beauty culture. Training in schools is rapidly superseding apprenticeship in the trade.

Many managers expressed a preference for operators who had served apprenticeship under skilled direction in shops with high standards of service. Apprenticeship in foreign cities, especially Berlin, Paris, Vienna, or the larger cities of Italy, was esteemed a personal asset connoting thoroughness in training and a professional foundation in the practices of the trade. A fairly large number of men, especially in Philadelphia and St. Louis, had served long apprenticeships in some of these places. It is unfortunate that in this country apprenticeship has been regarded lightly and that there are instances where student operators have been enrolled primarily as cheap help to work on paying customers. These operators, almost wholly lacking in theory and practice, have been put to work on the unsuspecting customer, and it is not only the cut-rate shops that have erred in this abuse of apprenticeship. In States where laws stringently regulate the training of candidates for licenses, schools of beauty culture have been encouraged, because restrictions in regard to the number of apprentices employed and in details of training them seem much too complicated for the average shop owner to be concerned with.

### Private training schools

It is unfortunate that the ethics and practices of some of the many schools that have sprung up have not been high and that there still is a need for the enforcing of better standards in the schools. Members of the trade repeatedly pointed out that the functions and purposes of shop and of school are at variance. The shop is concerned with selling service to its customers; the school should be fundamentally concerned with training. Yet in each of the cities schools were visited in which education seemed secondary and the students, as cheap help, were enrolled primarily to work on paying customers in direct competition with commercial shops. Practice work had little of the laboratory flavor and was much tainted with commercialism. Not all schools were of this type; each city had two or more whose organization and method of training seemed to be of high standard.

*Number and size.*—In the four cities all schools listed in the classified telephone directories or those generally known to the trade were visited by agents of the Women's Bureau. Interviews here discussed cover 6 schools in Philadelphia, 5 in St. Louis, 4 in New Orleans, and 4 in Columbus, all training white operators. The size of these schools varied from 5 or 6 students to as many as 200. The number of instructors varied from an owner with an assistant to a teaching force of 8.

*Tuition fees.*—For the all-round operator's course tuition charges ran from \$50 to \$250. Size of city seemed to have some bearing on fees, as the majority of the schools charging more than \$200 were in Philadelphia, the largest city visited. St. Louis and New Orleans each had a school that charged \$200 and more, but none in Columbus charged so much. Special arrangements could be made for payment, and discounts were made for cash. A school in Philadelphia whose fees had been from \$100 to \$150 before the passage of the regulatory act had planned to raise its charges. Small schools that charged \$100 or less generally were hardly more than cut-rate shops, with the emphasis placed on practice work on paying customers. Such schools could not exist without a paying clientele, and unfortunately the practice work seemed to be planned not so much for the students' benefit as for the returns to the school. Here both supervision and instruction appeared to be neglected.

Practically all the private schools offered evening as well as day courses. All included short courses for manicurists; the time period usually was a month or 6 weeks and fees were from \$25 to \$35. In most schools, however, these short courses were discouraged. "Brush up" courses to acquaint the trained operator with up-to-date methods in waving, facial treatments, and so forth were reported, especially by the larger establishments.

### Public schools

In the four cities surveyed the only public school offering a course in beauty culture to white students was in New Orleans, where a course was given in the industrial high school. About 50 students of beauty culture are admitted annually, and the theory and practice seemed on a par with or superior to those in private schools. The only educational requirement is the completion of the eighth grade. Though there is no upper age limit, the students' ages usually range from 17 to 35 years, with the majority under 20. The course, spread over the period September to June, gives 1,096 hours of training, 96 more than



the State's statute requires. There is no tuition charge, but a laboratory fee of \$5 and an equipment fee of \$15 are required; this latter amount gives the student two uniforms, a marcel iron, 2 wave combs, manicure scissors, nippers, file, buffer, a dozen emery boards, orange wood stick, and miscellaneous supplies as required.

At the time of the study St. Louis was organizing a course in beauty culture in its vocational high school for white students. This course was begun in February 1934 but it was not planned to have the actual practical work under way until September. The course will be a regular one in the eleventh and twelfth grades. The 1,000-hour minimum of training required by the Missouri law is to be supplemented by instruction in science and bookkeeping as applied to the work of a cosmetologist. The course will include also general educational subjects from the regular curriculum—English, social economics, history, and so forth. The qualifications for eligibility for this course are as follows:

1. Minimum age of 17 years.
2. Completion of 2 years of secondary school work in high or vocational school.
3. A physical examination by the school doctor.
4. Successful passing of tests and meeting standards aimed to indicate the applicant's fitness. For example, a very short girl, one with crooked or crippled fingers, one with an antisocial personality, would not be allowed to take the course.

Students must sign an agreement not to work as a paid operator until they complete the course of study and secure a license. Practice work is carried out on other students, and the services of the school shop are not to be available to the public. A low laboratory fee and charges for supplies and instruments comprise the expenses of the course. This course has been discussed in detail here because it seems that such a course and competition of public with private schools must result in better standards for the trade as a whole.

There is great need for improvement and higher standards in the field of training. Many of the problems that vex manager and operator might be minimized at least partially if the operator's background were more fundamentally planned in the initial stages of training. In addition to more fundamental training in the basic principles of beauty culture there is a need for more education in simple business methods of cost accounting, pay rolls, and general records of receipts and disbursements.

#### Training of women operators

In interviewing the women, questions were asked as to the type, the time, and the cost of training. That apprenticeship is decreasing and schools are increasing in importance was emphasized in the present study, as about 3 in 5 of the women reported that they had been trained in schools. If a woman interviewed had learned her trade as an apprentice, though she afterwards had taken "brush-up" courses in a school of beauty culture, she was considered as having received her training as an apprentice. It is customary for operators to take special courses in order to become acquainted with new methods, fads, or styles. Training of this sort often is pursued in evening classes by employed women; in other cases, full time is given to study under organized leaders of the trade in some large city.

