With the arrival of Spring, I present Issue 2 of the CSWEP News. The Focus of this issue is on post-tenure career paths in economics. Ina Ganguli and Anna Paulson, at-large members of the CSWEP board, ask a sobering question about the stagnation and decline of women after achieving tenure. It is indeed disheartening to witness women exiting the economics profession in greater numbers than men in the post-tenure stage. Ina and Anna present results from a fascinating survey of a sample of women economists who have left academic economics post-tenure, including full professors, or are seriously considering exiting the profession. The survey responses provide illuminating insights into the reasons for women leaving academia and where women report higher overall satisfaction having done so. Unhappiness with academic norms and experiences of sexual harassment and discrimination are some of the cited reasons for leaving. The survey responses are particularly revealing, and I encourage you to read them.

They have compiled a collection of thought-provoking articles exploring the leaky post-tenure pipeline. In “Gendered devaluation and retention among U.S. faculty,” Katie Spoon and Aaron Clauset examine retention rates across academic fields and find striking differences across genders in the likelihood of women leaving academic economics at every stage, including full professor ranks. Exploring the issue of promotion to the most senior levels in the profession in detail, in “Climbing the Ladder or Falling off the Cliff,” Marieke Kleemans and Rebecca Thornton find that women are more likely to stagnate in associate professor ranks or exit after gaining tenure and are less likely to be promoted to full professorship.

In the third piece, “Gender Balance in the Academic Finance Profession,” Mila Getmansky Sherman and Heather Tookes focus on tenure rates, promotions to full, publication numbers, and co-authorship networks in a sub-field where the underrepresentation of women is particularly striking—finance. They also highlight the mentoring and network-building ameliorative efforts of CSWEP’s sister committee in finance, AFFECT. On a more inspiring note, in “Mid-Career: The Few and the Forgotten,” Kasey Buckles describes the new initiative to develop community and peer-to-peer mentoring support for mid-career women launched by CSWEP in 2023. Early feedback suggests a very positive reception to our newest program. I recommend reading the informative if disconcerting, articles in this issue of Focus—they remind us that while progress has been made since the inception of CSWEP in 1971, we have a long way to go.
and hard road ahead in achieving gender parity in economics.

Turning to the junior faculty pipeline: We eagerly await our flagship mentoring workshop, CeMENT 2024, in Chicago in late June. It is also time to submit applications for CeMENT 2025, scheduled for San Francisco in January 2025. The deadline for applications is in mid-August—details are in this issue’s information about upcoming calls for papers, award nominations, and professional development opportunities. CSWEP will also host sessions at the Western Economic Association’s 99th Annual Conference in the last week of June and the first week of July in Seattle, Washington.

We invite nominations for CSWEP’s 2024 Carolyn Shaw Bell Award and Elaine Bennett Prize. The Bell Award is for senior women economists who have dedicated their efforts towards furthering the status of women in economics through their achievements, leading by example, mentoring junior faculty, and, more generally, increasing our understanding of how women can advance in our profession. For the Elaine Bennett Prize, we look forward to nominations that recognize and honor outstanding research in any field of economics by a woman not more than ten years beyond her Ph.D. The deadline for both awards is in mid-September.

Thanks to the organizers and mentors who make our many events and initiatives possible. Please forward this issue of the News to your students and colleagues. They can message info@cswep.org to be part of our mailing list for announcements and other news. Drop us a line if you want to volunteer for CSWEP activities or share comments and suggestions. We are actively looking for new CSWEP liaisons—we’d love to have you join the CSWEP family! Please check out our website and follow us on Twitter @aeacswep to stay updated with our events and initiatives. As always, we invite feedback and ideas for new initiatives. I wish you a happy spring!

From the Chair

Anusha Chari, Professor of Economics, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Anna Paulson, Executive Vice President & Director of Research, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago

Ina Ganguli, Professor of Economics, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Kasey Buckles, Professor of Economics, University of Notre Dame and Associate Chair and Director of Mentoring, CSWEP

Aaron Clauset, Professor of Computer Science, University of Colorado Boulder & External Faculty, Santa Fe Institute

Marike Kleemans, Assistant Professor of Economics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Mila Getmansky Sherman, Professor of Finance & Judith Wilkinson O’Connell Faculty Fellow, Isenberg School of Management, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Katie Spoon, Ph.D. Candidate in Computer Science & NSF Graduate Research Fellow, University of Colorado Boulder

Rebecca Thornton, Herman Brown Chair, Professor of Economics, Hankamer School of Business, Baylor University

Heather Tookes, Professor of Finance and Deputy Dean for Faculty, Yale School of Management

Anusha Chari, Editor
Gina Pieters, Oversight Editor
Ina Ganguli and Anna Paulson, Co-editors

Leda Black, Graphic Designer

Brag Box

“we need every day to herald some woman’s achievements . . . go ahead and boast!” —Carolyn Shaw Bell

Do you have a recent accomplishment or achievement? Does a colleague? We want to hear from you!

Send announcements to info@cswep.org.
Focus Introduction: Why Are Women Leaving?

After the exhilaration of Claudia Goldin’s Nobel Prize in Economics for her pathbreaking work in the field of gender economics, the 2023 CSWEP survey of U.S. economics departments\(^1\) is disheartening: “Despite occasional signs of progress in women’s representation in economics, the pattern for the last two years—and most of the twenty-first century to date—has been stagnation.”

Although there have been gains earlier in the pipeline in recent decades, this stagnation is clearly evident at the post-tenure mid-career levels. The data also reveal a small decline in the share of women faculty in non-doctoral program departments (39.2% to 37.7% for associates and 29.8% to 28.1% for full professors).

Why are we seeing a stagnation or even a decline in the share of women at the post-tenure stages? Are women leaving academia at higher rates than men, and if so, why? In this FOCUS issue, we bring together articles summarizing research on gender disparities along the career path in economics, finance, and more broadly in academia, with a focus on the post-tenure stage. We complement the research summaries with the voices of some women economists, drawing on stories from several women who were tenured and either have already left academia, or plan to leave academia.

