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PATRIARCHY, CAPITALISM AND MARRIED WOMEN'S WORK: CONSTRAINTS, OPPORTUNITIES AND ATTITUDES.

A review of the debates and a study of women's employment in four occupations in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Philip Greasley, B.SC (Hons).

ABSTRACT

The relationship that women have with the labour market is marked in general by several characteristics which distinguish it from men's involvement in the labour force. That is, the majority of jobs women do, especially part time jobs, suffer from a combination of poor pay, bad conditions, few fringe benefits and little chance of promotion. Much of women's employment is dull, repetitive and boring and is largely in unskilled or semi-skilled work. In addition to this vertical concentration of women's employment, the majority of women are also horizontally concentrated into certain types of occupations or industries, for example, clerical and service occupations.

This thesis focusses particularly on married women's work. It aims to place the characteristics and features of married women's work within an historical context. This is attempted by tracing patterns and trends in married women's employment from pre-industrial Britain to the present. A theoretical perspective is developed which aims to explain these trends and patterns in relation to the dual influences of capitalism and patriarchy.

Arising from this discussion, an important focus for the thesis, and the focus for the field work, is to examine the way in which married women themselves react to their position at home and in the labour market. Thus, married women's attitudes, perceptions and reactions toward their home commitments and labour market participation are considered in relation to available opportunities and constraints. Opportunities and constraints which this thesis argues are largely the result of the interrelationship between capitalist and patriarchal interests.

The fieldwork for this thesis, referred to as the Newcastle Study, looks at four occupations (cleaning, clerical, catering and retail work) which are typical areas of married women's paid employment. The results are compared with those of other empirical studies and with other findings discussed within the rest of the thesis. The Newcastle Study illuminates many of the issues raised in the earlier review of the literature. Particular attention is paid to results which highlight the constraints which patriarchy and capitalism put upon married women's labour market opportunities, and the ways in which they affect married women's attitudes to paid and unpaid work.

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THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF M.PHIL 1991.



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## DECLARATION

None of the findings in this thesis have been submitted for a degree in this or any other university. At times, the research results presented in this thesis combine data from the "Urban Employment Study" with that of my own survey "the Newcastle Study". The results and analysis of the combined data are original.

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## INTRODUCTION

Nearly half of all married women in Britain are now employed at any one time and the majority of married women will now undertake paid work for at least some periods of their married lives. The majority of married women who do paid work, do so on a part time basis.

The relationship that women have with the labour market is marked in general by several characteristics which distinguish it from men's involvement in the labour force. That is, the majority of jobs women do, especially part time jobs, suffer from a combination of poor pay, bad conditions, few fringe benefits and little chance of promotion. Much of women's employment is dull, repetitive and boring and is largely in unskilled or semi-skilled work. In addition to this vertical concentration of women's employment, the majority of women are also horizontally concentrated into certain types of occupations or industries, for example clerical and service occupations.

Despite their labour market contribution, it appears that the majority of married women still have overall responsibility for housework and childrearing.

This thesis aims to place the characteristics and features of married women's work within an historical context. This is attempted by tracing patterns and trends in married women's employment from pre-industrial Britain to the present. A theoretical perspective is developed which aims to explain these trends and patterns in relation to the dual influence of capitalism



and patriarchy.

An important focus for the thesis, and the focus for the field work, is to examine the way in which married women themselves react to their position at home and in the labour market. Thus, married women's attitudes, perceptions and reactions toward their home commitments and labour market participation are considered in relation to available opportunities and constraints. Opportunities and constraints which this thesis argues are largely the result of the interrelationship between capitalist and patriarchal interests.

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 review literature to give a predominantly descriptive account of the history of married women's employment from the 18th Century to the 1980's. Within the account, I have attempted to highlight the importance of capitalist development and patriarchal organisation in influencing patterns and trends in married women's employment.

In Chapter 1 literature is reviewed to provide an account of married women's work in the 18th and 19th Centuries. The chapter starts by describing the different types of work performed by women in pre-industrial Britain. Their work is shown to be integral and essential to the patriarchal, home based, family economy in both rural and urban communities. Attention is given to sex roles and to areas of work from which women were excluded in pre-capitalist society.

Industrialisation, the advent of capitalism in agriculture and industry and the change to a wage based family economy are shown to have had serious consequences for women's work and status in the

late 18th and early 19th Centuries.

The second half of Chapter 1 describes the type of work available for married women in the 19th Century and assesses the number of married women who did paid work. Attention is given to the legislation and tactics which were used to limit women's paid employment opportunities. Particular emphasis is given to the way in which capitalism and patriarchy shape the patterns of married women's paid and unpaid work.

Chapter 2 discusses reasons why so few married women were in employment in the early part of the 20th Century. Discussion focuses on the long hours and exploitative conditions which those women who did paid work had to endure. The importance of women's work in the home is also highlighted. Trends in married women's employment are identified which continue to grow as the century progresses. Where possible, information is provided on married women's employment in the North East to provide a comparison with the rest of the country.

Chapter 3 traces the massive rise in married women's participation in the labour force from the Second World War to the 1980's. A major difference identified from married women's employment in the past is that most of this paid work is on a part time basis. Data from Newcastle upon Tyne show that similar trends occurred as in the rest of Britain.

Socio-economic factors which drew women into the labour force are discussed including the attitudes of the married women themselves. Longitudinal data are presented to show patterns and trends in

married women's employment from World War II to the 1980's. Features such as low pay, segregation and the part time basis of the work are discussed with reference to trade unions, legislation and women's life cycles. It is suggested that the features of married women's employment reflect a compromise between capitalist and patriarchal interests.

Chapters 4 and 5 review the literature which attempts to provide a theoretical basis for the understanding of married women's position in home and in the labour force. Chapter 4 reviews theories which have been put forward to provide an understanding of housework. Pivotal to discussion is the domestic labour debate. This is a debate where some authors have tried to place housework within the context of capitalist relations, while others place housework within the context of gender relations. The chapter concludes that the debate is important but does not provide a theoretical framework which can incorporate both women's position in the home and in the labour force. Thus, Chapter 5 turns to an examination of theories which attempt to explain women's position in the labour market. The aim of the chapter is to identify a theoretical framework within which it is possible to analyse women's position in home and paid work.

Chapter 5 starts with a critical review of the neo-classical approaches to women's waged labour and of dual labour market theories, including radical theories of segmentation. These theories are rejected on the grounds that the perspective is limited, not only for the analysis of married women's employment but also for the analysis of the labour market in general. The



chapter continues by contending that the most satisfactory framework for the analysis of women's position lies within the wide ambit of Marxist feminist theory. Various formulations of Marxist feminist theory are considered and reviewed. The chapter concludes that a framework which can be used to analyse women's home and labour market position is one which allows for the analysis of patriarchy and capitalism independently, but which can also take account of the interrelationship between the two.

Chapter 6 reviews empirical studies about women, especially married women, in employment and in the home. Particular attention is paid to the attitudes and reactions of the women in the studies to paid and unpaid work. The married women's attitudes are discussed in relation to their restricted opportunities in employment. These restrictions are discussed in the context of the constraints apparent in the material conditions of patriarchy and capitalism.

Chapter 7 gives a detailed description of my own research project which is referred to as the Newcastle Study. The Newcastle Study looks at four occupations which are typical areas of married women's employment. To do this 10 women were interviewed in each occupation. The questionnaire covered a broad spectrum of issues relevant to women and work including their present job features and home responsibilities. Many attitudinal questions were asked which aimed to tap the women's reactions toward their present jobs and perceptions of their opportunities in the labour market generally.

Chapter 8 summaries the results of the Newcastle study and discusses points arising from the results. The results are compared

with those of other empirical studies and with other findings discussed within the rest of the thesis. The chapter aims to show how the Newcastle Study illuminates many of the issues raised made in the earlier review of the literature. Particular attention is paid to results which highlight the constraints which patriarchy and capitalism put upon married women's labour market opportunities. Crucial to this discussion is the extent to which married women's attitudes to paid and unpaid work are affected by these constraints. Overall conclusions and suggestions for further research are made at the end of this chapter (1).

## WOMEN'S WORK IN 18th AND 19th CENTURY ENGLAND

The criteria we use for the definition of work are important when discussing women's work, especially before the Industrial Revolution. If work is to be thought of in terms of wage-earning only, the majority of men and women in pre-industrial Britain would be defined as not working. Tilly and Scott define work as "productive activity for household use or exchange" (1). This definition allows for pre-industrial work in the domestic economy to be compared with the wage labour of capitalism and industrial society.

Much of women's work in pre-industrial society has been ignored in past literature, partly because their activity was limited to the home and was assumed to be unproductive housework, but mainly because women have been largely excluded from working class history altogether.

Alexander says:

"Most historians define the working class de facto as working men ... Consequently women's contribution to production and as has been dismissed." (2)

To look at the effects of industrialisation on women's work, we must first look at women's work in pre-industrial times.

### Pre-industrial society and agriculture

Pre-industrial life centred around the family economy. Whether peasant or craftsman, rich or poor, urban or country, the family and production were inseparable. Thus Scott and Tilly remark "one

had to be married in order to live" (3).

The rural family organised their living and working around the farm.

The children of cottagers (4):

"At a very early age grew accustomed to the care of animals and helped in the dairy and garden, all of which was a considerable advantage to the farmer when the children in their turn went out to service." (5)

Every member of the family participated in production for and contributing to the household economy. The pre-industrial family was patriarchal in structure - each family member having their position with the father at the head. Sex roles also clearly existed, with males and females performing different tasks, for example, usually:

"Men worked in the fields, while women managed the house, raised and cared for animals, tended a garden and marketed surplus dairy products, poultry and vegetables." (6)

Although some work was considered too heavy for women, hauling and carrying were often considered to be women's work (7). The sexual division of labour between man and wife was not so much based upon the physical ardour of work but more upon proximity to the home. Women's labour on the farm was arranged to have flexible time arrangements and to be close enough to their home so that it could be satisfactorily combined with household chores and the care of children. Women would sometimes take on work other than farm work, in times of need, which could involve working away from the farm. At such times a woman's extra work could mean the difference between subsistence and near starvation. If the mother was forced to work away from the home, it would usually become the duty of a

daughter to take over household chores. Daughters were socialised early to take work and family responsibilities. If daughters were not needed within the family they would often be sent elsewhere to work as agricultural labourers or domestic servants. Others were apprenticed to women who taught them to weave or sew.

Women's work then, was an essential part of the domestic economy. The inclusion of household affairs within a woman's work also gave her a great deal of power inside the family. In management of household affairs, the woman was often the main buyer of goods and sometimes the main trader in the market place too. Tilly and Scott assert that this was the key to the woman's power in the household such that:

"although men had primacy in public roles women prevailed in the domestic sphere". (8)

#### The growth of capitalism in agriculture

By the 18th century changes were occurring in British agriculture with the growth of capitalist agriculture. The system where all people who lived in a village had a right to a house or land changed with the introduction of enclosures.

The system of enclosing land to increase production of farming produce took place as early as the 16th century on a small scale. In the 18th century the enclosure of land became more and more widespread as capitalist methods of production in agriculture grew. Enclosures were usually carried out by private bills prompted by land owners. Different districts were therefore covered by different bills which laid down dues to be paid, for example legal

and fencing dues . The consequence of enclosure bills was that land ownership was significantly reduced to those who could afford to pay the dues required. Small family supporting farms became less and less common. Land ownership was concentrated into the hands of a small class of large landlords by the mid 18th century. The enclosure system and concentration of land ownership led not only to loss of independence but also to decreased numbers of farmers needed in enclosures (9). Farmers who lost their own farms often became agricultural labourers, on large farms, working for a wage. Some turned to cottage industry, for example, weavers, hosiers and chain metal workers. Finding work sometimes involved the male labourer working away from the area in which he lived. Agricultural labourers were given very low wages and conditions were often very poor. Alexander says:

"Capitalist production developed within the interstices of the feudal mode of production, it emerged alongside of, but also in opposition to, small peasant agriculture and independent handicrafts". (10)

As in the small farm family economy, all members of the propertyless labourer's family had to work for the family unit to survive. As with the propertyless labourer, other members of the family also had to seek work away from the home on a wage paid basis. Thus the advance of capitalism in agriculture marks the growth of a family economy based on wage earnings and the decline of the domestic economy.

Women's work which added to the production of goods which could be exchanged for money or for other products tended to decrease in the early stages of the transition to capitalist agriculture because:

"The wives and daughters of farmers whose wealth was suddenly increased, sought a more leisured life and no longer concerned themselves with agricultural affairs ...The wives of tenant farmers and cottagers who were deprived of their land as a result of enclosures and engrossing, lost their opportunities of productive work they had in their own homes, and this, combined with the decline of some of the domestic industries, reduced them for the first time to a position of complete economic dependence upon their husbands." (11)

The loss of property caused a great deal of distress and unemployment to the wives of agricultural labourers who were earning below subsistence wages. From early times it had been usual for women to work outside of the home for parts of the year, and for short periods, in waged labour in agriculture, for example at harvest times. The late 18th century, however, saw the growth of women agricultural day labourers. Pinchbeck sees the reasons for their appearance as:

"The inadequacy of the male labourer's wage, the loss of by-industries, the new capitalist farming with its demand for cheap, irregular labour and lastly the French wars which withdrew many men from agricultural work." (12)

The diminishing possibilities of productive work for exchange in the home, and thus the growing necessities of mothers working outside the home, for example as agricultural labourers, increased the frequency with which daughters had to take over family responsibilities:

"The mother's two economic roles, as wage earner and as housewife, frequently conflicted, and when the demands of outside work had to be put first, her female children automatically took over the household duties, which involved not only the housework and cooking but also the tending and care of the younger members as well as nursing the sick members of the family. Thus to allow the mother to go out to work the elder female frequently had to relinquish the opportunity of going to school and stay at home." (13)

Pinchbeck maintains that women of Northumberland and Durham were probably employed more regularly in day labour in the late 18th century than any other district because of the 'bondage system'. This system required the male agricultural labourer to provide a woman labourer, the bondager, to work on a daily basis whenever she was required by the farmer. The bondager was usually a member of the labourer's family, perhaps a sister or daughter, but rarely his wife. The 19th century agricultural depression and lack of employment amongst women, however, forced some of the labourers' wives to become bondagers.

In the 19th century agricultural labour was often hired on a family basis. Kitteringham gives the example of the Kent hop fields where wives and children were expected to help with tying the beans and with the hop harvest. Again in the North East:

"The Newcastle Commission in 1861 noted an implicit understanding in hiring that the master should have a claim on the labourer's children when the work was needed." (14)

As frequently happened in the 18th century too, the family would often work as a unit at harvest time. One payment was usually made to the mother (and less often to the father) for the collective work of the family.

Towards the end of the 19th century men's wages began to rise and with the formation of the agricultural labourers union the material conditions of the labourer improved. As a consequence most women stopped working as day labourers in agriculture.



## Pre-Industrial Urban Life

Before the arrival of industry, England was not an urban country. According to Laslett, 74% of the population lived in 'Hamlets and Villages' (15). In 1688 the only city of any magnitude was London, where 10% of the population lived. Cities and towns were centres of consumer production and commerce. Specific jobs for males and females differed from city to city, and from town to town. As in the agricultural system, economic units were small, often overlapping with households. The scale of production was also small due to the limited capital, and because the quality and quantity of activity, commerce and manufacture were controlled by guilds or similar regulators. Urban life was more specialised than rural life, for example clothes were usually bought in shops rather than made by families, and the manufacture and trade of the city was usually geared to the demands of the local population. As in rural life the family wage economy was the centre of urban life. The craftsman, for example, often worked at home or in a small shop assisted by his family, apprentices, journeymen and servants. Laslett describes the family as follows:

"The man at the head of the group, the entrepreneur, the employer, or the manager, was then known as the master or head of the family. He was the father to some of its members and in place of father to the rest. There was no sharp distinction between his domestic and his economic functions. His wife was both his partner and his subordinate, a partner because she ran the family, took charge of the food and managed the women-servants, a subordinate because she was woman and wife, mother and in place of mother to the rest."  
(16)

Thus, as in agriculture, the family was strictly patriarchal in structure. Oldest sons often inherited their fathers' craft or

trade ensuring that property passed from male to male.

Wives of craftsmen usually assisted their husbands, and sometimes the craft was learnt by both husband and wife, however, the wife was always classed as the assistant. Married women were only allowed to join guilds if their husbands died, and if they didn't remarry. Under such circumstances women often carried on their husband's business. Scott and Tilly (17) point out that investment in long training for women may have been thought unwise because of the lost time, illness and mortality associated with childbirth. The exclusion of women was also a means of controlling the size of a craft. In certain trades women were only allowed to practice when labour was scarce. Guilds often officially excluded women from membership, but other mechanisms also ensured that women did not attain skills to perform crafts. Less formal mechanisms also ensured that women were excluded from crafts. Cynthia Cockburn describes some of the customs and rituals which took place in the printing trade, for example, customs which revolved around drinking and corporal punishment. Cockburn concludes:

"From such rituals it is clear that the exclusion of girls from apprenticeship, women from print, did not need to occur through closing a gate or through formal banning. It would have been an odd family that was willing to see a daughter enter so male oriented life." (18)

Some women did have trades of their own, however, and were protected against male competition. These trades were usually trades associated with production and distribution of food and clothing, for example seamstresses and dressmakers, and in the retail trade there were female brewers and bakers. Sheila

Rowbotham notes that these trades were related to the work women did in the household, because at the time domestic and industrial life was not mutually exclusive. Rowbotham points out that some words to describe certain women derive from this period. She says:

"Descriptions of these jobs have since become archaic or changed their meaning. 'Brewster' meant a female brewer, and spinster was not an old maid but a woman who supported herself by spinning." (19)

The majority of women, however, who worked independently were wives of unskilled labourers and journeymen. These women had no skills and became petty traders selling, for example, bits of cloth or food.

#### Industry under the domestic system

Before discussing women in the period of industrialisation mention should be given to the domestic textile industries of the main pre-industrial era. According to Pinchbeck (20) wool was the main industry in England until the first third of the 19th century. Cotton was only of minor importance until the end of the 18th century. Ure's description of the cotton weaver illustrates the importance of the whole family to these industries, (as in farming) and the importance of giving employment to other women in the neighbourhood.

"The workshop of the weaver was a rural cottage ...The cotton wool which was to form his weft was picked clean by the fingers of his younger children, and was carded and spun by the older ones assisted by his wife, and the yarn was woven by himself assisted by his sons. When he could not procure within his family a supply of yarn adequate to the demands of his looms, he had recourse to the spinsters of his neighbourhood. One good weaver could keep three active women at work upon the wheel spinning weft." (21)

When trade was conducted in the home the women's work tended to be the most varied. Large capitalist production of the home industries tended to give a division of labour which relegated women to certain tasks. Under capitalist organisation women's work was also reduced on the grounds that they were competing with men for the same jobs. The domestic system, however, lasted to some degree well into the 19th century and continued side by side with the factories.

### Industrialisation

We have seen that in pre-industrial society women were usually expected to work. Much of the pre-industrial women's work had 'use value' rather than 'exchange value' but was of no lesser importance because of this. Early industrialisation did not create dramatic changes in the types of job women did, but did alter the location of work and increased the number of women working for wages. For example, Scott and Tilly (22) show that when daughters started to work outside of the home the main areas of labour were domestic service, garment making, and textile manufacturing, all of which were traditional areas of women's work.

We have already seen that the growth of agricultural capitalism decreased the number of propertied people and as a consequence the 'family wage economy', as opposed to the home based domestic economy, became increasingly common. Industrialisation furthered the spread of the family wage economy as manufacturing moved outside of the home to the factory. Initially industrialisation did not break down the solidarity of the family as a unit. In the family wage economy each member still contributed to the household

budget. Even when daughters went to live and work away from home they would still send money to their families until they married. Traditional values did not last for ever, however, girls working for low wages long distances from home had to become more self-orientated. It became more important for a girl to marry younger so that resources could be pooled in hope of a better standard of living. As men's wages eventually began to increase the economic necessity for women to work outside of the home decreased.

### The wage based family economy and married women in industrial Britain

The wage based family economy meant that for many women their work increasingly was determined not by household needs but the household's need for money. Working outside the home led to a change in the allocation of a married woman's time, between her household and other productive activities. Women's productive work outside the home was inevitably less compatible than in the domestic economy where the two forms of work merged. The only way to resolve the conflict between productive work and home work was for married women not to work unless money was urgently needed.

When married women were forced to work because of economic hardship they often had to take low paying exploitative jobs,

"... Jobs were ... low paying, exploiting the usually desperate need that drove a married woman to seek employment and the fact that she had neither skill nor organisational support which might command higher wages." (23)

Industrialisation brought about a decrease in work opportunities for the more wealthy business-women, except in those trades run

mainly by women. Pinchbeck cites the reasons for this as being less necessity for the tradesman's wife to work, (and that to have a wife not working carried more social esteem) and partly because industrialisation with its new technology required new techniques and an increase in skill which the women could not just 'pick up' from their husbands as in the domestic system. New techniques required training which women were not allowed to undergo. It became increasingly difficult for women to set up in their own trades too, because of large scale business developments requiring greater capital.

In response to the decline in women's work opportunities, the Ladies Committee was founded in 1804. Their object was to promote the education and employment of working women. They said women were:

"Grievously and unjustly intruded upon by the other sex"

as a consequence they were,

"confined, most frequently to a few scanty and unproductive kinds of labour." (24)

This decline in women's work with industrialisation and growth of capitalism is important in relation to the sexual division of labour and status of married women. The confinement of women into the family left bourgeois man 'free' to accumulate capital, Rowbotham comments that,

"These changes in the organisation of work affected the household, the legal and social position of women and the dominant ideas in society about what was feminine."(25)

A new value was arising, then, that married women should not do

paid work. Interestingly, it was not a value that married women with children should not work but a value that married women simply should not work outside of the home. The emphasis then is on the idea that a man should support his wife rather than a concern for the welfare of children. Alexander sees capitalism as undermining women's position in the labour market,

"The intervention of capitalism into the sexual division of labour within the patriarchal family confirmed the economic subordination of the wife. By distinguishing between product for use and product for exchange and by progressively subordinating the former to the latter, by confining production for use to the private world of the home and female labour, and production for exchange increasingly to the workshop outside the home and male labour, capitalism ensured the economic dependence of women upon their husbands or fathers for a substantial part of their lives." (26)

Sylvia Walby argues that the exclusion of women from paid work should be seen as a "result of the intersection of patriarchal relations and capitalist relations". That is, the lack of employment possibilities for women should not be seen as the consequence of capitalism alone. She argues that...

"...married women were legally debarred from owning property or obtaining credit in their own right, since they were legally subsumed under their husband. Despite the rhetoric of individualism and free contract, married women were not even legal persons. This effectively precluded the possibility of female capitalists, the absence of which must be explained in terms of patriarchal relations." (27)

The proportions of married women who did do paid work in the 19th century is difficult to assess, first because not until 1901 did the census differentiate between single, married and widowed women workers and also because there are also very few statistics available other than the census. Secondly, much of women's work

could easily be overlooked in census classifications because of the nature of the work. For example Alexander notes that the 1851 census classifies 50% of women in London as having no occupation. (This includes single, married and widowed women.) Many of the married women workers are probably not recorded in this census. Alexander gives examples of the type of work which could easily be overlooked by the census: that is women helping their husbands in trades and crafts and for lower class women spasmodic, casual and irregular employment like washing, cleaning, charring and other sorts of home work. The other women not likely to be recorded in the census are, according to Alexander,

"the street traders, market workers, entertainers, scavengers, mudlarks; also those who earned a few pence here and there, looking after a neighbour's children, running errands, minding a crossing, sweeping the streets ... (and) prostitutes." (28)

Contemporary estimates given for the proportion of married women in paid employment often varied depending on whether or not the person responsible for the estimate was for or against married women working. Those opposed to married women working over-estimated to exaggerate the size of the problem, and vice versa for those in favour of married women's work.

Margaret Hewitt surveys the statistics and documentation that is available for the 19th century, for example, from parliamentary debates and small area statistics. Hewitt quotes the Lady Inspectorate, Miss Anderson, to show that the textile industry, especially cotton manufacture, employed the highest proportions of married women. The statistics available for the textile industry in



the 19th century indicate that between a quarter and a third of the women employees were married. The numbers of married women working in textiles appears to have peaked between 1871 and 1891, after which it began to decline. The 1901 census records that 24% of the women working in textiles were married. Hewitt also finds evidence to suggest that other industries, for example earthenware manufacture, also employed similar proportions of married women in some areas of the country (29).

We shall now go on to look at some of the types of work in which married women took part, and the differences which arose because of their dual roles as paid employee and housewife.

#### Factory workers in the textile industry

Trade unions were illegal between 1799 and 1824 (the Combinations Acts 1799). According to Rowbotham, however, women did begin to organise themselves in trade unions within this period. Two examples Rowbotham (30) gives are of the female Reform Society formed in Lancashire between 1818 and 1819, and that in a spinners' strike in 1818 women drew strike pay equally with the men because they were part of the same union. However, Rowbotham reports, because of having dual responsibility of employment and work at home women did not on the whole see themselves as wage earners on the same basis as men. Because many men also shared this view they resisted the entry of women into factories. Men saw women as competing with them for jobs and, instead of fighting with the women for better conditions in the factories, therefore resisted the entry of women into factories.

Until the mid 19th century the hours women worked in factories were often excessively long, for example, Hewitt (31) refers to an 1843 report by Mr Horner (factory inspector for the Manchester area) on a large Manchester mill where women were expected to work fifteen and a half hours per day. Pinchbeck (32) mentions evidence given before the Peel's Committee in 1815, which showed a thirteen and fourteen hour day was not unusual for either children or adults. The first regulation of hours came with the 1844 Factory Act (33) where women and children under eighteen years of age were limited to a twelve hour day. Night work was also prohibited. In 1847 the 'ten hour movement' won its battle for further reductions in hours, although this did not become effective, because of loopholes, until 1851.

Because of the long hours married women were away from home, daughters of seven, eight and nine years of age would be kept at home to clean the house, run errands and look after children. (The same system as we have already discussed for 19th century agricultural workers.) A large class of women also existed, according to Hewitt, who derived their maintenance from providing the wants of mill hands. There were, for example; tea women, cleaners, washerwomen, needlewomen, shoemakers and nurses. When factory operatives had to use the services of these women their high wages could be considerably reduced by the outlay of money to them. Hewitt cites Lord Ashley who estimated that twelve shillings out of an average of seventeen was often spent on the delegation of work (34). Ellen Barlee says of these service women,

"The most thriving business in these districts appears to be

that of nursing; as the children must be looked after, they are committed to a class of artificial mothers who make child nursing a trade." (35)

It was not uncommon for women to return to paid work as soon as possible after childbirth. The 1833 factory commission (36) stated of cotton operatives that some go back after nine or ten days, some stay at home for three weeks or a month, but the shorter period was the most common. Mothers usually preferred to leave infants in the care of an older person maybe a grandmother or elderly aunt. Hewitt takes a random sample from the 1851 census and concludes that this could only have been possible in one out of three cases. If a mother did not have a daughter or a young girl she could hire, then her only alternative was to take her child to women who acted as 'day nurses'.

Most 'nurses' had two or three and sometimes four babies to look after, even though most of the nurses were often women too old for ordinary employment. Terrible conditions existed and a great many babies died. Few of the female operatives could afford all their household responsibilities to be delegated to other women and thus their own free time was often spent on housework, Hewitt says,

"When family income was so low that the wife had to organise her home unaided, the life of the conscientious married operative was one of unceasing drudgery." (37)

### Slop work

Women in the Lancashire textile industries were not the only married women who worked for a wage. In Staffordshire married women worked in the potteries and we have already discussed agricultural married women workers. Women's work in London forms another type

of employment.

In London high cost of rents and fuel made the introduction of machinery and factories impracticable. Other techniques had to be found to compete with the provincial factories. The answer was found in the development of sweated outwork and slop-work. The slop trades produced ready made goods for retail and wholesale shops, warehouses and show-rooms in London. Slop trades were based along the same lines as the mechanised factories, that is, the division of labour which breaks down the skilled labour process in semi and unskilled work. Alexander remarks that the,

"Industrial history of London in the 19th century demonstrates the strength of Marx's dictum that the capitalist mode of production revolutionises the character of every manufacturing industry, whether or not modern industry is introduced." (38)

Slop work required and depended upon a large supply of cheap unskilled labour. Women and children were the basis of this labour force. Women and children were employed at below subsistence wages which worsened rather than improved as the process of undercutting took place, That is, to save on overheads, slop-traders sub-contracted to various small masters or mistresses who constantly tried to undercut each other in order to retain their business. According to Marylyn McDougall the sub-contractors worked their labourers sixteen, eighteen and sometimes twenty hours per day in their busy season and then laid them off or gave half-time work in slack periods. McDougall says,

"When this happened, the trade ceased to be considered 'honourable' and became 'sweated'. This occurred in hand-loom weaving and many trades, including tailoring and dressmaking, which became the notoriously sweated garment

industry." (39)

Changes in the law to regulate the sweated industries came even more slowly than the laws to regulate factory conditions. McDougall maintains,

"Prominent social reformers sponsored a Needlewomen's Benevolent Association. Royal commissions investigated sweated industries; parliamentarians introduced regulatory bills. None of these efforts succeeded until 1909, when legislation imposed a minimum wage on sweated industries."(40)

### Women in Victorian "Society" and work

The roles of women in the upper and middle classes contrasted sharply with those of the working class women. In the middle class home leisure became a mark of affluence, and thus the "idleness of women ... became a status symbol" (41). It was very important for the upper and middle class women to stay at home, according to Davidoff, because,

"The physical and social location of society activities had to be the private home no matter how small the scale might be." (42)

Men had to leave home for the armed services, church, politics and market place. Thus the custodianship of the home fell to the women in 'Society'. The only work considered in any way suitable for a 'gentlewoman' was work which was trivial, unremunerative, but above all in a private setting, outside of the labour market. This work tended to be in the personal service area, depending heavily upon friends as clients or customers. Davidoff gives examples of occupations which were listed in contemporary handbooks and

magazines as suitable for a gentlewoman:

"cleaning jewellery, dusting rare china and furniture, walking, clipping and washing dogs in the client's own home; possibly being a peripatetic lady cook. An article advises letting one's own town house during the season and taking a country house with garden near a railroad station. Then the lady might raise flowers and fruit, bring them up to town and do some table decoration for friends." (43)

If a woman or girl were faced with loss of income there was in fact no viable occupation which was considered suitable for her to take up.

As Rowbotham says the Victorian wife was "literally insulated from the source of her husband's property"(44). Rowbotham goes on to say:

"Although the circumstances of middle-class women improved with the growing power in society of their men, their relationship was one of increasing economic dependence. In this sense patriarchy was strengthened. The women were part of the man's belongings, their leisure the sign of his conspicuous consumption." (45)

Some women, however, began to find this situation unbearable. As early as the 1830s and 1840s some women had come to question their relationship to men and to society as a whole. However, although various groups tried to pressurise Parliament into passing bills to give certain rights to women, not until 1882 were women allowed to have independent ownership of property and only shortly before were they even allowed to keep their own earnings.

In other areas in which women were excluded, such as politics and education, the strategy to end exclusion was seen by reformers to be the extension of franchise to women, and according to Rowbotham the militant feminist movement arose out of this demand. In 1889

the Women's Franchise League was formed (and included Emmeline Pankhurst) which took up the rights of married women, hitherto largely ignored by the feminists who had concentrated on fighting for the vote for single women.

Towards the end of the 19th century middle class lifestyles began to decline in affluence. One of the consequences of this was that the middle class had to limit the number of domestic servants they had. In addition J A Banks notes that the wages for domestic servants rose by between 30 and 37% between 1871 and 1900. A solution to this problem was to use contraception and limit family size. Banks says,

"Once it had become established that birth control was not immoral, the fact of not being able to obtain domestic servants would itself become a salient factor in the fall in family size. If more children implied more domestic assistance, less domestic assistance implied either more domestic appliances or less children." (46)

The use of contraception marks the beginning of a different form of family which ultimately had consequences in relation to middle class women working and is the embryo of the contemporary nuclear family.

#### Controversy over women's work

Fierce controversy raged over married women's waged work in the Victorian period. Although it had always been expected for a woman to work, only when the centre of economic life moved away from the home did the married woman worker become a matter for concern or disapproval. This may have been partly because long hours were more easily overlooked in the cottage than, for example, in the

factory, but it was also closely linked to Victorian beliefs that women should stay in the home. Alexander says:

"The woman, as wife and mother, was the pivot of the family, and consequently the guardian of all Christian (and domestic) virtues. Women's waged work was discussed in so far as it harmonised with the home, the family and domestic virtue." (47)

Conditions of employment for women undoubtedly required investigation in the 19th century. It is the areas of investigation which took place, however, which show that the Victorians were only concerned with woman's work which went against their own ideals and beliefs about women. The Victorians did not expect a woman not to work. 'Work' says Alexander "was the sole corrective and just retribution for poverty" (48). Only work coinciding with a woman's 'natural sphere' was to be encouraged, however. For example Kitteringham notes that:

"The inconsistency of Victorian middle class attitudes toward female duties is illustrated by the notable absence of any commission inquiry into the working conditions and environment of their female servants. These servants carried out harsh and gruelling tasks, worked for long hours and were vulnerable to the whims and fancies of their employers; but such service was not thought degrading to the working class female; far from it, it taught her to be feminine, a most respectable girl." (49)

and again Alexander:

"There was not much to choose for example - if our criterion is to risk life or health between work in the mines, and work in the dressmaking trades. But no one suggested that sweated needlework should be prohibited to women." (50)

Many parliamentary debates concerned factory workers, with their long hours and unhealthy conditions. Measured in comparison with



other contemporary women's work, factory work could not actually be said to be worse than most other women's work. Pinchbeck maintains that when factory conditions were improved and the hours regulated, factory work was 'immeasurably superior' to the domestic system, she says:

"Women undoubtedly benefitted by the wider experience and more varied interest they gained by working together in a community." (51)

Walby gives extensive criticism to the ways in which the 19th century factory Acts have been defined as "protective legislation". She argues that the Factory Acts cannot be understood without a notion of patriarchy. She maintains that factory work was a potential source of power for women from which men could be relatively excluded. She says:

"Capitalists' preference for women workers (because their position under patriarchy enabled capitalism to exploit them more than men) threatened to undermine the basis of patriarchal power in the sexual division of labour. If women were to earn a wage and work long hours away from home, and men did not, then men would find their control over women significantly reduced. There emerged, then, a contradiction, rather than a fit, between patriarchal and capitalist structures" (52)

Although married women, also did often have difficulties in combining their household work with work outside of the home, the idea that work caused the breaking up of the home was exaggerated. Pinchbeck points out that:

"Not only factory workers, but all women of the working class were handicapped by ignorance and the lack of any proper system of instruction, and until some measure of training was placed within their reach, it was unreasonable to expect any raising of the general standard of skill or intelligent use of their resources." (53)

In discussing factory legislation in the 19th century it is not my intention to imply that reform was not necessary. It is important, however, to recognise that the reforms which succeeded were rooted in patriarchal interests. This is evidenced by the fact that other types of paid work which women were engaged in during the same period were not challenged in Parliament, particularly paid work defined as "women's work".

## THE EARLY 20th CENTURY AND WOMEN'S WORK

The coming of the 20th century brought with it not only the decline of some of the traditional industries in which women worked and the birth of new ones, but also the further decline in the numbers of married women in paid work. The value of the Victorian upper and middle classes, that married women should not do paid work, had become the value of the working class as men's wages rose and women's work became less of a necessity. Theresa McBride maintains that,

"... the most significant change in women's work to emerge from industrialisation was the notion that women should retire from work when they married. This idea arose partially from the assumption that the male wage alone should be sufficient to support a family. But it also reflected a kind of resolution of the conflict introduced by industrialisation between the married women's two roles since, in effect, it reduced her to a single primary role."  
(1)

It was not simply women who had child responsibilities who were expected not to do paid work but married women in general. It was important for status reasons for a man to be able to support his wife, whether with children or without:

"It was taken for granted that married women would not work unless there were special reasons such as the husband's illness or unemployment. It was clearly an extremely important symbol for men that their wives should not work. Women themselves did not usually want to work." (2)

Before looking at the position of married women in the early twentieth century we shall look briefly at the state of women's employment generally in this period.

Patterns and trends

At the very beginning of the 20th century new trends can be detected in women's work which continued to grow as the century continues. Hutchins (3) assesses the changes in the occupational distribution of employed women between 1881 and 1901. Her summary of the gains and losses in relative terms is shown in table 2.1 (4).

Table 2.1 Relative gains and losses

	percent		percent
Government, professional, commercial	+ 3.3	Service	- 4.4
Conveyance	+ 0.1	Agricultural	- 0.5
Metals and precious metals	+ 0.5	Mines	- 0.1
Bricks, chemicals, skins, paper	+ 1.5	Textiles	- 2.0
Food	+ 3.3	Dress	- 1.1
	<u>8.7</u>	Unspecified	- 0.6
	+ 8.7		<u>- 8.7</u>

Hutchins remarks:

"On the whole the changes shown by this table are relatively inconsiderable, and women once again appear as the conservative element in society." (5)

These inconsiderable changes, however, show the beginnings of trends which shape the pattern of 20th century employment for women. By the 20th century the traditional areas in which women

had been employed were declining. Agriculture had largely disappeared as a source of full time work for women, although on smaller family farms it was still common to find the wives and daughters of farmers helping with the day to day running of the farm. Seasonal work in agriculture still provided employment for women, for example, hop or fruit picking. The textile industries declined in importance as heavy engineering grew. The proportion of the labour involved in textiles decreased from 13.5% in 1851 to 8.2% in 1911, and of the female labour 22% were involved in textiles in 1851 compared with 16% in 1911 (6). The garment making industry declined along with textiles. The largest single employer of women, domestic service, also declined in the 20th century although over a longer period of time and later than the decline of agriculture and textiles. Domestic service remained a major source of female employment until after the First World War. In 1901, 42% of the female labour force was involved in domestic service according to Tilly and Scott (7) compared with a lower, although still considerable, 30% in 1930.

The shift from textiles to the heavy engineering industries led to relatively higher wages for men but fewer jobs for women. Women's employment opportunities were not decreasing, however, because the tertiary sector; service, administrative and professional jobs, was expanding at the same time and offered many opportunities for women to be employed especially in white collar jobs. The white collar jobs in the tertiary sector were filled with women because:

"High wages in industrial employment drew male workers, as did jobs as supervisors and administrators. Confronted with a shortage of men and large demand for white-collar workers,

employers began to recruit women. As a result the twentieth century saw a "migration" of women from industrial and domestic production into "modern" white-collar employment." (8)

The transition to white collar work for women did not necessarily mean that conditions and wages were also improved. Branca maintains that some of the women involved in retail work had to work up to ninety hours per week with no formal meal breaks. Although other areas of white collar work did not demand such long hours as shop work, wages were often low and few jobs offered any possibility of advancement. Clerical work, for example, had once been a position which could lead to worthwhile promotion in the 19th century but had become a job requiring low skill and little chance of promotion by the 20th century, hence explaining the undesirability of the job for men and the 446% increase of female clerks from 1861 to 1911 (9).

Walby presents evidence to show that male clerks gave considerable resistance to the entry of women into clerical work. Male clerks argued, for example, that the entry of women would depress pay and the status of clerical work (10). Walby argues that job segregation between male and female clerical workers in this period can be seen as:

"a negotiated outcome of a three way struggle between male clerks, employers and women." (11)

That is, by segregating cheap female labour into new occupational sub-groups, employers allayed fears of substitution in the established sectors of male dominated clerical work.

The expansion of white collar work although serving as replacement jobs for many women no longer able to find work in traditional areas of women's employment, and causing no overall expansion in the female labour force, did bring a new group into the labour force, that is women from the middle classes. According to Creighton:

"... the lower middle classes sought employment in the retail trades, nursing, and clerical grades in commerce and the public service. It was still quite usual for middle-class and upper-class women not to work, although an increasing number were entering the teaching profession, and a few pioneers were fighting their way into the traditional professions and the middle grades of the public service."  
(12)

The expansion of the tertiary sector then, provided jobs for many women; however, many of the jobs in the early 20th century were subject to the marriage bar. Many firms, including the public sector, would only employ single women who were forced to leave if they got married. In addition many occupations were still forbidden to women; thus says Creighton:

"The common feature of virtually all women's employment was that it remained unskilled, badly paid, and terminated on marriage or the birth of a first child." (13)

Taylor argues that women were forbidden to work in certain trades to deliberately keep women's work in a 'depressed condition', she explains:

"The attitude that women lacked the status for responsible positions, and the continual pressure for women to be employed in the most menial tasks, relates to the image of a patriarchal society in which women should not take up paid employment outside the home." (14)

Because females were only expected to do paid work after school and before marriage, Taylor asserts, their wage earning could be believed to be temporary and unimportant, therefore having no need to be sufficient for subsistence (15).

### Legislation

There was little change in the protective legislation for women in the early 20th century. Creighton (16) found that the only significant change in the early 20th century was concerning an amendment to the 1878 Factories and Workshops Act, concerning shift working and exemption procedures. This allowed for work done for government to be exempted from the 1878 Act in times of 'public emergency'. This provision was used extensively in the First World War to allow women to work increased overtime and shifts (17). Also during the First World War trade unions agreed to relaxations in craft restrictions, on the assurance that they would be reinstated at the end of the war. This gave women the chance, for a limited time, to undertake many occupations previously disallowed to them, for example in engineering and transport industries. Although most of the restrictions were reinstated after the war, Creighton maintains circumstances could never be quite the same again because:

"The inescapable fact remained that women had for a period of years done work that had formerly been regarded as unsuited to their sex. What is more they had frequently done so with conspicuous success, notwithstanding some early troubles. This in itself was an important long term gain." (18).

Sheila Rowbotham argues that the conditions of the First World War made significant changes in women's attitudes to work, she says:



"Young women ... from the upper middle classes came to assume that they had a right to work. Working-class women who experienced their capacity to do a man's job began to question female subordination." (19)

Rowbotham notes that the number of women in trade unions went up during the war and this meant that for the first time, outside of the textile industry, women workers became organised on a continuous basis.

The turn of the century, then, saw changes in the type of work in which women were employed forming a pattern which can still be recognised in contemporary women's work. Peculiar to the early 20th century, however, (and late 19th century) are the low levels of participation of married women in the labour force. According to Tilly and Scott (20) in 1911 only 9.6% of married women worked compared with 68.3% of single women. Before discussing the reasons for this we shall look briefly at the types of work in which those married women who were employed took part.

#### Married women's work

In the North West of England the textile industry was still an important source of married women's work in the early 20th century. Tilly and Scott maintain that in cities such as Stockport married women still worked in the mill when they had young children:

"Indeed in these cities the Child Labour and Education Acts passed after the 1870 s resulted in an overall increase in the numbers of married women at work." (21)

The increase, they argue was due to more single women being attracted by openings in white collar work, and therefore leaving

more jobs for married women in factories. Hutchins noted in 1901, however, that fewer women in Lancashire between 20 and 25 years of age were married than in the rest of England and Wales, but that once they did marry the majority left work. The number of married women working in textiles was indeed less than the numbers working there in the 19th century but Hutchins' statistics (22) show that 24.1% of the total females occupied in textiles were married, or widowed.

The numbers of married women in domestic service also rose at the end of the 19th century. Domestic service became increasingly unpopular with girls and the lack of supply of girls drove wage rates up for domestic servants. As a consequence many of the middle classes could no longer afford servants 'living in' and hence many changed to having women who could do domestic duties on a daily basis. Banks shows that census tables reflect this change:

"... from 1881 to 1911, the census tables show an increase in the number of charwomen of 3.3 per cent for 1881-91, 6.7 per cent for 1891-1901, and 12.7 per cent for 1901-11. Part of this increase, it is true, can be explained in terms of the expansion of commercial offices requiring cleaning during this period, but part also represents the increased demand for cleaners on the part of those middle-class households which were unable to get full-time labour." (23)

Overall there was a noticeable decrease in married women's participation in the labour force. The 1901 census shows only 22% of female labour to be married or widowed (24). The women who did work, worked because their families needed their wages. Tilly and Scott assert:

"In all cities with diverse occupational structure, the wives of the poorest, and widows, were the bulk of full-time

workers, whether employed in domestic service or away from home (usually casual labourers). Where the family fund depended on a woman's wage, she worked at what jobs she could find. This kind of family wage was most prevalent among the poorest families." (25)

Much of the work married women did was home work for example, sewing garments or trimming hats in the home. Most of the work involved long hours for very little money reflecting the desperate need the women had to take such work. Taylor, for example, describes the Nottingham lace-making industry, she says:

"The large proportion of women employed in the lace industry were outworkers, those employed in factories only accounted for one third of the total number of females employed. Such women could be employed at any time of demand and laid off when required, at no cost to the employer. Those women working long and gruelling hours in their own homes, for pitiful amounts, have been ignored by historians because of the lack of information, and ignored by contemporaries because their exploitation was considered irrelevant." (26)

Taylor argues that the increase in outwork correlates with the decrease in married women working in factories in the early 20th century (27). As opportunities for factory work declined the sweated industries, described in the last chapter, became a major source of employment for women needing full time employment. Robert Roberts (1971) notes that the 1906 Board of Trade figures show that half of the employed women in Britain earned less than 10s a week for seldom less than fifty-four hours. In addition, he describes the sweated industries exhibition organised by the Daily News in 1907. The exhibition he says:

"... shocked at least the more sensitive visitors into realising the conditions in which so many of the poor were living. Women, they learned, worked fourteen hours a day, made artificial violets and geraniums for 7d a gross, buttercups for 3d and roses for 1s 3d a gross. They put 384

hooks on cards for one penny and spent eighteen hours at it to earn 5s a week. Matchbox makers got a similar sum. In sweated sewing shops machinists made pinafores and babies bonnets for 2s a dozen and ran up a gross of ties to earn 5s. Shirt manufacture brought them less than a penny an hour. These were but a few examples in a massive chronicle of brutal exploitation." (28)

There may have been many part time jobs performed by married women which are not enumerated in census returns. Elizabeth Roberts (1977) in her study of working class women in the North West (concentrating on 1890 to 1914) found that nearly 50% of the mothers of her respondents had part-time jobs. She found that:

"there was a great variety of jobs undertaken for a very variable number of hours per week - thus it is not possible to quantify meaningfully the financial contribution of these casual women workers. But as one respondent remarked when describing her mother baby minding at 1s 6d per week, '1s 6d could feed a family then for 2 days'." (29)

Other ways married women found to earn a small income were to become cleaners, cooks, housekeepers or doing washing and sewing; some would keep pigs. Some families had lodgers although this was usually not in the smaller houses. Women sometimes opened shops on their own account in their front parlours and sold pies, ham and so forth (shops were usually run between man and wife, however). Some women did various combinations of jobs, but Elizabeth Roberts stresses that:

"Part-time work was an acceptable activity; full-time work was not." (30)

Full time paid work by married women was a sign of need in their household, those who did full time work were dependent upon being employed, had little control over their work, and had little

bargaining power. Tilly and Scott remark:

"It is no wonder, then, that working-class culture adopted the image of the married women at home as the sign of the health, stability, and prosperity of a household. The expression of the ideal was less of a result of embourgeoisment of the working class than it was a statement about the realities of working class experience." (31)

#### Reasons for the decline in married women's employment

We have already seen that traditional areas of married women's paid employment were contracting by the 20th century and that opportunities for women in white collar work were largely restricted to single women. The decline in opportunities for married women often meant that the only jobs open to them had long hours, were low-paying, and exploitative. Thus the cost of working full time became much higher in many cases and the benefit only equal to that cost in times of desperate need.

