

The challenges to gender integration in the career fire services: a comparative case study of men in nursing.

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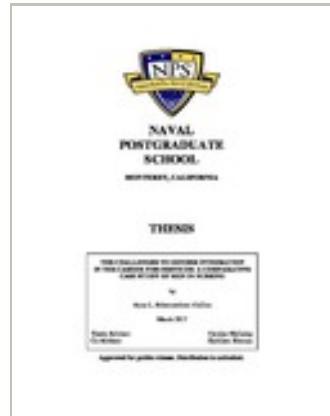
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Abstract

Many career fire departments in the United States are struggling to promote greater workplace diversity. In particular, the successful recruitment and retention of women in the fire service remains elusive. The challenges to gender integration are rooted in both organizational and societal constructs. This thesis explores the challenges to gender integration in career fire services by conducting a comparative case study of men in nursing. Research is based in academic and historical accounts, in addition to the use of participant-observation methodology. This thesis uses the subcategories of entitlement, belonging, pride, indoctrination, and tradition to analyze the challenges to gender integration in the workplace. It starts with an overview of fire service culture. This overview is followed by a detailed analysis of women in fire service and men in nursing. Finally, the thesis compares the elements within each subcategory to identify the impact of various impediments to promoting recruitment and retention in gendered workspaces. The thesis concludes that the successful integration of women into the fire services will remain a slow process based on societal and organizational impediments, including some factors irrelevant of gender.

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