Katie Spoon and Aaron Clauset draw on analysis in Spoon et al. (2023) to estimate faculty retention across a large number of fields and institutions using employment data from Ph.D.-granting institutions and survey data. They show that women are more likely than men to leave their faculty jobs at every career stage. In economics, the gender difference is huge: women full professors are 35% more likely to leave than their male counterparts. Feeling devalued plays an important role: among economists 46% of women vs 10% of men reported experiencing devaluation.

Marieke Kleemans and Rebecca Thornton focus on gender differences in promotion to full professor among economics faculty. They document a large gender gap in faculty at all ranks, with the largest gap at the level of full professor. After including a variety of controls, including institution type and research productivity, they find that women are 31% less likely to be promoted to full professor. The authors ask: “are we helping women to climb the academic ladder, only to have senior women fall off the cliff?”

Mila Sherman and Heather Tookes examine gender differences in one subfield of economics with the largest gender gap—finance. They also show that even after controlling for research productivity, women in finance are less likely to have tenure than men, and are less likely to be full professors. While women have fewer publications on average, the authors show that there is no gender difference in publication rates when looking only at solo-authored and top-journal publications. They document that although women have fewer coauthors overall, they have more women coauthors. The authors point to the role of mentoring and network-building, and highlight how the Academic Female Faculty Committee of the American Finance Association (AFFECT) recently launched its own early career mentoring initiative, patterned on CSWEP’s program for junior faculty.

Kasey Buckles suggests promising ways to support mid-career women. In Buckles (2019), she described

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\(^1\) Available in the 2024 CSWEP News, Issue 1: https://www.aeaweb.org/content/file?id=20292

* These are the views of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago or of the Federal Reserve System.
a toolkit for department chairs and other leaders with proven strategies for supporting women in economics. She also discusses a new program she developed through CSWEP, the Mid-Career Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Mentoring Program. The first cohort of P2P groups was launched in the fall of 2023. Halfway through, the majority of participants reported it was worthwhile and would recommend it to a colleague or friend.

Why are women leaving tenured positions in Economics? Individual Perspectives

We reached out to about twenty women who have either left, or seriously contemplated leaving, tenured roles in academia. They either reached out when we shared that we were interested in why women left academia on social media, or they were referred to us via someone else who was aware of our interest in the topic.

Key themes from the nine women who shared their stories with us are summarized below through excerpts of what they shared with us. The selected quotes have been lightly edited for length and clarity and to remove potentially identifying details. We are immensely grateful to the women who shared their experiences and suggestions.

The women that we talked to all had or have tenured positions in academia, five were (or are) full professors and four were (or are) tenured associate professors at large private and public research universities, liberal arts colleges or regional public universities. Most of the women who left academia are now serving in leadership roles at institutions focused on public policy or at a global tech firm. They are all using their economics training and research skills.

The women who have left academia are very happy with their new roles and their decision to leave academia and, often, report that they are being paid more.

“I find that I have better work-life balance, get more (and more varied) intellectual stimulation, engage in more meaningful collaborations, receive more constructive feedback, and have been able to develop new skills.”

“I love it. My work is fascinating and meaningful, I am surrounded by brilliant and kind people who treat each other with respect, and I feel extremely supported by my employer. The pay is also better, but that is icing on the cake.”

“I truly miss teaching and my identity as a professor. But the quality of life improvement for my family is immense. I feel supported to prioritize my own well-being.”

“I have no regrets. It is fun and interesting to do something new. I use my training and skills in a new way. In a way I have less control over my time because I do need to follow a more regular work schedule; but in another way, I feel like I have more control over my time because I don’t have so much BS to do all the time.”

“Having the independence to think about what questions are critical for the economy, rather than what questions appeal to funders, makes me profoundly happy.”

General dissatisfaction with academic norms is one reason why women leave or contemplate leaving.

“I was frustrated with long turnaround times and gatekeeping in the academic publishing process. And, while academic and empirical rigor are essential, I felt constrained to focus only on research projects that would publish well.”

“I love research and digging into questions, but the journal and publication process is soul crushing on some level.”

Links in this article

P2P Mentoring Program: https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/cswep/programs/resources/midcareer_p2p

continues on page 5
“I am getting more and more frustrated with academia. It is not about using the power of economics to make the world a better place. It is not even about advancing science. It is all about publishing in top journals, no matter how irrelevant or unimportant the topic of the paper is. The path to that goal goes through bullying, ignoring others’ work, not giving deserved credit to people who have done this before.”

Factors that disproportionately impact women are also important.

“I think it’s really true that the students demand more of women faculty, and a lot of men don’t even realize this. I tried to follow the advice to say no more, but it was difficult. For one thing, I knew that if I said no, one of my colleagues would have to do it (and there was a good chance it would be one of the other over-burdened women).”

“The University can just add tasks to the list of things faculty have to do without ever asking what will not be done—they all need a lesson in opportunity costs. There were some men who stepped up for sure, but it always did feel like a lot of tasks landed on the desks of the few women in the department.”

“The lack of stable childcare was a constant pressure on performance. After a while I felt like I was accomplishing little but treading water. It’s not that my job didn’t accommodate me, it was that having children made me worse at my job. I’m very competitive, I don’t like when I can’t perform to the level I prefer and I don’t like when I know I’m losing. All I knew was that in this job, kids hampered success. So I decided to find one where they wouldn’t matter.”

“Did I feel like it was mysteriously difficult for some people to see women and their work as ‘brilliant,’ definitely. Was it so much extra work (and maybe impossible) for women to be both liked and respected by the students? Yes!”

Discrimination and harassment—either that they experienced directly or that they perceive in the profession—are very important factors for some women.

“Inappropriate behavior from a senior colleague at my previous institution played a role, but so did a general culture in the university that didn’t value leadership from women.”

“My strong interest in leaving my department and potentially academia as a whole is due to the severe sexism and racism and my traumatic experiences. I love doing academic research, have some top-5 and top field journal publications. I also have been getting very good ratings from my teaching. But, the extent of bullying and harassment that I endured in my current and previous jobs was intolerable.”

“I had become increasingly cynical about the likelihood that the Economics profession will ever hold its members accountable for bad behavior. I hated being so cynical about the industry I worked in.”

“Some women seem to try to find hope from what the AEA Executive Committee is doing—the mass email they send out about anti-harassment policies, lockboxes about sexual harassment, etc. However, women who actually experienced the AEA Ethics Committee through the formal complaint process have serious frustrations.”

