

mobility, and high instability. They are kept there because of the "stagnation of the reservation econ- society was traditionally matrilineal, with extended property because of the "stagnation of the reservation econ- families the norm, Navajo women owned property because of the "stagnation of the reservation econ- and played an important role in family decisions. omy," discrimination, and their relatively low level But beginning in the 1930s, government policy dis- of educational attainment. A significant number do rupted this system by giving land only to males. not have a high school diploma (in 1990, more than one-third of all those over the age of 25, compared to one-fifth of white women).

As they could no longer make a sufficient living off reservation land, more Navajo men had to seek employment off the reservations. Nuclear families [CHICANA] WOMEN LATINA migrated, usually became dependent on male providers. With the men away much of their time, these women are often isolated and with husband and children, from Mexico to the United States during the 1916-1920 labor short- powerless. They often face divorce or desertion and United States during the 1916-1920 labor short- economic difficulties, because the community age created by World War I. They found work in the thus seeking work off the reservation. sprawling "factory farms" of the Southwest, har- frowns on women traditional Native American vesting fruits, vegetables, and cotton in the Impe- such disruption of the traditional Native American rial and San Joaquin valleys of California, the Salt society left Native American women in very grim River valley of Arizona, and the Rio Grande valley economic circumstances. But in recent decades, more of Texas. They also went to the Midwest, for instance and more of them have gotten jobs. Native American of Michigan and Minnesota, to harvest sugar beets, women's labor-force participation rate in 1970 was 35 to Such migrant workers typically were exploited, percent (compared to 43% for all women). This rate Such migrant workers typically were exploited, percent (compared to 43% for all women). This rate spending long, tedious, and physically demanding rose sharply to 55 percent by the early 1990s and is spending long, tedious, and physically demanding now within a few percentage points of the rate for all hours in the fields for very low pay; Some became women. too often this system "created debt peonage unable Like their African American counterparts over to pay the rent, tenants were unable to leave the land the past half century, Native American women have to pay the rent, tenants were permanently indebted to gradually moved out of low-skill farm and nonfarm and remained virtually permanently indebted to work and domestic jobs into clerical, sales, profes- their landlords." During the 1920s, with a shortage of European sional, technical, and other "white-collar" jobs. In immigration, new job opportunities opened up for sional, technical, and other "white-collar" jobs. In immigration, new job opportunities opened up for 1960, one in six working Native American women by Mexican Americans, and they began to migrate from 1960, one in six working Native American women by Mexican Americans, and they began to migrate from was employed as a domestic household worker; During rural, farm country to the urban, industrial centers, the early 1990s only one in a hundred was. During where they found work as domestics and factory the same period, the proportion of Native American workers. By 1930, one-third of working Chicanas women involved in agricultural work also went from workers. By 1930, one-third of working Chicanas women involved in Manufacturing work were domestics and a quarter employed in agriculture, [one in] ten to one in a white-collar work, re- ing; at the time, the share employed in agriculture, Wage was increasingly replaced by occupational struc forestry, and mining had fallen to 21 percent. It was fleeing the overall trends in the involved scales varied according to ethnicity, however. It was fleeing the overall trends in the involved scales varied according to ethnicity, however. It was ture; more specifically, while the percentage involved not uncommon to pay Chicana workers lower wages in factory work (much of it in textiles and traditional than "Anglo" (whites of European descent) women laun- crafts) fell from 18.1 to 14.2, the percentage doing the same job, whether as domestics, industries white-collar work soared from 28.9 to 61.3. Although for doing the same job, whether as domestics, industries white-collar jobs are classified as dresses, or workers in the Depression many of these white-collar jobs are of the West and Southwest. Then the shortage of jobs, "professional" (15.7% of all working Native Ameri- of the West and Southwest. Then the shortage of jobs, "professional" (15.7% of all working Native Ameri- of the West and Southwest. Then the shortage of jobs, can women) "managerial" (9.4%), two-thirds of years of the 1930s, with the general shortage of labor, Native American women are still concentrated in a backlash against Mexican American labor, Native American women are still concentrated in a backlash against Mexican American labor, the "secondary" sector of the labor market—which is and thousands of Mexicans were deported or pres- characterized by low wages: few or no benefits, low —sured to leave.