The following summary shows the type of training received by the women in each city and in the group as a whole.

Type of training	Percent of women				
	4 cities	Philadel- phia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Colum- bus
Apprenticeship.....	33.4	40.0	21.0	35.4	33.1
School.....	62.9	57.2	77.1	62.4	55.6
Both.....	3.7	2.8	1.9	2.2	11.2

New Orleans had the largest proportion of women with a background of school training. This was somewhat influenced by the public school described in the foregoing text and the provision in the State law limiting a shop to one apprentice yearly. (See p. 32.) About 15 percent of the white operators in New Orleans had been trained in the vocational public school.

#### Duration of training

The duration of schooling or apprenticeship reported most frequently was 6 months. This is the usual standard set by schools and State laws—a 6-month period, comprising generally 1,000 hours. Time in training as reported by the women was as follows:

Time in training (months)	Percent of women				
	4 cities	Philadel- phia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Colum- bus
Women reporting—Number.....	1,018	345	240	284	149
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 3.....	9.2	6.1	15.0	7.0	11.4
3, less than 6.....	21.0	24.1	9.2	11.3	51.7
6, less than 9.....	42.1	41.4	42.1	52.8	23.5
9, less than 12.....	5.5	4.1	14.2	1.4	2.7
12, less than 15.....	17.2	18.0	17.5	22.2	5.4
15, less than 18.....	.9	.9	-----	1.8	.7
18 and more.....	4.0	5.5	2.1	3.5	4.7

In all the cities but Columbus, where the time generally was shorter, 6 and under 9 months was the most usual period of training. Three of every five women in Columbus reported less than 6 months. One in five of the total in four cities reported a training period of a year or more, St. Louis having a greater proportion of these than had the other cities.

#### Cost of training

Approximately one-third of the women had made no cash outlay for their training. These reported learning the trade as apprentices or as receiving school training free. Of the 706 women who stated the definite amount that they had expended for training, approximately one-fourth had paid less than \$100 and close to two-thirds less than \$200. In Columbus, where the learning period was shorter than in the three other cities, the cost seems to have been smaller, for only 11 percent of the women reporting in Columbus as against 36 to 44 percent of those in the other places visited had spent as much as \$200 for training. In St. Louis and New Orleans the proportions of women spending as much as \$200 for the course was one-third greater than the proportion who reported \$150 or less.



Cost of training	Percent of women				
	4 cities	Philadel- phia	New Orleans	St. Louis	Colum- bus
Women reporting—Number	706	248	156	197	105
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than \$100	26.6	25.8	26.3	22.8	36.2
\$100, less than \$150	18.1	23.4	5.8	10.2	39.0
\$150, less than \$200	19.4	15.3	25.6	22.8	13.3
\$200, less than \$250	16.0	10.5	19.2	27.9	1.9
\$250 and over <sup>1</sup>	19.8	25.0	23.1	16.2	9.5

<sup>1</sup> 15.6 percent had spent \$300 and less than \$400. <sup>2</sup> reported as much as \$750.

### Training of men

The men had spent longer periods in training than had the women, but most of their preparation had been secured through apprenticeship. In contrast to the women, one-third of whom received their training as apprentices, the men show a proportion of one-half who had been trained in the shop. Ten percent of the men reported training as a barber's apprentice. Only about one-third of the men as compared with three-fifths of the women had attended beauty schools. No man reported attendance at a public school of beauty culture.

When the cost of training was inquired into, it was found that the men had expended less than the women for training; of those who reported definite costs, three-fourths of the men as against close to two-thirds of the women had paid less than \$200 for their course.

## LEGISLATIVE REGULATION OF BEAUTY CULTURE

### Absence of hour regulation

Beauty culture as a trade came into prominence after the enactment of most of the laws for the protection of women workers. State laws restricting working hours and setting standards for employment do not include this industry, and beauty shops are not covered by the term "mercantile establishments" because a service rather than a concrete product is the stock in trade. Among the States in this survey, the hour law of only Pennsylvania, with its 10-hour day and 54-hour week, was applicable to women at work in beauty shops. Here the coverage reads "any establishment", a term defined in the act as "any place where work is done for compensation of any sort to whomever payable."

With the increasing number of shops comes the necessity for licensing provisions for shops and operators so as to guarantee to the customer hygienic service and to protect the trained operator from competition with those untrained. Furthering of licensing has been urged upon owners as a means of attaining higher professional standards.

### By State

The first act to regulate in any way practices in the beauty-shop trade was a rather fragmentary law passed by Wisconsin in 1920. In 1924 Louisiana passed a more comprehensive act. Between 1925 and 1930 several States enacted laws, and a new spurt in this sort of legislation came in 1933 when Maine, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Ohio passed laws regulating the practice of beauty culture.

By the beginning of 1934 as many as 29 States had statutes of this character. These are Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin. Legislation has been more common in the West and Middle West than in the South and East.

Lack of uniformity is evident in the provisions of these State laws, and standards vary considerably from State to State. The regulatory provisions have been concerned chiefly with the licensing of shop and operator, training and examination of operator, and hygiene and sanitation, the last two designed primarily for the benefit of the customer.

From this it will be seen that the four cities covered by the Women's Bureau survey are in States that have laws regulating practices of beauty culture. Though Louisiana and Missouri had had such legislation for some years before this study, the Pennsylvania and Ohio acts were so new at the time (1933) that enforcement machinery had not been set up.