The women generally agreed that more should be done to make academia more welcoming to women, including advancing policies aimed specifically at women—like tenure clocks that recognize the different impact of children on performance.
women relative to men—but the most common suggestion is to broaden the definition of a successful career in economics. “But is it bad that ‘someone like me’ left academic economics, I don’t think so. I am still a practicing economist, and women are under-represented in the type of work I do now too! At first, I did sort of feel like I failed at being a professor because even after I got tenure, I couldn’t make a job that seemed like it should be amazing work well for me; and I was struggling to get enough done to put in for promotion to Full. But now I see it more as part of a career path, and I am happy with the change. I couldn’t be doing what I do now without having done a Ph.D. and the research I did as a professor. It would be nice if having a career in economics where you had different types of positions, or did different types of economics work at different times, were more normalized.”

“Say everything wrong with academia for women was fixed. It’s still a very particular type of job within the set we are capable of getting—a type of research, a type of employer, a type of institution, a type of performance measures. It could be that type is more male. In that case, the answer for women would be, the male-type jobs shouldn’t be more prestigious.”

“I think we do a disservice to graduate students by preparing them only for the academic market and prizing academic placements above all others. I think this mentality repels a lot of talent because the discipline appears elitist and unwelcoming. There is a lot of rewarding, impactful work outside of academia, and the environment tends to be less toxic.”

“I think economics needs to confront that it may change considerably in the next 10–20 years, with more competition from other majors, changes in our comparative advantage due to AI, and perhaps flat demand for our graduate students. I would also like to see research universities figure out how to value teaching and service (both inside and outside the university) better. This is not just about aligning with faculty workloads—it’s about what universities themselves say they want to offer students, e.g. a faculty that has impact. But then doing the work to have that impact, like government service, is not rewarded at all.”
Gendered Devaluation and Retention Among U.S. faculty

In most academic fields, women remain underrepresented among tenure-track and tenured faculty (Wapman et al., 2022). Despite broad interest in faculty attrition, most studies of gender and retention have focused on narrow samples—mostly assistant professors, in STEM fields, at prestigious institutions, who represent only 15% of all faculty—impeding a full accounting of its magnitude and variation.

We conducted a systematic investigation of faculty retention across the entire U.S. university system (Spoon et al., 2023) by combining two comprehensive datasets. The first was an employment census of 245,270 tenure-track or tenured faculty who were active in their roles over the 10-year period of 2011–2020, which spanned 111 academic fields at 391 PhD-granting institutions, including STEM, the social sciences, the humanities, health, business, and education. In our study, economics is classified as a non-STEM field within the social sciences. The second was 10,071 responses to a broad survey about faculty attrition of former and current tenure-track and tenured professors from within the larger census dataset.

Retention rates

Using this employment census, we find that, across U.S. tenure-track academia as a whole, women are more likely to leave their faculty jobs1 than men at every career age and stage. At the same time, we find that gendered attrition rates vary in magnitude across faculty ranks, academic fields, and institutions, and that the gendered attrition observed for academia as a whole is driven substantially by attrition of (i) tenured faculty, (ii) faculty in non-STEM domains (including economics), and (iii) faculty at lower-prestige institutions. Specifically, women were 6% more likely to leave than men each year as assistant professors, 10% more as associate professors, and 19% more as full professors (Fig. 1).

There are no STEM domains in which women assistant professors are more likely to leave than men over this time period. And in engineering, men are more likely to leave than women, even though engineering has the greatest overrepresentation of men of any domain. In contrast, the largest gendered attrition gap is for full professors in non-STEM domains such as economics: Women full professors in every non-STEM domain are more likely to leave than men. In economics in particular, women full professors are 35% more likely to leave than men (p < 0.01; Fig. 1).

These findings indicate that gendered attrition among faculty must be driven by more than the impact of work-life balance for early-career women, e.g., because of the unequal impact of parenthood (Morgan et al., 2021). In fact, we observe only modest, if any, effects among early-career women, but large effects for late-career women faculty.

Reasons for leaving

Even for ranks, domains, and institutions where retention rates are similar for women and men, our survey results show that the reasons that faculty leave remain gendered. In other words, faculty attrition

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1 We measure “all-cause” attrition, which is inclusive of all types of and reasons for an attrition event, regardless of whether it was related to not receiving tenure, moving to a non-academic job, retirement, or moving to an academic position outside our dataset of U.S. Ph.D.-granting institutions. Switching institutions within our set of 391 Ph.D.-granting institutions is not considered attrition.
can be gendered even if women and men leave their jobs at equal rates. We asked respondents if they left or would leave academia because they were unhappy, stressed, or otherwise unsatisfied with their position (a push); because they were drawn to, excited by, or otherwise attracted to a new position (a pull); or both.

We find that women are 44% more likely to feel pushed out of their jobs (Fig. 2A) and 39% less likely to feel pulled toward better opportunities (Fig. 2B) than men, making gender the strongest predictor of feeling pushed or pulled among the factors of gender, domain (STEM versus non-STEM), or institutional prestige, adjusting for career age, in a multiple regression analysis of all covariates.

While we found substantial variation in gendered retention rates across fields (Fig. 1), gendered patterns of feeling pushed and pulled were relatively consistent across fields. In economics in particular, women were 83% more likely to feel pushed out of their jobs than men (Fig. 2C).

**Gendered devaluation**

Why are women more likely to feel pushed from their positions? We asked about a range of faculty-specific stressors on the survey, and found that although women faculty associate these pushes with work-life balance issues early in their career, at all career stages, women highlight issues related to workplace climate (Spoon et al., 2023).

**Figure 1. Gendered retention rates**

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Notes to Figure 1. Time-averaged attrition ORs, split by academic rank, controlling for career length, employer prestige, and doctoral degree (domestic versus international), with 95% confidence intervals and statistical significance assessed via a z test. Because our dataset is a census, error bars can be interpreted as reflecting variability primarily from the underlying mechanisms rather than uncertainty in the odds that we observe. Individuals with appointments in multiple domains (12.8% of faculty) are counted in each domain.
Devaluation & Retention

Our survey includes 6,615 free-text responses from the same participants when asked what needed to be different about their positions to reduce their stress (current faculty; \( N = 4,442 \)) or stay in their positions (former faculty; \( N = 2,173 \)). Analyzing these free-text responses, we find that gendered devaluation, in both formal evaluations (e.g., tenure and promotion) and informal interactions (e.g., with colleagues), plays a central role in gendered retention, does so consistently across academic fields and institutional prestige, and is particularly salient for women of color and tenured women (Spoon et al., 2024). No other topic discussed by respondents—including service burdens, funding pressures, or caretaking responsibilities—exhibited such a sustained, gendered pattern.