Changes were also occurring in the early 20th century family which made staying at home more of a rational choice than it had done in the past. Between 1880 and 1914 prices fell while men's wages stayed relatively constant. The increased standard of living encouraged improved diets, health and life span of the working class; thus say Tilly and Scott:

"The decline of incidences of illness and death of a husband thus drove fewer married women into the labour force. In the course of her lifetime, a wife faced fewer emergencies which compelled her to become the family breadwinner." (32)

The size of families declined in the 20th century. Between 1900-1909, 33% of married women had small families - with one or two children, between 1920 and 1929, 46% had small families. Hall sees

this as part of the emergence of a "new ideal of the family" (33). Smaller families cost less to bring up, and thus gave less need for women to earn wages. Having fewer children meant that a woman spent less of her time in pregnancy and childbirth. Hall argues that the extra time a woman had was filled by new ideals of close family life. Motherhood was stressed in magazines for example, and the influence of Freud encouraged child-care along with the rise of state help in child rearing. Hall says:

"Thus, without altering the social and economic subordination of women, patriarchal ideology successfully adapted itself to the new small family. The concept of motherhood had been expanded to fill the space." (34)

In this period, when children started working they tended to live at home for a longer period than in the past. The income children contributed to the family budget again reduced the necessity of the paid working mother and at the same time increased household chores. With emphasis upon care of home and children for women, men increasingly became the sole wage earner. Married women often did not wish to work. Hall comments:

"Women themselves did not usually want to work. In their own homes they could establish their own work pattern and routines and they might have leisure for family and social life." (35)

During the First World War many women became economically active because of war time necessity. Creighton notes that after the war the majority of women "simply returned not unwillingly to the ranks of the economically inactive" (36). In Roberts' (1977) study, a respondent who is asked if she was bothered because she lost her job when the First World War ended explains:

"No, well I knew I was engaged to be married and you see in those days as soon as you were going to be married you left a job, you knew you were going to be sort of housekeeper and be at home all the time you see. That's the only thing we girls had to look forward to, if you understand, getting married and sort of being on our own, and getting our bottom drawer together and various things like that. Yes, that was the ambition of girls then." (37).

Apart from those women who worked because of desperate need, the temporary and part time paid work which married women sometimes performed would often be used for luxuries, or for example, saving for their children's education.

Household chores, as had always been the case in the past, filled long hours for married women with children, the increased emphasis on child-care and home responsibilities ensured that there was no lack of work for women to do in the house, thus says Roberts (1977):

"... the working class wife was an economic necessity to her husband she was indispensable. If she did not do the housework, he could not afford to pay anyone else to do it. Indeed if a wife died, it was a lucky man who escaped breaking up his home and seeing his children in the workhouse." (38).

In Roberts' (1971) account of growing up in the slums of Salford, he recalls how women fought an endless battle to keep their houses clean despite the environment in which they lived. He says:

"Women wore their lives away washing clothes in heavy iron-hooped tubs, scrubbing wood and stone, polishing furniture and fire-irons. There were housewives who finally lost interest in anything save dirt remaining. Almost every working hour of the week they devoted to cleaning and re-cleaning the same object." (39)

Because of the long hours involved in housework working class women

became almost literally confined to their houses and to the immediate vicinity, Roberts remarks:

"... the confinement of daily life was a subject for bitter complaint. Some did manage an occasional visit to the cemetery, or an hour in a balding park on the edge of village, but many were denied even this." (40)

Roberts (1977) argues that the division of labour between husband, as wage earner, and wife, as home organiser, did not necessarily mean the subordination of the wife. She says:

"The theme which emerges is one of partnership between husband and wife, and one of different but equal roles. The man was the principal earner of the family's income, but the woman was the family's financial manager." (41)

As financial manager of the family the woman took charge of the earnings of all the working members of the family, often including the husband's. Roberts' study showed that:

"In the great majority of cases the husband was only allowed financial control over a small pittance with which to buy his beer and tobacco." (42)

Roberts maintains that the mother was also the upholder of morals in many families regulating the behaviour of her husband as well as her children.

Although Roberts' discussion is useful for showing that women may have been given equal respect within the family, it is important not to obscure the economic reality for women. That is, married women who did not work for a wage were totally dependent on their husbands to support them. Even if the wife was given control of finance in some families, it could only be a result of the



husband's permission to do so.

Roberts (1971) notes that women were burdened with endless work in the home with little help from male members of the family, he says:

"Men in the lower working class, aping their social betters displayed virility by never performing any task in or about the home which was considered by tradition to be women's work. Some wives encouraged their partners in this and proudly boasted that they would never allow the 'man of the house' to do a hand's turn. Derisive names like 'mop rag' and 'diddy man' were used for those who did help". (43)

Roberts adds that kinder husbands did help especially at times when the woman was ill, pregnant or just plain exhausted. But even this help was often not admitted to outside of the family.

#### Women in the North East of England

Because the fieldwork of this thesis involves studying employed married women in Newcastle upon Tyne, I shall now focus briefly on married women in the North East of England in the early 20th century.

The women in the North East of England in the early 20th century exemplify much of what has already been written about women so far in this chapter. Employment for married women in England existed on a very small scale at this time as we have already discussed; in the North East of England the scale was even smaller. Henry Mess (44) quotes the following figures from the 1921 Census to show how few married women were in paid employment in Tyneside in comparison with the rest of England and Wales.

Table 2.2 Percentages of married women in employment

	Married women	Unmarried women (including widows and divorced persons)	All women (aged 14 and over)
Newcastle	5.2	56.6	31
Tynemouth	4.6	49.6	26
Gateshead	3.9	52.0	26
South Shields	3.4	43.4	21
England and Wales	9.1	58.9	34

The reason why so few married women worked in the North East was largely because of the nature of the industries which dominated the region. If we look at the type of work in which women were working in Tyneside at the time of the 1921 census we find that out of 76,000 women recorded as occupied, 17,000 of these women worked as indoor domestic servants, 10,000 were personal service workers (for example barmaids and laundrywomen), 9,000 were clerks and typists, 11,000 worked as shop assistants or saleswomen, over 6,000 were in some way engaged with clothing (dressmaking and tailoresses) and approximately 5,000 were professional workers (45). The aforementioned occupations account for approximately three quarters of the women in paid employment. The majority of these occupations were for single women either because the firms operated a marriage bar or because women were required to live in, for example as with much of the domestic work. Mess pointed out that, in Tyneside:

"The outstanding feature in the area is the absence of any considerable industrial occupation for women." (46)

Similarly, writing about Middlesbrough in Teesside, Lady Bell says:

"There are not, as in most manufacturing towns, large factories; there is therefore no organised women's labour. The women have no independent existence of their own. They mostly marry very young; the conditions of the town point to their doing so." (47)

The lack of industrial occupations for women reflects the fact that Tyneside industry was at this time largely heavy engineering (including shipbuilding) and mining. Married women had little choice but to be housewives, not only because of lack of occupational opportunity but also because of the unlimited amount of work that being the wife of a miner or heavy engineering worker involved.

In a local history of Wallsend compiled by J R Devon, a miner (who is also the son of a miner), comments:

"If a man came home after his eight-hour shift was up that was his finish, but a woman kept working till the very last minute. But the women were happy, when they married into the life of a miner, they knew what they were letting themselves in for. They accepted it and they carried it out ... my life was easy compared to my mother's." (48)

Women's work pattern in the home and in industry continued to be largely the same from the turn of the century to the late 1930s with a few minor changes. Long periods of economic recession caused many married women to supplement the family budget in the interwar years. For example, more married women, even from the middle classes, entered white collar work in the 1920s and 1930s when economic uncertainties caused more women to work. After the First World War some women were forced to work because their

husbands were killed or disabled during the war.

Major changes did not occur in the work patterns of married women until the Second World War, which although it did not necessarily cause the changes in women's work, can be taken as a useful divider.

## CHANGING PATTERNS OF EMPLOYMENT POST WORLD WAR II

This chapter looks at the patterns and trends in married women's employment from the Second World War to the present. We look at the the entry of large numbers of married women to the labour force on a formal basis during and after the Second World War and how numbers have multiplied to a point where nearly half of the married women in Britain now work.

Crucial to the discussion of trends and patterns in married women's employment is an examination of the way in which women are segregated both vertically and horizontally into certain sectors of the labour market.

### After World War II

The most outstanding feature of women's employment after the Second World War is the massive increase, starting in the 1950s, of married women's employment. Table 3.1 shows that, overall, the number of single woman in employment has decreased by 8.54% from 1911 to 1981. Notably increases do occur within the age groups 25-34 (12.12%), 35-44 (16.31%) and 45-54 (22.85%). These increases occur steadily through the decades 1911 to 1966 and largely reflect the continuing expansion of white collar work which started at the turn of the century.

The increase in married women's employment after World War II is far more remarkable than that of single women. From Table 3.1 we see that in 1911 only a minority of married women were recorded as being in paid employment (9.63%). Twenty years later (1931) the

proportion is still only 10.04%. By 1951, however, the proportion has more than doubled to 21.74% and nearly doubled again in 1971 to 42.03%. Numbers continue to rise in the 1970s to the point where in 1981 47.19% married are recorded as being in paid employment (1).

The majority of this increase in women's paid employment is accounted for by part time employment. Thus trends and characteristics of part time work are therefore central to our discussion of married women's participation in the labour force in the post-war period.

#### Married women and employment post-World War II

We have already mentioned in the last chapter that many married women did do paid work that was not recorded in census returns. The type of work not recorded would be work performed on an informal basis, often done in or around the home and integrated with housework, for example, taking in other people's washing for a small fee. Married women's paid work in the post-war period becomes more visible as it is taken into the formal labour market. Immediately, then, our focus is lifted from why married women "suddenly" start to engage in wage labour, (as census returns imply) to concentrate on the circumstances that allow married women to enter formal employment outside of the home environment.

Married women's employment would not have been able to increase at the rate that it did if employers did not have a demand for labour and if the employers had not been willing (or forced by circumstances discussed later) to change working hours to

Table 3.1 Female participation rates by age and marital status - Great Britain 1911-1981 (percentages)

Marital status	Year	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 and over	All ages 14 or 15 and over
Single	1911	73.05	73.59	65.61	58.53	34.48	69.32
	1921	70.65	76.23	67.62	59.72	36.63	68.14
	1931	75.73	80.41	72.37	63.90	36.38	71.62
	1951	84.60	86.87	80.97	74.77	29.69	73.07
	1961	77.64	89.50	84.92	81.61	32.14	69.61
	1966	73.59	88.64	85.52	82.23	29.78	66.15
	1971	65.62	85.84	85.04	82.39	24.39	59.68
	1981	66.70	85.71	81.92	81.38	16.38	60.78
Married	1911	12.00	9.92	9.93	9.92	7.20	9.63
	1921	12.70	9.37	8.86	8.40	6.29	8.69
	1931	18.50	13.19	10.16	8.51	5.32	10.04
	1951	36.62	24.42	25.71	23.65	8.39	21.74
	1961	41.80	29.48	36.37	35.33	14.01	29.44
	1966	43.53	34.34	48.60	49.84	21.30	38.08
	1971	45.34	38.37	54.17	56.81	24.03	42.03
	1981	53.65	48.36	63.77	64.32	22.60	47.19
Widowed and divorced	1911	56.67	65.22	60.84	46.01	19.48	29.43
	1921	51.43	46.43	45.23	40.20	16.82	25.59
	1931	53.33	54.35	45.20	35.40	13.80	21.23
	1951	67.50	66.67	64.15	53.97	11.44	21.04
	1961	57.50	67.57	72.13	66.78	14.11	22.93
	1966	58.33	65.96	74.14	72.36	15.96	24.29
	1971	51.57	60.76	70.64	74.13	14.85	23.12
	1981	55.00	62.14	70.80	69.79	10.09	22.89
All females	1911	65.61	33.73	23.74	22.74	15.97	35.32
	1921	63.23	33.60	22.75	20.73	14.91	33.71
	1931	68.46	36.45	24.45	20.97	13.33	34.19
	1951	71.86	37.06	35.17	34.40	12.96	34.73
	1961	66.76	38.00	42.42	43.29	16.79	37.49
	1966	64.24	41.00	52.68	54.88	20.58	42.19
	1971	58.31	44.01	57.13	60.41	20.67	42.62
	1981	63.17	54.32	65.43	65.97	17.10	45.52

accommodate part time working. Changes then have occurred in the economy which have attracted married women to employment. Many writers in the past have attributed changes in the economy entirely to the effect of the Second World War, Jean Hatlaire for example stated that:

"The growth of female employment in the United Kingdom is a direct consequence of World War II." (2)

What is often forgotten is that the tertiary sector was expanding rapidly before the Second World War. In view of the fact that the majority of women's employment is in the tertiary sector it is misleading to posit the war as the only reason for married women's increased labour market participation.

Where the Second World War did have an effect was in the reorganisation of the labour market to suit women with domestic commitments. Men were in short supply during the Second World War, and as in the First World War, women were recruited to perform jobs normally given to men. Myrdal and Klein remark:

"War factories were moved into areas where labour reserves were available; day nurseries were set up and canteen services were encouraged; the marriage bar for women in non-industrial occupations, such as civil service, the teaching profession (Education Act 1944), the police, the London County Council, the Metropolitan Water Board, the British Broadcasting Corporation and others, was removed." (3)

As with the First World War, the Second World War showed that if the economy requires provisions to be made for working mothers then they can be achieved.

Immediately after the Second World War, the numbers of married



women in the labour force dropped as war conditions finished and men took over jobs. Myrdal and Klein note that:

"By 1947 the numbers of married women in gainful employment had shrunk to 18 per cent of all married women living with their husband." (4)

The numbers of married women in paid employment rose rapidly again in the 1950s. Myrdal and Klein attribute this to a number of factors:

"Shortage of labour, the Government sponsored export drive, the outbreak of the war in Korea and renewed rearmament, all contributed to bring more and more women back into the industry, this time without conscription." (5)

Although part time employment as established in the Second World War continued and the marriage bar was not reinstated in most occupations, many of the benefits given in the war (especially in respect of child care) were not given by employers in the labour shortage starting in the 1950s (6).

#### Demographic changes

Because of prejudice against women working in the labour market, women were unlikely to have been recruited by employers if men had been willing to fill the jobs available. In times of labour shortage, however, male workers are in a stronger position than usual to reject poorly paying jobs with bad conditions. Thus women and immigrants tend to be recruited instead. Employers look first, however, to recruit single women. Employers thought that married women workers were unreliable because they were assumed to have family commitments which subjected them to high turnover and

high rates of absenteeism. Married women were thought to have high turnover rates not only because childrearing interrupts their work histories but also because married women were (and often still are) considered to have a low commitment to paid work because they put family responsibilities first (7). Married women were expected to have high rates of absenteeism again because family responsibilities may require the women to be available in times of a child's or husband's illness. In addition, employers argued that part time employees were expensive to recruit and that more facilities had to be provided because larger numbers of part time employees were needed than if full timers were to be recruited.

Single women were not available, however, because of demographic changes. Low fertility in the 1930s meant relatively few women were reaching adulthood in the 1950s. In addition many women reaching adulthood were marrying at earlier ages than in past decades. A gap then occurs not only because of expanding industries wanting to recruit single women but also with existing industries wishing to fill places emptied by natural labour turnover.

Earlier marriages were also followed by women rearing children at earlier ages. This combined with a continuing fall in the birth rate meant that many married women now became free to take at least part time employment from around the age of thirty-five and upwards. This can be seen from Table 3.2.

In addition to the earlier age when married women were able to take employment, women were living to older ages than in the past.

Table 3.2 Changes in the Life Cycle of Women (England and Wales) (8)

	<u>Date of Birth</u>					
	1850	1870	1890	1910	1930	1950
Age at (first) marriage	26	26	26	25	24	22
Average age at birth of child	28	28	28	27	26	24
Average age when last child aged 11	47	46	44	41	39	37

Rising standards of living, improved nutrition, advances in medicine and maternity care are some of the reasons why women were living to older ages. Increased years alive therefore further extended the years when women were relatively free from child responsibilities. Demographic changes, then, gave married women relatively more time to take up employment but these do not in themselves explain the reason why so many women should seek employment.

A change in attitudes to employment for married women?

We have already mentioned factors which influenced employers to employ married women, we now need to look at reasons why married women were prepared to enter the labour force and how men reacted to this.

Certainly one important reason for married women entering the labour force must be that opportunities were available to them that did not exist previous to World War II. Chapter 2 shows that women often did do paid work previous to the war which was outside the formal labour force and unrecorded. Although the majority of

employers offered jobs which were badly paid, they usually paid more than women could earn in the old system of trying to do "odd jobs" for payment in or around the home.

The 1950s and 1960s saw one of the largest boom periods that capitalism had experienced. Living standards rose and so did expectations and consumerism. The studies of married women working carried out in the fifties and sixties almost unanimously cite the major reason for married women's employment as being for money, the same reason as for men. In their study of children in Newcastle upon Tyne, Milner, Court, Walton and Knox found that:

" Only one mother said she worked solely because she enjoyed it. Some clearly sought extra money for furnishings, household equipment or holidays, but most worked because of financial pressure. One of the commonest reasons was lack of financial support from the husband." (9)

Surveys of married women's paid work varied in the respect that some found more women were employed because of economic necessity and not for "extras" such as holidays. Other surveys found the reverse to be true. Jephcott, Seear and Smith (10), for example, found "extras" to be the main reason for doing paid work. Nonetheless economic reasons were first and foremost. Whether defined as necessity or not, many of the financial reasons given for doing paid work were for the benefit of the married woman's children. Because laws relating to children's employment became stricter over the 19th and 20th Century, and because of the increase in education, children no longer tended to do paid work in times of family crisis. In the past both mothers and children had sought paid work if extra money was needed to supplement the man's

wage (or replace the husband's wage if he was incapacitated, unemployed or had died). The onus was now on the mother to seek employment if extra money was required in the family. Again because of changes in education mothers often wanted to help pay for their children to stay on at school and in some cases to go on to further education.

Invariably studies of the 1950s and 1960s also found that the most frequent other responses to the question of why women were in paid work was because of loneliness and boredom at home. Myrdal and Klein commented:

"... social isolation imposes a two-fold strain: on the one hand, her solitude gives the housewife a feeling of loss and causes dissatisfaction with her work; she feels that life is passing her by.

On the other hand, decline of other community ties has put an undue strain on her marriage relationship. This is no longer a part in the social fabric ... but has become practically the solitary link the housewife has with the outside world." (11)

Many of the studies in the 1950s and 1960s were written with optimism. They tried to show that it was quite "natural" for married women to do paid work and that problems of childcare were small and could be eradicated with more help from employers and the government (12). Several studies pointed out that no-one asks a man why he wants to be employed. Jephcott et al concluded, for example, that:

"The implication is obvious that employment outside the home is meeting deep-seated needs which are now felt by women in our society." (13)

Some studies also stress the beneficial effect that employment

could have for married women. Zweig, for example, thought that women had a "sense of inferiority" (14) which only experience in industry could overcome. Zweig stressed the benefit of employment for women:

"Home life is a matter-of-fact experience; it is just taken for granted. This can be done by every woman, but to work in industry is to prove oneself equal to a man. A woman worker acquired a higher status. She can earn her living and stand on her own two feet. She can feel independent and have a security altogether different from a housewife. She can bargain with a man on equal terms." (15)

It would be unfair to say that none of the surveys of married women's employment mentioned the fact that women were segregated into specific areas of the labour market, especially low paid, semi and unskilled work. Their major concern, however, was to argue against the critics of married women employees and to suggest policy initiatives to improve the existing situation of married women's employment and not to change its composition.

A major feature of married women's employment post World War II is that the majority of jobs were part time. This is a crucial difference to the paid work married women were doing in the 19th century. Part time paid work "allowed" women to continue to do domestic work in the home in addition to paid employment. Walby remarks:

"Part-time work ... represented the new form of compromise between patriarchal and capitalist interests. The expansion of part-time work and the consolidation of the distinction between it and full-time work during the post-war period saw the continuation of this patriarchal and capitalist accommodation. Women's labour was made available to capital, but on terms which did not threaten the patriarchal status quo in the household, since a married woman working part-time could still perform the full range of domestic tasks." (16)

In the labour force itself, men still opposed women entering jobs which they regarded as men's work. They seem to have been content, however, for married women to do paid work in areas which were separate and segregated from "men's" sphere of work.

In this chapter so far we have discussed the increase in married women's employment post-World War II by referring to economic, demographic and other social factors which drew women into paid employment. The next section draws extensively on statistical data to show trends and patterns of women's participation in the labour force since World War II. At certain points comparison is made with women's employment pre-World War II to illustrate change or lack of it in women's labour force composition. Particular attention is paid to the increase in part time employment and to occupational segregation.

#### Part time employment

Data sources after the Second World War and pre-1971 pose difficulties for the longitudinal study of part-time employment in that different surveys have used different definitions for part time employment. An article in the Department of Employment Gazette 1973 (17) points out these difficulties. For example, the census of population has the most comprehensive coverage of women's part time employment but this data is only available at infrequent intervals and in addition the census has changed, at various points in time, its definitions of part time employment. Because of changes in definition the data of the 1951 census of population is not comparable with later censuses (18). In the 1961 census part

time paid employment was defined as "less than the normal hours of employment". As a consequence there was an under enumeration of almost five per cent of economically active women. This understatement was of married women employed part time who had been entered on schedules as inactive (19). It was not until 1971 that the census of population asked "How many hours per week does the person normally work in this job. Exclude overtime and meal breaks". Asking the number of hours allowed the census to be analysed in line with other Department of Employment data, that is, treating paid work of 30 hours or less as part time (excluding meal breaks and overtime).

Table 3.3 (20) combines data from a number of sources to show the extent to which women's part time employment increased between 1950 and 1972. Each data source records the proportion of women employees working part time in manufacturing and/or records the proportion of women working part time in all industries. Table 3.3 shows clearly that women's part time employment increased rapidly from 1950 to 1970 in manufacturing and all industries generally.

The trend for women's part time employment to increase has continued through the 1970s and into the 80s. Table 3.4 (21) shows that the number of part time women employees has grown from 2.8 million in 1971 to 4.3 million in 1985. In the corresponding period the number of male employees fell from 13.4 million in 1971 to 11.7 million in 1985.



Table 3.3

## Women working part-time in manufacturing

Source coverage manufacturing	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	
L-returns female employees	11.8	12.2	10.5	9.7	10.3	11.4	11.0	12.0	11.9	11.9	11.7*	13.2
-----												
	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972
L-returns female employees (cont)	13.7	13.8	13.8	15.0	15.9	17.7	17.0	17.7	18.9	19.7	18.7	18.3
Census of population Females - all	20.2					24.3					?	
New earnings survey Female employees								20.4		22.3	22.5	22.0
Women employees aged 18 and over								22.2		23.8	24.0	23.3
Census of employment Female employees										20.1	20.1	

## Women working part-time all industries

Family expenditure survey + women employees			37.5	38.3	36.9	39.1	+40.1	43.2	43.7	46.3	44.9	45.5
Census of population Females all	25.0					32.0						
New earnings survey Female employees								27.8		30.5	31.3	32.1
Women employees								29.3		31.6	32.4	33.0
Annual census of employment Female employment											33.5	34.5
General household survey Females - all											43.4	

\* Standard Industrial Classification Changes  
+ 1963-66 figures are estimated

Notes to table

The different proportions of part time work given by each data source is partly because of the different sampling techniques but also because of different definitions used to describe part time work. (See DE article for full explanation)

L Returns were made quarterly by manufacturing establishments to the Department of Employment. They give the longest series of consistent data for women's part time work in manufacturing.

Table 3.4: Employment Trends - Great Britain 1971-86

	June 1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Employees in Employment	21.6	21.7	22.2	22.3	22.2	22.0	22.1	22.3	22.6	22.5	21.4	20.9	20.6	20.7	20.9	21.0
All male	13.4	13.3	13.5	13.4	13.2	13.1	13.1	13.1	13.2	13.0	12.3	11.9	11.7	11.6	11.7	11.6
All female	8.2	8.3	8.7	8.9	9.0	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.5	9.4	9.1	9.0	8.9	9.1	9.2	9.4
*	38%	38%	39%	40%	40.5%	41%	41%	41%	42%	42%	42.5%	43%	43%	44%	44%	45%
F.T females	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.3	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.9	5.4
P.T females	2.8	2.9	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.9	4.2	4.3	4.0
**	34%	35%	37%	38%	40%	40%	40%	40%	41%	41%	42%	43%	44%	46%	47%	43%

Figures rounded up to nearest 100,000 (point)

\* Female employees as a proportion (percentage) of all employees in employment.

\*\* Female part time employees as a proportion of all female employees in employment.

Table 3.5 Employment in Tyneside 1951-1981

Date	1951*	1961**	1971	1978	1981
Males	253,303	265,410	249,704	235,955	202,141
Females	113,501	119,450	148,328	161,687	144,592
	366,804	384,860	398,032	397,642	346,733
Females as % of total	31	31	37.2	40.6	41.7
Males % part time	--	0.6	3.0	4.5	4.2
Females % part time	--	20.9	34.5	38.9	40.8

\* Figures and percentages for 1951 are adapted from census information quoted in "Employment in the Inner City" by Jim Cousins, Margaret Curran and Richard Brown. University of Durham, 1983 p56

\*\* Figures and percentages for 1961-1981 are taken from the article "Some reflections on the role of women in the Tyneside economy" by Irene Hardhill and Fred Robinson, in Northern Economic Review, no 4, Winter 1986-87, P 15 (Table 1).

The field work of this thesis was carried out in Newcastle upon Tyne. Because of this, Table 3.5 is shown to allow comparison between the Tyneside region and Great Britain generally. Table 3.5 shows that although actual numbers of male and female employees increased from 1951 to 1961 the proportion of females employed in 1961 is still only 31% of all employees.

Figures are not available for part time employment in Tyneside until 1961. Where data are available, however, (from 1961-1981) we see the same massive rise in part time employment as in the rest of the country (from 20.9% in 1961 to 40.8% in 1981).

Direct comparison of Table 3.5 with Table 3.4 shows remarkably

similar proportions of women in part time employment in Tyneside as in Great Britain. (In 1971, for example, 34.5% of all female employees in Tyneside worked part time in comparison with 34% in Great Britain as a whole).

Because the trend for part-time employment to increase in Tyneside is so similar to the rest of Great Britain where figures are available, we can presume that similar increases in part time employment occurred in Tyneside between 1951 to 1961 as they did in the rest of Great Britain.

The increase in part time employment during the 1970s and 1980s is almost entirely within the service sector. For example between 1971 and 1976, 95% of the increase in part time jobs Great Britain was in the service sector (22).

We have shown that women's participation in the labour market has grown massively since World War II and that the increase is due mainly to married women entering paid employment predominantly on a part time basis. The next section looks at the distribution of women paid workers in different areas of employment and discusses the concept of occupational segregation.

### Occupational Segregation

It is clear from earlier discussion of women's employment (Chapters 1 and 2) that the majority of women in paid employment (for both single and married women) were concentrated into particular sections of industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The increased labour force participation of women after the Second

World War raises the question as to whether increased participation results in a decrease in occupational segregation.

Catherine Hakim (23) noted that studies concerned with the question of occupational segregation had generally not investigated changes over time and had concentrated on the prevailing situation. To rectify this, Hakim's study assesses changes in the level and pattern of occupational segregation prior to the introduction of legislation on sex discrimination and equal opportunities (1970 and 1975). The period covered, using census information, is from 1901 to 1971.

To test segregation, Hakim uses both horizontal and vertical measures.

Horizontal segregation looks at the proportion of women and men in particular occupations. Hakim's results show that occupations exclusive to one sex (an absolute measure of segregation) have virtually disappeared over the seventy year period. However, working in an occupation where one's own sex predominates (relative segregation) was still the most likely work situation in 1971, especially for men. Hakim found that over half of all men in 1971 were still in occupations where they outnumbered women by at least nine to one, and two thirds were in occupations where they outnumbered women by at least four to one. In contrast, whereas, the majority of women in 1901 were in occupations where they outnumbered men by varying degrees, in 1971 only a quarter were in occupations where they outnumbered men by nine to one. Half of all women employed were still in jobs where they were greatly over-

represented (at 70% or more of the workforce).

Hakim concludes:

"... over the seventy year period occupational segregation declined but is still largely preserved ... male inroads into women's preserves have not been counterbalanced by women's entry into typical male spheres of work." (24)

Table 3.6 Women workers in major occupational groups, 1911-1971  
(25)

(Female workers as a percentage of all workers in each of the major occupational groups identified by Bain and Price)

<u>Occupational groups</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>1921</u>	<u>1931</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1971</u>
Employers & proprietors	18.8	20.5	19.8	20.0	20.4	24.9
White collar workers	29.8	37.6	35.8	42.3	44.5	47.9
a) managers and administrators	19.8	17.0	13.0	15.2	15.5	21.6
b) higher professionals	6.0	5.1	7.5	8.3	9.7	9.9
c) lower professionals and technicians	62.9	59.4	58.8	53.5	50.8	52.1
d) foremen and inspectors	4.2	6.5	8.7	13.4	10.3	13.1
e) clerks	21.4	44.6	46.0	60.2	65.2	73.2
f) salesmen and shop assistants	35.2	43.6	37.2	51.6	54.9	59.8
All manual workers	30.5	27.9	28.8	26.1	26.0	29.4
a) skilled	24.0	21.0	21.3	15.7	13.8	13.5
b) semi-skilled	40.0	40.3	42.9	38.1	39.3	46.5
c) unskilled	15.5	16.8	15.0	20.3	22.4	37.2
Total occupied population	29.6	29.5	29.8	30.8	32.4	36.5

Vertical segregation is measured by Hakim by looking at the grades of work carried out by women and men over a seventy year period. To assess vertical segregation Hakim updates statistics collated by Bain and Price (table 3.6). The table is most remarkable in showing a trend towards greater segregation of women into semi and unskilled work. The proportion of women in skilled manual

Occupations has decreased by 10.5% whereas the proportion of women in semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations has increased by 6.1% and 21.7% respectively. In the non-manual sectors of employment table 3.5 does not show a decrease in the proportion of women in higher grade jobs. However, the non-manual occupation which shows the largest increase in women's participation is in the occupational group 'clerks', a relatively unskilled sector of non-manual work (from 21.4% in 1911 to 73.2% in 1970).

Hakim concludes her results on both horizontal and vertical segregation by saying:

" ... a variety of measures and approaches to assessing the extent and direction of change in horizontal and vertical occupational segregation in Britain all show consistent results. Some of the change has been in the direction of greater integration with 'exclusive' occupations disappearing completely for women and somewhat reduced for men. Much of the change however has been in the direction of greater occupational segregation, with women becoming over-represented in the lowest grades of white-collar and blue-collar work. Overall, there has been no change in the degree of occupational concentration, and no change in the degree of occupational segregation since the turn of the century." (26)

Hakim's data are very important for showing the occupational segregation of women both before and after the Second World War. However, the data do not differentiate between women employed part time and full time, and only chart segregation up until 1971.

To update discussion of occupational segregation and to look at differences in full and part time employment we now turn to the results of the Women and Employment Survey. The Women and Employment Survey (WES) (27) is a nationally representative survey of all women of working age. Altogether 5,588 women were

interviewed and 799 husbands. The survey is a landmark in research about women and employment because it is the most comprehensive survey, to date, which concentrates on a wide range of issues central to an understanding of women and the labour market. Because of its size and uniqueness, the WES is referred to extensively throughout the rest of this chapter.

Martin and Roberts test (horizontal) occupational segregation amongst their sample of women by using a different approach to Hakim. Their respondents were asked if there were "any men doing the same sort of work" as them at their place of work. Martin and Roberts argue that this measure is clearer cut than measuring whether women are working disproportionately with men because it allows them to "identify the extent of total job segregation working women experience at work". Furthermore this analysis enables comparison of women employed full time with those employed part time.

Their results show a high degree of occupational segregation. 63% of the women in the sample worked only with other women. Women in higher grade occupations (non-manual occupations) were much less likely than women in lower grade occupations to be occupationally segregated. 78% of the women doing catering or child care types of jobs work only with women. In all manual occupations segregation occurred for 70% or more of women. Overall women who were employed part time were much more likely to be occupationally segregated (70%) than women who were employed full time (58%). Martin and Roberts argue that the segregation of part-time employees is likely to be a reflection of the different jobs done by full and part time



employees with the same broad occupational groupings.

The husbands of the women in the sample were even more segregated from women in the workplace than their wives from men. 81% of the husbands worked only with other men. This backs up Hakim, but shows segregation to be even more extreme (28).

#### Vertical segregation: update

To update discussion of vertical segregation, information is presented from the 1981 Census. Table 3.7 shows the Socio Economic Grouping (SEG) of the economically active population of Britain by sex and, for women, by marital status. Segregation is shown to be acute for women overall and more so for married women. 61% of the single, widowed and divorced (SWD) women are employed in three SEG's which represent occupations classed as relatively low skilled). 41% work in the relatively unskilled category of clerical work, SEG 6 (See Appendix I for the key to SEG numbers), and 20% are in low skilled categories of manual work (SEG's 7 and 10).

Married women's paid employment is shown to be even more segregated. 68% of the married women are in four low skilled SEG's. 35% work in the relatively low skill non-manual category of SEG 6 while 33% work in low skilled manual categories (SEG's 6,7, 10 and 11). 9% of the married women work in SEG 11 which are occupations classed as totally unskilled.

Table 3.8 shows the differences in SEG's between people employed full time and part time. Overall 76% of the part time workers are found in four SEG categories which contain occupations classed as

low skilled (SEG's 6,7, 10 and 11). This compares with only 39% of the full-time employees. 15% of the people employed part time occur in SEG 11 and are therefore classed as unskilled compared with only 4% of the full time employees. 19% appear in SEG 7 (personal service workers) compared with only 3% of the full time employees. SEG 7 contains many low skilled jobs and also reflects the large number of part time workers in the service industries. The importance of the service industries is also shown by the 33% of part time employees in SEG 6 compared with 19% of full time employees.

Table 3.9 shows that of the people who are employed part-time only 8% are men compared with 92% of women. Huge differences also occur between the single, widowed and divorced (SWD) women compared with the married women. 80% of the women who work part time are married and only 12% are SWD. Taking data from table 3.8 and 3.9 into account, we can say that people who are employed part time are the group most segregated into low skilled occupations in terms of SEG. Moreover, the majority of people who are employed part time are married women.

The conclusion to discussion on segregation is therefore that both the vertical and horizontal segregation of women has changed little for women over the last 80 years. In the 1980s the majority of women in paid employment are still segregated into a small number of relatively unskilled sectors of the labour force. Moreover, although married women are more segregated into low skill occupations than other employed women, it is the married women who are employed part time who suffer the most severe segregation.

Table 3.7

Usually resident population of Great Britain economically active: socio economic group by marital status for women

Socio economic group	Men	%	Single, widowed or divorced	%	Married	%
1	84,712	5	8,216	2	12,266	2
2	135,557	9	11,551	3	31,076	5
3	14,361	1	408	1	972	1
4	70,150	5	3,995	1	4,597	1
5.1	101,193	7	47,459	13	82,902	13
5.2	12,450	1	4,138	1	7,518	1
6	147,342	9	146,446	41	222,176	35
7	17,804	1	36,752	10	83,351	13
8	55,937	4	1,707	1	4,923	1
9	409,021	26	14,888	4	24,307	4
10	210,722	14	36,547	10	66,230	11
11	90,554	6	12,670	4	53,825	9
12	83,009	5	4,115	1	13,880	2
13	10,532	1	399	1	797	1
14	10,369	1	457	1	890	1
15	19,346	1	2,150	1	2,975	1
16	24,072	2	1,290	1	512	1
17	54,745	4	25,722	7	15,334	2
Total	1,555,876	102	358,914	103	628,529	104

Table 3.8 Usually resident population aged 16 and over in employment, socio-economic group and whether employed full time or part time (to nearest whole number)

	Full time	%	Part time	%
1	101,185	5	2,159	1
2	159,604	8	10,479	3
3	14,202	1	1,334	1
4	74,282	4	2,265	1
5.1	184,113	10	40,121	10
5.2	22,269	1	1,080	1
6	363,200	19	129,421	33
7	55,882	3	74,187	19
8	57,173	3	1,625	1
9	385,739	20	14,148	4
10	241,295	13	36,695	9
11	75,548	4	57,581	15
12	83,830	4	9,799	3
13	10,981	1	587	1
14	10,680	1	843	1
15	19,617	1	3,067	1
16	24,774	1	96	1
17	16,331	1	4,187	1
All	1,900,705	100	389,674	106
Men	1,339,541	70	36,136	9
Women	561,164	30	353,538	91

Table 3.9 Usually resident Population Great Britain aged 16 and over in employment. Employment status by sex and marital status.

	All employees			
	Total	%	Full time	% Part time
Men	12,028,189	58	11,744,617	69
Women	8,705,666	42	5,304,106	31
of whom:				
Single, widowed, divorced	3,051,295	15	2,596,575	15
Married	5,654,371	27	2,707,531	16
All	20,733,855		17,048,723	3,685,132

All Taken from 1981 Census

### Trade unions, legislation and pay

The large increases in women's participation in the labour force since the 1950s also brought large numbers of women into the trade union movement. Walby makes the point that since women were largely segregated from men in their jobs they were therefore not thought to be undermining wages or conditions for men. A consequence of this was that responses to women in trade unions could also change (29).

Examples of the increased female membership are that the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) more than trebled its female membership between 1968 and 1978. The National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO) more than doubled their membership in the same period. When the National Union of Teachers (one of the traditional areas for female trade union membership) joined the Trades Union Congress (TUC) in 1970 it meant that another 200,000 women became part of the TUC. Much of the increase in women's trade union membership has been in the white collar sector of employment, but overall there has been an increase from a total female union membership of 16% in 1950 to 27% in 1975 (30)

Despite the large increase in women's union membership, women's trade union activity has tended to remain largely at card carrying level. Few women in proportion to men are involved in union executive work, being union officials or being TUC delegates. (31) The growth of women's trade union activity did lead to demands for equal pay which were eventually adopted by the Trades Union Congress. Through trade union pressure and women's political campaigning laws were eventually introduced. Walby comments:

"In the end, when legislation was being considered by Parliament in the late 1960s and early 1970s, there were no major institutional forces explicitly ranged against legislation. Organized women, the Trades Union Congress, the Confederation of British Industry, the Labour party and the Conservative party were all in support of some such legislation." (32)

The Equal Pay Act and Sex Discrimination Act came into force at the end of 1975. They were intended to eliminate discrimination against women in pay and in employment generally. The Equal Pay Act (1975) made it illegal for a woman to be paid less than a man for "like work" (Section 1 (4)) or for work which, although different, had been given equal value under a job evaluation scheme (Section 1(5)). These provisions of the Act apply to wage agreements, wage council orders and employers' pay structures. There is nothing in the Act, however, to stop agreements referring to a group of workers in the pay structure by job category. Thus, because of the segregation of many women into specific occupations, wage agreements can still discriminate against women by negotiating different wages for those occupations in which women are concentrated.

The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) aimed to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sex in employment, education and in the provision of goods, facilities, services and premises. It does not require employers, unions or the Government to take positive steps to break down segregation in jobs and is thus essentially passive legislation. There are also difficulties in enforcing the Sex Discrimination Act because of the difficulties of proving discrimination. Jean Coussins remarks:

"It is hard enough to prove one's entitlement to equal pay - a concrete enough idea- but the thought of trying to prove they were refused a job or promotion on sex grounds has put off

many women from taking their complaints to an industrial tribunal at all." (33)

Table 3.10 shows the gross hourly earnings, excluding the effects of overtime, of full time employees aged 18 and over between 1970 and 1986. Only full time women employees are included to draw a direct comparison between men's and women's employment. The table shows that there was a substantial increase in women's gross hourly earnings relative to men's between 1970 and 1977, that is, shortly before and after the Equal Pay Act came into force. Subsequently, however, women's earnings have remained at just below 75% of men's.

Mandy Snell assesses the impact of the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts in the 1970s by using data from the London School of Economics' Equal Pay and Opportunity Project. Her analysis shows that, as a result of the Equal Pay Act, many women gained increases in pay which they would not have received otherwise. In addition the Sex Discrimination Act has opened job opportunities to women which were formerly closed to them. While stressing that these gains should not be underestimated she nevertheless concludes that:

"At Workplace level, the legislation has had little impact. Although most women received some increase in pay as a result of the Equal Pay Act, many are still underpaid in relation to their level of skill and effort. Furthermore the Sex Discrimination Act has not eliminated discrimination in employment nor has it led to any significant degree of desegregation of jobs." (34)

The role occupational segregation plays in maintaining differentials between men and women is confirmed by the WES data. Martin and Roberts (35) found that part time employees, on

Table 3.10

Average gross hourly earnings, excluding the effects of overtime, full time employees aged 18 and over, 1970-1986 \*

	Pence per hour													
	1970	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Men	67.4	104.8	136.3	162.9	177.4	200.3	226.9	280.7	322.5	354.8	387.6	417.3	445.3	481.8
Women	42.5	70.6	98.3	122.4	133.9	148.0	165.7	206.4	241.2	262.1	287.5	306.8	329.9	358.2
Differential	24.9	34.2	38.0	39.5	43.5	52.3	61.2	74.3	81.3	92.7	100.1	110.5	115.4	123.6
Women's earnings a a %age of men's	63.1	67.4	72.1	75.1	75.5	73.9	73.0	73.5	74.8	73.9	74.2	73.5	74.0	74.3

\* In 'Women and men in Britain; a statistical profile.' Equal Opportunities Commission, HMSO, 1986, p38. Table four.



average were paid less (on an hourly rate) than full time employees. Hourly rates of pay did not differ significantly, however, within occupations. The lower pay of part time employees is explained by their greater segregation into "women-only" jobs. Thus, it is not the case that part time employees receive lower wages because of their employment status, rather that the occupational areas where part time employment is available offer low wages.

In 1984 the Equal Pay Act was ammended to include "equal value". This is defined in terms of the demands the job makes upon the person and is not reliant upon a job evaluation having been conducted. Table 3.10 does not indicate that the equal value amendment has had any impact on the earning gap to date, but the amendment is an important addition to the Act. Challenges of discrimination can now be made from women who are segregated into 'women only' jobs within a firm. An article in "Equal Opportunities Review" (36) shows that trade unions are beginning to use the equal value law with some success. One claim which won, for example, centred on an all female typing area which was exempt from the Equal Pay Act prior to the change in the law. A very significant point made in the article is that some women are discouraged from taking claims of equal value. This is because they receive hostility and harassment from male colleagues if they challenge established job segregation and differentials. The issue of male workers resisting women's equality is discussed more fully in Chapter 6 (37).

## Life cycles and employment patterns

Earlier in this chapter we discussed the demographic changes within this century which led more women to enter paid work at a later age in life than in the earlier part of the 20th century. Hakim (1982) argues that a new pattern of women's employment emerges which she calls the 'two-phase' or 'bi-modal' pattern. That is, women work before having children, leave the labour market to rear children and re-enter the labour market once children have reached school age. She says:

"Our analysis has shown ... that the higher work rates for women since 1931 in Britain are concomitant with the emergence of a bi-modal work profile which differs from that of men not only quantitatively in being generally lower than the work rate for men, but also qualitatively in exhibiting - at least for some women - a broken work history." (38)

Data from and analysis of the WES throw more light on the life cycle patterns of women's employment. An important aspect of the WES is that women's economic activity time is analysed by using data on the complete retrospective work histories of all the women interviewed who had completed full time education.