### Administrative bodies

Independent boards of cosmetology have been set up in many States to administer the laws, and these often are attached to health administrative units. The four States surveyed had administering bodies as follows: In Louisiana and Missouri enforcement of the beauty culture act is in charge of a board operating under the supervision of the State health department, in Pennsylvania it is delegated to the State department of public instruction, which is an innovation, and in Ohio the law created an independent body—the board of cosmetology—to administer. Where State requirements for operators are similar, reciprocity in licensing of operators usually is granted.

As a natural follow-up of the codes formulated for a large number of industries, in 1934 at least three States—California, New Jersey, and Wisconsin—set up State codes for beauty culture that contained standards for wages, hours, and trade practices. For discussion of these see page 33.

### Requirements for all-round operators

*Age and general education.*—Requirements as to schooling and age can hardly be considered those of a professional status. Of the 29 States, only Connecticut requires that operators have as much as 4 years of high school; next in educational standards is California, whose law requires completion of the ninth grade. Grammar school or the equivalent of the eighth grade is the usual stipulation.

Age eligibility also is low. Sixteen years is the age minimum in 14 of the 29 State laws, but 12 States—Arizona, California, Connecticut, Idaho (apprentice may be 16½), Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, and South Dakota—have set 18 years as the beginning age. In Kansas 17 years and in North Carolina 19 years is the minimum. The Wisconsin act has no age stipulation for operators, though the code for intrastate business of the beauty-parlor industry, effective in August 1934, forbids employment of any person under 16 years of age.



Excepting New Orleans, the cities covered in the survey are in States in which the legal entrance age is 16. Completion of the eighth grade or its equivalent is the educational requirement in Ohio, Missouri, and Louisiana. Pennsylvania's law does not treat of education.

*Training and apprenticeship.*—Periods of training and provisions relating to apprenticeship as prescribed in the laws of the 29 States vary considerably. A minimum period of 1,000 hours is required for all-round operators in three of the States included in the survey, while in Ohio the requirement is at least 750 hours. The period in terms of months usually is not less than 6, and if the training is pursued at night or after business hours the Pennsylvania statute extends the learning period to at least 12 consecutive months. Of the remaining 25 States, Washington and Nebraska have no definite regulation as to hours of training. In 10 the requirement is a 1,000-hour period for operators, and in 4 the training period is longer than this: Connecticut requires 2,100 hours, Montana 2,000, California 1,500, and Iowa 1,145. Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Maine, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin have requirements below 1,000 hours.

In Louisiana, before beginning training in a shop an apprentice is required to register, the law stipulating further that a shop shall have only one apprentice yearly, that nothing of value shall be accepted for the training of apprentices, and that no pay shall be given them while in training. As the President's Reemployment Agreement makes no exception in the case of apprentices and all workers must be paid, this provision technically for a time at least, eliminates apprenticeship from beauty shops in Louisiana.

The Missouri law does not provide that an apprentice be registered. It does allow registered operators to teach cosmetology in the regular course of business, "provided the owner or manager thereof does not hold himself out as a school and does not hire or employ or teach regularly at any one and the same time, more than one apprentice to three or less operators regularly employed within their business and said owner or operator does not accept any fee for instruction."

The Pennsylvania law regulating training does not entirely eliminate apprenticeship, but limits it to shops that employ four or more licensed operators and requires the shop owner taking apprentices to have a teacher's certificate. The section on apprentices reads as follows: "Any cosmetologist, hairdresser, or cosmetician, who is a beauty-shop owner and who is a holder of a teacher's certificate, may instruct apprentices, provided that there shall be no less than four licensed operators for each apprentice in any shop and there shall be no more than two apprentices in any shop, and provided such shop is not held out as a school of beauty culture."

Pennsylvania likewise has curbed any commercialism of its schools, as its law stipulates that a school cannot charge directly or indirectly for the services of, or for the supplies used by, students working for practice. Where a school or the same organization maintains a shop this must be entirely separate, and only those who have completed the required 1,000 hours of training and who have received from the department a permit to practice may be employed as operators.

The Ohio law classes as a school any beauty parlor exacting a fee for teaching any branch of cosmetology. This apparently rules out any training but that received in "schools" so-called, as the act reads—"Applicants for an operator's license shall not be less than 16 years of age; have a total experience of at least 750 hours of instruction in the majority of the branches of cosmetology or a proportionate number of hours in any lesser group of subjects related to each other in a school of cosmetology; \* \* \*."

#### Requirements for operators other than all-round

A number of States license separate services. It is not unusual for the laws to specify the number of hours of training required before a license can be requested. These periods vary for manicurists, permanent-wave operators, and electrologists. In some States hair cutting is restricted to persons having a barber's license.

In amending its cosmetic therapy law in 1928, Louisiana failed to include manicurists, who had been included in the original law. Probably as a result of this, the proportionate number of manicurists in New Orleans is high. In the three other States in which this study was made, manicurists obtained a license after passing an examination on completing the specified training periods. In Missouri the law allowed an alternative for manicurists—apprenticeship in a shop over a period of at least 3 months.

#### State codes

As already mentioned, California, New Jersey, and Wisconsin in 1934 promulgated codes to regulate beauty shops within their boundaries: California in January, New Jersey in May, and Wisconsin in August. The States have been divided into zones: In California, an irregular line marks the division of the State into three zones, while in New Jersey and Wisconsin the classification is according to size of city or town and the surrounding trade areas. Hours usually are set at 8 daily and 48 weekly, though the California code established in one of the three zones a standard of a 5-day week and 40 hours. In this State minimum wages range from the \$16 guaranteed wage (to which must be added one-half of the operator's receipts for all work done in excess of \$32) to a straight wage of \$22.75 a week, depending on zone and method of payment. In New Jersey the weekly minima for all-round operators range from \$11 to \$15, with manicurists receiving not less than 80 percent of these rates; in Wisconsin the wage is from \$15 to \$18.