At the same time, some fields exhibit larger gender gaps in reported devaluation than others—in economics, 46% of women vs 10% of men reported experiencing devaluation (Fig. 3), the largest gap between women and men in any field except for engineering.

Women explicitly connect their experiences of gendered devaluation with leaving their faculty jobs, suggesting that the accumulation of these experiences may drive the increased rate of gendered attrition we found among late-career faculty (Fig. 1). For example, tenured women often describe careers spent constantly having to prove themselves, and even when they publish more and higher-quality papers, secure more funding, place more graduate students, and win more professional awards, they report still earning...
less than their male colleagues while having their accomplishments diminished and devalued (see Spoon et al., 2024 for quotations).

**Implications**

These results demonstrate the importance of examining the underlying reasons that faculty leave their jobs (Figs. 2-3) in order to contextualize simple employment-based measurements of gendered attrition (Fig. 1). Moreover, these results highlight the critical and career-spanning role of workplace climate in gendered faculty attrition, and contextualizes the more commonly studied role of work-life balance in the early career.

Gendered devaluation among faculty emerges as the most distinctly gendered aspect of the academic workplace, and is the only theme women consistently report regardless of career age. Administrators and policymakers in higher education, as well as gender researchers, must expand our focus to include tenured women faculty, especially those in non-STEM fields like economics and those at the least prestigious institutions. Tenured women, especially full professors, constitute a large majority of all women faculty in the U.S. and represent the group of tenure-track faculty at greatest risk of leaving, despite being highly successful in their careers.

Our study shows clearly that faculty attrition rates alone do not provide a clear understanding of gendered attrition because they cannot shed light on whether women leave for similar or different reasons than men. For instance, with assistant professors in STEM, although we found no significant difference between women’s and men’s attrition rates, the reasons they report for leaving academia remain both strongly gendered and gendered in highly inequitable ways. Hence, it would be a mistake to observe equal rates of attrition in a department or field and conclude that gender equity had been achieved. Future studies of gender in academia should go beyond simply measuring gendered disparities of different kinds, e.g., in attrition, hiring, publication rates, citations, awards, etc., and should instead seek to identify the underlying social mechanisms or biases and whether those are gendered. Only such a focus will support evidenced-based policy changes to improve our communities and institutions.

**Figure 3. Aspects of the workplace**

[Diagram showing the percentage of respondents by gender in various aspects of the workplace, including Work, Organization, Work-life balance, and Workplace climate.]

**References**


**Notes to Figure 3.** Frequency counts of topics reported by current faculty in economics (N = 92) that would reduce the stress they feel in their positions, split by gender. The category with the largest gender difference (the percentage of women who reported the topic minus the percentage of men who reported the topic) is devaluation. 95% confidence intervals shown.
Over the past decade, there has been an increase in research on gender gaps among economists in academia. Pronounced differences in outcomes has been found in promotion to tenure (Ginther and Kahn 2004; Ginther and Kahn 2021), salary (Hilmer and Hilmer 2010; Binder, Krause, Chermak, Thacher and Gilroy 2010; Li and Koedel 2017; Chen and Crown 2019; Bedard, Lee, and Royer 2021), job mobility (Gualavisi, Kleemans and Thornton forthcoming), and publications (Sarsons, Gërxhani, Reuben, and Schramet 2021; Hengel 2022). Universities, professional organizations, and individuals have worked to design programs and policies to help raise awareness and support women to close some of these professional gender gaps, for example through mentorship programs (Hale and Regev 2014; Blau, Currie, Croson and Ginther 2010), and improving departmental climate and seminar culture (Dupas, Sasser Modestino, Niederle and Wolfers 2021).

Much of the research has focused on the transition from assistant to associate professor (Sarsons 2017; Antecol, Bedard, and Stearns 2018; Lundberg and Stearns 2019; Ginther and Kahn 2021). Policies and programs have, anecdotally focused on junior mentoring—for undergraduate, and graduate students, and junior faculty.

The largest gender gap among academic economists, however, is at the level of full professor. The overall share of women at lower ranks has been growing over time, yet only 14.8 percent of full professors in Ph.D.-granting economics departments are women (Chevalier 2021). We also know little about the determinants of the gender gaps at the senior level, what programs are in place or available for senior women, and what is effective for shrinking the gaps.

### Trends in full female faculty over time

We wanted to understand the gaps in promotion to full better in our paper, “Fully Promoted: The Distribution and Determinants of Full Professorship in the Economics Profession (Kleemans and Thornton 2023). In that paper we first document trends in the number and distribution of female faculty at the rank of full across departments. We use data from Ph.D.-granting institutions from 1995 to 2000 and from non-Ph.D.-granting institutions from 2006 to 2020 that are collected by the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics and maintained at ICPSR. In using these data to compare institutions over time, it is important to note that the samples of institutions expanded over time, so we present a balanced panel for each of our two samples of schools.

We show that departments have a fairly consistent number of faculty over time, with an average of about 25 tenure track faculty among R1 schools and about nine faculty in liberal art schools, with a slight increase among liberal art schools of almost one additional person over the last two decades. Of course, there are year on year fluctuations in total faculty, but generally we have not seen big increases or decreases in department size over time.

Figure 4(a) and 4(b) shows the distribution of female full faculty at R1 and liberal arts schools over time. We graph the percent of full female faculty overall, the percent with any full female faculty, and the percent with two or more full female faculty, over the time.

We observe large differences across R1 and liberal arts schools in terms of the percent of full female
faculty. On average, only 14 percent of full faculty are women at R1 institutions in 2020, compared to 32 percent at liberal arts institutions in the same year.