Results from the WES confirm assertions that age profiles of women's labour force participation have been changing over time. For example, the results show a steep rise in participation rates for women in their thirties and forties since the 1960s. Martin and Roberts comment:

"These results confirm trends established from other sources which show that the increase in women's participation in recent years is due mainly to increased participation among women in their thirties and forties, and is largely in

part-time rather than full-time work." (39)

Analysis of WES employment history data indicates that it is not appropriate to typify women's labour force participation by assuming a simple bi-modal pattern. In the WES survey only 23% of the women showed a strict bi-modal pattern in their employment histories. The data does confirm an initial paid work phase for most women between leaving full time education and their first birth. This phase, which the study found to be on average between 7 and 8 years, is generally in full time employment and nowadays lasts until first pregnancy rather than at the point of getting married. Interruptions in this period are more likely to be because of unemployment (particularly for young women) than for any other reason.

The bi-model pattern is not supported by WES data in suggesting that the initial phase of paid working is followed by a single period of not being in paid work (whilst rearing children) followed by another single period of employment (when child rearing is complete). The WES data shows a more complex picture. 37% of the women in the survey with two or more children had been employed at some time between the births of their first and last child (40). In addition, while some women were employed continuously after child rearing was complete, others were employed only spasmodically. Dex (1984) comments:

"There appears to be a continuum of women's working experience which ranges between, at one end, a continuous worker's profile, and at the other, the women who never return after childbirth." (41)

### Changes over time

A higher proportion of older women fitted the bi-model pattern of employment than younger women. Only 25% of the women who had their latest period of birth between 1955 and 1959 had returned to paid work between first and latest child. The corresponding figure for women whose latest period of birth was between 1975 and 1979 is 47%.

Correspondingly, the average time period between childbirth and return to the labour market has been reduced over time. Of the women whose first birth was between 1950 and 1954, half made an initial return to paid work by 9.7 years after first birth. The comparable time for women with first births between 1975 and 1979 was 3.7 years (42). From these figures it can be predicted that, if women's participation in the labour market continues at the present rate, women will increasingly spend more of their lives in paid work or at least economically active.

### Part time employment and life cycles

We mentioned earlier in this chapter that the majority of women with children have tended to be employed full time before the birth of their first child (the 'initial phase'). In the WES, overall 84% of the women with children had been employed full time before their first birth and only 2% had been employed part time.

In contrast, the majority of women who return to the labour market after childbirth do so, at least initially, on a part time basis. Dex's analysis of WES data shows that overall 68% of women who

return to paid work after childbirth re-enter on a part time basis (43). The longer the time women had spent out of employment during childrearing, the more likely it was that their return would be on a part-time basis. Women who returned to employment on a full time basis tended to return relatively quickly after childbirth (44).

The WES data show a variety of patterns of paid working experience subsequent to the initial return to the labour market after childbirth. The majority of women do not appear to change employment status (that is, part or full time) after their initial return to the labour market, although they may experience job changes or additional periods out of the labour market (for example, because of unemployment). Where changes in employment status do occur, they occur in both directions. Although there is a tendency for women to change from part time to full time employment the longer they have been in employment after childbirth, there is also some evidence of a tendency to change from full time to part time as women approach retirement (45).

#### Downwards Mobility

The change from full-time employment pre-childbirth to part-time employment after childbirth frequently involves moving down the occupational scale. Joshi comments:

"Interruptions associated with childbearing are often followed by part time work and, compared with uninterrupted careers, lower hourly pay and lower occupational status, at least while children are young. To the extent that these features are consequences of childbearing, they mean that the economic opportunity cost of child bearing is not just measured in terms of years away from the labour market but also in terms of the reduced earnings after a return." (46)

In the WES survey 51% of women who had changed occupational level on returning to paid employment after childbirth, 37% had moved downwards. (14% moved to a higher occupation). Of those who returned to part time employment, 45% moved downwards (only 13% upwards).

Women who moved back to full time employment in later life were those most likely to regain or improve their occupational level as compared with their level prior to childbirth (47), thereby confirming the association between part time employment and downward mobility.

### Summary

This chapter has looked at the massive rise in married women's participation in the labour force from the Second World War to the 1980s. Much of this increase is shown to be accounted for by the growth of part time employment.

Reasons which drew married women into the formal labour force have been discussed with reference to demographic, economic and social factors. It is suggested that the part time and segregated nature of married women's employment may represent a compromise between capitalist and patriarchal interests.

Statistical data are presented to show the extent of the upward trend in part time employment for women. Comparative data shows that Tyneside has followed a similar pattern to the rest of Britain. The rise of the service industries is shown to be a major factor explaining the increased number of part time jobs.

The vertical and horizontal segregation of women into specific occupations is analysed using various data sources. Conclusions drawn were that occupational segregation has changed little from the beginning of the 20th Century to the 1980s. Data also suggest that women employed part time, the majority of whom are married, are even more likely to be occupationally segregated than women employed full time.

Women's increased trade union membership was noted and linked to the advent of legislation aiming to provide equal pay and opportunity for women employees. Legislation was shown to have made some effect on wage differentials between men and women, although occupational segregation acts as a major barrier to closing differentials further. Because women part-time employees are more likely to be segregated from men they are also more vulnerable to low pay.

Finally, life cycle patterns of women's employment were discussed. Evidence suggests that a variety of employment patterns occur often including more than one period of economic inactivity followed by availability. A tendency does emerge for most women to give up full time paid employment near the birth of their first child and to return to employment later on a part time basis. This tendency frequently coincides with downward mobility.

## HOUSEWORK IS WORK.

The large increase in the number of married women entering the labour force in the 1950s provoked much discussion about its desirability or otherwise for the family and (sometimes) the women themselves. Many studies designed (1) to investigate married women in the labour force tried to assess the impact paid employment had upon the role married women were expected to perform as wives and mothers. For the first time, then, empirical studies were recording, and giving attention to, the enormous amount of time and effort women (whether in paid employment or not) gave to their domestic labours.

Writings from the early women's movement drew attention to the apparent invisibility of housework and challenged the assumption that it is the natural sphere for women. Betty Friedan (2) and Hannah Gavron (3) insist that housework should be regarded as work in its own right, and not regarded as inferior simply because it is not paid work.

Ann Oakley (4) points out that even Gavron falls into the trap of using the word 'work' to mean paid employment and not housework. Oakley's 'Sociology of Housework' shows how housework can be studied in similar ways to paid employment. Her methodology is designed to focus attention on housewives themselves in contrast to past studies. Past studies, on the whole, have only been concerned with how effectively women perform the roles of wives and mothers, giving only cursory attention to the consequences for women themselves. Oakley says:



"Almost none of this literature is woman-focused. While considering the advantages and disadvantages to other family members of new patterns of domestic life, the consequences for the women are often omitted. 'Role conflict' is talked about but this is not necessarily the same thing." (5)

By using questions based on those asked by Goldthorpe et al (6) in 'The Affluent Worker' study, Oakley discovered that fragmentation, monotony and isolation were important sources of dissatisfaction in the work of housewives.

Housewife is an occupation and housework can be compared to paid jobs but it is also unique. In contemporary society housewives are not paid, they are usually dependent upon their husbands and are usually not recognised as doing 'real work'. The word 'housewife' is far more inclusive than simply describing a person's occupational status or indeed as Lee Comer points out:

"It does not describe a person, it defines a situation. The whole woman is defined only in terms of her relation to someone and something else." (7)

Unique to housework is that it has no boundaries. In contrast to many jobs in industry, there is no set time when the housewife is 'off duty' and there is no strictly defined leisure time. The housewife spends her 'free time' in the same environment as her work, always conscious of what work has been done and what is still to be done.

"The joke is that the woman lies there planning the following day's menu while the husband is making love to her is no joke to the woman. Doing housework and being housewife are indivisible." (8)

As the problems and stresses of housework begin to be revealed by the writers of the women's movement and as demands were made for

housework to be recognised as work, questions arose as to the monetary contribution that housewives were making to the economy.

Nona Glazer-Malbin argues that:

"Only the low status of women and the disparagement of housework can explain why economists have found estimating the contribution of housework to economic well-being an 'insoluble problem'." (9)

Glazer-Malbin refers to a point made by Professor Pigou (10) that if a number of men married their housekeepers the national product would be reduced, but (assuming the wives continued to do the same work as the housekeepers) the work performed remains constant.

William Gauger (11) showed that it is possible to measure the monetary value of housework using conventional economics. Gauger used the average dollar rates for various jobs in industry, for example; washing up, child-care and cooks. He did this to measure the contribution of women, their husbands and their children to housework. Not surprisingly, he found that women had a huge share of housework and even when the women were also engaged in wage labour the husbands' contribution to housework did not increase. Gauger found that the monetary value of housework increased the younger and more numerous the children. There are problems with Gauger's economic analysis, for example, he himself admits that his calculations underestimate the monetary value of housework. It is important, however, for showing that if economists really were concerned to measure the economic value of housework it could be done.

For some in the women's movement, the discussion of housework led

them to conclude that, in order for housewives to gain their rightful status as workers, housework should be paid. This demand started a long debate.

### Wages for housework

Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James (12) argued that housework was essential to capitalism and productive because it produced the workforce. Women reproduce and bring up children (the future workforce) and 'reproduce' the current workforce by helping to prepare their husbands for work each day. Women's oppression and lack of power, they argued, was in part due to their unwaged status. This article did not, however, raise the demand 'wages for housework'. The original text states:

"... the demand that would follow, namely 'pay us wages for housework' would run the risk of looking as though we wanted further to entrench the condition of institutionalised slavery which is produced with the conditions of housework therefore such a demand would scarcely operate in practice as a mobilising goal." (13)

The solution to women's oppression then, was seen to be the destruction of the system which institutionalised women as housewives and men as 'wage slaves'.

Drawing on the ideas of "Women and the subversion of the community", Selma James presented a paper called "Women, the unions and work: or what is not to be done" (14) at the National Women's Liberation Conference in Manchester, March 1972. In this paper she includes the demand 'wages for housework'. Because housework is productive and produces surplus value, it is argued, it should therefore be paid. Those who argued that housework should be waged

saw the demand as a tactic which would put women in a stronger position to end their oppression. Lee Comer argues that to give housework a wage destroys the ideology that a woman 'works for love':

"When it (housework) is reduced to an economic transaction with all that that implies - definition of work, hours, terms of contract and so on - it brings the hard outside world into the home. In addition the stranglehold that her labour of love has on her would be released as she would occupy the same economic ground as her husband. Their separate and irreconcilable worlds would merge, depriving the man of his role as provider and severely curtailing his economic power over her. To introduce payment for the woman's work is to taint love with cash." (15)

In short, those who argue for wages for housework, by giving women an economic position similar to men, maintain that it will break down assumptions, imposed by capitalism, that housework is not work but a natural feminine attribute:

"Wages for housework ... attacks capital and forces it to reconstruct social relations in terms more favourable to us and consequently more favourable to the unity of the class." (16)

Silvia Federici argues that to demand wages for housework does not mean that women continue to do it:

"To say that we want money for housework is the first step towards refusing to do it, because the demand for a wage makes our work visible, which is the most indispensable condition to begin to struggle against it, both its immediate aspect as housework and its more insidious character as femininity." (17)

The women's liberation movement has generally rejected the idea of wages for housework because of the further disadvantages that could be caused by the introduction of a wage. The most crucial argument

against 'wages for housework' was noted by Shulamith Firestone in 1970 before the idea was even raised as a demand. Whilst emphasising the vital importance of mothers to the economy she says:

"Payment is not the answer. To pay her (the mother) as is often discussed seriously in Sweden, is a reform that does not challenge the basic division of labour and this could never eradicate the disastrous psychological and cultural consequences of that division of labour ... " (18)

Women would be expected to carry on their housework as before with the improved status of a wage, which could only serve to strengthen assumptions that housework is women's work. It would raise the question as to why a husband should help his wife with housework if she is paid for it and he is not? Who exactly pays the wages for housework is not made clear in the debate. If it is to be the state, then the state is free to set down conditions and negotiations for housework and impose inspections upon the housewife to make sure the work is carried out to the state's satisfaction. Giving a wage to housewives, then, adds to their oppression by making them wage-labourers and thus subject to the exploitation of capital. Ellen Malos (19) argues that there is a confusion in the debate which seems to suggest that "the wages and the factory" are foundations of capitalism rather than the capitalist relations of production. Malos argues that the wagelessness of housewives derives from the privatisation of housework, and the tendency to see the reproduction of labour power as 'natural' and outside of capitalism ...

"... in other words 'wagelessness' is secondary, just as the wage is, to a system in which the mass of women and men who

do not own the means of production face the power of those who do. It is difficult to see how a wage for housework could alter that fundamental situation." (20)

A wage would not alter the isolation of the housewife and the full time entrapment in the home. The claims of Federici (21) that payment for housework is the first step towards refusing to do it seems untenable if housewives are to remain isolated. Oakley points out:

"As a wage labourer she will not easily generate the political power other groups of workers can exercise for her conditions of work are inimical to the organisation of housewives into trade unions with collective bargaining power and the ultimate deterrent of strike action." (22)

Beside the disadvantages that may be gained by having a wage for housework there are also problems in its implementation, especially, who is eligible for the wage? Caroline Freeman points out that if only married women are paid this reinforces the ideology of the family and marriage. If single women are also to be paid this reinforces the housework role even further. In addition if single women were to be paid, so must single men. Thus she says:

"We are caught in a cleft stick, since if we demand wages for housework for everyone, however much or little they do, this becomes a different demand, which cannot serve the function of getting social recognition for housework - it becomes the demand for a minimum income for all." (23)

A second problem of implementation relates to a point already touched on concerning who pays the wages. Joan Landes sees only two choices. The first, she says, is to formally split (by the boss or the state) the individual wage packet, which she argues is

already formulated to include "a non-working" or "underpaid" working wife. The second choice is the state could subsidise the extra cost by further taxation. Either alternative she believes...

"... will lead to increased division within the working class, which will aggravate already existing tensions between men and women, between husband and wife. Either choice could lead to an additional financial burden for the producing (working) class as a whole." (24)

The two possibilities put forward by Landes involve a redistribution of the individual employee's wage to incorporate a wage for housewives. Neither possibility would allow for a proper wage to be paid to housewives because as Malos points out, "in terms of hours spent and functions carried out the burden would be enormous" (25). No society could afford to pay a realistic wage for housework.

Clearly wages for housework cannot be accepted as helping to fight against women's oppression. The demand should not however be confused with other demands for increased money towards childcaring and the financial recognition of the childcaring role of parents (or parent). The debate over wages for housework sprang out of a much wider debate about the nature of housework and its relation to capitalism, sometimes referred to as the "domestic labour debate".

#### The domestic labour debate

Much of the controversy in the debate revolves around whether or not housework is productive and, related to this, whether or not it produces surplus value. Part of the problem arises from the different perspectives of the authors involved. For example, those

authors using Marxist categories as devices for the development of strategies for the women's movement, have a tendency to be less strict in their application of Marxian terms than authors whose aim it is to fit domestic labour into a Marxist analysis of capitalism.

Margaret Benston (26) was one of the first to attempt to fit housework into class analysis. Using Ernest Mandel's (27) discussion of peasant production, Benston posits that household labour is still pre-industrial, and that its closest parallel is peasant work in industrialised countries because:

"A pre-industrial production unit is one in which production is small-scale and reduplicative: ie there are a great number of little units, each complete and just like all the others."  
(28)

According to Benston housework produces use values but does not have exchange value. In doing household labour, women perform 'a huge amount of socially necessary production' (29) but their products are of use and not for exchange as in commodity production. According to Benston the inferior status of women in society is because they are excluded from commodity production and work outside the money economy (when women are involved in wage labour, she argues, this is regarded as transient).

"In a society in which money determines value, women are a group who work outside the money economy. Their work is not worth money, is therefore valueless, is therefore not even work." (30)

Benston's work is important for her recognition that the family is not just a consumption unit and should be seen "primarily as a production unit for housework and childcaring." (31)



One of the problems with Benston's analysis, as noted by Malos, is that household labour is left "floating in a historical limbo somewhere quite outside the capitalist economy" (32).

Dalla Costa and James attempt to relate the position of women as housewives directly to capitalism. The family under capitalism, they say, is not only a centre of conditioning, consumption and a reserve army of labour, but also a centre of "social production"(33). To develop the idea of women being the pivot of the "social factory", Dalla Costa refers to Marx's concept of labour power as a commodity. Housewives reproduce and rear children and also help men to prepare for each day's work. Thus Dalla Costa argues housework is productive because it reproduces the commodity labour power, that is, the capacity of the woman's husband to work, and the future capacity of her offspring to work. Men are the instruments of women's oppression (not the oppressors) under capitalism. Dalla Costa argues that this is because housewives, by performing social services, for example, washing and cleaning, 'liberate' the husband from these duties so that he ...

"... is completely 'free' for direct exploitation; so that he is 'free' to 'earn' enough for a woman to reproduce him as labour power." (34)

It is on this basis that Dalla Costa and James assert that "domestic work produces not merely use values, but it is essential to the production of surplus value" (35). Dalla Costa and James unleashed much discussion as to whether housework was productive or not.

Is housework productive?

It should be noted first that the Marxian use of the term 'productive' does not have any moral connotations, but is simply used to describe certain activities within capitalism. Freeman points out:

"The designation of housework as 'unproductive' is taken as a slur, instead of a technical concept allowing us to describe the relation between the housework and capital. The productive/unproductive distinction does have implications for the sorts of struggle appropriate for different sorts of workers, but it does not evaluate their work." (36)

Malos (37) gives a useful summary of what Marx actually said about the term 'productive'. In 'Theories of Surplus Value' Marx (38) excludes the reproduction of labour power from his definition of productive labour. Malos points out that Marx said any servant (seamstress, carpenter or cook for example) working for a private master is unproductive but that:

"The same labour can be productive when I buy it as a capitalist, as a producer, in order to produce more value, and unproductive when I buy it as a consumer, a spender of revenue, in order to consume its use-value." (39)

Marx continues by saying that the working class perform this kind of labour for themselves and it is therefore 'unproductive labour'. The distinction between unproductive and productive work is not based on the payment of a wage, work is unproductive if it "does not directly create the fund out of which they are paid" (40).

Housework cannot, then, be said to be productive in the Marxist use of the term (41), as Freeman wrote:

"The work which women do in the same home as the family has important similarity to the work some unproductive workers do who receive wages such as university lecturers, clergymen, social workers and policemen. All of these groups work to contribute to the reproduction of the relations of production, to the system of ownership and of power which govern our lives, and its maintenance both by force and through its acceptance by those who live under it. The work women do in maintaining and reproducing labour power is crucial to this, and thus to advanced capitalism. It is unproductive work by its very nature but it is nonetheless essential." (42)

### Housework as a mode of production

It has already been pointed out that Benston's (43) categorisation of housework as pre-industrial, whilst useful imagery for the characterisation of housework, is insufficient. Benston is placing housework within a different mode of production (44). Christine Delphy (45) argues that there are two distinct and autonomous modes of production in contemporary society, an industrial mode of production defined by capitalist property relations and capitalist relations, and a patriarchal mode of production and patriarchal exploitation. Delphy argues that married women's work in the home is no different from social production, except that they are not paid. Therefore their husbands, who are the beneficiaries of their work, are their exploiters. The marriage contract sustains this situation and is the basis of their class conditions, women forming a distinct class.

Maxine Molyneux (46) criticises Delphy for the theory that the subordination of women is based on men's appropriation of surplus value from women within marriage. Molyneux points out that not all women are married. Also marriage contracts and practices within marriage differ from society to society and within societies. She

adds:

"... in reducing the subordination of women merely to the marriage relationship, she leaves out of account the oppressive aspects both of motherhood, and of women's place on the labour market. Her narrow focus on the appropriation of labour within marriage also reduces the problem of women's oppression to purely economic concerns; it thereby fails to consider the ideological and psychological dimensions which are crucial if any understanding of any marriages at all is to be gained." (47)

John Harrison (48) put forward the idea that within each epoch there may be subordinate modes of production distinct from the dominant mode. These subordinate modes may be remnants of previously dominant modes ("vestigial modes") or precursors of future dominant modes ("foetal modes"). In addition to these modes are "client" modes of production which are "either created or co-opted by the dominant mode to fulfil certain functions within the economic and social system"(49). Harrison argues that housework, along with many areas of state activity and some non-capitalist sectors, falls into this category. Housework has a symbiotic relationship with capitalism on whose cycle capitalism depends for its own reproduction. The function that the housework mode of production performs for the capitalist mode is that it provides use values for the subsistence of the wage worker and this contributes to the reproduction of labour power. Harrison maintains that the housewife, through her labour, lessens the value of the wage earner's labour power by providing services which if bought on the market would raise the cost of subsistence and eventually affect wages. The value of labour power being lessened enables the capitalist to pay wages below the value of labour power. The housewife, because she receives only her subsistence in return for

her labour, therefore contributes a surplus of labour which appears in the capitalist sector as surplus value. Harrison concludes that women are a distinct class because their work is performed outside of the capitalist mode of production though they may hold dual class membership of the houseworking class and working class proper if they also go out to work.

The idea that domestic labour should be seen as a separate mode of production has been well criticised by Molyneux (50), Jean Gardiner, Susan Himmelweit and Maureen Mackintosh (51).

Molyneux argues against Delphy's proposition that housework is a mode of production autonomous from capitalism. Domestic labour depends on 'using or transforming' commodities produced and bought in the capitalist sector. Thus, asks Molyneux, "since all housework's inputs except labour are derived from the capitalist sector, in what sense, if any, can housework be seen as autonomous from it?" (52). Delphy implies that housework, as an autonomous mode of production, should be seen as independent of the various dominant modes of production (slavery, feudal or capitalist, for example). Harrison, on the other hand implies that housework, as a subordinate mode in capitalism, is a specific creation of capital. Molyneux criticises both of these implications on the same basis. Neither view takes account of the interconnections between housework and the dominant modes of production throughout history. Molyneux points out that within the domestic sphere there "have been important changes over the centuries, many of them connected with changes in the dominant mode of production" (53). She gives the example that the transition to capitalist agriculture increased

the purchase of food by families and decreased consumption of their own production.

So far the criticisms of Delphy and Harrison have been directed against arguments they put forward to arrive at the idea of a domestic mode of production. But could there be a domestic mode of production? Gardiner et al point out that although Marx does not use the term 'mode of production' consistently, he did, however, identify the capitalist mode of production and other historical epochs (feudal and so on):

"... by means of a particular set of social relations defining in each a single contradiction; the relation between producers and the controllers of their labour. The concept mode of production is thus fundamental to Marx's theory of history; changes in the set of production relations and the development of the productive forces being 'in the last instance' the determinant of the historical process." (54)

Gardiner et al argue that in Marxian thought there is in any historical period one basic contradiction to the "determination of the laws of development of that society" (55), which is in capitalist society the contradiction between capital and labour. Thus, they argue, the "analysis of domestic labour must be situated in relation to the contradiction and dynamic of the capitalist mode of production" (56).

Molyneux argues in a similar vein to Gardiner et al that the concept mode of production generally refers to two levels of analysis in the Marxist usage of the term, "first to the elements of the productive structure (ie forces and relations of production) and secondly to the laws of motion of the mode concerned" (57). Molyneux uses Balibar's (58) interpretation of Marx's concept of

'mode of production' on which to base her argument. Balibar interpreted 'mode of production' as a unit of periodisation, which divides history into different epochs of economic development and secondly a concept on which our "knowledge of determinate social formations depends" (59). From this Molyneux concludes that there cannot be a domestic mode of production (D.M.P.):

"Client modes such as the D.M.P., ... could never become generalised because they would never constitute the economic and social base of a social formation; in other words, they lack a productive base of their own. It goes without saying that there has never been, nor can there be, any social formation or part of one governed by the housework mode of production. This absence of a productive base, and the absence of any social production within the D.M.P., renders problematic the very use of the term 'productive' in this context." (60)

#### Housework and surplus value

Dalla Costa, James, Federici, Harrison and Gardiner (61) (who later changed her mind) are among those who have asserted that housework produces surplus value for capitalism. To recapitulate briefly, the argument is usually along the following lines: the labour involved in housework is assumed to have more value than the payment the wife receives for her own consumption out of her husband's wage packet. Thus the housewife is performing surplus labour, which is acquired by the husband as part of his consumption and therefore adds to his labour power. Because the husband's consumption is subsidised by his wife, the capitalist is able to pay the husband below the value of his labour power. Hence the extraction of surplus value by the capitalist comes from the male worker and indirectly through his wife.

Wally Seacombe (62) maintains that housework does not produce

surplus value, but his explanation of how housework produces value is closely related to the arguments put forward to show that housework does produce surplus labour. Seecombe's main thesis is that housework exhibits a dual nature under capitalism. On the one hand it has no direct relation to capital, it is not productive, does not produce surplus value and is not therefore governed by the law of value. On the other hand it does create a value because it adds to the creation of the commodity labour power. Labour power when exchanged for a wage on the market realises the value of the housewife's labour:

"... it (domestic labour) contributes directly to the creation of the commodity labour power while having no direct relation with capital. It is this special quality, which defines the character of domestic labour under capitalism."  
(63)

Gardiner et al reject the approach that domestic labour produces surplus value as "inadequate and as disguising more than it reveals" (64).

Margaret Coulson, Maga Magov and Hilary Wainwright in a critique of Seecombe state that it is not true that domestic labour creates value, albeit necessary labour...

"... it nevertheless does not create value at all, because its immediate products are use values and not commodities; they are not directed towards the market, but are for immediate consumption within the family." (65)

Molyneux, Gardiner et al and Coulson et al (66) all point out the false assumption that is made by those who claim housework produces value or surplus value, that is:



"This treats as equivalent, and therefore comparable, the concrete labour in the domestic sphere and the abstract labour time of commodity production. Yet they are not comparable labours since housework is not subject to the general equalisation of labour; hence there is no basis for the calculation of a transfer of surplus labour time between the two spheres unless the law of value is redefined." (67)

Coulson et al contend that it is the marriage contract and not the market which controls the participation of the housewife in the production of the commodity labour power. "Marriage and parenthood" are the only basis by which domestic labour is related to social labour, thus they argue:

"Housework under capitalism therefore remains a specific labour to which the concept of abstract labour does not apply: it is this aspect which gives it its specific privatised character and which provides a material basis for the relative autonomy of women's oppression from the central axis of capitalist exploitation." (68)

An additional problem with equating domestic labour time with wage labour time is that it fails to distinguish between housework and female wage labour, and the possible effects the latter might have. The approach then tends to see housework under capitalism as stagnant. Thus say Gardiner et al:

"As a result and because, in addition, no account is taken of the wife's potential for wage work, we find this approach static and ahistorical." (69)

#### Housework and the value of labour power

Those who have argued that housework adds to the commodity labour power, usually claim that the housewife therefore lowers the value of labour power because she provides the labour force for the waged worker's day to day reproduction. It is argued that because



housewives provide a subsidy to capitalism, that it is therefore in the interests of capital to maintain the position of women in the home. This approach is again guilty of seeing housework in a static relation to labour power. Housework varies from society to society and within societies over time. Molyneux points out that housework is:

"... subject to a variety of cultural and political conditions which establish what the standard of living for different strata and categories of the working class might be. It not only varies according to the different categories of labour (skilled/unskilled, black/white, male/female) but also according to different circumstances which affect the bargaining position of labour at any given time, such as labour supply and the level of class struggle." (70)

It cannot be assumed that housework plays any significant part in determining the value of labour power at all. Molyneux argues that if the day to day cost of reproducing labour via the market is high, then it is likely that domestic labour will be undertaken to lessen the cost. But she says:

"This cannot be regarded as axiomatic, and it requires empirical evidence to show that it costs workers less to perform their own domestic labour than to purchase what they require on the market." (71)

Molyneux makes the important observation that workers who have the lowest valued labour power are those who are least likely to have wives adding to their daily reproduction, that is migrants and single workers, about whom Molyneux remarks:

"Even supposing that they were able and willing to afford the necessary appliances, such categories of workers live in conditions (slums, hotels, shanties) which make it difficult for them to perform their own domestic labour, as a consequence they tend to rely on services and food obtained on the market." (72)

In view of the considerations above it thus becomes difficult to argue that female domestic labour is essential for capitalism. So long as labour power is reproduced on a day to day basis it is relatively unimportant to capitalism as to how this is achieved. A point often ignored in the domestic labour debate is that it is not only housewives who perform domestic labour. In addition to the single people and migrant workers mentioned above, who may perform domestic labour for themselves, families may involve children and the male wage earner in sharing domestic duties. Even within families that have a strict division of labour based on traditions of 'femininity' and 'masculinity', the man usually has a part in 'home maintenance' for example, repair jobs around the home, gardening, car maintenance and so forth. This is not to argue that the male wage earner's contribution to domestic labour is anywhere near approaching that of the housewife's contribution, rather that he too is very likely to contribute in part to the day to day reproduction of his wife.

If the potential of the married woman as a wage earner is considered there is a sense in which full time housewives could be seen to raise the value of the male wage earners' labour power. The expectation that the working class male wage earner should be able to provide enough money for his wife to be a full time housewife, means that the capitalist is expected to pay a family wage (although it is by no means the case that wages do always cover these costs). If it could be assumed that all husbands had wives who were also wage earners the claim for a family wage is no longer a necessity (73). Thus the benefits that capitalism receives

from women's position in the home are questionable.

### Problems in the domestic labour debate

Molyneux accuses many of those in the domestic labour debate of being guilty of "functionalism". To suggest that housework is "necessary", "crucial" or "essential" to capitalism, or that capitalism has somehow created housework, is to place housework in a purely functional relation to capitalism. Referring to Marx, Molyneux maintains that the capitalist is not interested in the labourer's reproduction (the labourer can take care of himself) and thus the capitalist is not interested in the domestic sphere. Molyneux argues:

"... it may well be that, at another level, that of concrete social functions, the form of organisation of the domestic sphere and the social relations within it do play an important role in the reproduction of given formations. Nevertheless, whatever the relations between the domestic sphere and the requirements of social reproduction, they are not established simply because of their functionality for capitalism." (74)

A trap that many writers have fallen into in the domestic labour debate is to regard housework as a relatively static phenomenon. It is important to take into account the various forms that domestic labour has taken over time and the cultural and social variations in different societies. Coulson et al make this point:

"... a purely structural analysis of housework under capitalism is not at all adequate, only an historical account of the modifications which it has undergone and continues to undergo can interrelate and explain what in Gardiner's article, for example, appear as discrete forces acting upon domestic labour." (75)

The domestic labour debate has often been reduced to the exclusive

analysis of economic factors. The concentration on economic issues has meant that important issues such as the sexual division of labour have not been adequately analysed. Malos argues against the narrowness of the debate:

"Women are not only housewives, the position of women in the family cannot be reduced to the housework issue, any more than the position of women in society as a whole. The family in our society, based as it is on heterosexual monogamy, is more than merely a device for servicing the male work force, though it is that too." (76)

Molyneux argues that besides economics, women's subordination must be analysed in consideration of the fields of psychoanalysis, sexuality, language and ideology. Women's subordination, she argues, must be seen at a more general level:

"... an attempt has to be made to analyse the complex combination of material relations through which women's subordination is mediated; such an analysis would include in addition to an examination of the 'domestic sphere', consideration of the sexual division of labour, reproduction, the labour market, changes and variations in the value of male and female labour power and the role of the state in maintaining women in a dependent position within the family." (77)

The functionalist, economist and static approaches of the domestic labour debate authors probably explains the failure to incorporate a thorough analysis of women's position in the labour market. Analysis, for example, based on the assumption of the 'family wage' ignores not only the fact that many wives enter the labour market today, precisely because their husbands do not receive a wage sufficient to support his whole family, but also fails to analyse the significance of other times during capitalism when large numbers of married women were involved in the work force. Coulson

et al shows that the family takes a new form under capitalism. Because marriage is no longer based on "the solid foundations of material production" (78), as in pre-capitalist times, it becomes less stable because it is 'voluntary'. The stability of the family, they argue, is further threatened by women entering the labour market. At one stage during the 19th century, for example, in certain areas of Britain demand for labour was so high that men, women and children became labourers (79). One manifestation of this was that when young girls and old women were paid to look after small children while mothers worked in the factories or mills, thus argue Coulson et al:

"The bond of property, even at the level of parental control of children's labour, was loosened. The disappearance of privatised housework coincided with high instability of the working class." (80)

Towards the end of the 19th century men's wages rose and demand for female labour declined. The family then became more stable. But because it was not the centre of production, as in pre-capitalist times, marriage still retained the 'voluntary' characteristic which capitalism gave to it.

The massive entry of married women into the labour force since the 1950s is again partly in response to a tendency for the male not to have a wage sufficient to maintain his family to expected living standards. Analyses, then, which assume the existence of a 'family wage' throughout capitalism and ignore the significance of women's contribution to the labour force can only be incomplete. Landes remarks:

"We can no longer separate women who are housewives from women who are productive labourers, even for the purpose of analysis. We need to understand the inter-relationships between work done in the home and work in production, that is between production and reproduction." (81)

Although there are many problems with the way in which authors have tried to analyse housework under capitalism, the domestic labour debate has not been fruitless. The debate has moved theoretical discussion away from approaches which regarded the housewife's role under capitalism as purely consumptive. The household is assuredly important to capitalism as a unit of consumption but also important (although not essential) for the production of use values which contribute to the reproduction of the labour force.

The domestic labour debate began as an attempt to analyse women's subordination under capitalism. Various attempts have been criticised and rejected along the way, but because they have provoked carefully constructed criticism, they have therefore been instrumental in encouraging the development of approaches which more satisfactorily explain women, at least in relation to housework, under capitalism. The domestic labour debate is also important for recognising the importance of analysing both women's position in relation to men and women's relationship to capitalism.

Criticisms and assessment of the domestic labour debate suggest a need to provide a wider theoretical framework for the analysis of married women's work (both paid and unpaid). The framework should be able to incorporate analysis of women's position in the home and in the labour force. A framework for analysis should also be able to avoid economic reductionism by allowing for a full analysis of

the sexual divisions between men and women.

The next chapter discusses theoretical perspectives which do incorporate analyses of women in the labour market as well as the home.



## THEORIES OF WOMEN'S WAGED LABOUR

In our discussion of the domestic labour debate one of the most crucial points to emerge was that it can no longer be applicable, if it ever was in Britain, to analyse women's oppression as wives and mothers without analysis of their exploitation as wage labourers. Nearly 50% of married women are now employed at any one time and the majority of married women will now be employed for at least some periods of their married lives. The relationship that women have with the labour market is marked in general by several characteristics which distinguish it from men's involvement in the labour force. That is, the majority of jobs women do, especially part-time jobs, suffer from a combination of poor pay, bad conditions, few fringe benefits and little chance of promotion. Much of women's employment is dull, repetitive and boring and is largely in unskilled or semi-skilled work. In addition to this vertical concentration of women's employment, the majority of women are also horizontally concentrated into certain types of occupations or industries, for example clerical and service occupations, and specific industries within manufacturing, for example clothing and footwear industries (1).

Despite legislation in the 1970s, for example the Equal Pay Act, the Sex Discrimination Act and the setting up of the Equal Opportunities Commission, women continue to be a disadvantaged labour force (2). It is therefore important to provide a theoretical basis on which women's disadvantaged position can be understood. This chapter, then, looks at the different theories which have been espoused to explain the position of women in the

labour force. We shall begin by looking at the neo-classical economists' approach to women's waged labour. The discussion of the neo-classicalists is based largely on articles in 'The economics of women and work' edited by Alice H Amsden (3). The book gives an excellent overview of the neo-classical approach and criticisms of the perspective. We shall then move on to look at the different types of dual labour market theories which have been used to explain women's disadvantaged position in the labour force and again the difficulties we are faced with if we use these theories to analyse women's employment. Finally we shall look at the Marxist feminist approaches to women's employment and I hope to show this perspective as the most satisfactory to explain women's disadvantaged position in the labour market and its capabilities of highlighting the importance of connecting women's position in the family with women's waged labour.

### The neo-classical approach

The neo-classical approach takes the individual as its starting point for analysis. The assumption is that individuals are faced with freedom of choice and act rationally by making a choice which gives greatest utility to themselves. The extent to which the individual is able to maximise utility is limited, however, by a number of constraints, the greatest of these are incomes and prices. The individual's behaviour is therefore largely determined by incomes and prices. Because of the few variables employed in the neo-classical framework it is believed that the model can be applied to all individuals regardless of their class, race, culture and place in time. All other factors influencing the individual's

behaviour (ideological or cultural, for example) are regarded as 'tastes' and assumed to be outside the sphere of economic analysis.

Jacob Mincer (4) in attempting to investigate the rise in women's employment since the 1960s developed a framework which has since been influential amongst neo-classical economists investigating women's employment. Mincer set out to resolve the apparent contradiction between time series and cross-sectional findings on married women's labour force participation. Mincer refers to the 'backward-bending' supply curve of labour, that is, the notion that an increase in the average wage in real terms, decreases the hours of work offered by suppliers of labour. He argues that empirical evidence shows that this effect is stronger than the substitution effect (the substitution effect would mean that more hours would be worked because an increase in wages makes leisure time more expensive). He says:

"The secular negative association between the length of the work week, participation rates of males, and rising real incomes is clearly consistent with the backward-bending supply curve." (5)

He notes, however, that to apply the same notion to women's employment is "immediately challenged by contradictory evidence in time series" (5). That is, women's employment in the States had doubled between 1890 and 1960 despite the fact that real income had tripled in the same period. For Mincer, this apparent contradiction is explained by the wife's own wage rate, thus analysis from an individual rather than family basis. Women are drawn into the labour force because their own wage rate increases making the opportunity costs of both leisure and housework higher.

The substitution of market goods ("domestic servants, labour saving appliances and frozen food") for home production becomes more viable as higher female wage rates increase the scarcity of leisure time and time spent in housework. Thus Mincer concludes that:

"... given the income elasticity of demand for home goods and for leisure, the extent to which income differentials affect hours of work in the two sectors depends on the ease with which substitution in home production or consumption can be carried out. The lesser the substitutability the weaker the negative income effect on hours of work at home, and the stronger the income effect on hours of work in the market." (7)

Mincer's analysis of women's employment deviated from the conventional neo-classical approach by his inclusions of time as a variable in his framework. Alice Amsden maintains that by doing so Mincer has broadened the scope for other neo-classical economists to include other non-market variables into their analysis. She says:

"Thus was born the 'New home economics' and marriage, motherhood, divorce and death became grist for the economists mill." (8)

Gary Becker (9) developed a theory of marriage using the neo-classical approach. According to Becker, people marry mainly because they want children. Added to this, when people love each other, thus desire to have frequent contact and share things, they can increase their utility by sharing the same household. Becker maintains that the division of labour within the family is also an advantage of marriage (or co-habiting) in that he conceptualises the marriage relationship as a "two person firm". The woman "hires" the man to be the breadwinner because her labour market productivity and wages are lower than those of the man. The man in

turn "hires" the woman because he is incapable of bearing children and his time is too expensive to do housework.

Such an explanation of marriage requires exploration of why there are differentials in the labour market between the sexes. For the neo-classical economists the answer lies in human capital. Women do not invest as much as men into their own human capital and therefore have lower productivity. Even though a man and woman may be of the same age and have the same qualifications, neo-classicists argue that the woman has lower productivity because of her spending fewer years in the labour force than men, these years being interrupted to have and raise children. The neo-classicists also maintain that women deliberately choose jobs with limited possibilities for promotion or on-the-job training and this is shown in the lower earnings women receive. Mincer and Polachek give a fairly typical neo-classical explanation of women in relation to human capital in their article "Family investments in human capital" (10). The major function of the family, Mincer and Polachek maintain, is the building of human capital in children. The investment that parents make to build up the human capital in their children is analysed by Mincer and Polachek with regard to sexual divisions within the family and the wage differential between men and women in paid employment. On the basis of a national longitudinal study of work experience (NLS) in the USA 1967, Mincer and Polachek argue that ...

"... foregone market-orientated human capital of mothers is part of the price of acquiring human capital in children and more generally, a price extracted by family life." (11)

On the other hand, the price extracted by family life from fathers

is their "greater market specialisation, longer hours, and greater intensity of work and of job training ..." (12). Mothers, then, invest time into children at the expense of labour market experience and thus their acquisition of human capital. Fathers, however, concerned with the financial investment into their children continue to build their own human capital because the maximisation of financial rewards is dependent upon their labour market participation. Changes do occur, however, in parents' investments in their children on a cost-benefit basis. Thus, Mincer and Polachek argue, if wages rise for women in the labour market it is to be expected that there will be an increase in women's employment and lower fertility.

Beth Niemi (13) attempts to explain the higher rate of unemployment amongst women, in comparison to men, by using a neo-classical approach. Niemi maintains that the main reason for women having a higher rate of unemployment is that they are frequently moving in and out of the labour force. Re-entering the labour market usually involves a period of frictional unemployment while women search for the best jobs available, thus maximising their income. Again the search for the best job is conceived on a cost-benefit basis. The cost of the search (the time unemployed) for a good job is weighed against the returns a good job will return. Niemi makes a distinction between short-term and long-term unemployment for women. She argues:

" ... women are less mobile than men within the labor force, occupationally and geographically, because of systematic differences by sex in the profitability of a given move and the expected period over which returns will be reaped. This factor raises the female unemployment rate. When women are

faced with the prospect of a very long-term unemployment, however, and the expected gain from continued labor participation falls quite low, they are more likely than men to leave the labor force, because more valuable non-market uses for time tend to be available to women." (14)

Thus according to Niemi, women's unemployment whether short-term or long-term is a matter of their own choice.

### Criticism

Problems with the neo-classical economists' analyses of women and employment stem from the weak foundations upon which neo-classical theories are based generally. The neo-classical economists, in attempting to formulate paradigms which are applicable across cultures and over time, succeed in explaining little. Theories based on the idea of rational individuals being able to make choices which maximise utility assume too much. Neo-classical economists, by positioning the freedom of choice that each individual has, ignore important variables that may and do limit the freedom of the individual to make choices. Discrimination that may occur on grounds of race, sex or class, for example, is ignored by the neo-classical theorists. Amsden points out that it is not unreasonable to assume individuals have freedom of choice, "in a world populated by atomistic individuals with roughly equal endowments of material and human capital" but that ...

"... in a world in which men and women, and workers and capitalists, have unequal wealth and power, their abilities to exercise freedom of choice differ. In such a world, all women may be subject to discrimination. All may be saddled with child bearing responsibilities. Working-class wives may have little choice about whether or not to work. The working class as a whole has no choice at all." (15)

Isabel Sawhill argues against the idea of individuals making choices to maximise utility in her criticism of the 'new home economics' developed by neo-classical economists. Sawhill points to the fact that even when people do have the ability to make choices they may well make mistakes in their choice. Some mistakes can be easily be rectified, for example, the mistake of eating in a restaurant with bad food. Other mistakes, however, are not so easily overcome. If to marry or have a child, for example, turns out to be a poor choice the consequences of that mistake are not easily rectified. Mistakes may happen for several reasons. For example, the present benefit of a choice may have an unseen cost in the future of which the individual is not aware. Sawhill lists three main reasons why poor choices may occur:

"... insufficient knowledge of private consequences, failure to consider social consequences, and the obsolescence of social guidelines and mores in a rapidly changing world." (16)

The neo-classical analysis of the rise in wives' participation in the labour force is said by Amsden to "explain everything and nothing" (17). In attempting to formulate a theory which can be generalised over time and cultures the neo-classical economists become vague and circular in their arguments. The theory of marriage (18) for example, posits the difference in wages between men and women as one of the major determinants when two individuals assess the gains from marriage. Fertility is also explained by the wage rate of the mother (if the wage is high children become more costly in terms of time). Both marriage and fertility are thus explained using earnings as a major determinant. When neo-



classical economists attempt to explain why men have higher earnings than women the arguments are turned around. Because women marry and raise children they fail to build human capital in terms of on the job experience and this lowers their labour market productivity and therefore their earnings. Sawhill comments:

"So we have come full circle. We have seen that women earn less than men because of their special role within the family, but that their special role within the family - and indeed the desirability of marriage and children - are importantly related to the economic status of women." (19)

Using the idea of human capital to explain women's lower wages in the labour force does little to eliminate the problem. If women do not build human capital in the labour market this may be through their awareness of low wages caused by discrimination in the labour market and they may be discouraged from participation because of this. The concept of human capital goes some way to explaining why women, whatever their skills, are concentrated in a very small group of occupations. Amsden, however, criticises the structure of neo-classical theory for being "a-historical and a-social" and for attempting to divorce economics from power. Amsden argues that historical analysis is essential to understand women's participation in the labour force. She says:

"An historical analysis ... puts flesh on the skeleton of the income and substitution effect and provides a more penetrating picture of why women of different social classes went out to work in greater numbers after the war." (20)

Having seen that the neo-classical approach is inadequate for the understanding of women, we shall now move on to look at a perspective which, unlike the neo-classical perspective, does

present us with an historical analysis of women's employment and does, to varying degrees, attempt to connect the social and political with the economic. That is, we shall move on to consider the various dual labour market theories.

### Dual labour market theories

Dual labour market theories grew out of the institutionalist approach to economics. The institutionalists can be seen as reacting not only against neo-classical economics but also against Marxism. Many of the institutionalists have given lengthy and detailed criticism to the neo-classical framework (21) whilst still retaining certain principles on which economics are based.

In this section we shall look first at the institutionalist approach to dual labour markets developed by Doeringer and Piore (22). This approach rests much upon the importance of internal labour markets and is a development of the work of Slichter, Lester and Kerr (23) in this respect. The difference in dual labour market theory is the emphasis on those who are not included in the internal labour markets. Dual labour market theory explains women's disadvantaged position in the market as being a result of their segregation into certain parts of the labour market. Women's high unemployment is similarly explained as being the result of overcrowding and excess supply in certain sectors of the economy.

From institutionalist theories of segregation we move to look at the British based Barron and Norris formulation (24) of dual labour market theory and the American radical theories of segmentation. Both approaches arose out of the institutionalist

formulation but take different theoretical standpoints in their explanation of how segmentation occurred historically and how it is maintained. All three approaches, however, see women's disadvantaged position in the labour force as being caused by the segmentation of the labour force.