#### HAZARDS AND STRAINS

The beauty operator's occupational hazard seemed slight. As already mentioned, irregular and sometimes very long hours, as well as uncertain lunch periods, constitute a definite health liability even greater than the strains incident to the work. Though the beauty operator is constantly exposed to soaps, creams, astringents, deodorants, hair dyes, antiseptics, and so forth, types of compounds that may cause dermatitis, only a few such cases were reported in this study. From the statements of workers in the trade the operator is in a less precarious position than the customer.



When the operator has received little training in, or has little appreciation of, the application of principles of asepsis, the customer is exposed to a host of possible infections: Nail infections result from the careless handling of sharp or pointed manicure tools; certain chemicals in bleaches or hair and eyelash dyes cause virulent infections if the customer's skin is at all sensitive; skin diseases are spread by unsterilized tools or towels. Burns are a cause of injury affecting both operator and customer. A well-trained operator recognizes the necessity of controlling points of safety and hygiene for the benefit of the customer and herself as well, by handling tools and supplies in the most efficient and hygienic way.

Of course, there are operators who suffer accidents characteristic of the trade and some who are sensitive to forms of dermatitis, but findings in this study indicate that the number is small, a fact borne out by the somewhat meager data available from other sources on accidents in beauty culture.

In the interviews the women were questioned as to whether they had ever lost as much as a day's time because of an injury or infection received in the course of their work and whether medical attention had been necessary. Both questions usually were answered in the negative. The careful operator through training and experience learns to protect herself by frequent washing of hands and by exercising care in the use of sharp or heated instruments. A typical reply was, "There isn't any danger if you watch out a little."

Of the 1,143 women replying to the question as to strains and hazards, only about 1 in 10 answered in the affirmative and 5 of every 6 of these stated that the injury or infection was slight. The most common cause of injury was burns, reported by 49 women; skin infections from various causes were reported by 24, infections from dyes by 11, cuts by 5. Repeatedly did operators express the opinion that there are few hazards, and that infections were caused by carelessness or ignorance of the principles of asepsis.

#### Miscellaneous data on accidents and strains

Accident data on any representative scale seemed difficult to secure. As already mentioned, the industry has an aversion to all record-keeping, and for this reason little material regarding accidents or strains was available in the shops. State compensation statistics are of little value because most compensation laws do not cover any establishment with fewer than 3 employees, and in some States, as Missouri, the minimum number is 10. This limitation by number of employees would exclude automatically most of the shops in this study since the majority had fewer than 3 employees. And, of greater importance, beauty operators are not separately tabulated in the State reports.

In Ohio, where the law has compulsory application only in shops with three or more employees, the State board had available complete records that were considered indicative. For the barber- and beauty-shop group carrying compensation insurance, 41 accidents were reported in 1933, and only 12 of these lost time. Industrial diseases are compensable in Ohio and physicians throughout the State are supposed to report all cases treated. A search of the files of the

Ohio occupational-disease division showed that only three beauty-shop operators had received treatment for an occupational disability in the year. Case descriptions of these follow:

A manicurist contracted an impetigo infection from a client while she was giving a manicure.

A case of dermatitis due to permanent-wave solution and soap used in shampooing which irritated the skin.

An operator infected with dermatitis venenata on hands; severe itching and burning. Contracted from dipping pads in sulphate castor oil to give permanent waves.

Another indication of the few injuries occurring in the trade is the low insurance rate set for beauty and barber shops as adopted by the Ohio Industrial Commission under the provisions of the State's Workmen's Compensation Act. It is only 11 cents per \$100 of pay roll and is one of the three or four lowest in the State insurance-rate manual.

Records of 83 injuries reported in the beauty-shop trade in New York State for 1932 were available. Though 25 of these were falls or injuries not directly related to the work, 58 persons lost time on account of some injury or infection received while on the job. The following shows the extent of time lost:

Time lost:	Number of cases
Total.....	58
Less than 1 week.....	4
1, less than 2 weeks.....	19
2 weeks, less than 1 month.....	17
1 month or more.....	18

Cuts and punctures appeared on the reports more frequently than other injuries; almost half of the records showed these causes, burns and strains or bruises ranking next. Slipping on wet floors and colliding with equipment were not uncommon. Typical descriptions of the injuries taken from the reports of the New York records are presented here:

Cooking beauty preparation, when pot slipped and preparation spilled.

Giving a hair cut, customer moved head and scissors slipped and ripped operator's finger.

Strained self lifting and carrying dryer.

Permanent-waving tin foils that she was using cut finger.

Electric hair-dryer machinery fell over and struck her on shoulder.

Cleaning hair pieces and blaze burned hand and face.

Five cases of occupational diseases were found in this group of New York reports. They were described as follows:

Using hair dye, operator's hands became infected.

Operator poisoned in both eyes and around neck from contact with chemicals used in work. The sample of eyelash dye was found to contain a derivative of benzine.

Using treatment lamp and medication, hands became affected.

Occupational dermatitis due to using hair dye on customers.

Using ammonium hydroxide, it caused blisters.



A few similar cases of women interviewed in the present survey are described thus by the agents:

Hands crack and bleed from permanent-wave solution.

Lost nails on 2 or 3 fingers about 2 years ago when giving permanent wave. In the past 4 years has developed a sort of dermatitis from having hands in shampoo, lotion, and so forth.

Injured finger when closing metal clamp giving permanent wave. Caused bone infection and operator lost 3 months from work.

More injuries seemed to be connected with permanent-wave solution and equipment than any other. Certain of the wave solutions are very drying, and operators with sensitive skins have to give special care to their hands to keep them from cracking and becoming infected.