While in 2005/2006, the percentage of departments with any full female were similar across R1 and liberal arts institutions (57 percent and 59 percent, respectively), the rate of increase in having a full female increased more sharply among R1 institutions, to 75 percent in 2020, compared to 64 percent among liberal arts institutions. This pattern is similar for the likelihood of having two or more full female faculty, where in 1995 and 2000, only 14 percent of R1 institutions had multiple full female faculty, growing to almost 50 percent of departments in 2020. In liberal arts schools, there were 14 percent of institutions in 2006 with multiple full female faculty, growing to just 28 percent in 2020. The more rapid relative growth at R1 schools is likely due to the fact that those institutions simply have more tenure-track positions overall.

Next, rather than showing the percentage of female full faculty, we present the total number of male and female faculty at each rank over time in Figures 5(a) and 5(b).

First, note the large gender gap in faculty at all ranks, with the largest difference at the level of full professor. Second, note that there are some slight changes over time, namely, increases in female faculty and decreases in men. At R1 institutions, across the two decades of the sample, the large gains are among full female faculty members (1.2 additional faculty), followed by female associates (0.7 additional faculty) and female assistants (0.7 additional faculty). The largest gains at liberal arts institutions are female assistant professors (0.5 additional faculty), followed by female full professors (0.4 additional faculty), with no changes in female associate professors.

Across both R1 and liberal arts schools, the largest declines in faculty lines are male full professors (1.6 fewer full male professors at R1 schools and 0.4 fewer full male professors at liberal arts schools) and declines in male associate professors (1.1 fewer associate male faculty at R1 schools and 0.1 fewer associate male faculty at liberal arts schools). In terms of assistant professors, there was no change in the number in male faculty at R1 schools and there was an increase in male assistant professors, by 0.4 additional faculty at liberal art schools.

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Predicting Promotion to Full Professorship

To understand more about the determinants of promotion to full, we combine survival analysis with data from the Academic Analytics Research Center, that consists of all tenured and tenure-track faculty members at 213 higher education institutions from 2011 to 2020. We divide this sample in a similar way to our previous analysis—148 institutions that are characterized as “very high research activity”, similar to our R1 institutions and 60 as “high research activity” by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (2000).

Our analysis follows Ginther and Kahn (2021) who study promotion to associate professor. We also follow their sample criteria by constructing a panel of faculty who (i) appear for at least three years in the data, (ii) were at the rank of associate professor between 2011 and 2020, and (iii) obtained a Ph.D. between 2000 and 2009, and iv) are employed in an economics department.

We estimate a Cox proportional hazard model, in which we predict the likelihood of becoming a full professor. We include a set of predictors including gender, year of Ph.D., indicators for working at a public institution, indicators for working at an institution characterized as “very high” or “high” research activity, and the inverse hyperbolic sine transformation of the annual number of cumulative publications and citations.

We find that without controls, in each year, women are 31 percent less likely to be promoted to a full professor. These results are broadly in line with Bedard et al. (2021) who use salary data from public institutions to study career progression, salary growth, and mobility.

Our estimated gender gap in promotion to full is smaller, at 18 percent, when controlling for working at a public institution, working at a very high research-intensive institution, Ph.D. year, and publications and citations. These rates are similar but a little larger than the gender gap in promotion to associate professor, found by Ginther and Kahn (2021)—they find coefficients at 19 percent without, and 15 percent, with controls, respectively.

The gender gap in promotion to full appears to be driven by very highly ranked research universities. After including our controls, there are no gender differences in promotion to full in less intensive research environments.

Future Research

We have come a long way over the past several decades, both in raising issues related to gender disparities through rigorous empirical work and in providing opportunities and support for women in the field of
economics. At the same time, there remain many departments without any senior women and women are significantly less likely to get promoted to full, even controlling for measures of productivity, especially in research active departments. Is it perhaps “easier” to support junior women, than more mid-career and senior women? This raises the question that as we support undergraduates and junior women, are we helping women to climb the academic ladder, only to have senior women fall off the cliff?

**Figure 5b. Total Number of Faculty by Faculty Rank, Liberal Arts Departments**

![Graph showing the total number of faculty by faculty rank for Liberal Arts Departments from 2006 to 2020. The graph displays the number of female and male faculty at different ranks (Assistant, Associate, Full) over the years. The data suggests a decrease in the number of female full professors and an increase in the number of male full professors.]
CSWEP has collected and disseminated data on the gender balance in the economics profession for more than 50 years. Women economists are underrepresented in academia and, although representation has increased over time, the rate of change is slow, especially at the senior professor ranks. Until recently, we have known very little about the status of women at the economics subfield level. Understanding this can help shed light on the mechanisms driving persistent gender imbalance in the profession. Chari and Goldsmith-Pinkham (2018) is one of the first papers to document the meaningful variation in gender composition that exists across subfields of economics. Using data from the NBER Summer Institute Program, they report that 21 percent of all authors were women during 2016-2018. Microeconomics had the highest share at 26.5%, while finance had the lowest share, at 14.6%. Thus, the average gender gap masks important heterogeneity in the status of women in the profession.

In our paper (Sherman and Tookes, 2022), we narrow the lens to focus on academic finance, where the gender imbalance is particularly large. We construct a database of finance faculty at the top-100 U.S. business schools over the 2009 to 2017 period and find that only 16.0% are women. Figure 6 illustrates the very slow changes in the composition of faculty during the sample period. In 2009, women account for 14.9% of the sample of finance faculty and, by 2017, that percentage rises to only 16.8% (the values in finance are lower than the 19.7% in 2009 and 23.1% in 2017 that CSWEP (2019) reports for economics as a whole). Representation among tenured faculty is growing at a faster rate, with women accounting for only 10% of tenured faculty in 2009, and 14.8% by 2017.

We examine the relationship between gender and a variety of career outcomes, including rank of institution, tenure status, exit from the profession, research productivity, and coauthorship. Important for this issue of the CSWEP newsletter, we also examine gender disparities in promotions to full professor.
Findings

Our analysis is primarily descriptive; however, the data point to at least three important forms of gender imbalance in academic finance.

1. Controlling for research productivity women hold positions at lower-ranked institutions, are less likely to have tenure than men, and are less likely to be full professors.