#### Internal labour markets and the dual labour market

Doeringer and Piore developed the concept of a dual labour market from their analysis of internal labour markets in the USA. They define internal labour markets as ...

"... an administrative unit, such as a manufacturing plant, within which the pricing and allocation of labour is governed by a set of administrative rules and procedures." (25)

In conventional economics, pricing, allocating and training decisions are agreed by economic variables. Doeringer and Piore argue this to be the case in the external market but that internal labour markets are governed by administrative rules. The internal and external labour markets are connected, they maintain, and movement occurs between the two markets at the points of entry to and exit from the internal labour market. All other jobs in the internal markets are fixed internally either by promotion or by transfer of the workers already there. The jobs within the internal market, Doeringer and Piore argue, are therefore not under the influence of competitive forces in the external labour market. The advantage of the internal market, for the workers within it, is that they have exclusive rights to jobs within it and continuity of employment, giving a security which the external market does not. Another factor increasing the desirability of internal labour

market for workers is the association with equity. Doeringer and Piore argue:

"The rules which govern an internal market are thought to effectuate standards of equity that a competitive market cannot or does not respect. The standards at stake include not only the criteria upon which pricing and allocative decisions are made, but also administrative procedures such as union grievance procedures and managerial 'open door' policies through which these criteria are applied and reviewed." (26)

Because of the advantages, it is argued, workers are willing to sacrifice earnings to acquire and retain employment in internal labour markets. This is a further encouragement to management to internalise pricing and allocation. Because of the stability generated by internal labour markets, management, and indirectly the workers, are said to benefit from savings made on recruitment, screening and training costs. Internal recruitment also provides a more reliable workforce in that the workers reviewed for a position internally are already known to the management (attendance and work records for example).

In summary, Doeringer and Piore maintain it is stability which is the most important feature of internal labour markets. Along with stability comes rigidity and irreversibility in the administrative rules governing the internal labour markets. They say:

"... The gradual removal of the industrial workforce from its agricultural antecedents, the decline in economic fluctuations the increased specialisation of machinery, and the rise in non-wage compensation and social welfare payments have all worked to gradually increase the stability, and the incentives for stability within the internal labour market." (27)

## Dual Labour Market Theory

Doeringer and Piore assert that internal labour markets by their very nature are designed to 'discriminate', because they select workers at 'ports of entry' and bestow privileges on those within the internal market. It is the better educated and skilled workers who usually find work in internal labour markets and who therefore reap the benefits of this kind of work. By focusing on those workers who are not in the internal market, Doeringer and Piore seek to explain the low-income and disadvantaged labour force by using the dual labour market theory.

The dual labour market theory was developed by M J Piore in 1969 (28) and further by Doeringer and Piore in 1971 (29). The theory argues that there are two types of labour market, a primary and secondary market. Doeringer and Piore characterise the two markets as follows:

"Jobs in the primary market possess several of the following characteristics, high wages, good working conditions, employment stability, chances of advancement, equity and due process in the administration of work rules. Jobs in the secondary market, in contrast, tend to have low wages and fringe benefits, poor working conditions, high labour turnover, little chance of advancement, and often arbitrary and capricious supervisors." (30)

Workers in the two sectors, they maintain, also show certain characteristics which reflect the type of job they are in. For example, the workers in the secondary sector are thought to have "greater turnover, higher rates of absenteeism, more insubordination, and engage more freely in petty theft and pilferage" (31). Those workers in the secondary markets are there

because of their place of residence, inadequate skills, poor work histories and because of discrimination by employers.

Doeringer and Piore divide the secondary labour market into three types. The first contains completely unstructured jobs, the opposite of those in the internal labour markets. The types of jobs in this category are casual labouring jobs in construction, domestic work and dishwashing in restaurants. The next type of secondary labour market is said to be 'secondary' internal labour markets. These are markets which do have internal formal structures but have many points of entry. The work is usually low paid and unpleasant, for example, blue collar jobs in foundries, stitching and pressing jobs and menial hospital jobs. The third type of secondary jobs are those attached to primary markets but having few or no steps to promotion or transfer rights. An example Doeringer and Piore give for this type of market is in certain pulp and paper mills, where there is a wood yard where standards are less stringent than the rest of the enterprise.

An important aspect of dual labour market theory is the interaction between developments in economic structure, developments in technology and patterns of labour market behaviour. That is, technological development requires a decrease in labour market mobility. This can only happen by the development of oligopolistic markets which give firms greater control and certainty in their products and markets and therefore allows the formation of a stable, high paid labour force (the primary sector). The secondary sector is seen to be important because it provides the flexibility still required by the system. Expansion of the primary sector over

the trade cycle can be achieved by subcontracting to the secondary sector or by temporarily employing secondary workers.

Doeringer and Piore are concerned with policy orientated solutions to discrimination within the labour market which they argue does exist. However, they assert that some workers benefit from the secondary market because they require jobs of the secondary kind to fit their own requirements. Within this category Doeringer and Piore include married women with family responsibilities. They say:

"There are groups of workers in the labour force whose economic position or phase in their life cycle leads them to place little value upon permanent employment and chances of advancement. Such is the case with working mothers who are preoccupied with their families and whose earnings are used as a supplement to the basic wage of the man who heads the household. Many such women expect to quit their jobs to have more children, or, when they have accumulated enough funds to finance certain household durables. Moreover, they often seek jobs which will tolerate lateness or absenteeism caused by family emergencies." (32)

#### The dual labour market and unemployment

The high rate of unemployment among women (compared with men) is seen by dual market theorists to be largely frictional unemployment, reflective of the relatively high rates of labour turnover in the secondary market. Barbara Bergmann, for example, argues that black people and women are designated bad jobs with few rewards. The extreme occupational segregation of women into repetitive, boring work with no chances of advancement gives them little incentive to stay in any one particular job. She says:

"To go in exasperation from one boring job to another, even at the cost of unemployment, may be better than staying in one particularly boring job, especially if nothing is to be

gained by staying in terms of salary, responsibility and advancement. An occasional retreat from a boring job into unpaid housework is undoubtedly refreshing for women who can afford such a luxury." (33)

Bergmann posits from this that the most job leaving is done by women and black people with the greatest ability who thus find occupational segregation the most distressful. Isabel Sawhill (34) calculated that in the USA approximately half of the 18% difference in labour turnover between men and women could be accounted for by the fact that women were concentrated in occupations and industries which have a high turnover for both men and women. For Bergmann, then, the way to reduce unemployment and labour turnover for women and black people is to reduce segregation in the labour market. Bergmann argues that if labour were distributed according to the individual's aptitude (rather than on a sex or race basis) fewer individuals would find themselves 'mis-matched' in their jobs. Bergmann maintains that many occupations which have a high turnover at the moment, for example, labourers, service occupations and some clerical work, are low paid because they are over-crowded with a 'captive' labour supply of black people and women who, because of discrimination have nowhere else to go. Thus, says Bergmann, if discrimination were eased part of this labour supply would go to other occupations. Following from this, Bergmann conjectures that if these occupations and industries were not over-crowded the supply of labour would become more scarce and hence wages and conditions would have to improve.

#### The dual labour market theory in Great Britain

Until now our discussion of the institutionalist economists has



been based on articles written in the USA, about the USA. In 1973 Bosanquet and Doeringer attempted to discover if there was a dual labour market in Britain. The authors recognised that there was an immediate difficulty in applying the theory to Britain because of the lack of relevant data available. However they maintain that circumstantial evidence on wage-earnings, profits, job tenure, internal labour markets and discrimination could provide information on the extent to which dual labour markets operate in Britain. Bosanquet and Doeringer consider that Britain does not have such a sharply delineated or so structured internal labour markets as the USA and that the distinction between primary and secondary sectors is weaker. However, they argue, despite the differences between the USA and Great Britain, the distinction of primary and secondary sectors is still useful. Of Britain they say:

"In the primary sector, workers on average show relatively low levels of turnover, have higher earnings and relatively good advancement and on-the-job training opportunities. In the secondary sector, workers have low levels of skill and on-the-job training, earnings are low, promotion opportunities are infrequent, and turnover is relatively high. Women and coloured workers, with the exception of the better educated, find access to on-the-job training and to promotion severely limited." (35)

Non-institutionalist economists have attempted to expand and reformulate the dual labour market theory to fit with other theoretical perspectives. In Britain the most well-known non-institutionalist proponents of dual labour market theory are Barron and Norris (36). It is to their formulation of dual labour market theory that we now turn before examining the American radical theories of segregation.

### The Barron and Norris formulation

Barron and Norris use a different slant in the application of dual labour market theory. Instead of postulating a secondary sector built on economic disadvantage alone, they maintain that in the western world, dualism is not clearly visible...

"... except in those areas where salient social divisions have highlighted the distinction between the two sectors as well as reinforcing their interest." (37)

Barron and Norris cite black people in the USA as an example of workers experiencing secondary labour market conditions and contend that it is predominantly women in Britain who constitute a secondary labour force. The Barron and Norris formulation of dual labour market theory is one which is designed specifically to explain the position of women in the labour force. Five attributes are listed which are said to characterise secondary workers ...

"... dispensability, clearly visible social difference, little interest in acquiring training, low economism and lack of solidarity." (38)

Barron and Norris stress, however, that these attributes are the "product of the social relationship between employer and worker" and should not be thought to exist in the individual independently of that relationship, although such attributes may be shaped to an extent in the social system. The authors then attempt to show how the five attributes can be applied to women employees in Britain. They conclude that:

"It seems to us that women are the main secondary work force in Britain, and that the fact that the primary-secondary division coincides with sexual divisions in the labour market

has obscured the evidence of dualism in the British labour market." (39)

The Barron and Norris formulation pays little attention to history in the analysis of dual labour markets. In contrast, the American radical theories of segmentation, of which there are no equivalents in Britain, have concentrated mainly on the historical origins of segmentation and use a Marxist framework for their historical analysis.

### The radical theory of segmentation

The main proponents of the radical theory of segmentation in the labour market are Edwards, Reich and Gordon (40). Radical theories explain the origins of segmentation in the labour market as being because of the capitalists' need to divide and rule the labour force. Reich, Gordon and Edwards say their theory...

"... argues that political and economic forces within American capitalism have given rise to and perpetuated segmented labor markets, and that it is incorrect to view the sources of segmented markets as exogenous to the economic system." (41)

Reich et al argue that through history political-economic forces encouraged the division of the labour market into separate submarkets, each submarket having different behavioural rules and characteristics. Segmented labour markets, they argue are the outcome of this segmentation process. Reich et al identify four different segmentation processes. The first segmentation, in line with institutionalist theory, is into primary and secondary jobs (42). The second segmentation is within the primary sector where "subordinate" jobs (routine and bound to authority) are

distinguished from "independent" jobs (self-initiating and creative). The third segmentation is by race. It is argued that minority workers are present in secondary, subordinate primary and independent primary segments, but that the jobs they hold are often "race-typed" because of prejudice and geographical separation. The fourth type of segmentation Reich et al identify is by sex. That is, certain jobs are generally restricted to men and others to women. The wages in the female sector are usually lower than those of men. They say:

"Female jobs often require and encourage a 'serving mentality' - an orientation towards providing services to other people and particularly to men. The characteristics are encouraged by family and schooling institutions." (43)

Reich, Gordon and Edwards attempt to trace the historical roots of segmentation in the labour market by looking at monopoly capitalism. They argue that in America before monopoly capitalism (before the 1890s) competitive capitalism encouraged homogenisation of the labour force. That is, the factory system eliminated many crafts and specialised skills and created many semi-skilled jobs. The result of homogenisation was to produce many conflicts with workers, general strikes and a strong socialist party. At the same time as the work force homogenised oligopolistic corporations began to emerge. Reich et al say:

"Their new concerns were the creation and exploitation of monopolistic control, rather than the allocational calculus of short-run profit maximization." (44)

Because large corporations were aware of the revolutionary potential of proletarian movements, Reich et al contend that

employers sought to 'divide and conquer' (45) the labour force. Bureaucratic hierarchies and internal labour markets were formed and, in addition, employers consciously exploited race, ethnic and sex antagonisms to reduce the strength of unionism. Along with conscious efforts to divide the workers, Reich et al maintain that "systematic forces" also helped to segment the labour market. Different firms and industries grew at different rates and therefore caused a dichotomy in the industrial structure. Big monopoly companies needed a stable market and were unsuitable for areas of the market where demand was cyclical or seasonal. Monopolies, thus, subcontracted to smaller more competitive firms on the industrial periphery for certain products. This division, Reich et al argue, caused divisions in working conditions, wages and mobility patterns, which resulted in the formation of a primary and secondary sector in the labour market (46).

Radical theorists then, see the formation of segmentation in the labour market as directly related to the dynamics of monopoly capitalism. Segmentation is seen to be functional for capitalism because it divides the workers and therefore inhibits the struggle of workers against employers and legitimises inequality in autonomy and control.

#### Assessment of dual labour market theories

Two important questions arise from considering the concept of dual labour markets. The first is whether or not the dual labour market is a useful analytical tool itself. Second is whether or not the concept of a dual labour market is helpful to our understanding of

the position of women in the labour market. Criticisms of the dual labour market theories fall broadly into two main schools of thought. One is taken by those who accept the usefulness of the dual labour market idea but want to see further dimensions added to the theory (47) so that it adequately explains the position of women in the labour market. The other approach sees the idea of dual labour markets as unhelpful to our understanding of the labour market and rejects it in favour of other theories (48).

Dual labour market theory has been criticised for its lack of analytical power. That is, it is said only to describe a situation rather than explain it. Of the American dual labour market theories Jill Rubery remarks that...

"... analysis as it now stands is more a rationalization of the present structure of the American labour market than an explanation of how this was arrived at from the range of development paths open to it." (49)

Being descriptive presents the difficulty of applying the American dual labour market theories outside of the USA. The paper by Bosanquet and Doeringer (50) tried to do this but they admit themselves that it is difficult to find data to back up their theory. They attempt to show the existence of a dual labour market in Britain by taking data which implies duality, but as Glen Morgan and David Hooper point out (51), the majority of this data is based on earnings data, giving scant attention to other variables which are said to constitute a secondary labour market. Thus Bosanquet and Doeringer give little foundation for the assertion of a dual labour market in Britain and basically just point out that certain groups of the population are more subject to low pay than others.

As a corollary to this, Morgan and Hooper argue that dual labour market theories lack statistical evidence even when applied to America.

Both institutionalist and radical dual labour market theories are ambiguous about where primary and secondary employment begins and ends. The Doeringer and Piore formulation for example, gives three main types of dual labour market (52). The very fact that such diverse types of dual markets are postulated suggests that the conceptualisation of mere duality is to over-simplify the complexities of the labour market. Similarly the Barron and Norris formulation argues that dualism "can cut through firms, industries and sectors" but that dualism is "essentially a matter of degree" (53). Again we have the problem that authors attempt to stick a notion of the labour market being divided into two for the purposes of analysis, but are forced to use a wide interpretation of that concept to fit the theory to the actual complexities of the labour market. Morgan and Hooper argue that Barron and Norris do not attempt to identify dualism in either industrial firms or occupational differences but rather define the primary and secondary sector in terms of the workforce it employs. Thus they argue:

"The result is nothing more is being said than that groups in the workforce possess differential amounts of power, dependent partially on internal technological and economic factors and partially on external factors such as the social position of black and female workers." (54)

Dual labour market theorists have had a tendency to ignore the part which workers themselves have played in the formation of the labour

market as it is at present. Radical theories of segmentation, in particular, have tended to see the economic structure as purely the result of strategies of monopoly capitalists. On this point Rubery criticises radical theories of segmentation for assuming that an homogenised workforce would be able to fight for control of production and wages if divisions were not present in the labour market. She argues that it is possible that workers have only been able to establish and maintain a bargaining position from which to conduct their struggle because of the development of a structured labour force. (55)

Another area where it is important to include trade unionism in the analysis of economic development is in the part they have played in restricting capital from following certain labour market strategies. Beechey, for example, points to the equal pay legislation in Britain. The Confederation of British Industries had for some time been in favour of an equal pay act for women, providing that such legislation included the abolition of protective legislation for women. Beechey points out that it was the Trades Union Congress which managed to resist the abolition of the protective legislation for women when the Equal Pay Act was passed in 1970 (56).

Rubery argues that radical theories, besides missing out the role of the worker in economic development, also limit their analysis by focusing on the changes which occurred in the economic structure in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, thus giving more contemporary changes little attention. Rubery argues that this had the result of making radical theory a static analysis of the labour



market. She says:

"... analysis must ... be carried out within the context of a continuous struggle between capitalists and workers on the industrial front, over wages and over control of production."  
(57)

In addition to the general focus in the dual market theories there are several problems in the application of dual labour market theories to women. Beechey points out that the major concentration of women's employment are in different sectors of the economy. Women are distributed both horizontally in different occupations and industries and vertically, mainly in the semi and unskilled groups. She says:

"In the conflagration of the multifarious forms of employment into a heterogeneous category of secondary sector workers, the important differences between these predominantly female occupations become submerged." (58)

Perhaps the most important inadequacy of the dual labour market theory in explaining women's employment is its failure to give enough attention to the sexual division of labour. Beechey criticises Barron and Norris for treating the division of labour as an "exogenous variable" and assuming the dynamics of the labour market to be the determinant factor in explaining women's employment situation. Barron and Norris maintain that the sexual division of labour only contributes to and does not cause segmentation of women in the labour force. But as Beechey points out, only one (lack of solidarity between women) of the five attributes that Barron and Norris maintain contribute to women being secondary workers, does not relate to the importance of the family and sexual divisions in determining their labour market in

Position. A further point on the five attributes that Barron and Norris list is that to apply them to women does rest on certain stereotypical assumptions about women. For example, the argument that women are not likely to develop solidaristic relations with fellow workers is an assumption which is beginning to be refuted by contemporary research discussed in the next chapter (59).

### Conclusion

In conclusion I would argue that the dual labour market theories are without doubt a great advancement on neo-classical approaches to women's employment. Many of the problems in women's employment, for example poor pay, bad conditions and discrimination, are identified and highlighted in dual labour market theory. The Doeringer and Piore formulation of the dual market theory is on the whole unhelpful in our understanding of women's employment because it is based on sexist assumptions about married women in the labour force. That is, by seeing 'secondary employment' to be an advantage for married women because it fits their family circumstances, Doeringer and Piore fail to discuss alternative ways in which women need not be 'secondary' workers.

The radical approaches and the Barron and Norris formulation of dualism in the market do give important and useful suggestions for future policy to end discrimination against women in paid employment. However, where these latter approaches fail, I would argue, is at the very heart of the dual labour market theory. That is, in trying to adhere to a dualist notion of primary and secondary markets, the theorists in question are forced to

overlook many of the differences which occur within the areas of women's employment. One solution to the problems encountered so far in dual labour market theory is to take the criticisms into account and develop the theory further. Jo Anne Laws (60), for example, wants to see women's part-time employment distinguished as a more disadvantaged type of work than women's full time employment, whilst keeping both types of employment in the secondary market category. Yet further differentiations could no doubt be made within the secondary category to show differences between occupations, industries and firms. But the more we differentiate women's employment, the more distant the concept of a dual labour market becomes and the more questionable its applicability as a theory.

#### Marxist feminist theory

Over the last two decades much has been written about women in the labour market from a Marxist-feminist point of view. The approach as the name of the perspective suggests is a synthesis of two types of analysis. The Marxist analysis is based on a historical and economic approach and tends to highlight the Marxian concept of capital accumulation as being crucial to the understanding of women's position in the labour market. The feminist side of the theories places the major emphasis of women's disadvantaged position in the labour force as being rooted in patriarchy, and gives most attention to the sexual division of labour in the family. The extent to which the Marxist, the economic side of the Marxist feminist argument, is emphasised as opposed to the patriarchal side of the theories is the major point of contention

within Marxist-feminist theory. We shall start this section by looking at the work of Marx and Engels on the question of women and from there look at various Marxist-feminist perspectives. The last part of the chapter examines theoretical frameworks which can incorporate both gender and capitalist relations and the interrelationships between the two.

### Marx and Engels

For Marx the important characteristics of the manufacturing period of the capitalist mode of production was the division of labour, that is the breakdown of traditional handicrafts into a succession of manual tasks. The division of labour is arranged hierarchically with a class of unskilled labourers at the bottom of the scale. Marx argues that the manufacturing period of capitalism is conducive to the employment of women and children but that male labourers resist this tendency by insisting on maintaining apprenticeships even when they become unnecessary. As the hierarchy of concrete labours gave way to modern industry, 'real' capitalism takes effect. Machines make machines and the worker becomes an appendage to the machine. Modern industry provides the preconditions for the abolition of the division of labour (when everything is automated) and the division of labour is only perpetuated through traditional habit which fosters competition. Marx argues that the mechanisation of modern industry is the factor which allows women and children to be brought into the labour market. He says:

"In so far as machinery dispenses with muscular power, it becomes a means of employing labourers of slight muscular

strength, and those whose bodily development is incomplete, but whose limbs are all the more supple. The labour of women and children was, therefore, the first labouring sought for by capitalists who used machinery. That mighty substitute for labour and labourers was forthwith changed into a means of increasing the number of wage labourers by enrolling, under the direct sway of capital, every member of the workman's family, without distinction of age or sex." (61)

Marx then, maintained that because every individual of the family now became a wage labourer, the value of the man's labour power was lowered. He says:

"To purchase the labour-power of four workers may, perhaps, cost more than it formerly did to purchase the labour power of the head of the family, but, in return, four days' labour takes the place of one, and their price falls in proportion to the excess of the surplus labour of four over the supply volume of one." (62)

For Marx, then, the entry of women and children into the labour force fosters competition with the male and breaks down male resistance. Despite the problems which occur when all the members of a household are brought into the labour process, Marx argues that nevertheless a 'higher' form of family arises because women and children are brought from the domestic sphere to the process of production and this is the basis for a new economic foundation of the family. He says:

"It is obvious that the fact of the collective working group being composed of individuals of both sexes and all ages, must necessarily, under suitable conditions, become a source of humane development; although in its spontaneously developed, brutal, capitalistic form, where the labourer exists for the process of production, and not the process of production for the labourer that fact is a pestiferous source of corruption and slavery." (63)

Frederick Engels wrote in more detail about the position of women

under capitalism than did Karl Marx. Engels believed, as did Marx, that the employment of women breaks up the family. He says:

"The employment of the wife dissolves the family utterly and of necessity, and this dissolution, in our present society, which is based upon the family, brings the most demoralising consequences for parents, as well as children." (64)

For Engels it was the confinement of the woman to the private domestic sphere which formed the basis of her subordination to the man. Thus Engels sees the entry of women into social production as the precondition for women's emancipation. He says:

" ... To emancipate woman and make her the equal of man is and remains an impossibility as long as the woman is shut out from social productive labour and restricted to private domestic labour. The emancipation of woman will only be possible when woman can take part in production on a large, social scale, and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amount of her time." (65)

Engels argues that it is the development of capitalism to large-scale industry which provides the conditions for and even demands the employment of female labour. Engels believed that the entry of women into the labour market could break down male supremacy in the home because it gives women economic independence, besides giving less time for women to perform domestic duties which Engels believed would change more and more into public industry.

To sum up, R Delmar (66) lists three reasons why Engels saw that male domination would disappear in the epoch of modern industry. The first is that the proletarian family lacks private property which for Engels was the basis of the monogamous family. Secondly, the woman is no longer the property of her husband because she is economically independent from him. Thirdly, the proletarian family

lacks the means of securing male domination under bourgeois law.

Veronica Beechey has taken the work of Marx and Engels and broadened its scope to provide a framework for the analysis of women in the labour market. Beechey maintains that although Engels was right to see production and the family as determining the position of women, there are deficiencies in Engels' analysis. Beechey criticises Engels for not regarding the sexual division of labour within families as a problem. Engels also fails to analyse the role of state in reproducing the position of women in the family and in industry, and assumes that the monogamous family will disappear among the working classes when women are drawn into social production. In addition to deficiencies in Engels' analysis, Beechey points out that changes have also occurred under monopoly capitalism which also require Engels' account to be modified. She says in summary to her criticism of Engels:

" ... Engels fails to recognise what feminists have consistently argued, that the patriarchal family has remained within capitalist society, and its persistence is not merely a 'hangover' from a pre-industrial stage of capitalism or from a pre-capitalist society, nor even of sexist attitudes and prejudices which can be purged through argument and education, but is of fundamental economic, political and ideological importance to the capitalist mode of production."  
(67)

For Beechey the analysis of women's wage labour is importantly related to the analysis of the relationship between the family and the capital accumulation process. Beechey argues that the separation of the family from the means of production occurs in the course of capital accumulation. Historically this occurred when the whole family became involved in wage labour and capital

therefore dominates directly, of this period Beechey says:

"... The family appears to have become separated from the capitalist mode of production, it is in reality divorced only from the labour process (the site of production), and continues to play a vitally important role in the system of capitalist production as a whole." (68)

Marx argued that the object of capitalist production was the extraction of surplus value, either absolute (the extension of the working day) or relative (increasing the intensity of labour). As limits were placed on the working day, Marx argued, the extraction of relative surplus value has been concentrated on by capital, this involves trying to keep down or lower the value of labour power. Marx argued that modern industry was able to reduce the value of labour power by substituting unskilled for skilled workers, female labour for male labour and replacing adult workers with children. This de-skilling process, Marx argued, was able to take place because of the tendency of machinery to dispense with the need for human strength. Beechey argues that this latter argument is based in naturalistic assumptions that the physical strength of women is less than men, and is inadequate in view of the fact that women had been involved in heavy work in pre-capitalistic society and in the early stages of capitalism. Beechey then sets out to reconstruct Marx's analysis on a more properly materialistic basis.

Beechey goes along with Marx in arguing that the tendency of modern history to employ all members of the workman's family is advantageous to capital because the value of the labour power is spread over all members of the population and thus surplus value is higher and the value of labour power lowered. Marx assumed an



average value of labour power for theoretical purposes. He acknowledged that in practice, however, labour power does have different values which are determined by a number of factors, for example, expenses involved in training, national diversity, and the part played by women and children. Beechey argues that female labour may have a lower value than male labour. The reasons for this could be that women have less training and therefore the cost of reproducing their labour is lower. Secondly, she argues that, because of the existence of family, women are not expected to bear the cost of their own reproduction. Therefore it is assumed that women have husbands to provide for them and their children, hence the value of their labour power can be lowered. Beechey says:

"As far as women are concerned it is only possible to pay wage rates below the value of labour power because of the existence of the family, and because of the assumption that a woman is partly dependent upon her husband's wages within the family." (69)

Beechey argues that single and widowed women in the late 19th century and single mothers today suffer because of the assumption of male dependence. She says:

"The point is that even where women do not have husbands - or fathers - to support them, in patriarchal ideology their sexual position is defined in terms of the family as a patriarchal structure." (70)

Beechey argues that female wage labour can be seen as advantageous to capitalism, for example, because women's employment leads to a greater demand for consumer goods. Domestic work, such as sewing and mending, has to be replaced by purchasing ready made goods. Thus, the cost of keeping the family goes up.

Beechey also attempts to account for the concentration of women into semi- and unskilled occupations. Beechey argues that the tendency of modern industry towards the equalisation of labour was fought by the working class by restricting entry into skilled occupations. She says:

"This organised power has, historically, been over-whelmingly representative of male, white, skilled workers." (71)

Thus the entry of women into the labour force, Beechey argues, was restricted to lesser skilled jobs, because of struggle by male workers against de-skilling, and their subsequent protection of skilled jobs.

Beechey suggests that women may constitute a specific form of an industrial reserve army of labour. She says:

"I would argue that married women function as a disposable and flexible labour force in particular ways, and that the specificity of the position of women arises from their domestic role in the family and the prevalent assumption that this is their primary role." (72)

Beechey points out that women are more likely to be made redundant than men because, for example, they are less likely to be unionised. Secondly, Beechey argues, women are a flexible working population more likely to be horizontally mobile than men and willing to take part time work because of their position in the home. Thirdly, women's employment puts pressure on wages generally because their wages are lower than those of men. Beechey gives examples of when the reserve army of women has been drawn upon, ie in the First World War, and in the 1960s when restrictions were made on immigration to Britain from the Commonwealth.

Beechey recognises that there are limitations to her Marxist analysis, most importantly that it does not account for the tendency for female labour to be concentrated into certain industries and occupations; that is, the horizontal division of labour that divides men and women in the labour force. Beechey says in addition to the analysis of the labour process:

"The analysis of the horizontal division of labour, in order to explain why at certain moments some industries and trades have generated a demand for female labour would have to consider alternative sources of labour (are women the only available reserve army?) trade union policies relating to the recruitment of women, state policies towards both the employment of women and the family, and attitudes to women working in particular kinds of occupation." (73)

Beechey also calls for the analysis of the contradictory tendencies of female wage labour. That is, for example, capitalism has brought more and more married women into the labour market, but the state has by no means removed women's burden in the home especially in respect of child care. Thus the burden of domestic labour remains with women in addition to paid employment.

#### Criticism of Veronica Beechey

Floya Anthias gives extensive criticism to Beechey's analysis of female wage labour in an article "Women and the reserve army of labour" (74). Anthias argues that Beechey correctly criticises Engels for his economistic approach, and agrees that a dynamic analysis is necessary in the study of women's position. That is, analysis which doesn't concentrate solely on commodity production, but also considers family production in its broadest sense. What must be avoided, she argues, is an approach which

regards the family as static or "presupposed" for the purpose of analysis. She says:

"It would appear as theoretically mistaken to take the family as 'presupposed' for it is inextricably bound, affecting and affected by the productive process, although it is one of the conditions of existence of women's wage labour in capitalism." (75)

Anthias argues for an approach which analyses the process by which women have been drawn into employment, and which also takes into account the types of employment which women have been drawn into. She identifies a need to focus on...

"...the ways by which they (women) were ghettoised, doubly exploited, excluded from certain social, political and economic spheres and so on." (76)

Anthias maintains that Beechey does not address these issues by explaining women's position in employment by their "advantages" to capitalism. Anthias agrees that there are certain features about women's position which may be an advantage to capitalism. The advantages, however, do not adequately explain why and how women have entered the labour market at various stages during capitalism. For example, Beechey's argument assumes women can be paid lower wages than men because the male wage subsidises their costs of reproduction. Anthias argues that not all women are dependent on men, and those that are may only be dependent because they are paid low wages in their job.

Anthias notes that although Beechey starts out to show how women's employment is advantageous to capitalism, her eventual position is to show how women's employment is structured by the offensive of

capital to lower the value of labour power. Anthias points out that to argue the family as pre-supposed is to want it both ways. She says:

"If women's social relations in production are merely a reflection of the 'logic' of capital, why is the family perceived as 'autonomous' and 'presupposed'?" (77)

Anthias accuses Beechey of conflating two levels of analysis, the mode of production (accumulation etc.) and the level of social formation (family). Anthias maintains that Beechey does not give adequate explanation as to why women have been drawn into employment, and does not analyse legal and industrial changes, changes in state activity and family structure which have occurred. Anthias says that Beechey, in using the advantage that women's employment gives to capitalists as the reasons for their increased participation in the labour force, is economistic and functionalist:

"Economistic -because it explains women's employment with reference to its economic advantages to capital; functionalist- because it argues that it is these advantages that actually determine women's employment." (78)

Anthias gives her most detailed criticism of Beechey in considering the concept of women as a reserve army of labour (RAL). Anthias argues that in Marx the concept of the reserve army of labour:

"... refers to the role of "unemployment" within the abstract capitalist mode, whereas the main problematic concerning women's employment is its increase and the particular form it takes." (79)

Anthias points out that the concept of the reserve army of labour has problems as Marx presents it, in what exactly the reserve army

is. However, Anthias argues, Marx's account is at a level of abstraction that cannot explain 'who' comprises the reserve army at any particular time. Anthias agrees that women may be found to be more disposable for political and ideological reasons than men, but they do not themselves constitute a specific form of reserve army as Beechey argues they do. In addition, the concept of the reserve army of labour does not explain why individuals or groups are constituted as its members. Anthias says:

"There may be some individuals or groups who experience 'unemployment' more than others but the concept of RAL cannot explain this. Any explanation has to be in terms of the categories of labour those individuals or groups perform within the capitalist mode which makes them more susceptible in times of slump." (80)

Anthias gives many reasons why the reserve army of labour concept is of little use in explaining women in the labour market and maintains that to use the concept marginalises the importance of women's employment under capitalism as cheap labour. In addition it also veils the importance of occupational categories and industries that women are active within. In conclusion, then, Anthias argues against the concept of reserve army of labour in Beechey and her emphasis on the dependence of women upon the male wage. She says:

"... it assumes that if only women were not economically dependent on men, their role in the labour market, their ghettoisation and particular forms of oppression would be transformed and underestimates the need for struggle along various fronts, but especially the ideological front." (81)

Another important way in which the RAL is not useful to understanding women's employment is the lack of discussion of

gender-typing in occupations. The majority of occupations in which people work still tend to be regarded as either men's work or women's work. It is not easy to envisage that women would automatically be drawn into areas traditionally defined as men's work simply because it was convenient for capitalism. The only examples existing where it could be seen that women have been used as a reserve army of labour are in the two world wars. Huge numbers of women were drawn into jobs which were traditionally male preserves to fill the gaps left by men who had joined the forces. I would argue, however, that Marx's use of the concept of the RAL does not fit the examples in the world wars. Marx used the RAL to explain how capitalism is able to stop wages rising above levels which threaten the capital accumulation process. The RAL is therefore part of the ongoing process of capital accumulation. In the two world wars women were only allowed to work in traditional areas of men's employment because trade unions gave qualified consent. Trade unions only agreed to women working in these areas with the proviso that men would return to their jobs after the war was over. Some trade unions, engineering unions for example, also insisted that the government paid women the same rate as men for the jobs they had temporarily taken over. Thus, in the only examples where women have taken over traditionally "male" jobs in large numbers, the outcome was that unions had sufficient power to agree to changes on their own terms.

### Avoiding Functionalism

The problem with the Marxist side of the Marxist-feminist perspective, as Anthias has shown of Beechey, is that it is easy to

fall into the trap of suggesting that social formations are caused by the demands of capitalism, and become functionalist in the approach. Anna Pollert says:

"Recent Marxist feminist writing has become locked into a materialistic world - perhaps out of well-founded aversion to idealist 'patriarchal' explanations - and has become prone to 'marxist functionalism' - explaining all in terms of what 'capitalism' wants." (82)

Whereas Marxists have had a tendency to view the family as useful to capitalism and see its existence as being because of its use, Jane Humphries presents a different perspective on the family. Humphries accuses Marx of ignoring processes within the family. She says:

"The working class family for Marx is like the firm in neo-classical economics - a black box whose inner workings are simultaneously neglected and mystified." (83)

Humphries argues that the family has survived, not because of its usefulness to capitalism but because the working class has defended it. In the 19th century kinship ties were the major source of non-bureaucratic support in conditions of chronic uncertainty, that is situations where the individual is unlikely to cope without help because, for example, of "sickness, death, old age, marriage and childbirth." (84) Humphries then sees the family as enduring because of the struggle by the working class to keep an institution which meets the needs of those non-labouring members of the working class in a capitalist environment. She says:

"The humanity of the traditional methods, in comparison with the brutal and degrading alternatives, must have had positive implications for the development of working-class consciousness." (85)



Another point Humphries makes is that the family wage, one wage for a whole family, rather than all members of the family going to work, may again be more advantageous to the working class than to capitalists. Some Marxists have argued that the family wage is advantageous to capitalism because of the reproduction of labour power in the home and the production of use-value (86). Humphries argues that it was the working class movement in the nineteenth century who fought for the family wage in an attempt to limit women and children working, to give greater control over the labour supply.

She argues that to condemn the strategy of fighting for a family wage is insensitive to the material conditions of the working class in the 19th century. She adds, however, that:

"The tragedy is that action could not be controlled on a class basis, but had to be regulated systematically on the basis of female labour, and theoretically of married female labour, so reinforcing sex-based relations of dominance and subordinations." (87)

Humphries' analysis is important for the recognition that the demands of family are not necessarily synonymous with or dictated by the demands of capitalism. The perspective Humphries uses regards the family, both extended and nuclear, as a single force against capitalism. On the one hand this is useful because it recognises that both working class women and men defended the family; on the other hand it fails to answer many questions about the structure and inequality within the family both before and during capitalism.

The fight for, or retention of, a "family wage" goes some way in

explaining why men were hostile to women entering the labour force. It does not provide a satisfactory framework for analysing why women's employment both now and in the past is segregated into specific areas of the labour force.

Humphries recognises the oppression of women within the family and the way in which attempts to preserve a "family wage" further entrench women's inequality (88). An essential element missing from Humphries' account, however, is an attempt to place gender inequalities within a framework for analysis. To achieve this requires a theoretical perspective which Cockburn argues should allow for:

"... a fuller conception of the material basis of male power, one which does not lose sight of its physical and socio-political ramifications in concentrating upon the economic". (89)

Pollert argues for an approach which analyses the vicious circle between gender oppression and working class exploitation which she says:

"... both perpetuate women's relegation into the domestic sphere, and intensifies their exploitation as workers. This vicious circle is both material and ideological - in the sense that practices and ideas of employers and trade unionists in class terms, and of men and women in gender terms, create it." (90)

A framework for the analysis of women and work must include discussion of both capitalist and gender relations and the interactions between them. To achieve this we need to construct a framework which can analyse gender relations independently from capitalist relations, but which can also take into account the

interrelationship between the two.

### Origins of patriarchy

To analyse patriarchy separately from capitalism requires some discussion about the origins of patriarchy and the sexual division of labour.

In Chapter 1, "Women's Work In 18th and 19th Century England", it is clear that the patriarchal family existed before capitalism under the feudal system in England.

Using anthropological and historical sources, Hartmann looks at the possible origins of the division of labour between men and women. From these sources, she concludes that patriarchy did not always exist but that it "emerged as social conditions changed" (91).

Hartmann contends that although the pre-conditions and tendencies for an hierarchical, male dominated state existed in tribal societies, it was the emergence of the state and feudalism which ensured women's subordination. Particularly important in Hartmann's analysis is the idea that with the emergence of state men took control of the social and public sphere, whilst women were confined to the private sphere of family life. She says:

"In England... the formation of the state marks the end of Anglo-Saxon tribal society and the beginning of feudal society. Throughout feudal society the tendencies towards the privatization of family life and the increase of male power within the family appear to strengthen, as does their institutional support from church and state. By the time of the emergence of capitalism in the fifteenth through eighteenth centuries, the nuclear, patriarchal peasant family had become the basic production unit in society." (92)

The emergence of capitalism further entrenches the subordination of women. Hartmann argues that because women were already in an inferior position at home prior to capitalism, the capitalist organisation of industry, by removing work from the home, increased the domination of men over women (93).

### Segregation: capitalism and patriarchy

Understanding women's unequal position towards men involves analysis of women in paid work and in the home. An understanding of segregation in the labour market is crucial to this process.

Hartmann argues that in capitalist society it is job segregation by sex which maintains the superiority of men over women. Furthermore it is male organisation, especially in the workplace, which excludes women from paid work and is the crucial support mechanism for patriarchy.

Many authors have now shown how it is the restriction of entry into certain trades and skilled occupations by men which goes some way to explain the historical segmentation of women in the labour force. Rubery makes this point:

"Substitution of women for men may lead to a real decline in relative wages in an occupation, and reduce employment opportunities for men, hence the incentive for males to try to confine women to a different segment of the labour force."  
(94)

Rubery discusses various methods which the 'organised' (in this case the male) labour force may have used to restrict entry into their occupations for example, union organised apprenticeships and promotion along the line of seniority. Rubery sees the structured

labour market as therefore being advantageous to skilled workers for protection against competition and establishing a strong bargaining position for them in face of deskilling strategies of management. Rubery accepts that hierarchical structures in the labour force may also be advantageous to employers, but the point remains that it is not wholly in the interests of capital. Similarly Angela Coyle (95) places women's segregation and low pay in the context of deskilling of the labour process. Coyle argues that management strategies to exert downward pressure on wages (generally) combine with union strategies to resist that and hence have the effect of reinforcing sexual division within the labour process. Thus Coyle argues, management and unions have different imperatives but both are interested in formal segregation. Coyle argues that the use of women as cheap labour increases the strength of organised males who are therefore content to see a subordinate female ghetto. The conflicting interests of the male skilled workers and women here shows Pollert's dialectical process at work (96). That is, the fight against class exploitation, by trade unions seeking to reduce the labour supply, reinforces gender oppression. As Amsden says...

"... discrimination against women is intensified by class struggle in order to restrict the supply of labor, trade unions pressure women to stay at home; if this is unfeasible (if a family wage is unachievable or wives are uncontrollable) women are occupationally segmented. It follows that class exploitation and sexist oppression must be fought simultaneously." (97)

It is important to recognise that the interests of capital and patriarchy are not always in consensus. Hartmann argues that in times of economic or social necessity, when demand for labour is

high, then capitalists have been able to overpower male workers. In certain other periods the male workers have fought against capitalism and have retained their own power. Hartmann, however, implies that capitalism benefits whatever the situation, she says:

"Capitalists inherited job segregation by sex, but they have quite often been able to use it to their own advantage. If they can supersede experienced men with cheaper women, so much the better; if they can weaken labor by threatening to do so, that's good too; or, if failing that, they can use those status differences to reward men, and buy their allegiance to capitalism with patriarchal benefits, that's okay too." (98)

Walby argues that Hartmann's work is one of the most successful attempts, to date, to analyse capitalist and gender relations without subsuming one to the other. The problems Walby identifies with Hartmann, however, are that she forms an inadequate concept of patriarchy, has an underdeveloped account of the variations in the relations between patriarchy and capitalism, and assumes a harmonious relationship between capitalism and patriarchy. She says:

"This position underestimates the conflict between patriarchy and capital and presents an inaccurate picture of historical stasis. Rather, the relationship between patriarchy and capital should be seen as historically variable and riddled with conflict." (99)

By recognising the potential conflict between the social forces of capitalism and patriarchy Walby sets a basis for analysis which allows for social change.

Walby defines patriarchy as:

"a system of interrelated social structures through which men exploit women." (100)

Her formulation is designed to avoid the problems of explaining what is to be explained within the definition. The definition identifies gender but does not differentiate as to whether it applies to men dominating women as men or as fathers; this deliberately avoids closing discussion of either facet. The definition is at the level of social relations rather than of individuals, because explanation is required at this level and not at the level of individual men, nor of discrete social institutions.

Walby sets out analyse gender relations in contemporary western societies by "constituting a system of patriarchal relations in articulation with a system of capitalist relations." (101) She maintains that gender inequality should be seen as the outcome of the interaction between these two systems together with that of racism. She says:

"The distinctness of the patriarchal system is marked by the social relations which enable men to exploit women; in the racist system it is the social relations which enable one ethnic group to dominate another; in capitalism it is the social relations which enable capital to expropriate labour. These social relations exist at all levels of the social formation, whether this is characterized as economic, political and ideological, or as economy, civil society and the state or whatever." (102)

Walby argues that key sets of patriarchal relations are to be found in domestic work, paid work, the state, male violence and sexuality. Other practices in civil society have limited significance.

When patriarchy is in articulation with capitalism, Walby maintains that patriarchal relations in the state, male violence, sexuality

and other aspects of civil society are of lesser importance than domestic work and paid work. The importance of each set of relations may vary but, she maintains:

"The different sets of patriarchal relations should be seen as related to each other; but not in any simple manner. Together they compose a complex system of patriarchy." (103)

### Domestic work

Walby uses formulations from Christine Delphy (104) to formulate analysis of domestic work. Walby criticises Delphy, however, for not dealing with the interrelationship between the domestic mode and the capitalist mode of production. Walby also criticises Delphy for her lack of analysis of paid work, particularly the patriarchal relations in the workplace. She argues that by ignoring the workplace, Delphy does not address the problem as to why women do not escape exploitation in the household by choosing to earn a living by waged labour rather than by marrying men. Walby contends:

"I would argue that an understanding of patriarchal relations in paid work is essential for understanding why women have not more widely entered the labour market, why conditions and pay are so poor relative to those of men, and thus crucial for the explanation of why women remain in the household." (105)

Walby argues that social relations in domestic work should be characterised as a patriarchal mode of production. Walby suggests that within this mode the producing class is composed of housewives or domestic labourers, the non-producing class comprises the husbands. The objects of labour are the exhausted husband and, the children, if any. The parts of the means of production identified as "the instruments of labour" consists of:



"the women's body, especially in the sense of her reproductive capacity, the house and its contents." (106)

The above elements comprise the patriarchal mode of production. The domestic labourer produces the labour power of her husband on a day to day basis, and her children on a generational basis. Exploitation or expropriation of the labourer takes place because the husband extracts surplus value from the woman. Expropriation is able to take place because the woman does not have complete possession of the means of production, especially the exhausted husband. She therefore does not own at least part of the means of production. The husband has possession of the labour power which the woman has produced, but the woman is separated from her product. The husband's labour power is separate from his wife physically, in the ability to use it, legally, ideologically and so forth. The husband sells the labour power to an employer and receives a wage which is less than the value of goods he has produced. He gives a proportion of this wage to his wife for maintenance of the family and retains some for himself. The proportion allocated for the wife's use is typically less than the proportion allocated to the husband for his use. Also, Walby maintains, the wife typically works longer hours than the man.

#### Discussion

In Chapter 4 other formulations of housework as a mode of production were discussed and criticised. Walby avoids many of these criticisms because her analysis of domestic labour is integral but only one part of her analysis of women in relation to patriarchy. Thus she does not ignore the links with capitalism nor

does she see domestic labour as separate from capitalism or from women's participation in the labour force.

Whilst accepting that Walby is right to identify sets of patriarchal relations which compose a complex system of patriarchy, I believe that to establish a patriarchal mode of production separate from (even if inextricably bound to) capitalism requires further research into certain areas.