As large numbers of beauty-shop operators are not covered by the compensation laws because most of the shops are small, workers in this industry are at a great disadvantage in cases of serious injury. There is little redress, for many employers are not financially responsible, so it is well that apparently neither accident nor occupational disease risks are great.

### Part III.—NEGRO BEAUTY SHOPS

#### INTRODUCTION

Wage reductions and lessened work opportunities in the last few years, resulting in curtailed purchasing power of the Negro worker, have had a marked effect in reducing the number and activities of Negro shops. Hair pressing, previously indulged in by many Negroes, especially by domestic workers, had by 1934 become a luxury to large numbers, even though prices in many shops had been materially reduced.

#### Census data

Beauty shops for Negro women have invaded every Negro shopping center and residential neighborhood. The increase in number of operators is similar to that in white shops. In 1910, about 3,800 (3,782) Negro women barbers, hairdressers, and manicurists were reported by the United States census,<sup>6</sup> while in 1930 the number was three and one-half times as large (12,816). Undoubtedly most of these women were serving the needs of their own race and relatively few of them were at work in white beauty shops or barber shops.

For the four cities included in the Women's Bureau survey, the census record of 1930 shows that the number of Negro women barbers, hairdressers, and manicurists<sup>7</sup> was as follows:

Philadelphia.....	628
New Orleans.....	261
St. Louis.....	318
Columbus.....	135

Small-scale operation and local management were even more characteristic of Negro shops than of white. Most frequently they were operated independently and occupied a 1- or 2-room suite in a business block or in the dwelling of the owner.

Some had one or more chairs in a combined beauty and barber shop. Booth rental is commoner among Negro operators than among white. Instead of having a whole room or more at their disposal, for a stipulated sum—\$2 or \$3 a week—a booth, a chair, a shampoo board, or other equipment, together with light and hot water, are rented. These operators are just as independent as those renting a larger space. They have their own customers and arrange their hours and appointments. Some of the women renting booths reported that they came to their place of business only on certain days of the week, as Thursdays and Saturdays, or whenever they had special appointments. Booth renting in Negro shops was confined to Philadelphia and St. Louis, the former having three times as many women in this class as the latter.

<sup>6</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census: Monograph, Negro Population in the United States, 1790-1915, p. 509; and 15th Census, 1930; Population, vol. IV, Occupations, p. 33.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 15th Census, 1930; Population, vol. IV, Occupations, pp. 530, 906, 1291, and 1415.



No concessionaires or national chains were found, but there are affiliated training-school chains. Though sometimes an establishment took the name of a nationally sold product, the ownership was always independent. However, there were shops of local chains as well as those connected with beauty-training schools.

In many cases shops that flourished in 1929 and that up to 1931 had at least one employee were being operated in 1934 by the owner alone. At least as many Negro shops with only an owner-operator were called upon in the course of the study as the number scheduled here, that is, those with paid employees. As there are so many shops with the owner as the only operator, only a part of the persons reported by the census would fall within the scope of this survey.

#### Type of shop and number of employees

Of the 75 Negro shops included in this study over four-fifths (62) were independently owned; approximately two-fifths of these were small commercial concerns, while more than one-half were connected with the owner's living quarters. Six were units of local chains and 5 were connected with beauty training schools.

The 75 Negro shops had 157 Negro women and 2 Negro men employed. Ninety percent of the women were considered regular full-time employees; 4 percent were part-time workers and a like proportion were classed as apprentices. Five of the 7 apprentices were in St. Louis and the other 2 were in New Orleans. As already mentioned, there were few Negro workers in shops catering to white customers; only 15 were found during the course of the survey, and these have been disregarded. In Columbus and in New Orleans, however, the number of regular full-time employees scheduled was too small to make a comparison by city seem very significant. Since nearly nine-tenths of the Negro shops and slightly more than four-fifths of the Negro women employees were in Philadelphia and St. Louis, the discussions following will apply chiefly to the Negro women in the four cities as a whole and to those in the shops of the two cities mentioned.

#### Philadelphia and St. Louis

The two largest cities included, Philadelphia and St. Louis, offer more diversified work opportunities for Negro women and, as a result of this, proportionately larger groups could afford beauty treatments. While as many shops without employees as with employees were called upon, it was possible to secure data for 30-odd establishments in Philadelphia and St. Louis with at least one woman employed. A total of over 60 women in each city were scheduled. Philadelphia was the only city in which Negro men were reported and only two were at work in the shops visited there.

#### New Orleans

The number of shops (5) and of Negro women (18) scheduled in New Orleans in 1934 seem very small for a large southern city that had as many as 261 Negro women barbers, hairdressers, and manicurists reported in 1930. Even in the earlier year, however, few of the 261 could have been full-fledged licensed operators, as the records of the secretary of the Louisiana board of control of cosmetic therapy show that only 11 Negro women had general operators' licenses (and operators were the only workers covered by law) in New Orleans in 1934. A large part of these must have been women working in their own

homes at the time of census taking, who would not have been included in this study because they were owner-operators. During the study 10 shops were contacted in which the owner was the only operator and there were 2 others that reported bringing in extras occasionally on Saturdays, though none were employed at the time of this survey.

In addition to the 11 all-round operators who were licensed, 217 hairpressers were registered. Most hairpressers sell their services, either in their own kitchens where they press hair for 25 cents, or by carrying pressing oil and irons from house to house to ply their service in the homes of customers. This itinerant type of service was the bane of the regular shop owners and many disparaging tales were told about it. Instances were cited of women bartering hairpressing for food, clothing, or anything else of use to them.

#### Columbus

The census report shows that there were fewer Negro women in this occupational group in Columbus than in any other city visited. Most of the Negro shops in Columbus were of the owner-operator type, and when additional workers were needed a member of the same family—mother, sister, or daughter—was called on. Since such an arrangement does not afford employment, the great majority of the shops contacted in Columbus were not within the scope of this study.