When we turn our attention to career trajectories of individual faculty members and examine career outcomes exactly X years post-Ph.D., the patterns suggest a glass ceiling effect. In the case of tenure, we only find evidence of a gender gap in tenure rates at six years post-Ph.D.; however, consistent with a glass ceiling effect, we find evidence of large gaps in promotion to full professor. Focusing only on progress in tenure rates can mask the more persistent disparities at later career stages.

2. Women publish 17.3% fewer papers than men, driven mainly by fewer low ranked and co-authored papers.

Here, it is important to point out that all our analyses of gender gaps in institution rank, tenure status, and full professor status, and salary control for the number of publications of each faculty member. Potential gender gaps in the quantity and composition of publications are of independent interest because successful publishing records are strongly associated with better career outcomes. Publication gaps have been well documented in economics and other broad fields (e.g., Bentley (2011), McPherson et al. (2013), Antecol, Bedard, and Stearns (2018), Ghosh and Liu (2020)), but our narrower focus on the finance subfield allows us to control for potentially important confounding factors.

Closer examination of the quantity gap in publications reveals that it is driven mainly by publications that are not in top journals, especially those that are coauthored. On average, we do not find a significant difference between men and women in the number of solo publications or top publications. The latter finding is consistent with no difference in the quality of papers written by women. If anything, using citations as a proxy for quality, we find evidence that the quality of papers written by women is higher than that for men.

This result is in line with Card et al. (2020) and Hengel and Moon (2020), which both report higher citations for articles written by women.

3. On average, women in finance tend to have fewer coauthors and fewer coauthors from within their own Ph.D. cohorts, but they have more coauthors who are women.

The finding that women tend to have smaller networks of successful collaborations is not particularly surprising, given that women tend to publish fewer papers. However, consistent with findings in economics as a whole (e.g., McDowell, Singell, and Stater (2006), Boschini and Sjogren (2007)), we also find that women in finance tend to have more coauthors (in number) who are women. This finding is in line with AFFECT (2018), which reports that if the first author on a published paper in finance is female, that paper is more likely to have another female coauthor. Given that only 16.0% of faculty are women during our sample period, these findings suggest that women in finance have smaller publication networks (perhaps even smaller than in economics as a whole, where the representation of women is larger). We also find that women have fewer coauthors from within their own Ph.D. cohorts, which may indicate a social networking constraint and could be relevant if coauthor seniority is considered in promotion cases.

The career outcomes that we document could be driven by factors already found to affect the status of women in other fields, such as child-rearing policies (Antecol, Bedard, and Stearns (2018)), time and family considerations (Goldin (2014), Ginther (2006), Ginther and Hayes, (1999)), discrimination and stereotypes (Nosek et al. (2009), Reuben, Sapienza and Zingales (2014), or psychological attributes such as risk tolerance and attitudes towards competition (Bertrand (2018)). We do not take a stand on the question, except through our analyses of potential network constraints.

The main goal of our paper is to present basic facts that might motivate additional work to uncover the factors that drive the differences that we observe in the data.

What’s Next? Trends in the Data

Our main findings might, at face value, suggest a poor outlook for women entering the profession. A closer look at year-by-year regressions reveals a more optimistic picture. When we examine relationships between gender and various measures of success within the population of finance faculty each year, the gender gap (i.e., imbalance that cannot be explained by differences in observable productivity or seniority) shrinks or even disappears during the last years of the sample.
In the last years of the sample, we find that research productivity (not gender) explains most of the variation in where a faculty member is employed, whether the faculty member has tenure and whether the faculty member exits the profession. For example, Figure 7 (below) shows point estimates and 95% confidence intervals around coefficients on the gender dummy in year-by-year regressions of the rank of institution on faculty gender, publication and citation history, tenure status and Ph.D. year. The last two years of the sample show very little difference in the rank of institution at which men and women are employed.

The dependent variable is Institution Rank, defined as the US News and World Report Business School ranking (lower values indicate higher rankings). The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals around the coefficients on the female dummy for each year (shown in red). The figure also plots the difference between the estimated coefficient on the female dummy in year t and the estimated coefficient in 2009 (shown in blue).

These changes are occurring at the same time as another slow-moving trend in the finance profession: more women are entering the profession and obtaining tenure. Of the finance faculty who have tenure over the entire 2009 to 2017 sample period, 9.7% are women. The corresponding percentages of women faculty who obtain tenure and are promoted to full professor, as shown in Figure 8 below.

The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the faculty member is a full professor. The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals around the coefficients on the female dummy for each year (shown in red). The figure also plots the difference between the estimated coefficient on the female dummy in year t and the estimated coefficient in 2009 (shown in blue).

Following the success of CSWEP’s mentoring program for junior faculty, the Academic Female Faculty Committee of the American Finance Association (AFFECT) recently launched its own early career mentoring initiative. Early feedback suggests that the program is having a positive impact; however, the continued shortage of women faculty at the full professor level raises the question of whether more resources should be devoted towards networking opportunities and support for women during the post-tenure years, as they navigate the pathway to full professor status. Our view is that an initiative targeting women in the years immediately following tenure would be a worthwhile experiment.

References

AFFECT, 2018, Publication patterns of women in the finance profession, Presentation, AFA, Philadelphia.


When I wrote “Fixing the Leaky Pipeline: Strategies for Making Economics Work for Women at Every Stage” for the *Journal of Economic Perspective’s* 2019 Symposium on Women in Economics, my goal was to give department chairs and other leaders a toolkit full of proven strategies for supporting women in economics. Looking both inside and outside of our field, I found good examples of successful interventions focused on students and early-career economists. But when I looked for interventions to support women at mid-career and beyond, I found next to nothing. It wasn’t merely that efforts to help mid-career women hadn’t been carefully evaluated; it was that they barely seemed to exist at all.

CSWEP’s mentoring breakfasts for Mid-Career women at the annual AEA meetings were a notable exception, but even that program was very “light-touch” compared to CSWEP’s other offerings.

The lack of support for mid- and late-career women is surprising and frustrating when one considers that for the last twenty years, the biggest leak in the academic pipeline has occurred between the associate and full professor stages. In 2023, women accounted for 27% of associate professors in departments with Ph.D. programs, but just 18% of full professors (CSWEP Annual Report, 2023). This gap is not simply a result of the fact that women are only now making it to the promotion-to-full stage—the percent of associate professors that are women has been over 20% for two decades. It is clear that women have been promoted to full professor more slowly and at lower rates—if they stay in academia at all.