First, in Walby's analysis of the patriarchal mode of production the extraction of surplus value by men from women is directly analogous to the capitalist mode of production where capitalists extract surplus value from workers. The patriarchal mode of production, however, is said to pre-date capitalism because it existed in feudal times. Further research is needed to ascertain whether a patriarchal mode of production based on the extraction of surplus value did exist before capitalism. If, for example, research finds that husbands were only able to extract surplus value from their wives with the advent of capitalism, then this would suggest that the relationship is more a manifestation of dominant capitalist relations than a mode of production in itself.

A second area which needs to be clarified and researched is the scope of the patriarchal mode of production. We need to research, for example, whether or not husbands extract surplus value from their wives in all social classes, whether it is predominantly in the working class, or merely some sections within social classes.

The importance of research would be to see if the notion of a patriarchal mode of production can be used as a model for the

family from which theoretical generalisations can be made.

Walby's concept of a domestic mode of production is criticised by Harriet Bradley who argues that:

"...the attempt to characterise patriarchy as both a domestic mode of production and a set of structures external to it seems to me theoretically dubious. If patriarchy really is a mode of production, all those elements must surely be included in it? This seems a clear attempt to have your cake and eat it." (107)

In addition, Bradley criticises Walby for attempting to construct a patriarchal "mode of production" as one which is comparable to the capitalist mode of production. Bradley argues that Walby is attempting to compare two intrinsically different things. Bradley points out that:

...it is not possible to conceive of patriarchy as a structure homologous to capitalism (or indeed to the more general structure of a 'mode of production' in the Marxian sense). Marxian class theory can be firmly grounded in a specific set of relations, the social division of labour for the production of goods and services, and is then built up from there. But gender relations cannot legitimately be confined to a single social activity (even the family) or even be said to originate in one level and spread into others. Gender activities pervade all aspects of social existence and so no satisfactory base/superstructure account can be produced." (108)

Notwithstanding reservations about the patriarchal mode of production, there are many points in Walby's overall analysis which are useful for the analysis of married women and employment. That is, Walby identifies that there are different sets of social structures which interrelate to form a complex system of patriarchy. It is the social structures and social relations which allow men to exploit women. This framework allows patriarchy to be

analysed separately, but still in articulation with capitalism. Thus, the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy can be viewed as one which is not always harmonious and is sometimes in conflict. Within this last point lies potential for social change in contrast to a static analysis.

A theoretical framework which I believe gives a wide scope for the analysis of patriarchy is one which places the concept of ideology in relation to the concept of the material. Nicola Charles notes the use of ideology by Althusser. She says:

"Ideology, as Althusser (1971) has argued, does not exist in the realm of ideas: on the contrary it has a material existence in the form of practices, and these practices give rise to 'theoretical' ideologies or ideas and systems of belief. It is important to stress that ideologies or ideas and systems are rooted and reproduced by material practice, thus they have a material existence." (109)

Many writers have discussed the role ideology has in perpetuating the inequalities between women and men. Hilary Wainwright for example, discusses how women themselves are affected by ideology. She says:

"Women have absorbed, unconsciously and consciously as part of their self-conceptions, a cultural interpretation of their biological distinctiveness as women. It is this which provides the basis for their active complicity in their own subordination." (110)

The process of complicity takes place, Wainwright argues, through the interaction of learning processes and emotional conflict of family relations. That is, not only are male and female babies and children treated differently by, for example, being given different toys, and encouraged to have different ambitions, but also

Wainwright argues, the mother because of her lack of social life and autonomy has a tendency to seek fulfilment through her child and husband. The father is more divorced from children and therefore sees the child as an individual. Wainwright argues that this affects children's emotional relationships with parents and gives them a sense of identity which consequently shapes their attitudes to the sexual division of labour.

In the educational system boys and girls learn the sexual division of labour through both formal methods of teaching, that is, being encouraged to study in specific directions relating to sex, and informally through the ideological support that the educational system gives for the sexual division of labour. Wainwright comments:

"The mechanism of this general ideological support include the content of curricula, the organisation of teaching, discipline, and forms of selection. In all these ways the distinct destinies of girls and boys within the division of labour are reflected and actively reinforced." (111)

Cockburn takes the analysis of the ideological further by placing it in the context of the material. Cockburn argues against theoretical approaches where there is " a kind of to-ing and fro-ing between "the ideological" and "the economic", neither of which gives an adequate account of male supremacy or female subordination. She argues that there is a confusion of terms. That is:

"the proper complement of ideology is not the economic, it is the material. And there is more to the material than the economic. It comprises also the socio-political and the physical, and these are often neglected in Marxist feminist work.

It is only by thinking with the additional concepts of the socio-political and the physical that we can begin to look for material instances of male domination beyond men's greater earning power and property advantage. " (112)

Cockburn's case study "Brothers" (113) focuses on artisans in the printing industry ( compositors). She traces their history from the 19th century until the present, describing the many ways in which compositors have defeated the attempts of employers to weaken their bargaining position. Changes are now occurring, however, with new technology which is undermining their bargaining position. She maintains:

"...the struggles over the physical and mental capability and the right of access to composing equipment was one of the processes in which factions of classes were formed in relation to each other." (114)

In printing women were almost entirely limited to bookbinding and other low paid finishing operations held to require no skill. Physical and moral factors were used against girl apprenticeships, for example, it was maintained that girls were not strong enough, lead might be harmful to pregnancy and the social environment might be corrupting.

Cockburn describes the way in which men's physical power in the sense of corporal effectivity (bodily strength and capability) and technical efficiency (relative familiarity with and control over machinery and tools) has been used to subordinate women. Cockburn argues that it cannot be denied that men generally can undertake greater feats of physical strength than women. However, she argues that both physical efficiency and technical capability do not belong to men by birth, but are appropriated by males through

through childhood, youth and maturity. It is men's socio-political and economic power which enables them to do this.

"In turn, their physical presence reinforces their authority and their physical skills enhance their earning power."  
(115)

Cockburn argues that many writers have given evidence about the role which ideology plays in constructing male and female. Cockburn also maintains, however, that there is evidence to support the idea of bodily difference as a largely social product. For example, men are trained to develop muscle and to use their bodies with authority. They are socialised to seize or shelter females and expect them to submit.

Cockburn acknowledges that some degree of bodily differences may be inborn (we simply do not know how much is innate or through socialisation). The important point, however, is that between men and women:

"Small biological differences are turned into bigger physical differences which themselves are turned into the gambits of social, political and ideological power play." (116)

Thus, Cockburn argues, physical differences become physical advantages which interact with male economic and socio-political advantage. She says:

"The appropriation of muscle, capability, tools and machinery by men is an important source of women's subordination, indeed it is part of the process by which females are constituted as women.

... a process in some ways an analogue of the appropriation of the means of production by a capitalist class, which thereby constituted its complementary working class." (117)

Man's greater earning power can thus be achieved by maintaining access to specific forms of training, by limiting access to certain occupations trades and so forth.

Cockburn's use of the material to encapsulate the social, political, physical and the economic, allows analysis of women's position in relation to men in all spheres of society. This is crucial for the study of women's position in paid work and in the home. Taking into account the material shows that sex differences and hierarchy can be achieved within the workplace and are not simply caused by women's position in the home. Furthermore, Cockburn's framework allows for analysis of the extent to which women's position in the home is a product of their position in the workplace.

Cockburn's theoretical approach, like Walby's, allows room for patriarchy, or male power, to be analysed independently from capitalism while still allowing for analysis of the articulation between the two.

Having discussed the importance of the material in determining the ideological and vice versa, we need further discussion of the extent to which women themselves are influenced by the ideological and constrained by the material.

The next chapter looks at the way in which empirical research can add to our understanding of married women's position in the labour force.



## MARRIED WOMEN IN THE LABOUR FORCE: REACTIONS AND ATTITUDES.

Previous discussion in this thesis has focused on the trends and patterns in married women's work, both paid and unpaid, from pre-capitalist society to the present. Many theoretical perspectives have been presented and criticised. Discussion of various theoretical perspectives which aim to account for women's position in the labour market and in the home has concluded that an approach is needed which can take account both of women's position in relation to capitalism but also women's subordinate position in relation to men. The perspective chosen is one which views patriarchal relations as independent but interrelated to capitalist relations.

This chapter discusses empirical studies on women, especially married women, in the labour force. The studies concern the attitudes and reactions of women towards paid work and to commitments in the home. In some studies men's attitudes to women in paid work are also reported. Where appropriate discussion is linked to the way in which attitudes and reactions are influenced by the ideological and material conditions of patriarchy and capitalism.

### Man the breadwinner

In the early 1970s Wilmott and Young maintained that the family as an institution was becoming more egalitarian or "symmetrical" (1). They argued that their research showed that both men and women were sharing domestic responsibilities. Many feminist writers argued against this notion on the grounds that although husbands may "help

out" with some aspects of housework, by far the greatest proportion of housework is still performed by women. Ann Oakley's study of housework, for example, found that it was considered effeminate for a man to do too much housework. She says:

"In only a small number of marriages is the husband notably domesticated and even where this happens, a fundamental separation remains: home and children are woman's primary responsibility". (2)

The overall responsibility that women have for housework is a key factor in understanding domestic labour. Husbands may "help" with housework to varying degrees, but as Porter found:

"...if he 'helps' with the washing up it does not relieve her of the responsibility of making sure it gets done."(3)

Pollert observed that the women she interviewed, in a tobacco factory called "Churchmans", gave a first impression that domestic duties were shared between themselves and their husbands. Further questioning, however, produced results more akin to those of Ann Oakley. Pollert remarks:

"With most women it became apparent that 'sharing' meant a limited delegation of specific tasks to their husbands, while they bore the responsibility for the endless, undefined niggling work. And even this division often broke down- the women had high standards, the men lacked training and skill". (4)

Thus, men who do take part in domestic labour are able to do so without threatening traditional roles because they only "help" towards something which is ultimately defined as the responsibility of women. Patriarchal ideology gives women a monopoly over responsibilities in the home and gives men the role as breadwinner.

Studies show that even when married women are in employment their attitudes and those of their husbands are usually that it is the man who is the breadwinner. Hunt, for example, found that:

"The fact that most men cannot adequately support a family financially without the addition of female earnings, and the fact that women spend a greater proportion of their lives in industry than in full-time maternity, has not invalidated the distinction between man the breadwinner and woman the wife and mother". (5)

Pollert found that men at Churchmans had a tendency to see women as working for "pin money"; the women did not because they were obviously aware of how much their contribution was needed towards the family budget. However, women still saw their employment as marginal and their husbands as breadwinners. Pollert says of the women:

"What was specifically female in the women's conception of their wage labour was the fact that they still considered themselves dependent on a man, and their pay as marginal to a man's - even if they were single. To this extent "women's pay" perpetuated the pin-money myth"(6)

Pollert also found that some women expressed the view that they would not wish to earn more than their husbands, lest they felt downgraded. Such is the entrenchment of an ideology which dictates that man needs to be the breadwinner. Some studies found that subtle mechanisms operate to ensure that the male wage is seen to be more important than the female wage. Hunt found, for example, that her respondents tended to put the male wage towards the absolute necessities of family life ie paying rent or the mortgage, buying food and clothing and so forth. Women's wages, on the other hand, were set aside for items which could be regarded as

additional or luxury items to some extent (7).

Not all studies have found the same as Hunt regarding the spending of husbands' and wives' pay packets. The Community Development Project's (CDP) study of North Shields (8) for example, found that only 15.5% of their sample of women with husbands spent their money on themselves or luxury items like holidays. In contrast, 75 % of the married women in the sample either pooled their money with their husbands' wage or kept the wages separately whilst still spending both wages on essential items. The CDP did find, however, that the notion of man the breadwinner was still very much in evidence.

The way in which men and women conceptualise the separate roles of breadwinner and homemaker is not only sustained by ideology, but reinforced by external realities. Men's wages are on average higher than those for women (9), particularly when part-time work is considered. Thus one of the material conditions which helps to sustain patriarchal ideology is that economically the male wage is usually more important than the female wage. Hunt says:

"If the wife's employment is deemed by the husband, or by the husband and wife, to be unnecessary or at least of secondary importance, the husband can use the marginality of the wife's employment as an argument in favour of maintaining the domestic status quo." (10)

In addition, many of the occupations that women are in are classed as semi- or unskilled occupations. (11)

Many studies of women in the labour market have found that married women see their primary orientation as being to the family and

their employment as secondary. Judith Chaney (12), for example, found that the married women she interviewed in Sunderland (90% of whom had children at home) saw their role as wife and mother as being more important than employment. They did not see the home and family as a constraint on finding paid work because they only considered jobs that fitted in with their domestic responsibilities. Thus, jobs had to be near home, part time and have flexible hours.

The employed women that Porter interviewed (13) were all in traditional, low paid, areas of women's employment. These jobs were chosen by the women because they were "handy" and convenient. Fiona McNally reports that many married women chose office temping because it was a way of reconciling the dual demands of home and the workplace (14).

The responsibility and commitment of married women to the domestic sphere crucially affects their position in employment. Pollert comments:

"The quality and intensity of their work, the wage bargain they can strike, their ability to organise, all are subordinate to their role in the family". (15)

The relatively small amount of effort that the majority of men are expected to put into the domestic sphere allows them to have a full commitment to paid employment. Women, however, can usually only maintain their family commitments and responsibilities to the full by sacrificing a full time commitment to work.

The commitment that women have to the family must also be taken in

the context of the work that is available to them. Beynon and Blackburn point out that married women are severely discriminated against in their paid employment and as a consequence have some of the worst jobs to perform. From their study of factory work they conclude:

"As a group, working class women form the most highly exploited sections of the labour force. Given this it is not surprising that many women regard being a housewife and bringing up a family as more important and rewarding than the meaningless alienating jobs that are available to them".  
(16)

The types of paid work married women do may affect their orientation to work. McNally found that the majority of her sample of office workers would choose to carry on working even if they could afford to leave. The temporary office workers that McNally interviewed, although having to perform many boring tasks, appreciated the variety of work which temping generally gave to them. They did not feel that the same variety was to be found in their domestic life (17).

In contrast, the tobacco workers interviewed by Pollert (18), gave the impression that their boring and repetitive employment was only an added burden to the strain of domestic work. Similarly, in the sample of married women, interviewed by the CDP in South Shields (19), 63% said they would leave their jobs if their husbands earned enough to keep the family "comfortably".

Studies discussed so far show that the priority that married women give to their family life over paid employment is a consequence of ideology which designates major domestic responsibilities to women.

It is also, however, a consequence of inferior conditions found in the areas of paid employment available to them which may lead women to value their domestic role over their role as paid employees. In this sense the material conditions reinforce ideology.

We shall now go on to see how the attitudes of married women in employment can be affected by their primary allegiance to and identification with the domestic role.

### Married women's reactions to employment

One of the ways in which Porter describes married women's perceptions of themselves in relation to the workplace environment is one of being a "migrant" (20). That is that married women may feel that they are not really workers in the sense that males are because they are not full time and because they feel their domain is primarily at home. Similarly Beynon and Blackburn found that:

"Many of the married women who were employed part-time did not regard themselves as 'real workers' " (21)

Despite the necessity of working outside the home, many married women are left with a sense of guilt when they are in employment. Guilt which suggests that they should really be at home giving more attention to the family. Porter maintains:

"Sexist ideology lays down what should happen and what is held to happen, even when reality does not tally with ideology. This means that even when the majority of women do work -as indeed they do- they feel they have to justify doing so." (22)

To justify working may well lead to women desperately trying to prove that they are able to maintain standards in the home despite

their employment, and eventually overcompensate for their time at work. Porter points out that in this sense, women who are employed are thus sanctioned for deviating from their traditional role (23).

Many studies have found that women give importance to a friendly or family atmosphere in their work situation. An example of the way in which this preference shows in perceptions of the work environment is that some studies show that women prefer small firms instead of large ones. The relationship between management and employees is thought to be less formal and more friendly in smaller firms. Beynon and Blackburn found that:

"The women were much more likely to think that the family ownership of the firm resulted in a greater interest being taken by the firm in employees." (24)

It is within small, family owned firms that some of the worst conditions of pay and employment exist. It may therefore seem ironic that such firms are perceived to take a greater interest in employees. Other factors may play a part, however, Caroline Freeman makes the point that some firms which offer low pay with poor conditions may still seem attractive to women with domestic responsibilities because the firms are more tolerant of employee absenteeism resulting from domestic commitments (25).

In the 1950s and 1960s there were many policy orientated studies which looked at the "dual role" of married women in work and in the home. A question which many of these studies asked was why the women were working in paid employment. The most common response to this question was always "money", the second reason was for friends and company or as an escape from boredom and loneliness at home



(26). The studies in this period had a tendency to over emphasise the benefits that women gained from work because they were carried out at a time when many people were still highly critical of married women entering the labour force. Friends and company are still emphasised as one of the major advantages of working in the studies of married women in the 1970s and 1980s (27).

In one of the few studies of women who re-enter the labour force, Chaney (28) found that only a few women who were looking for a job mentioned workmates or friends as a reason why they wanted to work again. Contributing (financially) to family life and a sense of independence were more customary responses. In the same study, however, Chaney found that the majority of women she interviewed who were already in employment did talk of friends, workmates, meeting people and interesting work as things they valued highly about their jobs in addition to pay.

Thus, friends and workmates may not be a primary motivation for women seeking work outside of the home, but may become an important reason for staying with the job once employed. In a study conducted by the CDP in North Shields (29), friends were valued so highly by the married women interviewed that many said their friends were more important than prospects of advancement. Similarly Beynon and Blackburn report that in the factory they studied...

"... the women were less keen to change to more interesting jobs in the firm, mainly because they were unwilling to leave their friends". (30)

The emphasis on good relations between workers and the desire for a

good atmosphere extends into the area of personal welfare at work. Several studies have concluded that women are more concerned than men with the conditions in which they work. In 1952 Dr Zweig noted the tendency of women to want good conditions in which to work:

"Coming into this man's world, they (women) are keener on humanising it, making it more accommodating and gracious. The factory should look more like a home and not a place for robots. All managers without any exceptions, agree that women are more welfare-minded than men, and require and make use of, more welfare services." (31)

Zweig's style is patronising towards women and uses his own stereotypes of women to make his conclusions. The findings of the study are useful, however, in showing the concern married women have with welfare and good conditions. Hunt observes similar tendencies of women to want good conditions and argues that because women have been less subject to the "calculative relations characteristic of capitalism" (32) it means that women have not been socialised, as men have, to see themselves only as wage earners. Thus Hunt maintains that wanting good conditions is part of women's desire to stay human. Because of caring for people in the home, women who return to work have:

"...a greater sensitivity concerning capitalism's capacity to transform workers into the means to profitable ends." (33)

Hunt argues that this aspect of women's socialisation into the domestic sphere may be advantageous to women and sometimes needs to be learned by men (who have been socialised into having a purely instrumental orientation to work). Hunt sees such aspects as giving possibilities for future trade union strategies:

"Women workers tend to make more positive demands of their work situation than their male counterparts, and if one is concerned with workers having a greater say in running their own lives this tendency is advantageous." (34)

Hunt links these ideas with the idea that women suffer alienation in reverse to men. Hunt argues that men partially alleviate their feelings of alienation at work by leisure in the home. Women, in contrast feel alienated in the home and expect to find these feelings partially alleviated in their paid work situation.

Although women show a concern with the physical or environmental conditions in which they work, many writers have tended to see women as largely accepting of their terms and conditions of employment, that is, regarding pay, fringe benefits, statutory rights and so forth. Other writers, however, have attempted to differentiate between how far women are really satisfied and accept their jobs, despite discrimination, and how far their seeming acquiescence is a response to restricted opportunities in the labour market. That is, the feeling that there is no point in complaining about their present job when there are no better alternatives available to them. Chaney, for example, reports that the women she interviewed thought that their jobs were favourable but only in comparison with jobs that other women they knew worked in (35). The women had a pessimistic view of other jobs available and, Chaney maintains, this was a well founded and realistic view when taking into account the jobs that are available to women who need restricted hours and so forth. Similarly McNally argues that the married women she studied who did office "temping" were not necessarily satisfied with that type of work but had few other

opportunities. She says:

"It is clear that the apparently attenuated occupational ambition of many women in today's world must be examined within this wider context of restricted opportunity." (36)

Another important area of women's reactions to employment which needs to be discussed is their attitudes to trade unions and, related to this, whether or not women show resistance in their employment situation.

### Unions and resistance

There are practical problems facing many women who want to be involved in union activities and there are also ideological problems to be fought against. Some of the attitudes of both men and women are not conducive to union activity. Two conflicting arguments have come out time and time again in studies which deal with women's union activity. One argument is from men arguing that women are not good union material, another is from women who contend that unions are male dominated and do not give support to women's problems. Both of these arguments go against encouraging the active participation of women in trade unions. Beynon and Blackburn found that part time women workers were less involved in the union than men and had less grievances. Beynon and Blackburn observed however that low involvement was partly self fulfilling. They remark:

"The low commitment to work of the part-time women was again evident in their tendency to do nothing about their complaints. Indeed the most striking thing about the group was the large proportion who had no opinion on all aspects of representation. As a group they showed little interest in the unions, though this was partly because no effort was made to

encourage their interest." (37)

Chaney (38) reports that although 77% of the women in her sample were members of a trade union, very few of them attended meetings and many tended to think that unions were not relevant to women and part time workers especially. Pollert found a difference between younger and older women workers. The tobacco workers Pollert interviewed had a 90% union membership (membership was encouraged by management) but she maintains that the experience of being a housewife overshadowed the younger married women's involvement in the work situation. She says:

"Most women were not ashamed to admit their ignorance about trade unionism. The language was alien and merely confirmed their sense of exclusion from a 'man's world'." (39)

Pollert found that the older married women, however, were more concerned with union affairs and she maintains that this was because they were "committed to a life of full-time work" (40). Beynon and Blackburn found that full time women workers were "good" union material although their style of unionism differed considerably from the men (41).

It seems apparent that one of the reasons why some married women are so tentatively attached to unions relates to earlier points made about the sense of not being primarily attached to work but to the domestic sphere. It is equally important to stress however the sense of not feeling part of the "man's world of work". This sense may be in part be because of women's own notions of man the breadwinner and woman the home maker. It may also be, however, because of the way in which men create conditions at work which

create barriers to women's participation. Men's attitudes to women in trade unions are a crucial factor in influencing women's involvement.

Nichols and Armstrong, in their study of a chemical plant, discuss how a new flexible productivity deal effectively pushed women from the plant. Some of the new tasks arranged in the deal were too heavy for women and the management hoped that the women would leave through natural wastage. By the end of the study, however, only six women were left. Nichols and Armstrong report that the women believed in the principles of trade unionism but did not get the support from the men who ostensibly believed in solidarity. Instead, the men largely believed that the women worked for 'pin money' and resented the women for not being able to do the heavy work because this doubled their own work load. Thus, Nichols and Armstrong point out that the men blamed the women for a situation which was ultimately the fault of a productivity deal impossible to effect. The women were therefore unable to secure jobs for themselves and other women because of stereotyping and lack of support from men (42).

Pollert also found evidence of stereotyping women by management and male co-workers. She says:

"Not all men were hostile, but the crux of their attitude was that women's place was in the home, or in a 'feminine' job such as nursing. As factory workers they were awkward, superfluous or downright problems". (43)

Male stereotyping of women in employment thus appears to be a major problem which discourages women's participation and further

explains why union structure discourages increased participation. Union meetings, for example are often held outside of working hours and it is thus impossible for married women with home responsibilities to attend meetings. Child care facilities are rarely provided at union meetings again discouraging married women's participation. Many women may feel discouraged from union activity because many unions are male dominated and often do not take account of issues relevant to women or delegate such issues to secondary importance. Hunt points out that the language in trade unions meetings is often addressed to men only, for example, "dear brothers". Hunt also found that meetings are often held in traditional male preserves, for example, the pub or club. Hunt says:

"If evening meetings are held in traditionally masculine environments like pubs and working men's clubs, social inhibitions are added to the practical difficulties which deter women from attending meetings." (44)

The case of the school dinner ladies studied by Cunnison exemplifies the extent to which male domination in unions can be a barrier to women who are trying to protect their employment conditions. In 1977 when school meals rose in price, Cunnison's school dinner ladies tried to fight against a cut in hours, especially for the servers, which prevented them from being able to finish work each day. When the servers went to the union they were disallowed from putting their problem on the agenda because they were unused to union procedure. Their shop steward also showed little interest in them. Eventually the women did win their hours back but only after eight months, a delay caused mainly by the

slowness of the union to take up their cause (45).

It appears then, that although it may be expected that workers, male and female, would show solidarity to each other, there are many cases where men are antagonistic to women. One of the reasons for this may be that men do not understand the problems women have and are only too ready to see women as counter to their own work interests. In Armstrong's factory study he found a basic communication breakdown between men and women. He says:

"It seems clear that the mutual ignorance and indifference which exists between semi-skilled male plant operatives and women workers stems ultimately from the fact that neither group directly experiences the characteristic problems faced by the other." (46)

In our discussion of women and trade unions so far, we have discussed the rise in female union membership along with the factors which discourage or prevent women from taking a role in their unions above card carrying level. When looking at women and trade unions it is also important to take into account the fact there are still many sectors in which women employees are concentrated which have little or no tradition of trade union activity. Many women, for example, work in small firms which depend on a cheap and flexible supply of labour. Such firms often try to foster the idea of being friendly and family like in atmosphere. Workers are discouraged from trade union activity because it goes against the ethos of an informal and friendly relationship with management. In addition, it is extremely difficult for a small number of workers to attain a strong bargaining position with management.



In contrast to the "friendly firms" but giving similar results regarding unions, there are also firms which operate modes of productivity which go against union involvement and solidarity. For example, the North Shields study by the CDP (47) in the clothing industry pointed out that besides the union being weak, and making little difference to its workers, the bonus systems operated by the clothing firms promoted individual competitiveness. Thus there was no ethos of solidarity between workers. Similarly, in 1963, Lupton found that, in the waterproof garments factory he studied, there was an overall ethos of individualism nurtured by a system which tended to create competitiveness and jealousies between workers. Workers only displayed collectivity in expressing the feeling that they shared "a common lot". Making the best of this "common lot", however, they thought to be an individual matter. Arguing against the idea that it is women's domestic responsibilities alone which takes away women's 'desire to control' their employment, Lupton says:

"I think it is possible...that women workers like their male counterparts, will accept the customs and conventions of the industry in which they enter employment." (48)

Backing up these conclusions, are Lupton's findings in the electrical firm he studied. Here there was more solidarity and Lupton found that women tended to adopt similar approaches to men in raising complaints and so forth. They could not be classed as easy to exploit.

One of the most encouraging examples in the 1980s of how women can achieve solidarity and resist authority through collective action

is the sit-in at the Lee Jeans factory. Almost all of those involved in the sit-in were women who had dependent children or relatives to look after. A rota system was organised and responsibilities allocated. As one of the women commented:

"How many men could organise three shifts of seventy people night and day for 20 weeks without drink on the premises? Without damage or theft? Without dirt or scrappy nutrition? We spent the first week eating sandwiches and fish suppers. Now we have cooked meals, a choice of menu and a cleaning rota." (49)

The example of the Lee Jeans sit-in illustrates how much can be achieved even in a small factory with the right organisation and commitment. One of the key points to be remembered in the Lee Jeans dispute is that the women did not have to face a male-dominated union initially to take up their dispute. Through the hard work of certain union members they also managed to command the support of several major trade unions.

The problem for many women is that they work in sectors of industry which have very weak and badly organised unions. For example the retail and catering industries are both notoriously difficult to organise because of the industries' great diversity and low traditions of unionism for both men and women. Low activity does not necessarily mean that management is faced with a passive and all-accepting workforce. Barker and Downing, for example, argue that although there has been a massive increase in white-collar workers, especially women, joining unions in the last decade, sociologists have ignored forms of resistance that exist in the office independently of the unions. They say:

"Where forms of resistance other than direct strike action, such as absenteeism, high labour turnover, sabotage, lateness, are taken seriously, it is always in relation to men - as if women weren't capable of resistance." (50)

Barker and Downing contend that there exists an "invisible culture" amongst women in the office which although it appears oppressive contains the seeds of "resistance". Although much of the conversation between women in the office centres around personal domestic concerns, nevertheless Barker and Downing argue that it adds to the creation of a culture which men cannot penetrate. The culture also has forms of resistance against being over-pressurised at work. For example, a typist (in this case assumed by Barker and Downing to be female) can adopt a number of things to unofficially break monotony; she may pretend to look busy whilst having a chat, pretend to run out of paper in order to visit another office and generally work out mechanisms to give herself some control over her space and movements (51). Likewise, Barker and Downing point out that some of the tasks which are given to women office workers, just because they are women, can be used to their advantage. Barker and Downing say:

"...there are those little jobs which women are expected to perform just because they are women: such as making the tea, watering the plants, organising leaving/wedding/birthday presents, going out of the office on errands for the boss, all of which, while on the one hand reinforcing their ideological role as 'office wife' can be used to create space and time away from the routine of typing." (52)

Barker and Downing argue that, as patriarchal forms of office organisation give way to the needs of capital accumulation, so these informal forms of resistance give way to organised union resistance. Paralleling the idea of office culture, is the idea of

a shop floor culture identified by Sue Webb (53) in the retail trade, and by Pollert in the tobacco factory. Pollert observed that it was the girls who formed out of work ties who became "collective-spirited, self-assured, assertive and 'non-conformist'", in contrast to the women isolated at home. Those who developed this collective identity valued solidarity and set up resistance. The resistance, however, was not channelled into union activity. Pollert says:

"The pitfall was that they had no actual muscle with which to push their resistance. It remained at the level of shop floor style. Instead of challenging discipline and male oppression it became not only contained but also a weapon for the other side." (54)

The idea of a culture with its own forms of resistance which women form amongst themselves in the work situation illustrates how women are not complacent or indifferent to their jobs. These "cultures" however are informal, unstructured and unorganised. But, they may be the way in which women express and assert themselves in their work situation and be expressive of a consciousness shaped by patriarchal ideology.

### Summary

This chapter has aimed to give some ideas about the way women think about and react towards employment. The way I have attempted to do this is by referring to those empirical studies which tap the attitudes of women, and sometimes men towards women, in employment. It seems evident from several studies that for many women their consciousness is shaped by an ideology which dictates a division of labour that gives married women the major responsibilities of home,

even when in paid employment. The same ideology gives husbands the role of breadwinner regardless of whether or not they could support the family. The responsibility of the home is carried on into women's employment situation in that the family is always seen to come above employment in importance: jobs are chosen to fit with their family responsibilities and involvement with employment is sometimes sacrificed for family needs.

It is not surprising that some married women see the family as their primary responsibility when we take into account the way women, especially part time workers, are discriminated against in the labour force and left with jobs with poor pay and conditions. Although the notion that women should take primary responsibility for the home may arise from patriarchal ideology, there are also practical considerations and circumstances which may lead a man and woman to view the sexual division of labour as the most practical arrangement within the family. In this sense, then, material conditions and practice - the organisation of the workplace and of the home - complement and reinforce the ideological.

Studies considered in the chapter suggest that women's role in the family is one of the major factors affecting their perception of their employment situation. Some studies have shown that married women have a tendency not to think of themselves as real workers and in fact often suffer a type of guilt for being in employment. A guilt caused by an ideology that dictates that their place is at home is in conflict with the reality which necessitates that married women must earn money by being in paid employment (55).

The isolation that women feel as full time housewives seems to be reflected in the way married women value a friendly atmosphere at work to the extent that company has been found to be more important to married women than promotion. The emphasis on company and good conditions at work is symptomatic of what Hunt (56) has called alienation in reverse. That is, women expect their paid employment to partially alleviate their isolation at home. Women are concerned with their environment at work but have been seen by some writers to acquiesce to their discriminated position in the labour force. We cannot talk of acquiescence, however, without taking into account the restricted opportunities that married women are faced with and also their relationship to trade unions. There has been a great increase in women's trade union membership over the last decade but this has tended to remain at card-carrying level. Married women appear to show little interest in trade unions and do not see the union as relevant to them. Practical difficulties inhibit married women from union involvement, for example childcare responsibilities. These difficulties are largely the fault of male dominated unions not attempting to facilitate the active participation of women. Male workers in general often stereotype women as working for "pin money" and can be hostile to women, seeing their employment as contrary to male workers' interests. Evidence presented appears show a breakdown in communication between men and women not understanding each others' employment situation.

Non-involvement in unions by women, it must be stressed, is also largely because of the type of industries into which women are

concentrated. These industries often do not have traditions of trade union activity, either because they include many small family firms, or for example because they are firms which encourage individual competitiveness.

Women are capable of solidarity and union activity as the Lee Jeans sit-in illustrated. Some studies show that in some areas of employment women express themselves through female work cultures, which although they may express a collectiveness amongst women, and a means of assertion and even to some extent resistance, may equally be a culture steeped in patriarchal ideology and sometimes works against women's interests as paid workers.

Many of the findings and ideas from empirical studies discussed in this chapter are also considered in relation to my own research in Chapter 8.

Introduction

The research undertaken for this thesis was made possible by receiving a linked studentship grant from the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). The grant was linked to the Urban Employment Study, a research project funded by the Department of the Environment.

The Urban Employment Study (UES) aimed to explore how far the experience of living and working in the inner city leads to particular patterns of work experience, attitudes and expectations and to compare these experiences, attitudes and expectations with those of a sample which was similar in socio-economic terms but resident in an outer city area.

UES interviews were conducted between February and June 1979, with a total of 764 economically active men and women, 586 of whom were re-interviewed eighteen months later in the autumn of 1980.

One of the findings of the Study was that:

"Problems of deprivation and disadvantage in the inner city, in so far as they are related to employment and unemployment, must be seen primarily as arising from two sets of conditions neither of which is confined to the inner city and its effects: on the one hand, inequalities of condition and opportunity which characterise the structure of our society generally, and, on the other, the more specific and hopefully shorter term problems induced by current economic recession."  
(1)

The UES interviewed many married women in the course of the study, but did not concentrate on many issues which have specific relevance to married women and the labour market. The



questionnaires used for the UES, for example. concentrated mainly on paid employment experiences and the respondents' attitudes towards and perceptions of the labour market. Questions were not incorporated to allow depth analysis into the "fit" many married women make between home commitments and labour force activity. It was apparent that any attempt to explore inequality of condition and opportunity in relation to married women's employment would require additional research. The linked studentship grant provided the opportunity for this research to take place.

The research aimed to examine inequality of condition and opportunity which exist for married women in paid employment and in the home. Further, to examine the attitudes and reactions of married women to their home and labour market commitments.

The rest of this chapter describes the research which was undertaken as part of the linked studentship grant and the subsequent results. To avoid confusion with other research, the research is referred to as the Newcastle Study throughout the thesis.

#### The Newcastle Study

A sample of forty married women was chosen from respondents previously interviewed in the UES. The sample was drawn to represent four occupational areas which are most typical of married women's employment in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Interviews took place in the summer of 1982 (2) using a semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendix II). The questions asked can

be divided into two main types: the first type of questions were designed to elicit factual information about paid work and home commitments; the second type were attitudinal in that they asked for the opinions of the women on a variety of issues related to their paid work environment and home responsibilities.

The interviews lasted between 30 and 75 minutes depending on the amount each women had to say about various issues. The interviews were all conducted face to face in the homes of the women. The women were encouraged to be interviewed without other people present and in most cases they agreed to this. The husband of the respondent was present in only one interview.

The four occupations that were chosen to represent typical areas of married women's employment: clerical, cleaning, catering and retail work, were chosen because in the Urban Employment Study sample these four occupations were the only occupations in which large numbers of married women worked. The UES was a representative sample of the occupations and industrial distribution of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1980. Data from the 1981 Census, discussed below, confirms that the four occupations chosen typify married women's employment in Newcastle upon Tyne (3).

#### The Newcastle Study in context: Census data

Table 7:1. shows that, at the time of the 1981 Census, women's employment generally was concentrated into four occupational categories: Professional and related in education, welfare and health (CODOT group 3); Clerical and related (CODOT 7); Selling (CODOT 8) and Catering, cleaning and other personal services (CODOT

10). The table shows that of people working in the city of Newcastle upon Tyne, 86% of women worked in one of these four CODOT (Classification of Occupations and Directory of Occupational Titles) occupational categories.

Table 7:2 show a breakdown of the Socio-economic grouping (SEG) of women resident in Newcastle upon Tyne by marital status. The largest concentrations of women overall appear in four main categories: SEG 5.1 (intermediate non-manual) SEG 6 (Junior non-manual) SEG 7 (Personal service workers) and SEG 11 (Unskilled manual). 72.1% of the single, widowed and divorced women work in these four SEG groups. Married women show an even greater concentration with 79% concentrated into the four groups.

A further difference between married women and other women's SEG groupings is that 31% of married women are concentrated into SEG's 7 and 11 compared with only 17% of the single, widowed and divorced women, both being low skill SEG categories.

Table 7.3 shows the differences between full time and part time workers in terms of the SEG of residents in Newcastle (male and female). Huge differences are shown in the differences between part time and full time work. 17% of the full time workers appear in the higher professional SEG categories 1 to 4. Only 5% of the part time workers appear in this category. 78% of the part-time workers appear in low skill SEG categories 6, 7 and 11. In contrast, only 31% of full time workers overall appear in these three categories.

Table 7.1 Occupations (1980) basis of men and women

	Men			Women		
	Est no	City %	C/ty %	Est no	City %	C/ty %
Professional & related supporting management; senior national & local government managers	7,090	8	5	2,010	3	2
Professional & related in education, welfare & health	6,200	7	5	9,530	13	12
Literary, artistic & sports	1,250	1	1	370	-	1
Professionals & related in science, engineering & technology	7,740	8	6	770	1	1
Managerial	8,660	9	9	2,700	4	4
Clerical & related	9,980	11	7	28,960	38	31
Selling	3,3570	4	4	8,450	11	12
Security & protective service	2,220	2	2	310	-	-
Catering, cleaning, & other personal service	3,960	4	3	17,910	24	25
Farming, fishing & related	690	1	1	20	-	-
Materials processing, making & repairing, (excluding metal & electrical)	5,800	6	7	2,150	3	5
Processing, making & repairing & related (metal & electrical)	16,650	18	23	210	-	1
Painting, repetitive assembly, product inspecting & related	2,310	2	3	1,310	2	3
Construction, mining & related	5,040	5	6	20	-	-
Transport operating materials moving & storing & related	8,780	9	11	510	1	1
Miscellaneous	2,450	3	5	280	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>92,780</b>	<b>92,780</b>	<b>281,590</b>	<b>75,970</b>	<b>75,970</b>	<b>200,930</b>

Table 7.2 Socio-economic grouping (SEG) of men and women resident in Newcastle upon Tyne

SEG	Males		Females		Married	
	No	%	SWD* No	%	No	%
1	422	5.5	60	2.9	76	2.5
2	443	5.7	54	2.6	110	3.5
3	66	0.8	5	0.2	2	0.1
4	365	4.8	33	1.6	23	0.7
5.1	517	6.7	315	15.0	390	12.6
5.2	50	0.6	27	1.3	33	1.0
6	738	9.6	844	40.4	1107	35.7
7	101	1.3	234	11.2	531	17.1
8	234	3.0	7	0.3	22	0.7
9	2319	30.2	58	2.8	79	2.5
10	1051	13.7	168	8.0	201	6.5
11	658	8.6	114	5.5	423	13.6
12	228	3.0	6	0.3	39	1.3
13	4	0.1	0	0	1	0.1
14	6	0.1	0	0	0	0
15	15	0.2	3	0.1	0	0
16	49	0.6	1	0.1	0	0
17	405	5.3	158	7.6	67	2.2

Total 7671 99.8% 2087 99.9% 3104 100.1%

Census 1981 Small Area Statistics: Newcastle Upon Tyne. Residents Aged 16 or over in Employment (10 % sample, includes part time and full time workers).

\* Single, widowed and divorced

Table 7.3 Socio-economic group of residents working full time and part time

SEG	Working full time	%	Part time	%
1	529	6	10	1
2	535	6	34	2
3	67	1	5	1
4	401	4	10	1
5.1	1,020	11	153	8
5.2	102	1	4	1
6	1,901	21	640	32
7	323	4	486	24
8	238	3	14	1
9	1,994	22	49	2
10	1,054	12	113	6
11	520	6	435	22
12	218	2	37	2
13	4	1	1	1
14	5	1	1	1
15	12	1	0	
16	30	1	0	
17	64	1	18	1
Total	9,025	(104)	2,010	(106)

The four occupations chosen for the Newcastle study are shown to represent typical areas of married women's employment if Census data in tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 are considered together. Table 7.1 shows that occupations in CODOT categories 3,7,8 and 10 are the most typical areas for women's employment. CODOT group 3 (Professional and related occupations in education, welfare and health), however, is not represented in the Newcastle Study. This category includes professions such as nursing and teaching which are often full time and often performed by unmarried women. The Urban Employment Study included very few married women who were employed in this category. The UES sample appears to be representative in this finding because Census information in Tables 7.2 and 7.3 show relatively few married women and even fewer part time workers to be employed in the higher ranking, professional SEG groups.

Overall, statistics from the Census in Newcastle upon Tyne show similar patterns generally to those discussed in Chapter 3. That is women generally are segregated into certain sectors of the labour force. This segregation is found to be more even severe with married women workers especially when the paid work is on a part time basis.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

### Classification of occupations

In each of the occupational groups (clerical, cleaning, catering and retail) ten women were interviewed making a total of 40 married women.

The four occupations fit into three OPCS (Offices of Population Census and Surveys) occupational groupings. The four occupations also fit into three major CODOT groups. The CODOT categories are the classifications used by the Department of Employment at the time of the research.

All clerical workers are in OPCS group 21 ('Clerical Workers') and CODOT group 7 ('Clerical and Related Occupations'). All the retail workers are in OPCS group 22 ('Sales Workers') and CODOT group 8 ('Selling Occupations'). The cleaning and catering workers are both in the major CODOT group 10 ('Catering, Cleaning, Hairdressing and other Personal Service Occupations') and the same OPCS major group 23 ('Service, Sports and Recreation Workers').

The occupations of the women interviewed differ slightly in their socio-economic groupings (SEG) and in the Registrar General's social class grouping. Only the retail workers share the same SEG and class groups, they are all SEG 6 and Class IIIIn (see tables 7.4 and 7.5).

Table 7.4 Socio-economic grouping

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail
5.2 Intermediate non-manual	3			
6. Junior non-manual	7			10
7. Personal service workers		2	4	
11. Unskilled manual workers		8	6	
Total	10	10	10	10 N=40

Table 7.5 Class

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail
IIIIn Non Manual	10			10
IIIIm Skilled Manual			1	
IV Semi-skilled manual		2	3	
V Unskilled manual		8	6	
Total	10	10	10	10 N=40

The two cleaning women in SEG 7 and Class IV (semi-skilled) differ in status from other cleaners because they are home helps. Three of the catering women are in SEG 7 because they help to serve meals as well as prepare them (preparation only is classed as SEG 6) and the fourth catering worker in SEG 7 (and Class IIIIm) is thus classed because she is a trained chef and therefore classed as skilled.

Overall the SEG and class groupings show that the majority of women in the sample worked in occupations which are classed as requiring low levels of skill. 17 of the women interviewed were classed as junior non-manual workers, the lowest skill level for non-manual work. A further 14 women were classed as unskilled manual workers, the lowest skill category for all workers.

The industrial distribution of employment does not necessarily reflect the occupational distribution. For example it is quite possible to have a clerical job in an engineering firm. The industries in which the women interviewed are in, however, do largely reflect their occupations (see table 7.6). All of the retail workers are classified by the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) as in "Distributive Trades", plus three of the



clerical workers. 23 other respondents are in industries classified as service industries (SIC's 24 - 27). Thus, overall 90% of the sample are in distributive or service industries (4).

Table 7.6 Industry by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail	
5. Chemical			1		
6. Metal Manufacture	1				
10. Ship building and marine engineering		1			
15. Clothing and footwear	1				
23. Distributive trades	3			10	
24. Insurance, banking, finance and business services	1				
25. Professional and scientific services (inc education)	1	4	7		
27. Public admin and defence	3	5	2		
Total	10	10	10	10	N=40

The high proportion of women in service industries is explained by the fact that many clerical, cleaning and catering workers (none of the retail workers) are employed by the public sector (see table 7.7).

Table 7.7 Employment Sector

	Clerical	Cleaning	Catering	Retail	Total (%)
Public sector	5	10	9		57.5
Private sector	5		1	10	42.5
Total	10	10	10	10	100.00

Five of the ten catering women work in the preparation of school meals and in addition one works in a nursery (local authority) and one in a polytechnic. The other two public sector catering workers work in a local government centre.

Of the cleaning women two work in schools, two in polytechnics, two in social services (the home helps), two in local government buildings, one in a fire station and one in shipbuilding. Thus all cleaners work in the public sector.

Of the five public sector clerical workers, three work in Department of Health and Social Security (a major source of clerical work in the North East), one in a post office and another for a health clinic.

Heavy dependence upon the public service industries (thus service industries as well as service occupations) is again a feature of women's employment (and increasingly men's too) in Newcastle upon Tyne and the North East generally (5).

The women in the private sector are mainly retail and clerical workers. Retail workers are employed in a mixture of departmental stores, supermarkets and small shops. Three of the clerical workers in the private sector also work in shops, the other two work in manufacturing industries.

Table 7.8 Employment status of the women interviewed

	Clerical	Cleaning	Catering	Retail	(Total)
Full time	6		4	3	13
Part time	4	10	6	7	27

27 (67.5%) of the women interviewed worked part time. All of the cleaning women worked part time and most of the retail workers (70%). 60% of the catering women were part time but only 40% of the clerical workers.