The number of Negro shops and employees, by city, follows:

City	Number of shops	Number of employees		
		Total	Women	Men
Four cities.....	75	159	157	2
Philadelphia.....	32	66	64	2
New Orleans.....	5	18	18	
St. Louis.....	34	63	63	
Columbus.....	4	12	12	

From the standpoint of number of employees the most usual shop for Negroes, like that for white persons, had 1 employee. Twenty-eight of the 75 shops had 1, 24 had 2, and together these constitute about 70 percent of the establishments. Eight, or slightly more than one-tenth of the shops, had 5 or more employees. None had so many as 10.

#### Prices

In the majority of Negro shops hair shampooing and pressing are the only service of much importance. Hair pressing is a slow process, and when combined with a shampoo the operation usually takes more than an hour, sometimes as much as two hours. Before the depression, the price for a combined shampoo and hair press rarely was less than \$1.50—usually it was \$2—but in the winter and spring of 1933-34 these were high prices. This survey included 3 shops in New Orleans and 1 in St. Louis that charged 25 cents for a shampoo and hair press. This was the low point. Of the 75 Negro shops slightly more than half had a minimum price of from 25 to 75 cents for a shampoo and press. The 5 shops in New Orleans fell in this class, as did almost nine-tenths of those in St. Louis. Philadelphia and Columbus prices were higher, no parlor charging less than 75 cents for this service.



In the former city slightly more than nine-tenths of the shops charged \$1 or more. On the other hand, approximately half the 34 shops in St. Louis had 50 cents as the minimum price of a service and in only about two-fifths was the minimum higher than this. In the few shops in Columbus \$1 was most frequently the minimum price for a shampoo and press.

### Occupation

Negro shops were too small to allow for much specialization and all but 4 of the women reporting on jobs considered themselves all-round operators. Hair pressing and shampooing were looked upon as the main source of revenue, and though almost all the women reported themselves as all-round operators, it was only occasionally that they were required to give a manicure, facial treatment, hair cut, or other beauty service. After pressing, marcelling was the next in importance as a service, and many operators observed at work by Bureau investigators seemed skilled, turning out their customers with beautifully arranged coiffures of smooth and pleasing waves. In New Orleans very little marcelling was practiced, because of high humidity. The few Negro women who were not designated all-round operators were 1 manicurist, 2 shampooists, and 1 specialist.

## WAGES

Only a few of the Negro shops kept pay-roll records, so the facts presented here are based for the most part on the oral reports of employers and employees.

### Method of pay

Straight salaries for a specified period and commissions, found about equally, were the two most usual pay systems. Though in New Orleans and Columbus practically all the women worked on commission, in Philadelphia only about three-eighths and in St. Louis less than one-fourth of those reported were on this basis of pay. In the city last mentioned approximately three-fifths of the women were time workers.

Distribution of workers by method of pay, according to city, shows such scattered groups that medians could be computed only for the four localities combined. Women paid on a time basis apparently were more fortunate than those on a commission basis, for at the time of the survey the former had a median of \$10 a week, the latter a median of \$6.75. An explanation of this is that the shops most hard pressed by lack of business had the most marked tendency to pay their workers on a commission basis.

### Weekly rates of time workers

Lost time, whether voluntary or involuntary, reduces a worker's pay. Salary rates reported for women in beauty shops were low, and on the whole little difference was noted between rates and earnings. Of the 62 Negro women whose weekly rate of pay was reported, less than one-twelfth had specified salaries of as much as \$15, while more than two-fifths got less than \$10.

### Week's earnings

As a result of the low wage rates just mentioned, the reported earnings of Negro women in beauty shops are low. For the most recent normal week preceding the interview, the median of the earnings of the

156 Negro women covered in this study and having pay data reported was \$8. This is, roughly speaking, about three-fifths of the median for white women in the industry.

The range in earnings is from \$1 to \$16.25. Eliminating the lowest and the highest 10 percent of operators, it is found that the earnings of the middle 80 percent extended from \$4 to \$13.50. Almost two-thirds of the number received less than \$10 a week and only about 1 in 16 as much as \$15. The minimum rates as proposed by the beauty-shop code would have done much for the Negro women.

*By city.*—Seven of the 10 Negro women earning as much as \$15 were in Philadelphia, with 1 in each of the three other cities. The median of the week's earnings in Philadelphia was \$9.25 and in St. Louis it was \$7.25, as compared with the median for the four cities of \$8. Of the 63 women in Philadelphia nearly one-fifth received less than \$5; about one-half, less than \$10; three-eighths, \$10 and less than \$15; and one-ninth, \$15 and under \$17. In this city earnings were decidedly higher than those found elsewhere.

In St. Louis about one-sixth of the 63 women earned less than \$5, approximately three-fourths (73 percent) less than \$10, more than one-fifth (22 percent) \$10 and under \$11, and only 1 woman reached \$15.

Earnings were lowest in New Orleans, where 10 of the 18 women (2 of these were apprentices and received no money wage) reported less than \$5 for the week; 4 received \$5 and under \$10, and 3 had amounts ranging from \$10 to \$14. One earned as much as \$15.

Only 12 Negro women were in the Columbus group and 8 of these received less than \$10, 3 of them less than \$5.