I believe that the main reason so little has been done to support mid-career women is that there is a perception that these women have “made it” already, so they do not need support. Indeed, it is these very women who are so frequently called upon to serve as mentors and role models for others (including by CSWEP!). But might the numbers cited above be a consequence of the fact that the support structures intended to help women succeed are pulled away the moment they achieve some success? And furthermore, might the needs of mid-career women be different, as they face new challenges like added service requests or new caregiving responsibilities?

**CSWEP’s P2P Program**

Given the absence of proven strategies for supporting mid-career women, I recommended in my *JEP* article that those interested in developing new programming consider looking for things that we know work at other stages, and adapt them for the particular challenges of mid-career. When I became the Associate Chair and Director of Mentoring for CSWEP, I saw an opportunity to implement this approach. CSWEP’s flagship mentoring program, the CeMENT workshop for junior economists, has been shown to increase promotion rates and other measures of professional success. One of CeMENT’s core features is that each mentee is assigned to a group with two senior mentors, but also three or four other co-mentees. Many former participants report that the “peer-to-peer” mentoring they received from their group was extremely valuable (and this certainly matched my own experience as a CeMENT mentee). Along with the rest of our board, I wondered: could CSWEP help mid-career economists find that same network of support?

This is how CSWEP’s new Mid-Career Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Mentoring Program was born. Participants in the program form groups of four to six economists,
ideally with similar concerns, job characteristics, or career stages. The groups commit to meeting at least five times in a six-month period, for 60-90 minutes each time. Once launched, the groups are meant to be self-directing, with support from CSWEP provided in the form of topic modules containing assignments to help participants reflect ahead of group meetings, and topics for discussion.

Critically, because needs at this career stage vary widely CSWEP intentionally built the program to have a flexible curriculum. Groups can choose from modules on topics from “planning for promotion,” “productivity and time management,” and “managing service,” to “discernment” or “creating an impact with your work”. Each module has resources to help participants reflect ahead of group meetings, and topics for discussion. Alternatively, if the group members feel they would be better served by a book club format for a meeting or two, CSWEP created a list of relevant books like “The No Club” or “How to Write a Lot.”

When we launched our first cohort of P2P groups in the fall of 2023, I was hoping we would be able to recruit five to seven groups. But with minimal advertising through our liaison network and social media, we ended up with 28 groups and over 130 participants. The overwhelming response confirmed our prior that women at this stage were hungry for community and support.

We checked in with the participants at the midway point in December, and 70% said they are finding the program worthwhile and would recommend it to a colleague or friend. At this early stage, respondents seemed to most value the networking opportunities, saying “it provided much needed support since I don’t have an extensive network,” and “we have been a good source of support/listening for each other.” In general, participants expressed enthusiasm: “This is a great program! Keep going...we need this!”

CSWEP is planning to welcome a new cohort into the P2P program, likely in the fall/winter of 2024. We have learned a lot from this first group that we hope will make the experience even better going forward. One big surprise early on was that, while our intent was that participants would form their own groups, over 75% of registrants said they could not find a group and wanted CSWEP to help them form one. Yet again, it seems like a lack of a support network is a common issue at this stage! While we did our best to form cohesive groups, some of them found that their interests were not well-aligned, and a few groups never managed to meet at all. Going forward, we will be looking for ways to help people find the right peer group so they can make the most of their P2P experience.

Lessons for Leaders
Our hope is that P2P will be an important addition to the toolkit for attracting and retaining women and other under-represented groups in economics. We invite department chairs, managers, and other senior leaders to encourage women in their networks to participate in future P2P cohorts. Leaders could also check out and share the P2P resources, advocate for a similar program at their institution, or connect mid-career women they know to one another. Finally, we hope CSWEP’s process in creating the P2P program will inspire other efforts to serve women at this stage: look for evidence of what works, and then adapt it to meet the needs and constraints of mid-career women.

P2P resources: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1UWD7prDV-dZcR2ZoGZeBy7lohGPABNvY

Yet again, it seems like a lack of a support network is a common issue at this stage!
Summary

Call for Nominations

1. CSWEP Carolyn Shaw Bell Award. 
   Deadline: 20 September, 2024
2. CSWEP Elaine Bennett Research Prize. 
   Deadline: 20 September, 2024

Call for Applications

CeMENT Mentoring Workshops for Junior Faculty. 
Deadline: 15 August 2024

CSWEP Sessions at Upcoming Meetings


Links in this section:

Bell Award Information: https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/cswep/awards/bell

Bennett Prize Information: https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/cswep/awards/bennett

Call for Nominations: CSWEP Carolyn Shaw Bell Award

DEADLINE: 20 September 2024
The annual Carolyn Shaw Bell Award is given to an individual who has furthered the status of women in the economics profession, through example, achievements, increasing our understanding of how women can advance in the economics profession, or mentoring others. Nominations should include a nomination letter, updated CV, and three or more supporting letters, with preferably at least two letters from mentees. Nomination letters should be focused on examples of how the nominee has fulfilled the criterion of advancing the position of women in economics, rather than strictly on academic achievements.

A CSWEP-appointed committee reviews nominations and the prize will be awarded at the January 2025 ASSA-AEA Meetings in San Francisco, California. The Award Committee automatically retains and considers applications for a period of three years, and previous nominators are encouraged to update nomination packages if appropriate.

Nominations are due by September 20, 2024. Send nominations for this award to Kristine Etter, CSWEP Committee Coordinator, at info@cswep.org.

For more information and a list of past recipients of the Bell Award, visit THIS LINK.

Call for Nominations: CSWEP Elaine Bennett Research Prize

DEADLINE: 20 September 2024
The annual Elaine Bennett Research Prize supports, encourages, and recognizes outstanding contributions by young women in the economics profession. Nominees should be at the beginning of their career, normally within ten years of completing their dissertation and earning their Ph.D. However, adjustments will be made for nominees who have had childcare or medical leave. Nominees will have demonstrated exemplary research contributions in their field. Nominations should contain the candidate’s CV, relevant publications, a letter of nomination, and two supporting letters. The Bennett Prize is for fundamental intellectual contributions to economics. Correspondingly, the nomination letter should describe the candidate’s research and its significance, and supporting letters should come from experts in the field who are best able to speak to these contributions, regardless of departmental or agency affiliation. A CSWEP-appointed committee reviews nominations and the prize will be awarded at the January 2025 ASSA-AEA Meetings in San Francisco, California.