The number of hours worked per week in paid employment by the part timers varies considerably from 6 hours to 25 hours. Exactly one third of the part time working women worked 15 hours or less, thus working less than the 16 hours required to be eligible for statutory employment rights. The remaining two thirds of part time women workers interviewed worked between 16 and 25 hours per week. Although the numbers in each occupational group are too small to make any firm conclusions, there is a slight tendency for the part time clerical workers and retail workers to work more hours than catering and cleaning workers.

#### WORK HISTORIES

The information on work histories described below results from combining information from the Newcastle Study with corresponding past interviews carried out by the UES. The first set of UES interviews recorded work histories from 1969 to 1979. The second round of interviews took place eighteen months later (autumn 1980) and up-dated information on work histories. As previously described, the married women in the Newcastle Survey survey were chosen because of their occupations. Thus, their occupation in 1982 was the same as in 1980 (6).

In sum, the work history information for each respondent potentially spans at least thirteen years. Respondents were also

asked what their first job was after leaving school. For nine respondents this additional piece of information completes their entire work history.

Table 7.9 Number of women in each occupational group who have worked in other occupations

Past occupations	Present occupations			
	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail
Clerical	7	2	4	4
Cleaners		4	2	2
Catering	1	4	2	4
Retail	4	5	1	7
Manufacturing	1	5	4	1
Other	2	2	4	
No other occupations	4	1		2
	N=10	N=10	N=10	N=10

33 of the women interviewed had worked in at least one other occupational category than their present one, at some point in their lives. Of the seven women who had always worked in the same occupational category, six had worked in other jobs which had the same occupational groupings.

Only two women had worked with the same employer throughout their work history and the experiences were markedly different. One of the women worked full time and had "worked up" the company from being a junior clerical worker to become a data processing supervisor. She had no children and was the highest paid of all the women in the sample.

The other woman was a part time cleaner who had only ever worked in the labour force since child rearing responsibilities were over because she "lived at home" before marriage. She was the oldest

woman in the sample, worked few hours and was very poorly paid even in comparison even with the rest of the sample.

Of the 33 women who had worked in other occupational groupings, some, albeit few, had actually worked in all four occupations being examined (clerical, cleaning, catering and retail work) at various points in their work histories. It is of great importance when we consider the differences between occupations that we do not lose sight of the fact that most women have experienced other work environments besides their present one.

Overall the catering and cleaning workers have had a more varied work history, in terms of different occupations at least, than the clerical and, to a lesser extent, retail workers. Few of the clerical workers have had experience of manual work, whereas six of the ten retail workers had been in manual work at some time or another. Perhaps here we should take into account the fact that, despite the classification (both by Class and SEG) of retail work as non-manual work, many retail workers, especially those in supermarkets, do have manual work to perform in the course of their job, for example, shelf filling.

#### Downward mobility in work histories

##### Clerical workers

The clerical workers show little evidence of downward mobility in terms of SEG or Class in the course of their work history. The one woman who did experience downward mobility, however, exemplifies the way in which traditional areas of women's work are under valued

in terms of pay. She had trained as a State Registered Nurse but had to stop nursing because the pay was so bad. She moved to an area of clerical work where many men are employed in the same job (DHSS). By doing so she experienced a rise in wages but downward mobility in terms of skill and class groupings.

Most of the clerical workers had remained at the same level of skill throughout their work histories (usually SEG 6, Class IIIIn) although three had increased their skill level (to SEG 5.2) by attaining supervisory positions. All of these three women worked full time and had done so throughout their work histories.

One women who changed from part-time work to full time work retained the same economic status but gained more training opportunities and more money than in her previous job.

#### Retail workers

Retail workers show a similar pattern to clerical workers. There is only a little evidence of downward mobility although it is worth pointing out that one woman gave up a full time retail supervisory job because she needed part time work. Another part-time sales assistant had worked as shorthand-typist, and had also been a manageress in a bakery shop when working full time. Six of the retail workers had experienced increased status in their work histories because of moving from manual work (mainly catering) to non-manual work, although there is no actual increase in terms of skill (retail work being classed as unskilled non-manual work).

## Catering workers

The women whose present jobs are catering and cleaning occupations show a rather different pattern from the clerical and retail workers, showing fairly definite evidence of downward mobility. Three of the ten catering workers previously had been in skilled manual (Class IIIm) work at other times in their work history. The types of skilled jobs tend not to be those which require apprenticeship, for example glass inspector, bakery work and dressmaking, but do involve training. Another catering worker had been a computer operating supervisor and in terms of SEG had experienced a decrease in skill (from SEG 5.2 to SEG 11). One of the catering workers had previously been a canteen manageress and had also experienced a decrease in skill from SEG 1.2 to SEG 11. All but one of the skilled jobs were full time and in each case but one, the drop in skill coincided with a move from full time to part time work. Two more catering workers had been in non-manual work, although unskilled, at a previous point in their work history. Two catering workers had stayed at the same level of skill throughout their work histories. The one catering worker to experience an increase in skill level in her present job was a head cook (and therefore skilled) and had worked in lower skilled jobs before she was qualified. At the time of interview she worked part time in the public sector (in a nursery). All her previous jobs had been full time work and it was during this time that she gained qualifications and promotion to the level of head cook.

Six out of the ten catering workers could not have experienced an increase in skill in their present jobs because by SEG and Class

groupings they are defined as totally unskilled. Similarly among the cleaning workers only two are classed as semi-skilled and the other eight are unskilled.

#### Cleaning workers

The cleaning women show a very similar pattern to the catering women. Four of the cleaning women had been in skilled manual jobs (Class III<sub>m</sub>) at some time in their work history, for example bakery work and clothing machinists. Three out of these four women had been full time in their skilled jobs and also in their first jobs. Like the catering workers the decrease in skill again coincided with the move to part-time work. Another cleaning woman (unskilled) had previously been in semi-skilled manual work, making sweets. Four more of the cleaning women had past jobs in unskilled non-manual work. One of these women had been a coffee house supervisor and the categorisation by Class as unskilled seems misleading (as with many categorisations by SEG and Class) if we compare this with other class ratings of supervisory positions. Of the other three cleaning women with past experience of non-manual work, one had been in clerical work the other two retail workers. The only cleaning worker who had not experienced a decrease in skill was in the only job she had ever had (and had been there for 20 years) and had not been in paid work before she was married.

Among the catering and cleaning women who had been in skilled manual jobs at some point in their work history (n=7) none had had their skilled jobs in service industries and all were in manufacturing industries of some type.



## The influence of employment status

Overall the sample of married women showed considerable evidence of downward mobility when comparing their present jobs with previous ones in their work histories. Evidence of downward mobility is particularly apparent in the catering and cleaning occupations and usually coincides with a transition from full-time to part-time work.

27 women in the sample worked part time and of these 14 (over 50%) had worked in full time jobs with higher skill levels. This figure is likely to underestimate the proportion of women who experience downward mobility with a move to part time work because some of the work histories are incomplete and do not record employment before unavailability due to child bearing and rearing.

Because numbers are small it is difficult to assess whether or not women who re-enter work on a part time basis and then move to full time later in their life will experience a rise in skill levels. Only two women in the sample had changed from part time work to full time work after a period of child rearing. Of these two, only one experienced an increase in skill by changing employment status.

### JOB FEATURES

#### Wages

According to the New Earnings Survey (April 1982), the mean average national wage (over all occupations) for men working full time was 354.8 pence per hour and 262.1 pence for women working full time. Thus, women in full time employment are paid only 73.9% of men's

pay. For women working part time the mean average hourly wage was even lower at 207.8 pence per hour.

The New Earnings Survey 1982 also shows that the mean average hourly rate for women working part time in the north (all occupations) was one of the lowest in the country at 193.7 pence. The New Earning survey notes that it excludes significant numbers of part timers with lower pay.

Numbers are too small to give any conclusive evidence about wages, however, we can tentatively suggest certain tendencies which emerge.

Table 7.10 Amount earned per hour

Pence per hour	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail	Part time	Full time
120-139		2			2	
140-149	1	1		3	5	
150-159	1	3	2	3	7	2
160-179	2	3	6	2	9	4
180-199		1	1		2	
200-219	3		1	1	1	4
220-239						
240-259	2			1	1	2
300-400	1					1
Total n=40	10	10	10	10	27	13

Nearly three quarters (29 women) of the respondents earned less than 180 pence per hour, thus considerably less than the New Earning Survey's average for the north. Of the women working part time only two out of 27 earned more than 199 pence per hour, compared with seven of the 13 full time workers (see table 7.10).

Clerical work illustrates the division between part time and full

time work most clearly. All six full time clerical workers earn more than 199 pence per hour. The woman who earns the most in the sample is married, has no children and has been with the same employer since leaving school. The four part time clerical workers earn between 150 and 179 pence per hour.

Different employers are at least part explanation for the differences in pay for part time and full time clerical workers. For example, three of the full-time workers are employed by the DHSS (now the DSS) where pay and conditions are negotiated with trade unions. The four part-timers all work in areas which lack trade union pressure. One, for example, works as a wages clerk in a supermarket, another as a clerk in a small bakery.

Within the retail trade differences between employers are apparent. The two highest earning retail workers are both employed by departmental stores, "well respected" as employers. Supermarkets which were operating on a low profit margin tended to pay the least.

All of the cleaning women and all but one of the catering workers are employed by the public sector. Differences in wages depend on which part of the public sector the women work in, for example, the wages of the catering women are more clustered than those of the cleaning women because of the high proportion of catering women who are employed by schools in this sample.

#### Fringe benefits

Table 7.11 shows that all the respondents said they did receive

holiday pay. Most of the clerical workers (90%) and retail workers (80%) receive sickness pay but this proportion is lower amongst the cleaners (60%) and catering workers (50%).

Quite a high proportion of respondents report that there are pension schemes where they work but few are actually in the pension scheme. This is especially low amongst the cleaners of whom only one respondent was in a pension scheme. Perhaps predictably all the catering workers had cheap eating facilities. Not so predictable, however, is that 70% of the clerical workers had cheap eating facilities compared with only 10% of retail workers and of the cleaners.

Few respondents had travelling expenses - 2 of the cleaners have travelling expenses because they are home helps.

The influence of union negotiated agreements is apparent in the public sector where more fringe benefits tend to be given than in less unionised sections of the private sector.

Table 7.11 Fringe benefits

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail
Sickness pay	9	6	5	8
Paid holidays	10	10	10	10
Pension schemes	6	6	9	7
Are you in pension scheme (yes)	3	1	4	3
Redundancy	3		7	3
Redundancy schemes	2	1	6	1
Cheap eating facilities	7	2	1	3
Travelling	1	3	1	1
Don't know if there is a...				
Pension scheme	1	2	1	
Redundancy schemes	1	1		1

## Length of job

Many women had been in their job for several years. Only 18% of the women had been in their job for less than one year. 46% of the women interviewed had been in their job for more than five years and 15% had been in their job for over ten years.

Table 7.12 How did you get your job?

	Clerical	Cleaning	Catering	Retail	%
Friends/relatives		3	3	3	23
On spec	5	4	3	4	40
Newspaper	2	1	1	1	13
Job centre	1	2	1		10
Newsagent	1		2		8
Other				2	5
No answer	1				3

The main way of getting a job was by going to places on spec (40% overall, see table 7.12) and enquiring if there were any vacancies. For all but the clerical workers, the second most popular way of finding a job was through friends or relatives. Presumably the nature of clerical work requires more formal methods of job search. The main methods used to find jobs are in fact very similar to the most popular ways in which working class men find work, that is, tending to use friends and relatives and their own initiative to find work rather than extensive use of job centres.

## Training

The number of women who said they had had training (48%) is actually higher than those who said they had no training. Despite this response, much of what the women describe as training is in fact a probationary period usually lasting between three and six months. All of the women who said they had been trained said it

was "on the job training". Only clerical workers, however, seemed to have any structured training on the job.

### Promotion

The women interviewed were asked if they had any chances of promotion. The largest group to say they did have chances of promotion were in catering (60%). Five out of the six who said they had chances of promotion worked in school meals. In the school meals service chances of promotion can be gained through length of service and by taking exams, the highest position being head cook. The catering worker who said she could not get promotion because she was as far as she could go (head cook) worked for a local authority nursery which has a similar system for promotion to that of school meals.

Three of the full time clerical workers said they did have chances of promotion and a fourth said she was as high as she could go. In contrast none of the part time clerical workers said they had chances of promotion.

Half of the women in retail work said they had no chance of promotion. The cleaning women gave the largest negative response, in that eight women said they had no chances of promotion.

Nearly half of the women who said they did have chances of promotion said they would not take it if it was offered to them. The frequent reason given for not taking promotion was that it would involve working full time instead of part time. The home commitments these women had were usually the reason they could not

Cope with full time work. Thus for many women the avenues of promotion to them were not in fact possibilities because their capacity to be employed in the first place was based primarily on the part-time basis of that work. A catering worker said, for example:

"Promotion is available to supervisor, but you have to work full time and I don't want to. I want the time to spend with my family and be at home. I think the more money you've got the more you spend."

ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS

Employment prospects

Table 7.13 Rating the employment prospects

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail	Total
Very good					
Good		2	3	2	18
Fair	1	2	1	1	13
Poor	6	3	2	6	43
Very poor		2	2	1	13
Don't know/NA	3	1	2		15
	n=10	n=10	n=10	n=10	n=40

To gauge how the women interviewed rated their prospects in the labour market generally, they were asked if they thought their employment prospects were very good, good, fair, poor or very poor. None of the women thought their prospects were very good, although approximately a quarter of all groups except clerical workers thought their employment prospects were "good". The largest proportion in each group rated their prospects either poor or very poor (overall 55%). The differences between occupational groups are small on this question (see Table 7.13). One of the retail workers related job prospects to training:

"Yes prospects are automatically different unless you have been to university etc. You are limited to the type of work you can take unless you want to retrain".

When asked to compare their employment prospects with those of other women, the respondents tended to give two main responses, that is, either prospects were the same or the respondent thought her own chances better because of having qualifications. Four clerical workers, four retail workers and two of the catering workers thought their prospects better because of their qualifications. None of the cleaners thought their prospects were any better than those of other women. Five thought their prospects the same as other women, one woman thought her prospects bad because of her age, the rest didn't know.

At least half of the women in each group (seven in the catering group) thought their employment prospects were better than men's employment prospects. Only two retail workers, one clerical, one catering worker and none of the cleaners thought their employment prospects worse than men's. Some of the women who thought women's prospects better than men seemed to base their assumption on the idea that women's jobs were less important (economically at least) than men's:

"Women have got more chance of getting a job than men, because it's only a small job, whereas a man needs a job to keep his family."

"It may be harder for a man because women take anything, some men work for coppers and I don't agree with that."

Other responses, however, appeared to be based more either on how women viewed the different opportunities for part-time and full



time work or on differences between what they defined as men's work or women's work...

"I think women's prospects are poor on the whole, but there's always some part time work available for women."  
(Cleaner)

"A little better for women because shops never go out of business... people always have to eat and dress, it's the tradesmen who are suffering."  
(Retail worker)

"Everything is in a terrible state, men's prospects are about the same)."  
(Clerical worker).

### Expectations of leaving the job

The women were asked if they expected to be in their job in five years time. There were negligible differences between occupations in the response to this question. Overall 62.5% said they did not expect to stay in their job. The women who did not expect to be in their jobs in five years time were mainly those who either hoped a better job would turn up or those who were afraid they might be made redundant because of their firm closing down.

As a corollary to the last question, the women were asked if they had ever thought of leaving their job. Nearly all the women in catering and clerical work and most of the women who were cleaners said they had never thought about leaving. Only the retail workers had a high proportion who said they had thought of leaving (70%). The reasons given for thinking of leaving were varied but tended to reflect dissatisfaction with the nature of the job, for example, shortage of staff, boring work and not liking the job. Of those women who had thought of leaving their job, few of them had done anything about getting another job. Two women said they had thought

about leaving their job for full time work but could not do this until the children were older, for example:

"I've thought about leaving a few times but the hours are suitable for the little one regarding school, if Joan could look after herself I'd consider full time."  
(Retail worker)

#### Reasons for staying in the job

The next question "what keeps you in your present job" was the reverse of the previous two questions which were concerned with leaving. The women could give as many responses as they wanted to this question but usually gave no more than two answers even when prompted to do so. As with the majority of studies of both women's and men's employment the most popular reason for keeping in their present job was for the money. 70% of clerical, retail and catering workers and 50% of the cleaners mentioned money as a reason for staying in their present job. Other answers to what keeps you in your present job varied considerably. Overall the second most popular answer was "like the job", especially amongst the clerical workers (50%), although none of the cleaning workers gave this answer. Several women overall mentioned the hours, being near home, being used to the job or having friends as a reason for staying in their job. The numbers, however, are too small to suggest differences or similarities between the different groups. Thus for this question the money aspect of the job overrides all other answers. Typical answers to this questions were as follows:

"Like the money and because it's night work, the husband looks after the kids."  
(Retail worker)

"Like the money and get on well with the teachers."  
(Catering worker)

"I need the money and like the company."  
(Cleaner)

### Job Satisfaction

Related to the last question but as a more direct test of job satisfaction, the women were given a list of ten job aspects and asked to list three in the order which they thought were most important when looking for a job. The women were asked if they were satisfied or dissatisfied with each of these three aspects concerning their present job.

In Table's 7.14 and 7.15 the responses to these questions are grouped into four categories which divide the most important features of the job into economic, social, intrinsic and convenience factors (7).

In accordance with the previous question, money was the most frequently mentioned most important aspect of a job for the women interviewed. Table 7.14 shows the order in which women in each occupation rated the different aspects of choosing a job. From this it can be seen that clerical and retail workers tended to mention wages less often than the cleaning and catering women. Overall the retail workers mention economic factors less than any other group. The actual work itself and the conditions of work - the intrinsic factors- were stated more frequently by the clerical and retail workers than by the cleaning and catering workers. None of the catering or cleaning workers mentioned intrinsic factors as the most important aspect of looking for a job.

Table 7.14 Important aspects of job

	Clerical			Cleaning			Catering			Retail			All			
Wages	3	2	0	5	2	1	5	4	1	3	0	3	16	8	5	
Security	1		2	1	1	1		2	2	3	0		2	2	3	
Promotion prospects	-----															
Economic features	4	2	2	6	2	2	5	6	1	3	0	3	18	10	8	
Workmates			2	2		1	2		4	0	2	3	4	2	10	
Bosses		3	1	1	3	1			1	1	2		2	8	3	
Social features	-----															
Social features		3	3	3	3	2	2	0	5	1	4	3	6	10	13	
The work itself (interesting/boring)	2	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	2	1	1	4	3	5	
Responsibility	-----															
Conditions		1		2	0	0	2		1	2	1	2	2	3	8	
Intrinsic features	-----															
Intrinsic features		3	1	3	0	0	4	0	2	3	3	3	6	6	13	
Being near home	1	2		1	1	1		0	2	1	1		3	6	2	
Convenient hrs	2	1	1	4				3			2	2	7	7	2	
Convenience features	-----															
Convenience features		3	3	1	1	5	1	3	2	1	3	3	1	10	13	4

The 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices are listed respectively under each occupational heading.

Table 7.15 Satisfaction in Job

	Clerical		Cleaning		Catering		Retail		Total	
	Sat	Dis	Sat	Dis	Sat	Dis	Sat	Dis	Sat	Dis
Wages	5		8		8	2	5	1	26	3
Security	3		2		2				7	
Promotional prospects	-----									
Economistic features	8		10		10	2	5	1	33	3
Workmates	2		2	2	6		5		15	2
Bosses	4		5		1		3		13	
Social features	-----									
Social features	6		7	1	7		8		28	1
The work itself (boring/interesting)	3	1	2		2		3	2	10	3
Responsibility	-----									
Conditions	3	1	1		3		5		12	1
Intrinsic features	-----									
Intrinsic features	6	1	3	1	5		8	2	22	4
Being near home	3		3		3		2		11	
Convenient hrs	4		4		3		5		16	
Convenience features	-----									
Convenience features	7		7		6		7		27	

Convenient hours figure quite highly for many of the women interviewed. Table 7.15 shows the total number of times each aspect was mentioned by the respondents. The mentions are accumulated regardless of whether they are first, second or third in importance. 40% overall mentioned convenient hours. Close behind convenient hours is having good workmates especially among

catering and retail workers. For the clerical workers interesting work (40%) is rated more than having good workmates (20%), but for the cleaning women neither having good workmates (30%) nor interesting work are valued very highly when choosing a job. Significantly no women at all mentioned either promotion or "having responsibility for your own job" as an important aspect when choosing a job.

As with many studies of worker satisfaction (both male and female) there is very little dissatisfaction expressed by the women about their jobs (Table 7.15 also records the percentage of women expressing dissatisfaction with any of the job aspects mentioned). Despite the low wages the majority of the interviewees receive, only three women (8%) said they were dissatisfied with their present wages. Similarly with other job aspects very little dissatisfaction is expressed by the women about their present jobs.

#### Liking the job

Women were next asked to say what they like about their present job. The reason for this question was to get responses which were not connected with the necessity of working. By far the most popular answers were those connected with meeting people (20%) or friends (25%). Thus nearly half of the sample mention people as a reason for liking their job. The second most popular response to this question was liking the work, or the variety of work, that the women performed (overall 27%). However, none of the cleaning women and only one of the retail workers mentioned the work itself as something they liked about the job. It is the clerical (50%) and catering workers (50%) who make up the bulk of this response.

"I have an interesting job, it's varied. Also with flexi - hours I can suit myself."

(Clerical)

"I like the job itself, it's not what I'm trained for but I like it. I also like the company, I work with a very nice crowd and it gives me a certain independence. I must admit that, although I love the school holidays, I miss the people I work with during that time."

(Catering)

Two of the cleaning women mention helping the old as something they like about the job. This is because both of these respondents were "home helps" and thus had more of a caring aspect to their job than most cleaning jobs. One said: "I feel as if I'm doing something worthwhile".

Few respondents gave more than one answer to the question about liking the job and those who did frequently mentioned friends or liking the work as a second response.

As a contrast to the last question respondents were asked what was the worst thing about their job. As with job satisfaction, many women seemed to find it difficult to think of anything to complain about in their jobs. 60% of the cleaners, 50% of clerical workers, 40% of catering workers and 20% of the retail workers could think of nothing to say that was bad about their jobs. Amongst the retail workers 30% said their work was boring (15% of the sample overall mentioned boring work). Some of the women who found their work boring linked their need for the type of work they were doing to family responsibilities:

"The staff are friendly, I like doing shop work, but it gets boring work at times. It's too easy I don't seem to be stretching myself at times. It's convenient hours for the children, It fits in with my husband's shifts - he can be

here when I'm not."  
(Retail worker)

"I'm bored out of my brain at work but it makes life easier at home. It keeps security in the family, my husband or kids could be out of work. I try to make the most of the job even though it's boring. I appreciate the girls I work with for the company. I would rather be at work than sit at home all day."  
(Clerical worker)

The only other common response to problems with job was among catering workers where 30% said their work was too heavy. Various other responses were given, for example, the bosses, travelling and the hours. Some women assessed their jobs with reference to housework.

"I don't like cleaning, I like shop work - I only took the job while the child was younger. There's nothing I like about it, it's just what you do in the house, cleaning up after people."  
(Cleaner)

"I don't care much for it, it gets us out for three hours and away from the children. The lasses are a good laugh, better than being stuck in the home. The money does come in handy."  
(Retail worker)

### Large and small firms

Table 7.16 Size of firm

	Clerical	Cleaning	Catering	Retail
Large firm	7	10	9	7
Small firm	3		1	3
	10	10	10	10

The women interviewed were asked whether they worked for large or small firms. For the purpose of this study, the decision as to whether the firm was small or large was left for the women themselves to decide. The definition of small or large is thus not



based on a certain number of employees in the firm.

Few of the women interviewed said they worked in small firms. Those women who did work in small firms (n=7) seem to find few advantages. Two women said there was less pressure in a small firm. The other women (n=4) in small firms could think of no advantages. Two women said to work in a small firm was a disadvantage because of being put on, another said small firms gave "little scope for anything".

53% of those working in large firms (n=33) thought there were advantages to being in a large firm and only 22% could think of any disadvantages. 19% of these women thought large firms were an advantage because of their security. 9.5% thought that large firms were better for friends and 9.5% thought large firms gave more chance of getting on but not for themselves. The only disadvantage mentioned (22%) was that in a large firm you are just treated as a number. A factor confusing the issue of large and small firms is that 69% of those working in a large firm or organisation actually either work in a small workplace (for example working in a fairly small shop which belongs to a large chain of supermarkets) or work with a small group of people (for example working in a small office which may be within a large complex of offices). A clerical worker in a large organisation said:

"When you're in your section it's like an office of your own, you get to know your workmates better than if you're moved about."

Thus, many of the advantages commonly thought to apply to small firms can also apply to large firms. This is especially true of

catering and cleaning workers where eight of the catering workers and six of cleaners said they worked with a small group of people (the other two catering workers and four cleaning workers said they worked by themselves).

59% of those working in small groups in large firms thought this was an advantage. By far the most popular advantage stated was that it is more personal and friendly (85% of those saying it was an advantage to work in small groups). Only one woman could think of any disadvantages and that was too much pressure.

Table 7.17 Do you work as a team?

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail	Total(%)
Work as a team	8	6	9	8	78
Work by self	2	4	1	2	22
Work in competition	10	10	10	10	100
					n=40

Working as a team

Women were asked if they worked with other people as a team, in competition with others, or worked by themselves. The majority of women said they worked with others and worked as a team (78%). One of the catering women who worked in School meals said, for example:

"We definitely work together as a team. The thing is, we've all been there since the school opened and we can read each other like a book -in and out of work."

No one said that they worked in competition with others and thus those not working in a team said they worked by themselves. The cleaning women had the highest number (n=4) of women who worked by themselves. (see Table 7.17).

## COMMITMENT TO PAID WORK

### The Choice to Stop Work

The women were asked whether or not they would carry on working if they inherited an income large enough to enable them to stop working altogether. Considering the high temptation for anyone to say yes to this question it is perhaps surprising that only 40% in the retail group and 50% in each other group said they would stop work altogether. 30% of all groups but the clerical workers (10%) said they would carry on working in their present job (25 % of the overall sample). The other respondents said they would do another job and several women said they would do charity work instead. A retail worker said:

"Stop work? No. I'd still like a little job, I get bored at home."

### More pay or less hours?

The interviewees were asked if they would rather have more pay for the same hours or less hours for the same pay. For the clerical (50%), catering (60%) and retail workers (60%) the popular answer was for fewer hours. The cleaners said they would prefer more pay for the same hours (80%). This is understandable because the cleaners on average work fewer hours in paid work than any of the other occupagroups in this sample.

### Retirement

The women were asked if they intended to do paid work up until the women's retirement age of 60.

Table 7.18 Will you work until you are 60?

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail
Yes	8	8	7	6
No		1		1
Hope not	2	1	2	1
Don't know			1	2

Table 7.18 shows that the majority of women do expect to be in paid work until retirement age. Even in the retail group where the largest proportion (60%) says it will not stay on, only 10% gives a definite no. When respondents said they hopéd they wouldn't work until they were 60, the response was often said in a light-hearted way, as if to indicate they did not believe that they would not.

### MOTHERS WORKING

57% of women said their mothers had been in paid work and of these women 61% said their mothers had worked most of their lives. Thus showing that for the many of the women interviewed a tradition had already been set in their families for women with children to do paid work for some or all of their lives.

### RELATIONSHIPS WITH MEN

#### Where the wage goes

Two questions in the survey were designed to test whether or not family finances were arranged in a way which, despite the earnings of the women, gave the men the status of "the breadwinner".

First the women were asked how their own and their husbands' finances were arranged each week. Did they, for example, pool their wages with their husband or did they keep their wages

separate. If their wages were separate, who paid for what?

The largest proportion of respondents in each occupational group said they pooled their wages with their husband (overall 65%). Although it used to be common to believe that women only worked for "luxuries", for example, holidays and extras, overall only two respondents gave this response (5% of the sample) to this question. Some studies have found that men's wages have tended to be used for food and rent while women's wages pay the more peripheral housekeeping bills and so on. In this study only 5% (n=2) appeared to do this. One woman reported that her wages were used to pay the bills, although her husband made the actual payments with her money:

"We use my wages separately. He's self employed so as my wage comes in he pays the bills - he never gets a pay packet."

#### Earning more than husbands

The second question testing the idea of man the breadwinner was whether or not the women thought that their husbands would mind if they earned more than him. Also, if the women themselves would mind if they earned more than their husbands. No woman interviewed said she would mind herself if she earned more than her husband and an extremely high proportion of respondents (88%) said they believed their husband would not mind either. Several of the women made the connection between earnings and the idea of the traditional male breadwinner:

"My husband wouldn't mind a bit if I earned more, not if it was going to benefit him he wouldn't mind. He used to be a bit a male chauvinist and he would never have me work. But

now he's finding out how hard life is and his attitudes are having to change."

(Clerical)

"Yes I think he would (mind if I earned more) because he's one of the old school who still likes to be the breadwinner."

(Cleaner)

The only woman (in catering) who said she did earn more than her husband, said he did mind.

### Working with men

The respondents were asked if they worked with men and if yes, what were the attitudes of the men to the women. 50% of the catering workers and 60% of the cleaners said they did not work with any men at all. Those that said they did work with men did not usually mean that the men did the same work. An affirmative answer to the question usually meant that men worked in the same premises, for example as a mechanic or store keeper.

70% of clerical workers and 80% of the retail workers said they did work with men, although 20% of the retail workers said that the only males they worked with were "just young boys". It was the full time clerical workers who tended to work with the most men and who did the same work. Their responses were markedly different from other workers:

"I'm just one of the fellas really!"

"We have a great team - I'm just treated like one of the boys. We all get the same so we're entitled to the same."

"Where I work the women get equal pay. Men depend on their wives working to exist."

Apart from one respondent who said that she did not know what the

men's attitudes were to women, all the other women said that men's attitudes towards them were either "okay" or good. The separation of "men's" and "women's" work was noted in some responses. For example, a part time secretary said:

"I work with men, but there aren't any male secretaries. They seem to accept the women for the type of work they do."

Few women gave any indication of male employees being hostile towards women employees. As a corollary to this all the women who said they worked alongside men said they got along together as friends at work.

When asked if they thought they were treated differently because they were women, none of the catering or cleaning women thought they were. This may be because neither of these groups have very much contact with men in their work.

60% of clerical workers thought they were not treated differently although only 20% said they definitely were treated differently. Only the retail workers had any significant number who thought they were treated differently because they were women (40%), including one respondent who thought she was treated differently because she was a married woman.

Some women referred only to their employers when asked about men's attitudes. Within these responses was often a recognition that married women were needed for the type of work they did, on the basis that no one else would do it:

"They (employers) think they need them - the men wouldn't do the work, they couldn't." (Catering)

"If it wasn't for us they wouldn't get anyone. Young lasses don't work very well and new ones don't like the hours. It's only the women with children who'll do it."  
 (Retail)

Two of the clerical workers related negative attitudes of male employers towards women:

"My boss has just retired, he didn't believe in women working. He never put any women up for promotion. We had no proof about it he would just say we were not good enough- he was one of the old school."

"I think the majority (of male bosses) are alright, but the odd one or two seem to think you're taking the place that a man could take."

### TRADE UNIONS

Table 7.19 Union membership

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail
CPSA	2			
SATA	1			
GMWU		5	2	
NALGO		4		
NUPE			8	
USDAW				5
Not a member	7	1		5
	10	10	10	10

Overall there is very high union membership amongst the women except for the clerical workers (only three members). The high membership reflects the influence of trade unions in the public sector, especially for catering and cleaning workers.

It is also noteworthy that 5 of the 10 retail workers were members of USDAW. This is despite working in a part of the private sector where union activity is often discouraged.



Although union membership was high, the amount of union activity by the women is very small. Equally the unions that the women are part of do not appear to give much attention to the women, at least at shop floor level.

59% of the women in unions said they did have a shop steward, 26% said their shop steward was a woman and 33% said their shop steward was a man. 26% of the women in unions said they had no shop steward as far as they were aware and 15% had no idea if they had a shop steward or not. Of those who said they definitely did have a shop steward only 38% reported knowing a shop steward in their own workplace.

Table 7.20 Attendance at meetings

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail	Total
No		55	60	60	52
Yes, occasionally		22	20	20	19
Yes, often			10	20	7
Yes, when necessary	100	11	10		19
No answer		11			4
	n=3	n=9	n=10	n=5	n=27

Although a fairly high proportion of women in unions (45%) said they attended meetings at some time, only 7% said they attended meetings frequently. There do not seem to be major differences between industries here except that all three clerical workers said they attended meetings when necessary. Although conclusions cannot be drawn when numbers are so small, it may be significant that one of the women who showed most interest in union affairs worked full-time and had no children. She reported that:

"I'm involved in the union and attend all the meetings. At the moment I'm fighting for the one other female supervisor

not to be made redundant- I don't want to take on the other woman's work and do her out of a job."

Only one third of the women in unions had meetings in their own workplace. Meetings were often held outside the workplace in, for example, the Newcastle Civic Centre or another branch of the firm in which the women worked. Only the retail workers had a majority of union members (four out of five) who had their meetings at their place of work. A further difficulty for women attending union meetings was that only 18% reported union meetings to be held in their working hours. Many women did not know when meetings were held (perhaps there was not a set time for meetings). However, 44% said meetings were held outside of working hours. Only one woman said child care was provided at union meetings and 44% said they were not provided (n=12) and 52% (n=14) said they did not know if it was provided or not.

Table 7.21 Are you interested in union affairs?

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail
Yes	33		20	20
No	33	100	80	80
Want to be a member only	33			
	100	100	100	100
	n=3	n=9	n=10	n=5

An overwhelming majority, as can be seen from Table 7.21, said they were not interested in union affairs, including one woman who said that the union did not really apply to her because she worked alone as a cleaner:

"With the job I'm doing it doesn't really apply to me. With being (working) on my own it doesn't really interest me - if

I worked with other staff I probably would be interested."

A very different reason for lack of interest was put forward by a retail worker in USDAW:

"I'd like to be more involved but it's difficult finding out at our place. I never see anyone from the union, no one ever comes around, we have to ring up another branch if we want a shop steward and they usually forget to 'phone back. You get a few leaflets about pay rises but that's about it."

When the women were asked if they thought other women they worked with were interested in the union the responses they gave tended to reflect what they themselves had said in the majority of cases. Another cleaner said, for example:

"I don't think women are interested in the union because they just want to get out of the house, whereas for men it's their livelihood."

When asked if any of the men they worked with were interested in union affairs few women said they were. A total of 18 women in a union worked with men and only three of these thought the men were interested in union affairs. Nearly half of those women said they didn't know if the men were interested in union affairs or not.

### Problems and the union

37% of the women in unions had taken a problem to their union at some time or another and 70% of these women said their union had helped them. A cleaner in the GMWU said:

"The union is very good for people who have had problems, the union always sorts it out."

Only the retail workers showed any dissatisfaction with the

Performance of their union (USDAW). Of the three women who had taken problems to USDAW only one said the union had been helpful. Comments about USDAW included:

"We're not in a good union therefore people don't bother with it. When the hours were cut people were disillusioned and fed up with the union."

"It does nothing for us. Useless. The union says we don't do the hours for them to do anything for us. Money is paid in for accidents, but a woman died through an accident at work and she never got any money."

When asked who they would take a problem to if one occurred at work, none of the women said they would go straight to the union. 56% overall said they would go first to their boss or manager and then if they could not solve their problems, they would then go to the union afterwards - it is usually laid down in an employee's terms and conditions of service that grievances should be taken to the direct manager or supervisor before the union is consulted. One woman expressed the fear that workers had standing up for their rights, she said:

"There's one woman who speaks up for us (we don't know our rights really) she rings the union to ask our rights (the rest of us are too frightened to ask)."

#### Union support for women

The women were asked whether or not their union had any special policy of support for women. Most of the women in unions said they did not know (59%). Of the cleaning women (in NALGO and GMWU) only one woman said their union had special policies of support for women. Three of the eight NUPE members said their union did have special policies of support for women. One of the USDAW workers

reported that:

"The shop steward said he hated women working!"

Women who are not union members

Because the numbers are too small to divide by occupation, the women not in a union (n=13) are looked at together. The most common reason for not being in a union was simply that there was not one at the place where the women in question worked. Nearly half of the non-union members said this (six out of 13). Nearly one third of non-union members (four out of 13) said they were not union members because they did not want to be. One woman, for example showed disgust with the weakness of her present union and the lack of incentive for women in her past union:

"I'm not a member because the union (USDAW) has no muscle. I used to be a member of NUPE when I worked in the kitchens, much to my disgust - such a male organisation! They didn't bother about the kitchen staff and were only concerned with caretakers. They wanted you to vote and nothing else."

One woman said that she appreciated working for the council because wage rises were automatically linked to union negotiated agreements but she was not a member of the union because: "being part-time they don't ask you to join". Another said the union was too expensive to join if you were part time.

Many of the women (nine out of 13), not in unions, had been in other jobs where they had been in a union in the past. When asked who they thought they would take a problem to the answers were fairly similar to union members' responses to this question in that nine out of 13 said they would take a problem to their boss or

manager. Two out of 13 said they would take the problem to their supervisor. The only difference between these women and union members was that union members usually said they would go to their union if they had no satisfaction with solving their problem with the employer or supervisor. Non-union members do not have this option, although one non-union member did say she went to a shop steward with problems even though she was not a member of the union.

The majority of women thought it made no difference to the way they were treated at work even though they were not in a union (ten out of 13). One woman thought she was, in fact, better off for not being in a union. This woman worked in a firm well know for its "paternalistic" style of management. She said:

"A union put out leaflets a few weeks ago and not one girl joined. They (the firm) look after you, they have communication meetings to iron out little problems. People are chosen to speak on behalf of others and they usually do for you what you want."

### SEX STEREOTYPES?

#### Jobs women should not do

60% of the women interviewed said there was no job that a woman should not do if she wanted to do it. Typical responses women gave when asked if there was any job a woman should not do were:

"Not really - I could do my husband's job (wagon driver). Women should be able to do all jobs if that's what they want to do. If it's the same job they should get the same pay."  
(Retail worker)

"If they're capable and they like it they should be able to do it." (Clerical worker)

"Physically there must be jobs that women can't do, but sex wise I don't see why women should be discriminated against unless on a physical or married basis."

(Catering worker)

"No, but there's a lot of jobs women can do better than men. I think it should be equal all the way."

(Cleaner)

35% who said there were some jobs women should not do tend to mention very stereotypical men's jobs involving heavy work, for example:

"Road sweepers, long distance lorry driving things like that-men's jobs. Shouldn't do a tradesman's job, heavy work like what a man should do."

(Cleaner)

"Fire service, I can't imagine a woman trying to fight a fire or anything like that."

(Retail worker)

Most of the women who said there was some work that women shouldn't do were concerned that the work would be too heavy for women, not that women should not do "men's work" as traditionally defined (5% -one woman- of the sample gave no response).

"There are some things a woman can't do - climbing and lifting and things like that."

(Catering worker)

#### Jobs men should not do

85% of the women thought that there was no job a man should not do if he wanted to do it. The 12% of women who thought there were some jobs men should not do tended to be hard pressed for examples except being in some areas traditionally thought of as "women's work", for example:

"Cleaning and school meals - A man would look funny and he would feel silly doing it."

(Cleaner)

"Depends on the job really, because if it's like office jobs in heavy industry then it's okay for men, but if it's like the Ministry then the young girls should take them instead of men."

(Clerical worker)

One respondent pointed out that:

"There doesn't seem to be many women's jobs that men want to do anyway."

## THE HOUSEHOLD

### Housework

The respondents were asked who did the housework in their family. 47.5% said they alone did the housework, while 45% said the housework was shared and 7.5% said they were the ones who mainly did the housework. A higher proportion of clerical workers (n=6) and cleaners (n=7) said they alone did the housework than the catering or retail workers (three in each group). Whether the women worked full time or part time did not seem to be a dependent factor for questions about housework. Only three of the women who worked full time said that housework was equally shared between themselves and their husbands and family.

	<u>Table 22 Who does the housework?</u>				
	<u>Clerical</u>	<u>Catering</u>	<u>Cleaners</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>All(%)</u>
Me (respondent)	6	3	7	3	47.5
<u>SHARED</u>					
Me and husband	1	5	2	3	27.5
Me and family		2			5
Me and daughter	2			1	7.5
My mother	1			1	5
Me mainly			1	2	7.5
	10	10	10	10	100



A number of ways of sharing housework were expressed (see Table 7.22) the most popular being sharing the housework with their husband (27.5%). The women who said their housework was shared were asked further questions to try and assess the extent to which household chores really were divided.

### Sharing the housework

The 52% of women who said they did not do all the housework themselves were asked if there were any household jobs that they always did themselves. Most women listed two or three household jobs that they always did, although 24% said there was nothing they always did themselves. The household jobs which the women mentioned most frequently as the jobs they always performed themselves were: washing clothes (52%), ironing (43%) and cooking (29%). Two important and time consuming household chores that women did not mention as being done exclusively by themselves were household cleaning (of any type) and jobs which are simple but need repeating frequently such as vacuuming, dusting and "clearing up" and also more involved jobs like spring cleaning.

The women who said household jobs were shared were then asked if there were any jobs that their husbands always did in or around the home. The answers tended to be less definite than answers to the previous questions, in most cases only one job was mentioned. 16% said there were no jobs that were only performed by husbands. 31% said their husbands always did the decorating and 21% said their husbands always did the gardening. Several other jobs were mentioned that husbands always did and these tended to be jobs

traditionally done by the male: taking care of the car and general repairs for example. Unlike jobs that the women did the jobs men always did were not usually jobs done every week, and did not seem to suggest a regular pattern of housework for men.

Women were asked if there was anything that their husbands would never do. Many women interpreted this question in the sense of "is there anything your husband could not do if he had to?" (for example in times of an emergency). 38% said there was nothing their husband would never do and 33% gave uncertain answers ("not sure" or "don't know", for example). Things men would never do tended to elicit varied individual answers for example "hanging out the washing" and "cleaning the brasses".

Some women gave an idea of the sort of jobs their husband did generally and often around the house. The types of jobs mentioned that men did frequently were "hoovering", preparing and cooking food and "a bit of most things".

The women interviewed were asked whether or not their children helped with housework, and if so, what did they do. However, the vast majority of respondents did not report any help from their children at all.

Finally, the women who said their housework was shared were asked if they themselves were more responsible for the housework than any other member of the family. An overwhelming 81% said yes they themselves were more responsible.

### Housework not shared

The women who said they alone did the housework were asked questions in a similar vein to those who said their housework was shared to see if there were real differences between the two groups. The pattern is very similar and the notion of sharing is shown to be very much a matter of each individual woman's definition. Table 7.23 compares the responses of women (in all occupational groups) who said they did share housework with those who said housework was not shared.

Table 7.23 Who does the housework? (all occupations)

	Shared (%)		Not shared (%)	
No help at all			3	16
Me and Husband	11	52	4	21
Me and family	2	10		
Me and daughter	3	14	3	16
My mother	2	10		
Me mainly/help Occasionally	3	14	9	47
Total	21	100	19	100

When asked if they had any help at all towards the household chores, only 16% of the women who said they did all the housework said they had no help at all, 21% said they had some help from their husband and 16% said their daughters helped them. 47% said they had a little help sometimes. The type of help that was mentioned by women who said they did all the housework included help with "dishes and things", help with Hoovering, shopping, children, washing and ironing, although there was no item mentioned frequently.

Comparing these responses with those women who said that housework was shared shows great similarities - many of the women who said housework was shared implied that the type of help they received was small and irregular.

32% of the women who said they did the housework themselves thought there was nothing in the way of housework that their husbands would not or could not do if they had to.

Leisure time

In an attempt to picture how little or how much time the women interviewed had for their own recreation, questions were asked about their leisure time. First women were asked "do you have much leisure time?" The majority of the women said neither a definite no or a definite yes. Most answers (see table 7.24) given were either "not a lot" (45%) or "a fair amount" (33%).

Table 7.24 Do you have much leisure time? (percentage)

	Clerical	Cleaners	Catering	Retail	Total
Yes		11	12	22	12
A fair amount	14	22	62	11	27
No	14	22		11	12
Not a lot	71	33	25	55	45
Varies		11			3
n=33					

The women who had cleaning jobs had the highest number of affirmative responses to this question. This is probably because the cleaners on average tended to work fewer hours than the other women. The women were then asked what they did in their leisure time. Many women seemed to have to think hard before they answered this question and few seemed to have definite hobbies or

Pastimes. The main leisure time activity mentioned was reading (32%) and knitting and crochet (26%). One woman seemed to speak for many when she said:

"Spare time? There's not any spare time, if I'm not at work I'm shopping or ironing."

Life cycles: children and work

Age

Table 7.25 Age of women interviewed (in 1982)

Age	Occupations				
	Catering	Clerical	Cleaning	Retail	All
30-35	1	1	1	2	5
35-40	1	2		1	4
40-45	4	3	4	6	17
45-50	1	1	3	1	6
50-55	1	3			4
55-60			1		1
60-65					
No answer	2		1		3
Total	10	10	10	10	40

The ages of the women interviewed (see table 7.25) reflects a growing tendency for older married women to enter the labour force after or between periods of childbearing and childrearing. Overall, 27 of the women who mentioned their age (four did not) were over 40.

Children

Of the forty married women interviewed all but one of the women had a child or children. Many of the women's children were no longer classed as dependent on their parents because of their age, for example 33% of the women interviewed did not have any children

under the age of 16. Variations understandably occur in the ages that women define their children as "old enough to look after themselves". When questioned whether or not the women had to make arrangements for their children to be looked after while they were at work, 62% of the women said they did not because their children were old enough to look after themselves. Generally children under 12 years of age were classed as dependents by their mothers. Of those women who had children still under the age of 12 (45% of the total) only 12% (n=2) said their children were old enough to look after themselves. 10% of the women with children said they did not need to make arrangements for their children while they were at work because their children were at school during this time. 28% of the women with children did make arrangements for their children to be looked after while they were at work, of these 45% said their children were looked after by friends or relatives and a further 36% said their husbands looked after the children. When husbands looked after children this tended to be when husbands had different shifts from their wives. Men's unemployment was also a factor, for example, one woman said:

"My husband's on the dole so he looks after the kids."