### Tips and extras

Tips and receipts from commissions on sales of cosmetics and so forth did not greatly increase the income of the Negro women. Slightly more than 30 percent of the 122 reporting on this subject had received no tips at all in the preceding week; about 40 percent said their earnings had been increased by less than \$1, and 23 percent by \$1 and less than \$2. Only 1 estimated that the week's tips added as much as \$3 to her earnings. Weekly tips of at least \$1 were more common in Philadelphia than in St. Louis, as 1 in 2 of the women in the former city, but only 1 in 7 of those in the latter, received this much in gratuities. Even in Philadelphia only about one-tenth of the women reported gratuities of as much as \$2 a week. Eight of the 10 women reporting on tips in Columbus received none; in New Orleans no facts on the subject were available.

Median earnings of the Negro women were increased \$1 when tips, commissions, and so forth, were included with earnings. Computations made for the four cities combined, for Philadelphia and for St. Louis, show that with gratuities of this sort the medians of earnings are \$9 in the combined group, \$10.25 for Philadelphia, and \$8.25 for St. Louis, while without such extras the amounts, as just mentioned, are respectively \$8, \$9.25, and \$7.25.

Ten women had their meals or their board and room in addition to their money wage; 2 received special commissions on articles or services sold.

Only 2 men were found in the 75 Negro shops covered; 1 worked on commission, and for the week reported his earnings were only \$3; the other, employed on a time basis, received \$14.



## HOURS

**Scheduled daily hours**

Opening hours in Negro shops generally were later and more irregular than those of white shops. Though shop owners would report 9 or 9:30 as their opening hour, agents on this survey when calling at such times frequently would find shops closed till 10 o'clock, and sometimes till noon. In general, schedules of the Negro shops as of the white, were irregular and varied with the day of the week, the state of the weather, and appointments.

Closing hours were later and the spread of hours longer than in white establishments. The schedules seem to reflect the long days of domestic-service workers, the group that furnished a large part of the customers of Negro shops. To accommodate those who have, besides Thursday afternoons, only late evenings for hairdressing or treatments, the shops remain open. Many reported 9 or 10 o'clock or even later as their closing time, especially on Thursdays and Saturdays—sometimes on Fridays also. A number of the Negro women stated that at times they worked till midnight, and even later on Saturdays, if there were appointments to fill.

Well over half of the 58 shops giving the daily maximum reported some days of 13 hours or more, and all had some day or days of the week as long as 11 hours.

**Scheduled weekly hours**

Of the 55 shops that reported fairly definite and regular hours of business for the week, only about 4 percent had operating schedules of under 60 hours. In Philadelphia only one shop had a schedule of less than 60 hours and in St. Louis none was open for less than 63 hours. In both cities some shops had a schedule as long as 80 hours.

**Actual hours worked per week**

The proposed code of fair competition for the beauty-shop trade limits the hours of work to 48 a week. Using this as a measuring point, it is seen that 3 of every 5 Negro women who answered questions as to hours worked in the week preceding the interview reported a schedule longer than 48 hours. Over two-thirds of these women had worked or been ready for service more than 54 hours. Hours in St. Louis were exceedingly long, for 5 of every 6 Negro women whose hours were given worked more than 48, and 4 of every 7 worked more than 54. In Philadelphia the hours of 3 in 7 of the Negro women exceeded 48.

**Changes in salary rates and hours worked during the preceding year**

At the time of this survey, because of the absence of an industry code and the fact that very few Negro shops had signed the President's Reemployment Agreement, wages had not been raised nor hours of work reduced in these shops. Since the summer of 1933, when N. R. A. policies first were adopted by industry, only 6 of the 70 shops reporting on this point had raised the level of their wage scale; only 12 had reduced the schedule of working hours.

Low earnings and long hours of work were admitted by most of the managers or owners, but they felt that the low prices and long over-all periods prevailing in the industry were responsible for such chaotic conditions.

## THE WORKERS

**Age of women**

Negro beauty operators, like the white, are young. Almost three-fifths of those reporting were under 30 and only about 7 percent were 40 or older. In St. Louis the proportion of young women was higher than for the total group, as seven-tenths of the women had not reached 30. Philadelphia shops, on the other hand, reported only about half of the women as under 30, so it is not surprising to find that the proportion who were 40 years or over is twice as high as that in St. Louis, and almost 1½ times as high as the figure for all cities. In the Negro as in the white shops, the young worker generally is preferred when a new employee is to be taken on.

**Marital status**

There is apparently no prejudice against the employment of married women in beauty shops, for the proportion is high. In the Negro shops 36 percent of the women were married, 19 percent were widowed, separated, or divorced, and 45 percent were single.

**Experience**

Since beauty culture is still a relatively new business activity and most of its workers are young, experience in terms of many years in the trade would hardly be expected. Considering the depressed state of business in the Negro shops, it is surprising to find that as many as 38 percent of the women had entered the trade in the past 3 years. More than 2 in 5 had worked in beauty shops for 5 years or more, and approximately 1 in 10 for as much as 10 years. The workers in St. Louis and Philadelphia had practically the same proportions with experience of 5 and under 10 years and of 10 years or more. It is interesting to note that in St. Louis, where a course in beauty culture has been given in a public school, the proportion of Negro women who had been in the trade less than a year is almost twice the proportion shown for Philadelphia.

**Time with present employer**

Beauty shops in their personnel relationships have an atmosphere of independence and on the part of many of the operators there is a spirit of free-lancing that tends to considerable shifting. As a result of these conditions, a high proportion (more than one-third) of the 131 Negro workers in the three cities for whom experience data were reported had been with their present employer less than a year. About three-fourths had worked for the present employer less than 3 years, and only one had worked in the same shop for as much as 10 years.

In St. Louis, where earnings are lower, hours longer, and workers less experienced than in Philadelphia, a greater turn-over would be expected, so it is not surprising to find that more than one-half of the Negro women in St. Louis, as compared with just under one-fifth of those in Philadelphia, had been with their present employer less than a year. The proportion of Philadelphia women with a job tenure of as much as 5 years was more than twice the proportion of St. Louis workers whose employment with the present firm extended so long.