Nominations are due September 20, 2024. Send nominations for this award to Kristine Etter, CSWEP Committee Coordinator, at info@cswep.org.

For more information and a list of past recipients of the Bennett Prize, visit THIS LINK.

Call for Applications: CeMENT Mentoring Workshops for Junior Faculty

DEADLINE: 15 August 2024
Workshops for Junior Faculty: January 5–7, 2025, in San Francisco, California
CSWEP will host two CeMENT Workshops for junior faculty in North American institutions following the 2025 ASSA-AEA meetings in San Francisco: one for junior faculty in Ph.D. granting institutions and one for junior faculty in non-Ph.D. granting institutions. Each workshop mentors women and non-binary junior faculty in tenure-track positions in economics departments or at other institutions with similar research, teaching, and service expectations.

The workshops will consist of a two-day program, beginning late afternoon on January 5th and ending at 2 pm on Tuesday, January 7th. The AEA will pay for participants’ lodging and food during the workshop, but attendees must arrange their own transportation. Participants will be arranged into small groups and assigned to mentors based on their research area. Group members and mentors discuss and offer feedback on the participants’ research. In addition, the workshops include a number of larger how-to sessions on topics such as: publishing, managing service, effective and efficient teaching, developing a tenure case, and networking.

We are excited about the opportunity to continue CSWEP’s tradition of
mentoring female junior faculty. We hope you will apply and look forward to seeing you at one of our workshops. For more information and application details please visit: https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/cswep/programs/cement-mentoring-workshops

We look forward to seeing you there!

Anusha Chari, Chair American Economic Association Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession

CSWEP Sessions @ Western Economic Association 99th Annual Meeting

29 June–3 July 2024

Hyatt Regency
Seattle, Washington

Gender Inequalities and Health Outcomes
Session Chair: Manali Sovani, Tufts University
Organizer: Francisca Antman, University of Colorado

Too Hot to Handle: Impact of Heat Shocks on Gender-Disaggregated Time Allocation among Labor in Nigeria
Manali Sovani, Tufts University

Parental Nonstandard Work Schedules and Childcare Stress and Children’s Outcomes
Yuko Nozaki, Sugiyama Jogakuen University

The Impact of a Vape Ban on Cigarette Smoking and Life Expectancy
Kathleen Hui, University of Pennsylvania

Pharmacy Proximity and Period Poverty: Assessing the Impact of Subsidized Menstrual Product Availability on Menstrual Management
Ritika Sethi, Rice University

Discussants: Kulsoom Hisam, Clark University, Kathleen Hui, University of Pennsylvania, Ritika Sethi, Rice University, and Yuko Nozaki, Sugiyama Jogakuen University.

Gender, History, and the Macroeconomy
Session Chair: Jinyan Chang, Miami University
Organizer: Francisca Antman, University of Colorado

Unveiling Gender Disparities in Unemployment Dynamics: A Comparative VAR Analysis of the United States and Norway
Marion Mae Cedeno, University of Texas at San Antonio

Financial Markets and the Macroeconomy
Naowar Mohiuddin, University of Kansas

Were Breadwinners Male? Impact of Technological Advancement and Industrialization on Labor Market Gender Gaps in Antebellum America
Jinyan Chang, Miami University

The Impact of Gender Inequality on Corruption: Evidence from Politics and Labor Market
Mahmoud Salari, California State University, Dominguez Hills

Discussants: Naowar Mohiuddin, University of Kansas; Sarah Elsheikh, University of Texas at San Antonio; Mahmoud Salari, California State University; Dominguez Hills, and Jinyan Chang, Miami University.

Gender Differences in the Labor Market and Educational Settings
Session Chair: Shahina Amin, University of Northern Iowa
Organizer: Francisca Antman, University of Colorado

Determinants of Market Work of American Indian and Alaska Native Women
Shahina Amin, University of Northern Iowa

Impacts of Sandwich Caregiving on Labor Market Outcomes
Aida Farmand, University of California, Berkeley

Do Students and Parents Prefer Same-Gender Teachers? Evidence from an Online Tutor Platform
Ini Umosen, University of California, Berkeley

Strategy-proof, but Gender-proof?
Emine Tasci, Boston College

Discussants: Aida Farmand, University of California, Berkeley; Shahina Amin, University of Northern Iowa; Emine Tasci, Boston College; and Ini Umosen, University of California, Berkeley.

Gender and Development
Session Chair: Nayantara Biswas, Clark University
Organizer: Francisca Antman, University of Colorado

Breaking Barriers, Improving Access: Effect of Access to Delhi Metro on Women’s Lives
Manali Sovani, Tufts University

Can Community Health Workers Affect Reproductive Health Decisions? Evidence from India
Nayantara Biswas, Clark University

Empirical Insights into the Extensive Margin of Gender Disparities in Firm Ownership: A Comprehensive Analysis
Arwa Althobaiti, Southern Illinois University

Globalization and the Gender Wage Gap: Evidence from Vietnam
Ngan Tran, University of Oregon

Discussants: Nayantara Biswas, Clark University; Manali Sovani, Tufts University; Ngan Tran, University of Oregon; and Arwa Althobaiti, Southern Illinois University.

Join the CSWEP Liaison Network!

Are you interested in connecting with others to improve the status of women in the economics profession? Consider becoming a CSWEP liaison. We are searching for liaisons who are in academic departments (both economics departments and others), government, business, and non-profit organizations in the United States and around the world. CSWEP liaisons have three responsibilities. They are:

1: Distributing the CSWEP (electronic) newsletter four times a year to interested parties.
2: Forwarding periodic emails from CSWEP about mentoring activities, conference opportunities, etc.
3: For those in economics departments, making sure that the department answers the annual CSWEP survey. To see if your institution has a liaison, take a look at the list of over 300 amazing people at THIS LINK. (https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/cswep/participate/ liaison-network)

To indicate your willingness to serve, send an e-mail with your contact information to info@cswe.org.
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