#### Unavailable

In Chapter 3 we described how data from the WES survey do not support a simple bi-modal pattern of employment for women (8). Because work history information is incomplete for all but nine of the respondents it is not possible to make firm conclusions about the number of periods of unavailability for the married women in

the study.

It is worth noting, however, that of the 40 women interviewed 33 women mentioned at least one period when they were unavailable for work because of child rearing responsibilities. Of these 33 women, six women mentioned two periods when they were unavailable and did paid work in-between these times (18%). See table 7.26. Thus, even with limited work history information, 18% do not fit the simple bi-modal pattern.

Table 7.26 Periods of unavailability

Length of period unavailable (years)	Occupation					
	Catering	Clerical	Cleaning	Retail	All	2P's*
0- 1						1
1- 2			1	2	3	1
2- 3			1	2	3	1
3- 4	1		1	1	3	
4- 5	2	1	1		4	1
5- 6	1			1	2	1
6- 7	1	2	2	1	6	
7- 8						
8-10		1		1	2	1
Total	5	4	6	8	23**	6

\* The column referred to as "2P's" records the number of women who reported having two periods of unavailability. When work history information revealed two periods of unavailability the last period recorded appears in the main part of the table. The previous period appears under this column and is not broken down by occupation because numbers are too small.

\*\* A further 16 women reported that they had been unavailable at some point during their work history but the length of the period is unknown.

The periods of being unavailable ranged from one to eleven years. None of the women were absent from the labour market for less than

one year when child rearing was taking place.

Re-entry

The time when most of the women in the sample took up paid employment after their children were born tends frequently to coincide with their youngest child reaching school age. 41% of the women started paid employment when their child was either four or five years of age, one of the respondents explained her reasons:

"I don't think you should work until the children are four or five years of age - I think they need their mother up until then, after that it's alright as long as they are in good hands."

In addition, however, a fairly high proportion of women (33%) started work when their youngest child was three or younger (see table 7.27).

Table 7.27 Age of youngest child on returning to work

Age of youngest child	Retail	Clerical	Cleaning	Catering	(Total)
0- 1					
1- 2	3			2	5
2- 3	1		1	1	3
3- 4		1	3	1	5
4- 5	1	3	2	3	9
5- 6	2	1	2	2	7
6- 7	1	1		1	3
7- 8		1			1
8- 9		1	1		2
9-10					
10-11			1		1
11-12	1	1			2
12-13					
13-14					
14-15					
No answer	1				1
No children		1			1
Total	10	10	10	10	40



Table 7.28 Age of youngest child by employment status of mother at the time of returning to work

Age of youngest child	Part time	Full time	No answer
0- 1			
1- 2	2	1	2
2- 3	3		
3- 4	4		1
4- 5	6	2	1
5- 6	5	1	1
6- 7	1	1	1
7- 8	1		
8- 9	1	1	
9-10			
10-11	1		
11-12	1	1	
No answer	1		
No children			1
Total	26	7	7

Table 7.28 shows the employment status of the women interviewed when they first re-entered the labour market after their last child. From this we can see that by far the largest proportion re-entered on a part time basis (69% of the whole sample and 79% if the don't knows and no answers are excluded).

These results support the finding of the WES survey (9) that the majority of women who return to paid work after childbirth do so at least initially on a part-time basis. Two of the women who re-entered the labour market on a part-time basis worked full time when they were interviewed in 1982. One of the retail workers explained why she had re-entered paid work initially on a part time basis and then changed to full time:

"When I took this job the children were getting on a bit but when I first started work with the children it was part time. I never had to make arrangements for the children because I used to work on school lunches when they were

younger."

Three of the women who worked full time immediately after child-rearing, had changed to part time work in 1982. Although these numbers are very small, the evidence does accord with WES findings that changes in employment status after re-entering employment can involve not only changing from part time to full time but also the reverse (10).

#### Influenced by children?

The women with children were asked if the fact that they had children had influenced them when they took their job. 15% said having children had not influenced them when choosing their job. 64% said they were influenced in that they had had to choose hours which fitted in with taking care of their children. Only 5% mentioned making arrangements for their children to be looked after as a way in which children had influenced their way of choosing a job.

Many of the women (n=27) in the course of the interview were asked if they would have used child care facilities if they had been available to them - in many cases the question was asked in the past tense to relate to when the women's children were younger. 59% said they would have used childcare facilities if they had been available to them. Of the women (41%) who said they would not have used child care facilities if they had been available, the majority said this was because they already had someone to look after their children (54.5%). Only one woman gave an answer which was directly against child care facilities; she said that mothers should stay

with their children when they are in their early years.

The general approval and acceptance of childcare facilities by the respondents is reinforced by responses to the question "do you think there should be more childcare for working mothers?" An overwhelming 79% said yes there should be more childcare facilities. Only one woman made a response which linked childcare to the idea of married woman "taking" other people's jobs:

"If a law came out that said no-one could work unless it was full time then there should be more child care. But whilst there is part time work available I don't think married women should take jobs that self-supporting women or men could take."

To expand on the idea of childcare the women were asked if they thought anything else could be done to help mothers who are in paid employment. The question was designed to see if fathers were mentioned in connection with childcare, but none of the responses mentioned men at all. 41% thought more childcare facilities to be the only help that employed mothers needed. 21% said there were probably other things which could help but could not think of any at the time of interview. 14% of the women interviewed thought that the firms should do more to help with childcare. Other ideas mentioned included more childcare facilities in summer holidays, splitting school holidays into smaller divisions and generally "just more help". Responses included such comments as:

"More to help? Should have more places open in the school holidays, because I think that's why many mothers won't work."  
(Cleaner)

"The children are the biggest problem. The majority of schools now have nurseries, but perhaps they should split up

the summer holidays -three weeks at a time- but then the weather might not be so good and the children would get bored."  
(Cleaner)

### Effects on children?

Only one of the women interviewed (2.5%) thought that her employment had had a bad effect on her children. This woman felt that she had not been able to spend the time she would have liked to have done with her children when they were younger because of her employment. 41% of the women interviewed thought that their paid employment had made no difference at all to their children. The "fit" between part time work and child responsibilities was evident in many responses to this question, for example, a catering worker said:

"I don't think it (work) affected her really because when she started school, I was there before and after."

31% of the women mentioned that their children were better off materially because of their work which ties in with the fact that most women (like men) say they are employed for the money and often mention children as a reason they need money. As one of the clerical workers said:

"We haven't got a great standard of living and sometimes we used to be on the breadline. But now at least we have my wages to fall back on."

Finally 10% of the sample thought their children to be more independent because of their paid work. Comments from clerical workers as to whether or not their work had affected their children included:

"It has as in the way that she hasn't depended on me all the time. I managed to get her into nursery and she mixes a lot more than she did before - she's not so clingy. My son was always with me and he lacks confidence."

And another said,

"A lot of the reason I went out to work was because he was on his own at home. I took him to a nursery and that did an awful lot of good for him - there were no other kids in the area."

The vast proportion of mothers then felt that their employment had in no way been detrimental to their children.

In this chapter I have attempted to describe the results of the Newcastle Study in detail. The next chapter summarises the results before going on to discuss the significance of the findings in the light of the discussion in the earlier chapters.

## SUMMARY OF RESEARCH, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This Chapter aims to show how my own research, the Newcastle Study, illuminates many of the points made in the earlier review of the literature. Particular attention is paid to results which highlight the constraints which patriarchy and capitalism put upon married women's labour market opportunities. Crucial to this discussion is the extent to which married women's attitudes to paid and unpaid work are affected by these constraints.

The first part of the chapter summarises major points arising from the results of the Newcastle Study and, where relevant, compares them with the empirical and theoretical studies discussed in the rest of the thesis. Overall conclusions and suggestions for further research are made at the end of this chapter.

### SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The Newcastle Study is based on interviews conducted in 1982 with 40 married women in Newcastle upon Tyne. The women interviewed were employed in four areas which typify employment for married women in Newcastle: clerical, cleaning, catering and retail occupations (10 in each occupational category). Overall, 57.5% of the sample worked in public sector employment which is also typical of women's employment in Newcastle upon Tyne.

A very high proportion of the jobs in these four areas of employment are categorised as low skill in terms of class and SEG; 17 of the women are categorised as junior non-manual, while 14 are classed as unskilled manual workers. The sample therefore reflects

the tendency, discussed extensively in Chapter 3, for women, and especially married women, to be vertically segregated into jobs classified as having low skill and status levels.

65.5% of the sample worked on a part time basis and this is particularly relevant to much of the discussion below.

### Work Histories

Information collected from the women interviewed included facts about the features and conditions of the jobs they performed (in employment and in the home) plus the attitudes of married women toward their paid and domestic work.

Work history information shows that many of the women had previously been employed in occupations which are classified as having higher skill levels than their present job. Thus our focus is immediately changed from discussing the women's skill ability to discussing why many of the women were employed in occupations which are classified as being low skilled.

There is evidence of a decline in status in all of the occupational groups studied. In the majority of cases work history information shows that women usually experience a drop in skill level if they change their employment status from full time to part time work (1). This tendency is particularly evident amongst the cleaning and catering workers.

Part of the aim of the Newcastle study was to compare and contrast the experiences and attitudes of the women in the four different occupations. Work history information shows, however, that 33 of

the 40 women interviewed (82.5%) had worked in at least one other occupational category at some point in their lives. In addition, only two women had worked with the same employer throughout their work history. Thus, it is important to recognise that the attitudes of the women interviewed may be shaped and influenced by their experiences in past occupations and industries and with different employers.

## PRESENT JOB FEATURES

### Wages and Fringe Benefits

The majority of women working part time earned an hourly rate below the amount recorded as the mean average wage for part time women employees in the north of England (all occupations) by the New Earnings Survey in April 1982.

Women who worked full time tended to earn more than part time workers. This is particularly evident for the clerical workers where the type of employer and the strength of trade unions seem to influence both pay and fringe benefits.

### Promotion

Of the four occupational groups, catering workers were the most likely to have chances of promotion and cleaners the least likely. Nearly half of the women who said they did have chances of promotion said they would not take it if it was offered to them. The frequent reason given for not taking promotion was that it would involve working full time instead of part time. Home commitments were usually the reason why the women could not take



full time work. Thus many women could not follow the avenues of promotion available to them because their capacity to be employed in the first place was based primarily on the part time basis of that work.

This finding is important in that it adds evidence to the assertion made in Chapter 6 (2) that it is not attenuated ambition which stops women from achieving higher status in jobs. Rather, the terms and conditions on which they are able to take paid work (in this case the part time basis) provide constraints and restricted opportunity for advancement.

### Job factors

Several questions were asked to gauge the factors women thought were important about their jobs.

As in many studies of both women's and men's employment, money and other economic factors were the aspects most frequently mentioned by the women interviewed.

A high proportion of women in each occupational group mentioned convenience factors about their jobs - being near home and convenient hours. This confirms the importance that married women have to attach to domestic commitments in the home in contrast to men (3).

Friendly workmates and meeting people were mentioned by over half the women interviewed as a reason for liking their job. These responses back up studies in Chapter 6 (4) which discuss how boredom and loneliness at home may be partly compensated for in the

workplace by a friendly atmosphere.

A further attempt to elicit responses which relate to friendliness and intimacy in the workplace was made by asking questions about the size of firm. The responses are interesting in that, of the seven women interviewed who said they worked for a small firm, few found any advantage at all in this. Of the women who worked for large firms, however, 69% said that they worked in a small workplace or with a small group of people. Thus a simple division of small and large firms is not appropriate to tap attitudes which relate to intimacy at work. In Chapter 6 (5) it was noted that some studies have shown that women prefer to work in small firms because of the more informal and relaxed atmosphere. In the Newcastle Study the numbers of women who work in small firms are too low to suggest that the above point is contradicted. It is important to recognise, however, that the women who work in large firms can also value their workplace because the number of people they actually work with is small. In addition, it is also possible to work in a small workplace which is part of a large firm. Within this workplace the atmosphere may seem relaxed and informal depending, for example, on the style of management.

For many women responses to questions about the important factors of a job were within the confines of what they needed from paid work. That is, a job which pays money and takes them away from the home but which can allow them to deal with home commitments. Taking this into account and that job prospects were thought to be generally poor, it is perhaps not surprising that few women expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs. It would appear that the

Women interviewed appear to assess the opportunities available to them, within the constraints and confines of their needs and, for most, their present job is thought to be as good as they are likely to get. These findings also support evidence presented in Chapter 6 which suggests that occupational ambition should be viewed in the context of the opportunities available (6).

### Commitment to work

A high proportion of women (47.5%) said they would give up working if they inherited an income large enough to enable them to do so. This was the case for all occupations.

It is very significant, however, that the women did not mention staying at home as an alternative to their paid work. Many women said they would do another job or voluntary work if they had enough money. Thus, the responses to this question cannot be taken as showing a low commitment to paid work in general.

The responses to this question are important. By taking away the main factor which makes women dependent on their present job - money - most women would choose to do other work. This backs up discussion in the last section which maintains that a realistic appraisal of available alternatives accounts for the seemingly high levels of satisfaction in present jobs.

Also, the majority of the women interviewed said they would work until retirement. Thus confirming the high levels of commitment that the married women in this survey have to the paid labour market generally.

In Chapter 6 (7) we discussed how different studies have reached different conclusions about the level of commitment women with home responsibilities have to paid work. It was posited that the type of paid work women do may affect the level of commitment they have to the labour force in comparison with their commitment to home. The results of the Newcastle survey support this notion and show that it is very important to differentiate an overall commitment to the labour force from commitment to a specific job.

For many woman in this sample a tradition of married women working in the labour force had already been set by their mothers. Over half of the woman interviewed said their mothers had worked for some or all of their lives, and nearly two thirds of these had worked throughout their lives. Most of the women interviewed were children or teenagers in the late 1940s and 1950s, the time when a great many married women formally (8) entered the labour force on a part time basis.

It may be because a tradition of married women doing paid work had already been set, that the majority of the women in the Newcastle survey did not give the impression that they regarded themselves as "migrant" in the workplace or that they felt guilty for doing paid work (9).

#### SEX ROLES WITHIN THE FAMILY

Questions designed to test whether or not man was still classed as the "breadwinner" did not seem to support this notion. 65% of the sample said wages were pooled (10) and only two women (5%) said that their wages were put aside for "extras" or luxuries. 88% of

the women did not think that their husbands would mind if they earned more than him. With the latter question, however, it is important to note that men's attitudes may be different in reality. For example, the one woman who did earn more than her husband, said he did mind.

Questions on housework did not seem to indicate a move away from the traditional patriarchal organisation within the family. The first important factor to be noted about the women's responses to housework questions is that the notion of sharing housework is ambiguous and interpreted differently by different respondents. Although 52.5% (n=21) said they shared housework with their husbands or other members of the family, further questioning showed that sharing for some meant a little help some times, whereas for others it was equally divided. In addition, an overwhelming majority (81%) of the women who said they shared housework also said they were more responsible for the housework than any other member of the family.

When asked if there were jobs that their husbands always did in the house, the women tended to mention jobs which are not challenging to male stereotypes, such as gardening or decorating. As a parallel only 16% of the women who said housework was not shared, said they did not have help at some times.

The results of the Newcastle survey support the contention by Oakley and Pollert (11) that "sharing" housework often means a delegation of tasks to husbands who "help out". The women retain the major responsibility for household chores.

## Women and men in the labour market

60% of the woman thought there was no job a woman should not do, if they wanted to do it. Several women also made remarks which either stated or implied that to bar women from any areas of employment was discriminatory. 85% thought that there was no job a man should not do, if he wanted to.

Although the women showed positive responses to women working in areas of employment not traditionally associated with women, none of the interviewees expressed a desire to work in such areas themselves. Women who did give examples of jobs a woman should not do tended cite jobs which they thought would be too heavy for women. This may be taken to be an expression of practical concern rather than sex stereotyping of women's jobs. Such responses may, however, be more a reflection of ideology than of reality. For example, there are many "men's" jobs which have been heavy work in the past which, through modern machinery, have now become relatively light work. It is possible that the responses made by women about heavy work represent the mystification around certain areas of "men's work". If this is the case the evidence may support Cockburn's assertion that small biological differences between men and women are socially constructed into larger differences which are used by men to subordinate women (12).

## Male attitudes in segregated employment

When woman were asked if they worked with men, clerical workers differed significantly from women in other occupations.

Most of the cleaners and catering workers did not work with men. Those that said they did, usually mentioned one or two men who were also on the premises but did not do the same type of work. Although eight retail workers had more contact with men in their work, two who said they did work with men said they "were just young boys". Most of the clerical workers said they worked with men, although it was only the full time workers who worked along side men and performed the same jobs.

The responses to these questions show clear evidence of horizontal segregation of married women in the labour market, especially when that work is part time. Thus, these findings back up the findings of the WES study discussed in Chapter 3 (13).

Most of the woman thought that the men's attitude to them at work were either good or "okay". These responses must be taken in the context of occupational segregation. Most of the women were not doing jobs which men would or could take because of the low levels of pay (several women indicated that their employers knew this to be the case). The four occupations are traditional areas of women's employment and most are not jobs which men could perceive as threatening to or devaluing their own jobs. Even the full time clerical workers, who did do the same work as men, were not in occupations which have been defined as traditional "men's work" in the 20th Century. It is interesting, however, that amongst the seven full time clerical workers (the only group where most did the same work as men) two mentioned bosses who thought that women were taking men's jobs.

It should also be taken into account that in sectors employing a majority of women, and a small minority of men, it is less likely that the men would feel safe to express negative attitudes towards women. It is within manufacturing jobs and industries in which men are the majority where negative attitudes are more likely to be found (14).

### Contrasting Occupations

It has already been noted that one of the aims of the Newcastle Study was to compare and contrast the experiences and attitudes of married women in four different occupations. An overview of the results shows, however, that in most cases there are as many differences within each occupation as there are differences between them. Moreover, the attitudes and reactions of the women interviewed toward paid work and home commitments showed remarkable similarity in many respects rather than great differences.

Only one occupational group - clerical work - showed significant differences from the other three occupations. As a group clerical workers tended to have higher rates of pay; they received more formal training for their jobs than any other group; they were the group least likely to have experienced a decline in occupational status in their work histories and the group where the highest skill levels were to be found in terms of Socio-economic Grouping (SEG). In addition, the clerical workers were the only group where a majority worked with men who were doing the same or similar types of work. Thus they were the group least horizontally segregated at work.



An explanation for many of the differences between clerical workers and the other married women interviewed is found in the fact that six of the 10 clerical workers were employed full time. The four part time clerical workers tended to experience conditions more closely related to the other three occupations than to the full time clerical workers.

Although the differences between clerical workers as a group from the other three occupations may be explained by the full time or part time status of the work, the findings point to some interesting issues.

First, the attitudes of the full time clerical workers towards paid employment and home commitments did not vary significantly despite the differences in job features. An important similarity between the full time workers, including the clerical workers, and the part time workers in general was that the majority still had the major responsibility for housework.

Second, the results suggest that the clerical sector as a whole includes a greater range of jobs than the other occupations studied. The range includes both poorly paid part time employment and relatively highly paid full time employment: the latter type of work not being subject to the same horizontal and vertical segregation as the former.

This finding may suggest that prospects of achieving greater pay and better conditions may be considerably greater for married women within the clerical sector of employment than other areas considered to be "traditional" areas of women's employment.

Although the condition for better pay and conditions may be dependent upon a change from part time to full time employment, results of the Newcastle Survey show that it is not unusual for married women to change their employment status from part time to full time or the reverse.

In sum, the results of the Newcastle Survey lead to the conclusion that the clerical sector of employment provides less restricted opportunities for married women than the other typical areas of married women's employment studied.

### CONCLUSIONS

The women in the Newcastle Study showed a great commitment to the labour force, although not necessarily their present job. The married women's assessment of the paid work they did and of their general employment prospects appear to reflect a realistic appraisal of the limited opportunities available to them. For many married women, these opportunities are not only confined by the features of the local labour market, but also by their need for paid work to fit their home responsibilities.

It may, therefore, be the case that many women married have to prioritise home commitments over labour force participation, especially when childrearing is taking place. Equally important to recognise, however, is that if and when paid work can be found which is compatible with home commitments then such work becomes a fact of life, not a temporary option.

These results do not support ideas that women regard themselves as

migrant in the workplace. One important reason for this may be that many of the women interviewed had already had a tradition of married women working in the labour force set by their mothers. Another important reason may be that most of the women interviewed had spent several or many years in paid work after or between childrearing. Thus, at the time of interview, paid work was an established and significant part of the women's life histories.

In Chapter 5 I argued that the idea that women constitute a specific form of the Reserve Army of Labour (RAL) should be rejected. Evidence from the Newcastle Study supports this argument. The respondents in the Study are highly segregated into specific areas of the labour market which typify married women's employment in the 20th Century. These areas of work are not only traditionally considered to be "women's work" because they are low paid but also relate to sex stereotypes about the specific roles of women and men. With the possible exception of clerical work, men have never been employed in large numbers in any of the occupations performed by the women in the Newcastle Study. Thus, the idea that women employees have been substituted as cheap labour instead of men seems untenable.

The idea that women are a Reserve Army of Labour also depends on the notion that women are a flexible and disposable section of the labour force. Evidence from the Newcastle Study also disputes this notion. Most of the women interviewed had long histories of paid employment and, in addition, the women's attitudes to paid work showed great commitment to the labour force. Although many of the women had experienced several job changes in their work

history, the majority of jobs performed were still in areas which typify women's employment. Work history information therefore gives no evidence to suggest that the women had been pulled in and out of occupations that would be considered "men's work" if the pay and conditions were better.

In Chapter 5 a number of different formulations of Dual Labour Market (DLM) theories were presented and criticised according to the particular formulation used. Overall comments were given to show why I rejected the notion of DLMs to explain the position of women in relation to paid and unpaid work (15). I want to make a few points to illustrate why I believe DLM theories generally would not be helpful in explaining the results of the Newcastle Study.

The job features of the occupations worked in by respondents to the Newcastle Study seem generally to fit the broad characteristics of the secondary labour markets described by DLM proponents. In comparison with typical areas of men's employment, the women in the Newcastle Study are segregated in specific areas of the labour market which are, for example, low paid, have few chances of promotion, and offer little on-the-job training. I would argue, however, that beyond this very general comparison with men's employment, the concept of a primary and secondary distinction is of little practical use.

Important results from the Newcastle Study show the differences between and within occupations. Pay and conditions of service, for example, are shown to differ significantly according to three main factors. First, the women in public sector employment had more

fringe benefits, such as holiday pay and sickness pay, than women employed by the private sector. The influence of trade union negotiated agreements in the public sector seems largely to explain the differences from the less unionised private sector.

Second, within all occupational groups studied rates of pay varied considerably between different employers. Retail workers employed by departmental stores, for example, had better rates of pay and more chances of promotion than those who worked for low profit margin supermarkets.

Third, women who worked full time, in comparison with part time workers, tended to have better rates of pay. They were more likely to be in jobs which are classified as skilled, more often had chances of promotion and had received formal training. Importantly, clerical workers who worked full time tended to work in sectors where women and men did the same jobs, received the same rates of pay and had the same terms and conditions of service as men.

The above three points are made to illustrate that the complexities of and differences between women's paid employment are hidden if we use a simple distinction of primary and secondary markets. Although some DLM theorists have expanded the theory to include subdivisions within primary and secondary markets (and sometimes further sub-divisions to explain cross-overs between primary and secondary markets) the analytical value seems to become lost and results only in description.

Some DLM theorists have attempted to explain women's position in the labour market by attributing them with specific characteristics

which lead them to secondary labour market employment. The danger of this approach is that it not only stereotypes women but can also obscure the importance of changes within life histories. The work histories of the married women in the Newcastle Study show that employment patterns often change as domestic circumstances change. For example, the work histories of the women interviewed show changes from part time to full time work as well as changes from full time to part time work. These changes can affect skill status, rates of pay and so forth. Thus, attempts to give women specific characteristics to explain their employment position can ignore important differences which occur over time in a woman's life history.

Another criticism of DLM theories is the failure to account for the part that workers themselves, both women and men, have played in the formation of the labour market as it is at present. It is my view that, relating to the last point, the most serious omission of DLM theorists is the lack of any coherent attempt to provide a theoretical account of the sexual division of labour between men and women. Some DLM theories acknowledge the sexual division of labour and discrimination against women as reasons for the employment position of women. There is, however, little or no attempt to explain how sexual divisions and discrimination arose or why and how they are perpetuated.

In my assessment of the results of the Newcastle Study, I have tried to stress the constraints and restrictions which limit married women's opportunities in the labour market. I believe any further analysis of these constraints requires an analytical

approach which has the potential to incorporate and explain the significance of sexual divisions in the home and in the labour market.

In Chapter 5 it was suggested that a theoretical framework for the analysis of women's work in the home and in the labour market needs to take into account the significance of both capitalist and patriarchal forces (16). For the purpose of analysis it is suggested that capitalism and patriarchy can be seen as acting independently but also in articulation with each other. I want to use this framework as the basis for discussion.

A more specific point that I want to explore is one made by Walby. Walby maintains that men accepted the entry of women back into the labour market in the 1950s because the employment offered to women represented a compromise between male workers' and capitalists' interests (17). I want to expand on this idea in the discussion below to examine how far the organisation of married women's work, paid and unpaid, can be seen to reflect patriarchal and capitalist interests.

Some responses given by the women in the Newcastle Study appear to indicate that the influence of patriarchy was declining. Questions designed to test whether or not the man was perceived as the "breadwinner" did not seem to support this notion. Some comments suggested that economic considerations had forced a change in their husband's attitudes. For example:

"My husband wouldn't mind a bit if I earned more, not if it was going to benefit him he wouldn't mind. He used to be a bit of a male chauvinist and he would never have me work. But

now he's finding out how hard life is and his attitudes are having to change." (Clerical worker)

Such responses may indicate that the economic forces of capitalism have overridden attitudes shaped by patriarchal ideology. Other areas also indicate a decline in traditional attitudes. For example, responses women made towards jobs women or men should and should not do largely did not adhere to traditional stereotypes of women's and men's roles.

Other findings from the survey, however, indicate that patriarchal interests continue to be upheld by the organisation and structure of women's home and paid work.

First, responses to "who does the housework?" show that vast majority of married women are still given the major responsibility for housework. In addition many of the jobs that men are reported to do tend to conform to traditional patriarchally based ideas about men's work. Responses to questions about child care also seem to show that men are rarely considered as alternative carers.

Second, the segregation of women into specific occupations is crucial to our understanding of the way in which the organisation of the labour market reinforces men's dominance over women.

Segregation of women, both vertically and horizontally, is shown to be a feature of employment for the interviewees in the Newcastle Study whose occupations typify paid employment for married women. Segregation is shown to be particularly acute for the part time workers. Many of the jobs women are segregated into are low paid and low skilled with little chance for advancement.



Segregation of women into specific low paid areas of the labour force may be seen to benefit the male worker. Women are not competing for the same jobs as men and therefore cannot be seen as potentially lowering the male wage.

The fact that most of the paid work available for married women is low paid reinforces roles within the family. If men's earning power is seen to be greater than women's then one form of logic suggests that the man should invest greater time into paid work than into domestic work. Men's greater earner power thereby adds to his status both at home and in the labour market.

Comparison can be made with women's work in the home and their paid work. Because housework is not paid, its true worth is hidden and undervalued. It is therefore seen as less important than men's paid work. Because women's work in the labour market is low paid, often because home commitments restrict opportunities, then women's paid employment can also be seen as secondary to men's.

A circular pattern seems to emerge where women's disadvantage in the labour force reinforces women's position in the home whilst, in turn, the home position reinforces disadvantage in the labour force. This circular trap is one way in which the male is able to retain power over women both in the labour market and in the home.

Results of the questions about trade union activity amongst women provide additional evidence to show that male work is considered, at least by men, to be more important than women's paid work. The women trade union members interviewed all belonged to unions which had both male and female membership. Thus, although the women were

segregated from men in their workplace, the trade union setting gave potential for women and men to receive and give support from and to each other.

The results of the Newcastle Study, however, suggest that many women felt alienated from their trade union. Many trade union issues did not seem relevant to women's needs, especially those who worked part time. In addition, some male trade unionists were actually hostile to women in employment. Thus, although contemporary trade unions do not formally exclude women, it is clear from the Newcastle Study that informal practices and customs operate, at least at shop floor or branch level, to ensure that women are largely excluded from active participation (18).

Excluding women from trade union activity is a crucial way in which men can retain power over women in the labour market both economically, socially and physically. If men can discourage women from attending union meetings, then men are free to meet together (socially) to discuss the collective strategies they will use to make their demands of an employer. The exclusion or marginalisation of women ensures that men can prioritise and agree their own concerns over those of women.

Trade union negotiated agreements with employers, particularly those concerning pay, will usually affect all workers, both women and men. Thus, male trade unionists are not only arguing for their own demands but also arguing on behalf of women. In this sense men become the mediators between women employees and their employers. The mediating role is an important way in which men are able to

have some control over the pay and conditions of service of women employees. Equally important to consider, however, are the wider implications of the way in which this mediating role retains male power over women. First, at the point of negotiation women are removed from direct access to their employer. Men can therefore be seen to act in a paternalistic way by "protecting" women from the danger of conflict with the employer. Second, because men are negotiating on behalf of women, there is an implication that women should be grateful for the gains that men have made for them; even if these gains are less than the men have made for themselves. The process of trade union negotiation can therefore be seen to reinforce the patriarchal notion that women can do better and can be more effective if men are helping them. There is also the implication that men's greater physical strength (however real or perceived) is an advantage because men can be more assertive and aggressive with employers than women.

Observations about trade union customs and practices give weight to ideas from Cockburn who suggests that the material basis of male power lies not only in the economic but also in the social, political and physical (19).

Married women's overall responsibility for the home and segregation into low paid jobs suggests that Walby's idea of a compromise between capitalist and patriarchal interests is still applicable today in some respects. That is, women's paid employment is no threat to the male if such employment is within sectors which men would not want to or could not afford to take. In addition, capitalist interests are also upheld by being provided with a cheap

source of labour.

I believe the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy is only one of compromise and should not be considered to be a harmonious relationship. The dominant interest of patriarchy is to retain the power of men over women. One of the ways of maintaining this power is to ensure that women are dependent upon men. When women enter the labour force they are no longer tied only to the private sphere of the home. Women are able to become more independent economically and are able to build up social relations outside of the home environment. Results of the Newcastle Study show, for example, the importance women attach to their pay and to social contact in their paid employment.

The inherent danger of women in paid work, in terms of patriarchal interests, is that women will seek to be more independent by taking on more paid work and becoming less willing to undertake domestic responsibilities. Thus, part time work may represent the compromise patriarchy is willing to accept. Men are seen to compromise with women by "allowing" them to do paid work and, therefore, may also be seen to compromise with capitalists by "allowing" women to work for them. However, the compromise is also a tense relationship because of the potential that paid work gives for women to achieve total independence from men.

I believe that women working part time is also a compromise for capitalist interests. It is part of the process of capital accumulation to exploit cheap sources of labour. Because women are a cheap source of labour it would appear to be in the interests of

capitalists to encourage women to extend the number of hours worked to increase surplus value. Capitalism is also forced to recognise, however, that women are needed in the domestic setting to reproduce the future labour force and help to replenish the present labour force. The tension within capitalism is therefore the precarious balancing of the need to further exploit women's labour to increase surplus value, and the need to ensure that the future workforce is reproduced and adequately reared. Because of this latter point capitalism is forced to compromise with patriarchal interests by accepting that a certain portion of women's time will be spent in domestic labour.

The danger of suggesting such a compromise between patriarchy and capitalism is that it may be taken to infer that the two have become locked into a static relationship. It may also imply that women have no role themselves in determining social change. I therefore want to suggest that the notion of compromise is only useful for conceptualising certain aspects of the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy. I do not want to suggest, however, that compromise in itself is a complete picture of this relationship. Other factors must be taken into account if we are to explain social changes which have already occurred in relation to women's employment and other changes which may occur.

I believe an important area which requires understanding is the changing industrial structure of Britain. A point I hope I have demonstrated fully in this thesis is that the service sector has grown throughout this century and continues to grow. An explanation for the way in which the service industries expand and

manufacturing declines may be found within the organisation of modern capitalism. It is outside the scope of this thesis to discuss world trends but a suggestion for further research can be made. That is, for research to examine the extent to which multi-nationals now look to the cheapest markets world-wide to produce their products. Manufacturing in Britain may be costly, for example, because wage rates have traditionally been established with trade unions. Other countries may be able to supply cheaper sources of labour. Service industries may be essential to capitalism in all countries, however. An example of how the service industries may be essential is that no matter where goods are produced, oligopolistic multi-national capitalists require workers in all countries to administrate, prepare and distribute goods for sale.

It is largely within the service sector that the opportunities for women's paid employment have increased, especially opportunities for part time work. One of the main areas of decline within the industrial structure of Britain is within manufacturing. Many of the jobs which are traditionally thought to be "men's jobs" are within manufacturing. If present trends are to continue, therefore, relatively highly paid sectors of "male" employment will continue to decline while "women's" low paid employment expands. This is not to suggest that service industries are the only source of new employment in modern industrial Britain, but that they are the areas of greatest growth.

With the decline of manufacturing, it follows that many of the jobs where men have traditionally tried to preserve good conditions by

custom, ritual and exclusion tactics are now on the decline. New jobs are being created which are appealing to men in terms of pay, for example, jobs involving new technology, and men may try to claim these jobs exclusively for themselves. In some areas connected with computing, for example, there are already occupations occupied predominantly by men, such as, computer programming and systems analysis. There is nothing traditional or inherent within these occupations, however, which make them difficult for a woman to perform. It may be the case that custom and ritual can develop rapidly with new occupations and can be used to exclude women as in the past. Tradition cannot be developed, however, except over time.

Also, a feature of modern technology is the tendency for changes to occur rapidly. It may, therefore, be the case that even if men do develop techniques to exclude women from a particular occupation, the occupation could be obsolete within a short number of years. In such cases the exclusion of women would do little to improve the bargaining position of men.

Regardless of whether or not it is possible for men to develop exclusion tactics in new occupations, the changing industrial structure of Britain has important implications for the trade union movement as a whole.

As the industrial structure of Britain changes, it follows that new forms of trade union resistance are needed to maintain or improve conditions for the trade union members. It would appear that male trade unionists have two main alternatives. The first is to attempt

to exclude certain groups of workers, women for example, to ensure that labour supply is limited for certain occupations. If fewer and fewer occupations can call on tradition to maintain exclusion tactics this approach becomes increasingly inappropriate. The second alternative is to use strategies which call for all groups of workers, including women, to receive the same rates of pay for the same type of work. This approach ensures that all workers are included within trade union strategy and working towards a common aim.

Another area which needs qualification is in the use of the terms patriarchy and capitalism. That is, although the concept of patriarchy is theoretically useful for an understanding of the ways in which men exert power over women, it must not be used in a way which suggests that women are passive instruments of patriarchy. The same applies to the application of the forces of capitalism upon women.

The influences of capitalism and patriarchy may affect women's consciousness and constrain their activity. They do not, however, create women's consciousness nor do they control women's actions completely. It is important to note that the women's movement generally, including women's trade union activity, has done much to raise the consciousness of women as a force within their own right. This point is crucial to the understanding of patriarchy and capitalism as constraining and affecting actions and consciousness, not creating them.

The extent to which patriarchy, for example, constrains an



individual woman's activity will depend on various factors in relation to men. In the sample of women interviewed for the Newcastle Study all the women are married and all but one had children. In this sense the women were in traditional family relationships with men and therefore perhaps a group most likely to have absorbed patriarchal ideology. Despite this, there were indications that attitudes of many of the women were not completely influenced by patriarchal ideology even if their attitudes were not reflected in their behaviour. First, many of the women showed awareness that women should be able to do any job they wanted to do and some linked this to being against sexual discrimination. Second, trade union membership was high amongst the women and several women expressed attitudes which showed awareness of their union's lack of interest in women's issues. Third, an overwhelming majority supported more child care for women, recognising the need for women to have more help so that they could participate more fully in the labour force.

In addition, the attitudes of the women showed great commitment to working in the labour force. This in itself suggests that the women did not adhere to a traditional patriarchal ideal of women working only in the home.

In sum, the attitudes of the women were in several places antagonistic or different from the traditional patriarchal view of "women's place". But in terms of practice and realistic opportunity the women's situation was rather traditional or conventional, that is, confined to poorly paid jobs with few opportunities (which most could not benefit from), continuing to have responsibility for

housework and so forth.

Although it is not possible to make firm conclusions from the evidence in the Newcastle Study a tentative suggestion can be made. That is, the results indicate that there may be an area of tension between women's attitudes and their actual practice (within the confines of restricted opportunity). This tension could potentially lead to future change.

More research is needed to assess the extent to which married women, and women generally, accept or reject the traditional notions of "women's place" both in the home and in the labour market. The results of this research could have far reaching implications for the extent to which the ideologies of patriarchy and capitalism can continue to sustain the material conditions which constrain and restrict women's work.

Throughout this thesis I have suggested that the most useful way of examining the position of women in paid and unpaid work is by looking at the significance of capitalist and patriarchal forces. I have therefore attempted to analyse the results of the Newcastle Study by using these two theoretical concepts. I would argue, however, that a problem arises in theoretical discussion generally because we know less about patriarchy theoretically than we do about capitalism. Thus, we cannot really understand the interrelationship between capitalism and patriarchy fully until we have a more developed and detailed theoretical understanding of patriarchy.

More research into how gender typing and gender roles are

constructed in occupations is a way that I believe could lead to important additions to our theoretical understanding of patriarchy.

One of the points made earlier is that women are segregated into jobs which men do not seem to want. One of the explanations for this is that the jobs are low paid and have poor conditions. I do not think this economic explanation is satisfactory in itself. I believe there are additional reasons, yet to be fully explored, which also lead to occupations being defined as "women's work".

One of the most obvious factors to consider is the way in which certain areas of women's employment reflect the tasks and responsibilities "traditionally" undertaken by women in the home. In the Newcastle Study, cleaning and catering are just two of many occupations where there is a direct similarity with domestic responsibilities. The women in cleaning and catering were the most horizontally segregated of the sample, the cleaners were the worst paid.

The other two occupations studied, retail and clerical work, clearly do not have the same direct connection with home responsibilities. Low pay was still an issue in these occupations, especially for the women working part time. Equally there are specific occupations within catering and cleaning (for example haute cuisine and window cleaning) which are acceptable for men to work in.

From these observations I want to suggest that there is no one variable alone which can explain the gender typing of paid employment. But, that it may be possible to construct a set

variables which determine whether or not an occupation is deemed to be thought of as male, female or neutral. No occupation would necessarily fit all of the variables but all occupations would fit a combination of some of the variables.

Some of the areas which need to be researched and tested to construct this set of variables relate to areas discussed earlier in this thesis. These are areas which have been shown to be important in the construction of patriarchal ideology and the material base which supports and reinforces ideology (20). Examples of the types of variables which could be used to examine the labour market are, for example; whether or not a distinction between men in the public sphere and women in the private sphere can be applied to certain areas of the labour market; the real and perceived physical strength needed to perform the job; the relationship to child care and general caring responsibilities and the extent to which traditional notions of women serving others can be applied to occupations where a service is provided rather than a product created. Another area to be considered is why the public sector is thought to be appropriate for women to work in. This may also relate to the idea that women are providing a service for the public good.

The aim of constructing variables to analyse specific occupations and specific areas of the labour market is to enhance our understanding of the way in which patriarchy exists and operates in the labour market. Increased understanding of the way in which patriarchy is expressed in employment could provide an important

contribution to the overall theoretical understanding of patriarchy.

## NOTES

### Introduction

1. Throughout this thesis I have attempted to acknowledge the importance of recognising unpaid work as important in its own right and the importance of not treating it as invisible or inferior to paid work. Recognition of the equal validity of unpaid work to paid work is crucial for the understanding of housework (discussed in depth in Chapter 4).

To avoid implicitly treating unpaid work, including housework, as invisible or unimportant I have attempted to use terms within this thesis which differentiate between the two types of work. I have therefore attempted, where possible, to refer to work in the labour force as "paid work" or "employment". Similarly people in employment are referred to as "employees" or "paid workers". There are exceptions, however, to this attempt. First, in some cases, for the sake of brevity, I have resorted to using, for example, work instead of paid work if the context of the discussion is clearly only about paid work. Second, terms such as part time and fulltime work always refer to paid work. This is because, although it is theoretically possible to be a part time houseperson, the term is rarely if ever used outside of labour market discussion. Similarly jobs, unless otherwise stated refer to occupations in employment.

### Chapter 1

#### Women's work in eighteenth and nineteenth century England

1. L A Tilly and J W Scott "Women, work and family". Holt Rinehart 1973, p3.
2. S Alexander 'Women's work in nineteenth-century London; a study of the years 1820-1850' in J Mitchell and A Oakley (Ed) "The rights and wrongs of women". Penguin, 1976, p59.
3. J W Scott and L A Tilly 'Women's work and the family in nineteenth-century Europe' in A H Amsden "The economics of women and work". Penguin, 1980, p101.
4. In the feudal system those farmers who could afford to employ labour employed a class of workers both male and female, known as servants in husbandry. According to Pinchbeck those people who started out as servants in husbandry eventually saved enough money to marry and become cottagers and squatters.

"For a few pounds squatters could build for themselves a hut on the edge of the common, around which they enclosed and cultivated a piece of the waste. The cottagers either owned or rented houses which carried with them certain common rights, such as the pasturing of specified animals and the right to cut turf from the waste." (see Table I)

I Pinchbeck "Women workers and the industrial revolution 1750-1850". Frank Cass and Company Ltd, reprinted edition 1969, p20.

5. Ibid, p20.

6. J W Scott and L A Tilly, 1980. Op cit, p101.

7. See I Pinchbeck, op cit, p17.

"Women servants in husbandry seem to have shared the heaviest work of the farm, few tasks if any being considered too severe for them"

Thus the wives of cottagers and squatters were not unused to heavy work.

8. Op cit, 1980, p106.

9. For accounts of changes with the introduction of enclosure bills see, David Thompson "England in the 19th Century" Pelican, 1978, p14. Also J Thirkettle "The Social and Economic History of Britain 1066-1956". Pergamon, 1968. Thirkettle notes that if the cottager had no legal right to his land he might lose his strip and his cottage. He quotes Arthur Young, a great champion of enclosures at the time, who admitted that:

"In 19 Enclosure Acts out of 20, the poor are injured. In some cases grossly injured". P148

10. Op cit, 1976, p75.

11. I Pinchbeck, op cit, p28.

12. Ibid, p57.

13. J Kitteringham 'Country work girls in nineteenth-century England' in R Samuel (ed) "Village life and Labour". Routledge and Kegan Paul, p54.

14. Ibid, p110.

15. P Laslett "The world we have lost". Methuen 2nd Edition. (Laslett takes his information from Glass "Papers on Gregory King", 1965, p186).

16. Ibid, p2.

17. L A Tilly and J W Scott, op cit, 1978, p12.

18. Cynthia Cockburn "Brothers: male dominance and technological change". Pluto Press, 1984, P 19.

19. S Rowbotham "Hidden from history". Pluto Press (London), 1980, p2.

20. Op cit, p112.
21. A Ure "The cotton manufacture of Great Britain", 1836, Vol I, p189, in Pinchbeck, op cit, p113.
22. Op cit, 1980.
23. L A Tilly and J W Scott, op cit, 1978, p126.
24. See I Pinchbeck, op cit, p304. It is worth noting that the work "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" by Mary Wollstonecraft (London), 1972 (but first published in 1792) shows us that ideas of equality for women, (in this case mainly to do with the education of girls) however embryonic, and although limited to a very small number of the middle class, did exist even as early as the eighteenth century.
25. S Rowbotham, op cit, p3.
26. Op cit, p77.
27. Sylvia Walby "Patriarchy At Work". Polity Press, 1986, p97.
28. Op cit, pp65-66.
29. M Hewitt "Wives and mothers in Victorian industry". Rockliff, 1958, p17.
30. S Rowbotham, op cit, gives more detail about women and the early trade unions in Chapter 6 of her book. Also, Walby, op cit, p93 contrasts the date at which the most important unions at the turn of the century were founded with the date at which they admitted women. Overall she finds an average gap of twenty years. Walby argues that when unions did admit women, this change in strategies must be seen at least partly as the outcome of feminist pressure.
31. Op cit, p24.
32. Op cit, p188.
33. M Hewitt, op cit, p24.
34. Op cit, p66.
35. E Barlee "A visit to Lancashire in December 1862" (London), 1862, p25.
36. See M Hewitt, op cit, p126.
37. Ibid, p67.
38. Op cit, p110.
39. M L McDougall 'Working class women during the industrial



revolution 1780-1914' in R Bridenthal and C Koonz "Becoming visible: women in European history". Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977, pp265-266.

40. Ibid, pp266-267.
41. V Klein "Britain's married women workers". Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965, p92.
42. L Davidoff "The best circles". Croom Helm (London), 1973, p92.
43. Ibid, p94.
44. S Rowbotham, op cit, p47.
45. Ibid, p41.
46. J A Banks "Prosperity and parenthood". Routledge and Kegan Paul (London), 1954, p138.
47. Op cit, p61.
48. Ibid, p63.
49. Op cit, pp132-3.
50. Op cit, p63.
51. Op cit, p308.
52. Walby, op cit, p110.
53. Ibid, p310.