**Unemployment in the preceding year**

No unemployed persons were included in the survey, but when interviewed the women were questioned in regard to unemployment



and part-time work during the year preceding the survey. Undoubtedly beauty operators had suffered less from unemployment in 1933 than had Negro women in other occupations, though employment standards of this industry had degenerated greatly.

In only three of the four cities did the Negro women report on such unemployment, and approximately two-thirds of them had suffered no unemployment or part-time work of as long as 2 weeks. More than four-fifths of the women in Philadelphia and one-half of those in St. Louis reported no such unemployment period nor part-time work.

#### Type and extent of training

Of the 133 women reporting on type of training nearly three-fifths stated that they had attended a public or private beauty school, and most of the remaining women had been apprenticed.

Type of training:	Number of women
Total reporting.....	133
Private school.....	57
Public school.....	19
Apprenticeship.....	54
Shop.....	3

Negro women had devoted longer periods to training than had white women. School managers and the women themselves thought that less pressure was felt by a Negro student to complete the work in a limited time; consequently attendance in school and shop was more intermittent and irregular in the case of Negro women. Undoubtedly, some had to work between periods of training. Close to half of the 113 women who gave the definite time of their apprenticeship or training reported that they had spent 6 and under 12 months in preparation, while almost two-fifths had spent a year or more. Six months is the time most frequently specified by State laws as the minimum for school training; apprenticeship periods are considerably longer.

#### Cost of training

From the summary following may be seen the amounts paid for training in private schools by 62 Negro women. Somewhat over half of the women had paid amounts varying from \$25 to \$200 for a training course in beauty culture. Almost two-thirds of these reported \$50 and less than \$100 as the tuition fee.

Cost of training:	Number of women
Total.....	62
\$25, less than \$50.....	11
\$50, less than \$75.....	19
\$75, less than \$100.....	21
\$100, less than \$150.....	8
\$150, less than \$200.....	3

#### BEAUTY SCHOOLS

The training of Negro women for beauty culture is not standardized and, from information received in this survey, it seemed to be inadequate and unsatisfactory. In 1933-34 private schools were struggling hard to exist at all, and in several instances their make-up and functions had become primarily those of a shop rather than of a training school. Most of the schools visited in Philadelphia and St.

Louis were of this type, much more concerned with their customers than with their students. It is quite customary for a school to introduce and apply the course of training developed by a specific system and, though operating under the name of the system followed and using the products manufactured by the sponsors of that method, to be an independently owned establishment locally.

#### Philadelphia

Of the 6 Negro shop-schools visited in Philadelphia in December 1933, 2 had not applied for a school license for 1934 and the managers seemed uncertain as to whether they could meet the requirements for licensing as a school under the new law. The Pennsylvania law, effective January 1, 1934, prohibits students from practicing beauty culture on patrons for pay, compliance with this provision making necessary the separation of shop from school. The 2 schools just mentioned had never offered much but apprenticeship in an informal way, while 4 other schools in Philadelphia nominally offered a regular course of study and reported giving 1,000 hours of training for a diploma, sufficient for certification for State examination. This group of 4 schools estimated the number of students trained yearly as 250, but undoubtedly this is the maximum of recent years. When asked specifically about their course of study, some of them stated that plans and subject matter were being revised to conform to the statute of 1933. From the standpoint of equipment, courses of study, and teaching staff, two of the Philadelphia training schools were the best of the Negro private schools visited.

Fees for the all-round or complete course in these Negro schools were reported as \$75, \$100, \$150, and \$200. There was, however, no such thing as a fixed price, and the amount expended for tuition was affected by numerous adjustments as to payment arrangements and the bargaining ability of the contracting parties. There was a tendency to increase tuition rates since students no longer could be a source of revenue. All the school managers mentioned working scholarships that reduced the cost of the course.

#### St. Louis

In St. Louis two private schools were visited, neither of which seemed to have a very definite program of training. The 5 or 6 students enrolled in each worked as regular operators in the shops at rates slightly lower than the so-called "professional rates." Both schools claimed standards and a regular course of study, though the atmosphere and set-up of the establishments seemed to offer little. Fees for the 1,000 hours of training were reported as from \$65 to \$80, depending on method of payment and special arrangements made; sometimes tuition was worked out by a pupil.

St. Louis was the only city included in the survey in which a public school was offering Negro women a course in beauty culture in preparation for a vocation. The Vaschon Vocational School for Negro students had had such a course since 1930. Of the women interviewed in St. Louis more had received their training here than in any other school, and from the brief contact made in this survey the public school seemed to offer the best available training in the field. The principal stated that about 20 pupils were prepared for the semiannual State board examinations. Students were admitted



at any time during the school year and were required to complete 1,000 hours of training. A general background for the work in beauty culture was supplied by a series of lectures given by the school doctor and science teachers and by classes in anatomy, hygiene, sanitation, and various subjects related directly to beauty culture or shop management.

In the fall of 1934 several changes were to be made. A registration fee of \$1 was the only charge, though beginning with September 1934 an additional laboratory fee of \$5 was to be required. Enrollment was to be limited; preference was to be given to those under 21 and to high-school graduates.

The Vaschon School maintains a beauty shop that is open to the public, and since the prices charged are very low the neighborhood shops complained bitterly of this competition.

#### New Orleans

In 1933 New Orleans had no licensed school for Negro women interested in beauty culture as a vocation. The annual registration fee of \$150 as fixed by law was deemed a barrier in these times by women who had maintained schools in this city before 1930. A few Negro shops employing licensed operators were allowed to take apprentices.

#### Columbus

Columbus had no school for Negro operators especially, and the nearest center where they could obtain a course of training was said to be Cincinnati.