It is worth noting however, a point made by Elizabeth Roberts in a paper titled 'Working class women in the North West' in "Oral History" Volume 5, Autumn 1977. Roberts argues against Hewitt who made a similar point to Pinchbeck concerning the inadequacy of working class wives in the 19th century. She says:

"It is possible that Margaret Hewitt, anxious to be fair to the working class women of the cotton towns has been as a result less than just to housewives of other Lancashire towns like Barrow and Lancaster, who were quite able to feed their families on a very varied, inventive, economical and nutritious diet. And virtually all the women respondents (in her study) speak of learning the skills of cooking from their mothers, who in turn learned it from their mothers."

## Chapter 2

### The 20th century and women's work

1. T M McBride 'The long road home: women's work and industrialisation', pp80-295 in R Bridenthal and C Koonz (eds) "Becoming visible: women in European History". Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977, p284.
2. C Hall 'Married women at home in Birmingham in the 1920's and 1930's' in "Oral History" Vol 5 Number 2, Autumn, 1977, pp62-84, p967.

Also, the principal Lady Inspectress in 1904 found that the main reason (category 1) for women's work was because of the father of the family's death, unemployment or insufficient wages. The second most common reason was desertion by the father and thirdly preference for factory work over domestic work. She stresses, however, that "in the great majority of cases the reasons for married women's employment is one of those in category I". Her inspectresses found that in the Potteries only 18% of the women worked when there was no financial necessity.

Report of the interdepartmental committee on Physical Deterioration BPP 1904 XXXII, Appendix V, pl25, section 37.

3. See B L Hutchins 'A note of the Distribution of women in occupations' in "Journal of the Royal Statistical Society", Sept 1904, pp479-490.
4. Ibid. Table I, p480.
5. Ibid, p481.
6. Louise A Tilly and Joan W Scott "Women, work and family". Holt Rinehart, 1978, pp151-2.
7. Ibid, p153.
8. Ibid, p150.
9. Patricia Branca "Women in Europe since 1750". Croom Helm, 1978, p52.
10. Walby, op cit, pp148-155.
11. Ibid, p154.
12. W B Creighton "Working women and the Law". Mansell, 1979, p3.
13. Ibid.
14. Sandra Taylor 'The effect of marriage on job possibilities for women and the ideology of the home: Nottingham 1890-1930' in

"Oral History" (Journal), Vol 5, Number 2, Autumn 1977, pp46-62, p51.

15. Ibid.
16. Op cit, p26-27.
17. Sheila Rowbotham points out that because protective legislation was "put aside" during the first world war some women were "exposed to dangerous and heavy trades, with disastrous effect on health". See S Rowbotham "Hidden from history". Pluto Press, 1977, p111.
18. Creighton, op cit, p4.
19. S Rowbotham, op cit, p111.
20. Op cit, p196.
21. Ibid, p194.
22. Op cit, p488.
23. J A Banks "Prosperity and Parenthood". Routledge and Kegan Paul (London), 1954, p136.  
  
Also Tilly and Scott p153 (op cit) note that the number of servant girls under 15 years of age fell by 34% between 1881 and 1901 whereas the number of female servants between 25 years and 44 years of age increased by 33%, and those over 44 increased by 20%.
24. See Hutchins, op cit, p482.
25. Op cit, p195.
26. Op cit, p52. Taylor argues that women in homework and casual labour provided the reserve army of labour capitalism needs in times of economic fluctuations. The idea of women as a reserve army of labour is discussed and criticised in Chapter 5.
27. Ibid, p54.
28. R Roberts "The classic slum". Manchester University Press, 1971, p56.
29. E Roberts 'Working class women in the North West' in "Oral History" Vol 5, Autumn 1977, (pp7-30) p14.
30. Ibid, p15.
31. Op cit, p196.
32. Ibid, p199.

33. Op cit, p67.
34. Ibid, p68.
35. Ibid, p67.
36. Op cit, p94.
37. Op cit (1977), pp9-10.
38. Ibid, p12.
39. R Roberts (1971), op cit, p21.
40. Ibid, p21.
41. Op cit (1977), p21.
42. Ibid, p13.
43. Op cit (1971), p36.
44. H A Mess "Industrial Tyneside", Bureau of Social Research for Tyneside, Ernest Benn Ltd 1928, p47.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Lady Bell "At the works: a study of a manufacturing town (Middlesbrough)". David and Charles, reprint 1969, first published 1907, p178.
48. Account by a miner in "Where the wall ends: recollections of a Tyneside town", written by Wallsend-Willington Quay-Howden residents, compiled and designed by J R Devons. Published by Wallsend Arts Centre, 1977, p94. The quote is, of course, a personal account from the life of a miner and to say that the "women were happy" may well be a romanticised view of women's lives, (in this case the man's mother).

### Chapter 3

#### Married women's employment post World War II

1. Table 3.1 from 'The labour force' G S Bain, R Box and J Pimlott, Chapter 4, Table 4.7, in "British Social Trends since 1900". A H Halsey (ed), Macmillan, 1988, p172.
2. J Hartlaire 'Part-time employment: its extent and its patterns', "Employment of special group b)". OECD (Paris), 1968, p17.
3. A Myrdal and V Klein, "Women's two roles". Routledge & Kegan

Paul (London), pp52-53.

4. Ibid, p54.
5. Ibid.
6. Although writers such as Myrdal and Klein maintain the marriage bar was not reinstated after World War II, Walby, op cit, p 206, gives examples to show that some trade unions were successful in obtaining reinstatement in some cases.
7. This assumption is also tied in with the assumption that married women will have a husband who is the main breadwinner and that the woman's wages are 'pin money' and easily done without.
8. See M Young and P Wilmott "The Symmetrical Family - a study of work and leisure in the London region". Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973, Table 11, p103.
9. F J W Milner, S D M Court, W S Walton and E G Knox, "Growing up in Newcastle upon Tyne". Oxford University Press, 1960, p40.
10. P Jephcott with B N Seear and J H Smith "Married women working". George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1962.
11. Op cit, p148.
12. This positive attitude came as a response against media articles and public concern which fostered a belief that married women working caused neglect of children.
13. Jephcott et al, op cit, pp100-101.
14. Dr F Zweig "Women's life and labour". Victor Gollancz Ltd (London), 1952, p18.
15. Ibid, p16.
16. Walby, op cit, p207.
17. 'Part-time women workers 1950-1972' in "The Department of Employment Gazette", November 1973, p1088-1092.
18. Viola Klein points out in "Britain's married women workers", Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965, that in 1951 the population census underestimated working women, especially part-timers, because of the wording of the census instructions. The census instructions were "For anyone chiefly occupied in unpaid domestic duties at home write 'Home Duties' in column P (ie Personal Occupation) and leave columns R and S (ie Employer and Place of Work blank." Thus many 'housewives' who also had jobs were recorded as housewives and their employment ignored.
19. This point and further discussion of the differences which

occur between and within data sources can be found in "The Department of Employment Gazette", 1973, op cit, p1088.

20. Table 3.3 is from Table 1 of the "Department of Employment Gazette" article, *ibid*, p1089.
21. Table 3.4 from Department of Employment statistics, in "Women and men in Britain: a statistical profile", Equal Opportunities Commission. HMSO, 1986, p28. Table 3.4 also shows that the number of women in part-time work decreased from 4.3 million in 1985 to 4.0 million in 1986. In the corresponding period full-time women employees increased from 4.9 million (1985) to 5.4 million (1986). At the time of writing the report it is too early to suggest whether or not a new trend is emerging.
22. See S Dex and S M Perry 'Women's Employment Changes in the 1970s', in "Employment Gazette", April 1984, p151-164.
23. Catherine Hakim "Occupational Segregation: a comparative study of the degree and pattern of the differentiation between men and women's work in Britain, the United States and other countries". Department of Employment Research Paper No 9, 1970.
24. *Ibid*, p24-25. Hakim assesses her results by taking into account the fact that men outnumber women in the labour force approximately 2:1. Her results on segregation are not changed by this consideration.
25. Table 3.5 is from Hakim, *ibid*, p29. The following notes accompany the table in Hakim:

Source: Table 3 in G S Bain and R Price 'Union growth and employment trends in the United Kingdom 1964-1970', *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 10 November 1972, pp366-381. The authors' analysis of census data 1911-1961 was repeated with 1971 census data for Great Britain to update their time series, with the following modifications of their method:

a) 1971 census separately identified/self-employed with or without employees. The self-employed with employees were classified in the 'Employers and proprietors' group and the self-employed without employees were added to their respective occupational group.

b) Lists of occupational groups in each order as given in G S Bain, "The growth of white collar unionism". Clarendon Press (Oxford), 1970, pp 189-190 were adhered to except when an overlap in definitions required 1971 figures to be split proportionally to the 1961 census distribution.

26. *Ibid*, p 29.
27. Jean Martin and Ceridwen Roberts "Women and Employment: a

lifetime perspective", Department of Employment Office of Population Censuses and Surveys. HMSO, 1984.

28. Percentages quoted appear in Martin and Roberts, *ibid*, pp 25-28. Reference to Hakim *op cit*.
29. Walby, *op cit*, p208.
30. See Anna Cootes and Peter Kellner "Hear this brother", NS Report 1. *New Statesman*, 1980, p28.
31. See "Women and Trade Unions: A Survey by the Equal Opportunities Commission". Published by the EOC, 1983 But also see EOC report page 14 which shows that women are beginning to enter more senior positions at least in white collar unions. There is clearly still a long way to go but there are therefore signs of change.
32. Walby, *op cit*, p 214.
33. Jean Coussins "The Equality Report". NCCL Rights for Women Unit (London), 1976, p11.
34. Mandy Snell 'Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination' in "Waged Work: A reader", edited by Feminist Review. Virago, 1986, p34. Martin and Roberts, *op cit*, p136.
35. *Op cit*, p58.
36. 'Equal Value: The Union Response' in *Equal Opportunities Review*. Number 11, Jan/Feb 87.
37. In December 1986 the Sex Discrimination Act was changed, although not all sections came into force at that point. The new Act includes laws on retirement ages, restriction on night workers, and the removal of the need for organisations to receive designation to run single sex courses. Most of these changes became law in 1990.  
  
The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) proposes further changes which, if adopted, would place the burden of proof on employers to show that they did not discriminate.
38. *Op cit*, p14 (Hakim).
39. *Op cit*, p136.
40. *Ibid*, p128.
41. Shirley Dex "Women's Work Histories: an analysis of the Women and Employment Survey." Department of Employment Research Paper No 46, 1984 p15. Also, the following two points should be noted...

a) The women Dex refers to as 'continuous workers' are those

women who returned to work six months or less after childbirth (8% of the WES sample returned to work six months or less after each childbirth).

b) As a tool for analysis, Dex uses the concept of a 'three-phase cycle' (p14). That is, an initial work phase, a family formation phase and the final work phase. The crucial difference between the 'three-phase cycle' and the 'bi-model pattern' is that working and not working can occur within each phase. Martin and Roberts (op cit) use the initial phase in their analysis but do not use the 'family formation phase' and final work phase as distinct categories because they argue that they are concerned to "show how women's employment has changed at aggregate level over time".

42. Martin and Roberts, op cit, argue that these changes over time are "almost entirely attributable to increasing participation of women returning initially to part-time work", p 128.

Also, some of the group whose first births were between 1975-79 may not have completed childbearing. Martin and Roberts re-analysed the figures including only those women who considered their families to be complete and a similar pattern emerged.

43. Dex, 1984, op cit, p 48. See Table 25.
44. Dex, ibid, p560 and Martin and Roberts, op cit, p126, argue that the WES shows a tendency for women who return to work quickly after childbirth either to have higher qualifications and better jobs (thus more able to afford childcare), or to be in desperate need of money, for example, single mothers.
45. Martin and Roberts, op cit, p137.
46. Heather Joshi "Women's participation in paid work: further analysis of the Women and Employment Survey", Department of Employment Research Paper No 45, 1984, p47.
47. See Martin and Roberts, op cit, p152.

## Chapter 4

### Housework IS Work

1. For example:
  - F Zweig "Women's life and labour". Gollancz 1952.
  - S Yudkin and A Holme "Working mothers and their children". Michael Joseph, 1963.
  - A Myrdal and V Klein "Women's two roles". Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956.
  - V Klein "Britain's married women workers". Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965.
  - P Jephcott with N Seear and J H Smith "Married women working". George Allen and Unwin, 1962.



2. B Freidman "The Feminine Mystique". Gollancz, 1963.
3. H Gavron "The Captive Wife". Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.
4. A Oakley "Sociology of Housework". Martin Robertson, 1974.
5. Ibid, p18.
6. Goldthorpe, Lockwood et al "The affluent worker, industrial attitudes and behaviour". Cambridge University Press, 1968.
7. L Comer "Wedlocked women". Feminist Books, 1974, p65.
8. Ibid, p18.
9. N Glazer Malbin 'Housework' in "Signs", Journals of Women in Culture and Society I, 1975-76, p908.
10. See Glazer Malbin, ibid.
11. W Gauger 'Household work: can we add it to the GNP?' in Journal of Home Economics, Vol 65, 7, pp12-15.
12. M Dalla Costa and S James "The power of women and the subversion of the community". Falling Wall Press (Bristol), 1972, reprinted 1975.
13. Ibid, p36.
14. S James "Women, the unions and work". Falling Wall Press (Bristol), 1976.
15. L Comer, op cit, p120.
16. S Federici 'Wages against housework' in E Malos (ed) "The politics of housework". Allison and Busby (London), 1980, p257.
17. Ibid, p258.
18. S Firestone 'The dialectic of sex' in E Malos (ed) "The politics of housework". Allison and Busby (London), 1980, p159.
19. E Malos (ed) "The politics of housework". Allison and Busby (London), 1980, p30.
20. Ibid.
21. Federici, op cit.
22. A Oakley "Housewife". Allen Lane (London), 1974, p227.
23. C Freeman 'When is a wage not a wage?', in Malos, op cit, p206.
24. J Landes 'Wages for housework: Political and theoretical

considerations', in Malos, op cit, p272.

25. Malos, op cit, p33.
26. M Benston 'The political economy of women's liberation', in Malos, op cit, pp119-129.
27. E Mandel "An introduction to Marxist economic theory". Merit Publishers (New York), 1967.
28. Benston, op cit, p123.
29. Ibid, p121.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid, op cit, p125.
32. Malos, op cit, p12.
33. M Dalla Costa and S James, op cit. References taken here from the excerpt in Malos, op cit, pp160-195, p161.
34. Ibid, p173.
35. Ibid. On the subject of surplus value, Malos, op cit, points to an inconsistency in 'Women and the subversion of the community' she says,  
  
    "'Women and the subversion of the community' itself is not consistent here, partly because this article, the introduction and the notes to Falling Wall Press pamphlet were not all composed at the same time and therefore represent different stages in the development of the argument. The text says that 'domestic work is an essential function in the production of surplus value' but the note says that 'housework is productive in the Marxist sense, that is, producing surplus value'". (Malos, p24)
36. Freeman, op cit, p203.
37. See Malos, op cit, pp24-25.
38. K Marx "Theories of surplus value" in "Capital Vol 4". Lawrence and Wishart, 1972.
39. Ibid, quoted in Malos, op cit, p25.
40. Ibid.
41. It could be argued that Marx only classed the reproduction of labour as unproductive because he failed to see that housework does provide surplus value. However, it will be argued later that housework does not in fact produce surplus value.

42. Freeman, op cit, p204.
43. Benston, op cit.
44. Eva Kalvzynska 'Wiping the floor with theory - a survey of writings on housework' in Feminist Review no 6, 1980, criticises H Edwards ('Housework and Exploitation: A Marxist Analysis' in "No more fun and games, a journal of female liberation" No 5) for the same mistake. Edwards portrays husbands as slave-owners, and thus places housework in a different mode of production.
45. C Delphy "The main enemy" Women's Research and Resources Centre publication Explorations in Feminism No 3, 1977.
46. M Molyneux 'Beyond the domestic labour debate', New Left Review No 116, July-August 1979, pp3-27.
47. Ibid, p7.
48. J Harrison "The political economy of housework", Bulletin of the Conference of Socialist Economists, Volume 3, No 1, 1973.
49. Ibid, p40.
50. Molyneux, op cit.
51. J Gardiner, S Himmelweit and M Mackintosh 'Women's domestic labour' in Malos, op cit, pp235-252.
52. Molyneux, op cit, p15.
53. Ibid, p16.
54. Gardiner et al, op cit, p239.
55. Ibid, p240.
56. Ibid.
57. Molyneux, op cit, p17.
58. E Balibar "Reading Capital". NLB (London), 1975.
59. Molyneux, op cit, p17.
60. Ibid, pp17-18. Delphy and Harrison both describe women as a separate class. This idea is untenable once the concept of housework as a separate mode of production has been rejected.
61. Dalla Costa and James, op cit; Federici, op cit; Harrison, op cit; and J Gardiner 'Women's domestic labour', New Left Review, No 89, 1975.
62. W Secombe 'The housewife and her labour under capitalism', New

Left Review, No 83, Jan/Feb 1974.

63. Ibid, p9.
64. Gardiner et al, op cit, p244.
65. M Coulson, B Magov and H Wainwright 'The housewife and her labour under capitalism - a critique' in Malos, op cit, p221.
66. Op cit.
67. Molyneux, op cit, p9.
68. Coulson et al, op cit, p222. The concept of a material basis for women's oppression is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.
69. Gardiner et al, op cit, p244.
70. Molyneux, op cit, p10.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid, p11.
73. It was largely the result of trade union demands in the late 19th century which established the family wage, and therefore cannot be claimed to be a capitalist 'invention'.
74. Molyneux, op cit, p20.
75. Coulson et al, op cit, p222 (the reference is to Gardiner's article, 1975, op cit).
76. Malos, op cit, p38.
77. Molyneux, op cit, p22.
78. Coulson et al, op cit, p225.
79. Marx and Engels thought that the divisions of labour within the family were being broken down with the entry of married women into the labour market. They thought that the entry of both women and children into industry would lead to all labourers being exploited on an individual basis as wage labourers reproducing their own means of consumption and reproduction. cf Engels "The origins of the family, private property and the state". Progress Publishers (Moscow), 1970.
80. Coulson et al, op cit, p226. It is important to recognise that the conditions Coulson et al mention were not endemic. At no time during the 19th century did more than, on average, a third of married women with children work in paid employment. It is unlikely, then, that the family was seriously threatened on a national basis.

81. Landes, op cit, p273.

## Chapter 5

### WOMEN'S WAGED LABOUR

1. Discussed in Chapter 3 at various points, for example, pp75-77. Also, for studies showing how part time work for women is particularly disadvantageous see for example: Jennifer Hurstfield "The part-time trap", Low pay pamphlet no 9, 1978 (London); Ann Sedley "Part-time workers need full time rights", NCCL Rights for Women Unit 1980 and for the problems of part-time work in the north east in particular see North East Trade Union Studies Information Unit (NUSIV) "Part-time work: full-time problems" 1980.
2. See for example Jean Coussins "The Equality Report", NCCL Rights for Women Unit (London), 1976.
3. Alice H Amsden (Ed) "The economics of women and work". Penguin Books, 1980.
4. Jacob Mincer "Labor force participation of married women: a study of labor supply", in Amsden (Ed), Ibid, pp41-51.
5. Ibid, p42.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid, p45.
8. Amsden, op cit, p15.
9. G Becker 'A theory of marriage' in Theodore W Schultz (ed), "Economics of the family", University of Chicago Press, 1974.
10. Jacob Mincer and Solomon Polachek 'Family investments in human capital: earnings of women' in Amsden, op cit, pp169-205.
11. Ibid, p203.
12. Ibid.
13. Beth Niemi 'The female-male differential in unemployment rates' in Amsden, op cit, pp325-349.
14. Ibid, p349.
15. Amsden, op cit, p32.
16. Isabel V Sawhill 'Economic perspectives on the family' in Amsden, op cit, p136.
17. Amsden, op cit, p30.

18. Becker 1974, op cit.
19. Op cit, p133.
20. Op cit, p132.
21. For example Sawhill, op cit.
22. Developed most fully in Peter S Doeringer and Michael J Piore, "Internal labour market and manpower analysis". D C Heath and Co (Lexington, Massachusetts), 1971.
23. S Slichter "Note on the structure of wages", Review of Economics and Statistics, February 1950. R A Lester "A range of theory of wage differentials", Industrial and Labour Relations Review, July 1952. C Kerr, 'The balkanization of labor markets' in E W Bakke and P M Hauser (eds) "Labour mobility and economic opportunity". MIT Press, 1954.
24. R D Barron and G M Norris 'Sexual divisions and the dual labour market' in D Leonard Barker and S Allen "Dependence and Exploitation in work and marriage", Longman, 1976.
25. Doeringer and Piore, op cit, ppl-2.
26. Ibid, p29.
27. Ibid, p40.
28. M J Piore 'On-the-job training in a dual labor market' in Arnold R Weber et al (ed) "Public-private manpower policies". Madison, Wis: industrial relations research association, 1969.
29. Op cit.
30. Ibid, p165.
31. Ibid, ppl65-166.
32. Ibid, p170.
33. Barbara R Bergmann 'Curing high unemployment rates among blacks and women' in Amsden, op cit, p353.
34. Isobel V Sawhill "The economics of discrimination against women: some new findings", Journal of Human Resources, vol 8, no 3. Referred to by Bergmann, ibid, p354.
35. N Bosanquet and P B Doeringer "Is there a dual labour market in Great Britain?", Economic Journal, June 1973, p432.
36. Barron and Norris, op cit.
37. Ibid, p47.

38. Ibid, p53.
39. Ibid, p64.
40. R C Edwards, M Reich and D M Gordon (eds), "Labor market segregation". D C Heath, 1975.
41. M Reich, D M Gordon and R C Edwards "A theory of labor market segregation", American Economic Association, vol 63, no 2, May 1973, p359.
42. See Reich, Gordon and Edwards, *ibid*, pp359-360 for a list of characteristics of primary and secondary markets.
43. Ibid, p360.
44. Ibid, p361.
45. Ibid.
46. For a fuller historical account of the segregation of women in the American labour force from the radical theorists' point of view, see Alice Kessler-Harris, 'Stratifying by sex: understanding the history of working women', pp217-242 in Edwards, Reich and Gordon, 1975, *op cit*.
47. For example see Jo Anne Laws, "Part-time women workers and the segmented labour market", and Terence S Chivers "Gender reproduction and the labour market". Both papers were presented at the British Sociological Association (BSA) Conference on Gender and Society, April 5th - 8th, 1982.
48. For example, Glen Morgan and David Hooper "Labour in the woollen and worsted industry: a critical analysis of dual labour market theory". Paper presented to BSA Conference on Gender and Society, 1982; Veronica Beechey 'Women and production: a critical analysis of some sociological theories of women's work' in A Kuhn and A Wolpe "Feminism and materialism; women and modes of production". Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.
49. Jill Rubery 'Structured labor markets, worker organisation and low pay' in Amsden, *op cit*, pp242-270.
50. *Op cit*.
51. Morgan and Hooper, (*op cit*, note 48) Morgan and Hooper found that their own study (in Britain) did not support the dual labour market theory empirically. Another example of empirical research which does not support dual labour market theory is "Employment in the inner city: an extended report" by Jim Cousins, Maggie Curran and Richard Brown. University of Durham, 1983, especially Chapter Seven.
52. *Op cit*, (1971).

53. Op cit, p49.
54. Op cit, p8.
55. Rubery goes on to mention L Kahn "Unions and labor market segmentation", PhD Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1975. Kahn's thesis does include trade unions in the analysis of dual labour markets, however, Rubery points out that Kahn also suggests that in the long run unionisation may be of benefit to capitalism. See Rubery op cit, p249.

Also, Edwards, Reich and Gordon, op cit, have produced a more recent account of their version of labour market segmentation in D Gordon, RC Edwards and M Reich "Segmented Work, Divided Workers". Cambridge University Press, 1982. This provides an extended historical account of changes in the United States labour market since the late 18th Century. In this account the authors acknowledge the role of trade unions in creating divisions between primary and secondary labour markets.

"Segmented Work, Divided Workers" has, however, been well criticised in an article by P Nolan and P K Edwards "Homogenise, divide and rule", Cambridge Journal of Economics, 8, 1984, pp197- 215. Nolan and Edwards criticise the theoretical method underlying the empirical work presented by Gordons et al. In concluding their criticism, Nolan and Edwards maintain that Gordons et al. are right to point to class struggle as a key aspect explaining the route that capitalist societies take. They argue, however, that:

"Gordons et al. fail to comprehend the complexities and contradictions of that struggle. They have not transcended their difficulties in their earlier work, for they retain an over-simple view of employers' behaviour, in which the many ways of gaining compliance are reduced to a few straightforward rules and in which the dangers of investing employers with impossible amounts of knowledge, cunning and foresight are obvious. And they have a similarly underdeveloped view of the character and consequences of workers' resistance." (p214)

56. Veronica Beechey, 1978, op cit, pl78.
57. Rubery, op cit, p244.
58. Veronica Beechey 'Women and production: a critical analysis of some sociological theories of women's work' in "Feminism and materialism: women and modes of production", edited by Annette Kuhn and Ann Wolpe. 1978. Published by Routledge and Kegan Paul, pl79.
59. See Beechey, *ibid*, pp179-180. Also, for research which refutes the lack of solidarity amongst women see Chapter 6 pl82-184 of this thesis.



60. Op cit.
61. Karl Marx "Capital Vol 1". International Publishers (New York), 1967, p394. Quoted by Beechey (1978), op cit, p183.
62. Ibid, p395 (Beechey, op cit, p185).
63. Ibid, p392.
64. Frederick Engels "Conditions of the working class in England". Panther (St Albans), p141, 1976.
65. F Engels "The origins of the family, private property and the state". Progress Publishers (Moscow), 1970, p146.
66. Rosalind Delmar 'Looking again at Engels' 'Origins of the family, private property and the state'', mentioned by Veronica Beechey in "Some notes on female wage labour in Capitalist Production". Capital and Class No 3, 1977, pp46-47.
67. Beechey V "Some notes on female wage labour in Capitalist Production". Capital and Class No 3, 1977, pp47-48.
68. Ibid, p48.
69. Beechey (1978), op cit, p186.
70. Ibid.
71. Beechey (1977), op cit, p55.
72. Op cit (1978), p190. The idea of women as a reserve army of labour has also been put forward by a number of other writers, for example, Irene Breugal "Women as a Reserve Army of Labour", Feminist Review No.3, 1979.
73. Beechey, ibid, p193.
74. Floya Anthias "Women and the reserve army of labour: A critique of Veronica Beechey" in Capital and Class, No 10, 1980, pp50-63.
75. Ibid, p54.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid, pp54-55.
78. Ibid, p55.
79. Ibid, p50.
80. Ibid, p53.
81. Ibid, p61.

82. Anna Pollert "Women, gender relations and wage labour", (1982) paper presented to the 1982 BSA conference, op cit, p3.
83. Jane Humphries 'Class struggle and the persistence of the working-class family' in Amsden, op cit, p142.
84. Ibid, p150.
85. Ibid.
86. See Chapter 4, p91 ff.
87. Op cit, p158.
88. Implicit in Humphries' article is that patriarchy can be benign, especially if compared with the social forces of capitalism in their most "brutal" form.
89. Cynthia Cockburn 'The material basis of male power' in "Waged work a reader", edited by Feminist Review. Published by Virago, 1986, p95.
90. Op cit, p3.
91. Heida Hartmann 'Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Job Segregation by Sex' in "Classes, Power and Conflict" edited by Giddens and Held. Macmillan, 1982, p456.
92. Ibid, p454.
93. Chapter 1 gives a more detailed account of the way in which production was home centred and patriarchal before the advent of capitalism.
94. Rubery, op cit, p258.
95. Angela Coyle 'Sex and skill organisation of the clothing industry' in J West (ed) "Women, work and the labour market". Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.
96. Pollert, op cit.
97. Amsden, op cit, p28.
98. Hartman, op cit, p467.
99. Sylvia Walby "Patriarchy at work". Polity Press, 1986, p89.
100. Ibid, p51.
101. Ibid, p50.
102. Ibid, p47. Whilst acknowledging the importance of racism to the study of married women in employment, it is outside the scope of this thesis to discuss the dynamics of racism and

capitalism.

103. Ibid, p51.
104. Cf, Chapter 4, p 95.
105. Op cit, p42.
106. Ibid, p53.
107. Harriet Bradley "Men's Work, Women's Work". Polity Press, 1989, p55.
108. Ibid pp59-60.
109. Nicola Charles 'Women and Trade Unions' in "Waged Work: a reader" edited by Feminist Review. Published by Virago, 1986, p161. The reference to Althusser comes from "Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays" by Louis Althusser. New Left Books (London), 1971.
110. Hilary Wainwright 'Women and the division of labour' in P Abrams (ed) "Work, Urbanisation and inequality". Weiderfield and Nicholson (London) 1982, p179.
111. Ibid, p181.
112. Cockburn, op cit (1986), p96.
113. Cynthia Cockburn "Brothers: male dominance and technological change". Pluto Press, 1984.
114. Op cit (1986), p99.
115. Ibid, p97.
116. Op cit (1984), p204.
117. Op cit, (1986), p98. Cockburn questions the use of the term "patriarchy" in the analysis of gender inequality because, she argues, it is too specific to describe the multi-various and changing forms of male domination. She says:

"The gender relations are those of a wider, more pervasive and more long-lived male dominance system than patriarchy. They are of those of a sex-gender system in which men dominate women inside and outside family relations, inside and outside economic production, by means which are both material and ideological, exercising their authority through both individual and organizational development. It is more near andrarchy than patriarchy." (Ibid, p111).

"Andrarchy" means rule by men as opposed to rule by fathers or male heads of household or tribe. I have continued to use the word "patriarchy" in this thesis with the understanding that it

is defined to describe the social structures by which men exploit women and is not limited to, although it must include, the concept of rule by fathers or male heads of household.

## Chapter 6

### Married women in the labour force: reactions and attitudes

1. M Young and P Wilmott "The symmetrical family: a study of work and leisure in the London Region". Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973.
2. Ann Oakley "Sociology of housework". Martin Robertson, 1974, p164.
3. Marilyn Porter, 'Standing on the edge' in J West (ed) "Women, work and the labour market". Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982, p119.
4. Anna Pollert "Girls, wives and factory lives", Macmillan, 1980, p114. See also Pauline Hunt, "Gender and class consciousness". Macmillan, 1980 for similar ideas.
5. Hunt, ibid, p15.
6. Pollert, op cit, p84.
7. Hunt, op cit.
8. "North Shields: Women's work" Final Report, Volume 5. North Tyneside Community Development Project (CDP) 1978.
9. See Chapter 3, pp73-77 for more discussion of the differences between men's and women's pay.
10. Hunt, op cit, p112.
11. Rosemary Crompton et al (in J West, op cit) found that many of the clerical jobs women performed required skill and initiative but that because of occupational classifications were considered unskilled. This may well be the case with many other occupations considered to be 'women's work'.
12. Judith Chaney "Social networks and job information: the situation of women who return to work", Equal Opportunities Commission/ Social Sciences Research Council, 1981.
13. Porter, op cit.
14. Fiona McNally "Women for hire: a study of the female office worker". Macmillan, 1979.
15. Pollert, op cit, p111.

16. H Beynon and RM Blackburn "Perceptions of work, variations within a factory". Cambridge University Press, p147.
17. McNally, op cit.
18. Pollert, op cit.
19. CDP, op cit.
20. Porter, op cit, p118.
21. Beynon and Blackburn, op cit, p147.
22. Porter, op cit, p118.
23. Susan Yeandle, in a paper " Home Responsibilities" presented at the 1982 BSA Conference, talks of the guilt women feel by being at work 'neglecting' the home and the efforts women make to stress that they had not neglected 'their' responsibilities at home.
24. Op cit, p59.
25. Caroline Freeman in J West, op cit.
26. See for example Myrdal & Klein "Women's two roles". Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956 and Jephcott & Seear "Married women working". George Allen and Unwin, 1962.
27. It has been pointed out that the tendency of the earlier studies to ask married women why they work is a question that would not be asked of a man and therefore should not be asked of women. The more feminist oriented studies of the seventies have therefore tended to avoid asking women why they work. From other questions asked, however, it is still apparent in these studies that friendship and escape from home is an important aspect of working.
28. Op cit.
29. Op cit. For example in the North Shields study, 65% of the women interviewed said what they liked about working was the company and having a good laugh.
30. Op cit, p85.
31. Dr F Zweig "Women's life and labour". Victor Gollanz, 1952, p91.
32. Hunt, op cit, p172.
33. Ibid, p172.
34. Ibid.
35. Chaney, op cit.

36. McNally, op cit, p20.
37. Op cit, pl41.
38. Chaney, op cit.
39. Pollert, op cit, pl66.
40. Ibid.
41. Beynon and Blackburn, op cit.
42. Nichols and Armstrong "Workers divided: a study in shop floor politics". Fontana Collins, 1976.
43. Op cit, p79.
44. Hunt, op cit, ppl60-161.
45. Sheila Cunnison "Gender, the meaning of work and participation in local trade union organizations" paper presented to the 1982 BSA conference.
46. Armstrong (in J West, op cit) p46.
47. Op cit.
48. T Lupton "On the shop floor". Pergamon Press, 1963, p91.
49. See New Socialist No 2, Nov/Dec 81, pp24-25. "Lee Jeans: how one factory fought back" by Miriam Ryan.
50. Jane Barker & Hazel Downing 'Word processing and the transformation of the patriarchal relations of control in the office' in "Education and School", 1979, Volume 2, p242.
51. See Barker & Downing, ibid, pp243-244 for an extended example of the way in which office workers can develop control of their working environment.
52. Ibid, p243.
53. Sue Webb "Gender and authority in the workplace" paper presented to the 1982 BSA conference.
54. Op cit, pl57.
55. This later point does not seem to be supported by the results of my own research, and is discussed in Chapter 8, p268.
56. Hunt, op cit.

## Chapter 7.

### The Newcastle Study

1. Jim Cousins, Margaret Curran and Richard Brown "Employment in the Inner City: An Extended Report". Durham University, 1983, p335.
2. The results of the Newcastle Study are described in this chapter in the present tense. It is important to note, however, that it is now nine years since the women were interviewed. Changes may have occurred since 1982 and it is not my intention to imply that the situations and attitudes discussed will reflect the situations and attitudes of these women in the 1990s.
3. Before the sample to be interviewed was selected from the Urban Employment Study it was the intention to include a group of married women working in manufacturing occupations to cover all industries for example working in electrical engineering and textiles. However, of the married women from the Urban Employment Study, only ten married women were found to be working in manufacturing occupations of any kind at all (see also note 3 below).

The explanation as to why so few married women in the Urban Employment Study worked in manufacturing is largely to do with the regional structure of employment in the North East. Although the North East is well known for its manufacturing industries these are largely the male dominated heavy engineering industries. Light industries do not figure very highly in the North East. Thus, women in the North East are even more concentrated into service industries than women in many other regions of the country. The lack of manufacturing work for women in the North East has in fact been a feature of women's employment here throughout the history of industrial Britain.

An additional factor further limiting married women's participation in manufacturing industries in Newcastle upon Tyne is that those light industries which do exist seem to have few opportunities for part time work. All of the ten married women who were in manufacturing in the 1980 interviews of the Urban Employment Study worked full-time. The single women in the Study who worked in manufacturing industries also worked full time.

Other typical areas of women's employment (besides those chosen) that were possibilities for another occupational group to be interviewed were hairdressing and nursing occupations. The proportion of married women working in hairdressing and nursing occupations, however, was found to be even less than those in manufacturing occupations.

4. The 1981 Census results for Newcastle show that 81% of women altogether work in either distribution and catering or in industries classed as other services. This compares with only 43% of men (see appendix III for the 1981 Census industrial distribution of employees in Newcastle upon Tyne).
5. The extended report of the UES, Jim Cousins et al, op cit, describes how manufacturing has declined in importance in Newcastle since the early 20th century whereas service industries have grown in importance. The effect of the decline in manufacturing is seen most clearly by changes in men's occupations and industries. To a lesser extent women have also been affected by the decline although the most marked change for women is the growth of the service industries and the increased demand for women workers.
6. In some cases the women had moved jobs to work with another employer although their occupation remained the same.
7. These categories were used in the UES Study, op cit, p164.
8. Discussed in Chapter 3, p79.
9. Chapter 3, pp80-81.
- 10 See Chapter 3, p81.

## Chapter 8

### Summary of research, discussion and conclusions

1. This accords with the results of the Women and Employment Study (WES). See Chapter 3, p81.
2. For discussion refuting attenuated ambition, see Chapter 6, pp175-176.
3. The idea that work is subordinate to family responsibilities is discussed in Chapter 6, pp168-171.
4. See Chapter 6, pp172-173.
5. See Chapter 6, p172.
6. See Chapter 6, pp175-176.
7. See Chapter 6, p170.
8. The emphasis of the point made here is that the mothers of many of the respondents would have been in formal paid employment outside of the home at the time when the respondents were growing up. The point is therefore not meant to contradict earlier discussion of the way in which married women's employment was underestimated in the early part of the 20th



Century: much of the work which was underestimated was carried out on an informal basis, often integrated with housework and often carried out in or around the home.

9. As some studies suggest (discussed in Chapter 6, p171). The positive attitudes which the women expressed about the effects of paid work on their children (see Chapter 7, pp248-249) also refute the notion of women feeling guilty and not "real workers".
10. This supports evidence from the CDP Study which was also carried out in the North East. See Chapter 6, p168.
11. See Chapter 6, pp165-166.
12. See Chapter 5, p163.
13. See Chapter 3, pp68-69.
14. Chapter 6, pp176-181, discusses the attitudes of women and men working together in manufacturing work.
15. See Chapter 5, pp118-135.
- 16 See Chapter 5, p150.
- 17 This point is discussed in Chapter 3, p58.
18. The research was carried out in 1982 and since this time changes in the trade union movement have taken place. More trade unions have adopted policy aimed to encourage women's activity and variations as the extent to which these policies are implemented vary considerable between unions. Variations also occur within unions at branch, regional, and national level. More up to date research is needed to assess the extent to which trade unions discourage the participation of women.
19. See Chapter 5, p161.
20. See, for example, Chapter 5, pp162-164.

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APPENDIX I

The key to Socio-economic groups 1 to 17 are as follows:

- 1 Employers and managers in central and local government, industry commerce, etc - large establishments
- 2 Employers and managers in industry, commerce, etc - small establishments
- 3 Professional workers - self-employed
- 4 Professional workers - employees
- 5.1 Ancillary workers and artists
- 5.2 Foremen and supervisors - non-manual
- 6 Junior non-manual workers
- 7 Personal service workers
- 8 Foremen and supervisors - manual
- 9 Skilled manual workers
- 10 Semi-skilled manual workers
- 11 Unskilled manual workers
- 12 Own account workers (other than professional)
- 13 Farmers - employers and managers
- 14 Farmers - own account
- 15 Agricultural workers
- 16 Members of armed forces
- 17 Inadequately described occupations

APPENDIX II

The questionnaire used for the Newcastle study was as follows:

UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY

NAME:

ADDRESS:

DATE:

TIME:

LENGTH

COMMENTS ...

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT	NUMBER
SUMMER 1982	.....

- 1) What is your employment situation today:  
Employed full time;

Employed part time;                      Question 2  
Self employed/training etc;  
Unemployed/out of work;  
Full time housewife;                      Back page  
Retired;  
Other.

2) The last time you were interviewed you were a .....  
Could I take down the details of your occupation again?  
    Occupations .....  
    Industry .....  
    Employer .....  
    Location .....

3) What are your usual hours of work?  
    What days of the week do you work?

    Mon  
    Tues  
    Wed  
    Thurs  
    Fri  
    Sat  
    Sun

4) How did you come by your present job?                      (Job  
    Centre/paper/friends/on spec)

5) How long have you been in your present job?

6) Was there a training period?  
    Yes?  
    What did it involve? - on the job training?

7) Do you have any prospects of promotion?

    Yes? - Would you take promotion if it was offered to you?

    No? Why not?

8) Do you expect to be in the same job in five years time?  
    Yes/no

If no - why not?

9) have you ever thought about leaving your present job?

If yes, why?

9)a Have you ever done anything about it?

Yes, what?

10) What is it that keep you in your present job? (probe)

11) If you are looking for a job which things on this list would you consider the most important? And the next most important? And the next?

Satisfactory      Unsatisfactory

Being near home

Good chances of promotion

Good bosses

Good wages

Having good workmates/  
meeting people

Convenient hours

Interesting work/  
varied work

Good conditions

Security

Having some responsibility  
for your own job

With regard to your present job, would you say that you have the three things you have chosen?

Discuss the things said to be most important and/or what keeps you in your job.

What is the thing you like best about your job?

What is the worst thing about your job?

- Dead end job
- Not a very nice type of person to work with
- Poor employment prospects
- Low wages
- Someone always standing over you
- Bad conditions
- Bad employers
- Boring work
- Unsuitable hours

Discuss ...

Fringe benefits

14) Do you receive sickness pay when you are off work ill?  
Yes/no

15) Do you get paid for any of your holidays? (How long?)

16) Does your firm operate a pension scheme?

Are you in it?

17) Do you have cheap eating facilities at work?

18) Do you get any travelling expenses?

19) Do you think you should get any of these things (that you don't get already)?

20) What do you think of your employment prospects generally?

Are they: very good/good/poor/very poor

21) How do you think your prospects compare with other women?

Do you think they are different from men?

22) How much do you earn per hour?

23) What would you do if you inherited an income large enough to enable you to stop working altogether?

24) If you had a choice would you have more pay for the same hours or less hours for the same pay?

24) Do you and your husband pool your money or is each wage used for different things? Yes? How? ...

- 25) Would you or your husband mind if you earned more than him?
- 26) Being well, will you work until retirement age?

Men's attitudes

- 27) Do you work with any men? (No - go to question 29)
- 28) What do you think their attitudes are to women working?
- 29) What do you think your employers attitudes are to women workers?
- 30) Do you think you are treated in any way differently because you are a woman?
- Yes? How?
- 31) Do you find men and women mix together as friends and so on where you work?

Large firms/small firms

- 32) Do you work for a large or a small firm?
- And where you work yourself, is that in a small branch or what?
- 32) Do you think there are any advantages with being a small/ large firm?
- 33) Do you think there are any disadvantages?

Unions

- 34) Are you a member of a trade union? Yes/no (no - go to 43)
- 35) Which one?
- 36) Is your shop steward a man or a woman?
- 37) Do you ever attend union meetings?
- Yes? How often? Where? When

38) No? Never?

Are the union meetings held outside working hours?

Where are the meetings usually held?

Do they provide any child care facilities?

39) Would you say that you were interested in union affairs generally?

40) Do any of the women you work with take an interest?

How about the men you work with, are any of them involved?

Yes (but women are not) ... why do you think that is?

No. So would you say there was little tradition of union activity where you work?

41) Have you ever taken any problem to your union or shop steward?

Yes? What kind of problem was that?  
Was the union any help?

No? Who would you take problems connected with your work to?

42) Does the union have any special policies of support for women?

(Go to question 45)

43) Unions: not a member  
Why aren't you a member?

Have you ever been a member of a trade union?

yes? Which one? Where?

44) Who do you take your problems to?  
(Is it up to yourself or would others go with you?)

(Probe) Do you think you are treated differently because

you are not in a union?

45) To All:

Would you say you worked in competition with others at work, work as a team, or that you work by yourself and are not really concerned with others?  
(Discuss)

### General

46) Now that we have a no discrimination law for women do you think there are any jobs that women should not do?

And men?

### Family

47) What was your fathers main job:  
Occupation:  
Industry:

48) Did your mother have a paid job? What did she do mainly?  
Occupation:

Industry:

Did your mother work for most of her life?

What is your husbands main job?  
Occupation:

Industry:

### Housework

50) Who does the housework in your family?  
(That is is it shared between you or what?)

Yes, shared.

51) Does there tend to be some things that you always do that noone else in your family does?  
Are there some things that your husband does that noone else does?

(Probe if necessary)



What things does your husband generally regard as work in the home?

And the children? (if there are any)

52) On the whole would you say that you are more responsible for getting things done than other members of your family?

55) No not share:

Do you get any help at all in doing the housework?

(Probe) What kind of things?

Are there some things your husband would never do?

Are there some things you never do?

54) Do you think anything could be done about the amount of housework there is to be done?

Probe by suggesting:

Social Services

Government agencies

Private agencies

55) Do you have much time for leisure/spare time; what sort of things do you do if you have spare time?

### Children

56) Do you have any children?

Yes? What ages?

Ascertain whether or not dependents.

Do you have any dependent relatives living with you?

Yes, dependents.

57) Do you have to make any arrangements for your child(ren) while you are at work?

Yes? What?

Friends/relatives/private child care/state child care/

husband/other

No - not necessary because:

Mother working during school hours  
Children look after each other  
Other

58) Did the fact that you have children influence you when you chose your job? (or dependent relatives)

Yes? How?

59) Do you feel there should be more child care facilities for working mothers?

60) Do you think more could be done to help mothers who work?

Yes? Do you have any ideas as to what?

61) What age was your child when you returned to work?

62) Do you think it makes any difference to your child your being at work?

Out of Work

Are you available for work?

No? Why?

END

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

APPENDIX III

INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT OF MEN AND WOMEN AGED 16 OR OVER:  
NEWCASTLE 1981

	Men	(%)	Women	(%)	Total(%)
Energy and water	2,280	( 4)	860	( 1)	3
Manufacturing	19,210	(31)	5,860	(12)	23
Construction	7,610	(12)	610	( 1)	7
Distribution and catering	9,060	(15)	11,100	(23)	18
Transport	5,990	(10)	1,300	( 3)	7
Other services	17,570	(28)	27,770	(58)	41
Total (1)	62,600		47,750		100

(1) Including Agricultural and not classified

