Kent Academic Repository

Evans, Frances B. (1984) *Women's unemployment; a domestic occupation: A reconsideration of women's employment, unemployment and domesticity*. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) thesis, University of Kent.

Downloaded from
https://kar.kent.ac.uk/94331/ The University of Kent's Academic Repository KAR

The version of record is available from
https://doi.org/10.22024/UniKent/01.02.94331

This document version
UNSPECIFIED

DOI for this version

Licence for this version
CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives)

Additional information
This thesis has been digitised by EThOS, the British Library digitisation service, for purposes of preservation and dissemination. It was uploaded to KAR on 25 April 2022 in order to hold its content and record within University of Kent systems. It is available Open Access using a Creative Commons Attribution, Non-commercial, No Derivatives (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) licence so that the thesis and its author, can benefit from opportunities for increased readership and citation. This was done in line with University of Kent policies (https://www.kent.ac.uk/is/strategy/docs/Kent%20Open%20Access%20policy.pdf). If you ...

Versions of research works

Versions of Record
If this version is the version of record, it is the same as the published version available on the publisher's web site. Cite as the published version.

Author Accepted Manuscripts
If this document is identified as the Author Accepted Manuscript it is the version after peer review but before type setting, copy editing or publisher branding. Cite as Surname, Initial. (Year) 'Title of article'. To be published in ***Title of Journal*** , Volume and issue numbers [peer-reviewed accepted version]. Available at: DOI or URL (Accessed: date).

Enquiries
If you have questions about this document contact ResearchSupport@kent.ac.uk. Please include the URL of the record in KAR. If you believe that your, or a third party's rights have been compromised through this document please see our Take Down policy (available from https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies).

WOMEN'S UNEMPLOYMENT - A DOMESTIC OCCUPATION?

A RECONSIDERATION OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT AND DOMESTICITY

FRANCES B. EVANS

This thesis is submitted for a PhD

at the University of Kent at Canterbury

October 1984

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores women's unemployment through an analysis of their paid and unpaid work. It is suggested that sociological writing about unemployment has been dominated by accounts of male experience, and a specific consideration of the meaning of unemployment for women is presented here. A blend of research methodologies has been developed, using the work of feminists, life historians and interactionists. This distinctive, qualitative approach produces empirical data about many aspects of the lives of a group of middle-aged women, in which to situate their experiences of work of all kinds. Before presenting an analysis of these data, the period through which the women have lived is discussed, in order to understand the broader social context of their lives. This account draws on the published work of both historians and sociologists, identifying the social trends and events which may have been of particular relevance to women, as well as the range of influences on such developments. The empirical part of the research which is reported on here produced two types of findings. The first deals with the patterns of women's paid employment over the life-cycle, while the second relates to women's attitudes to domestic labour. Both make clear the links between domestic and paid work. A wide range of published material from the seventeenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries is then used to develop an understanding of the contemporary form of domestic labour. Particular attention is paid in this analysis to the ways in which ideological and material influences mould the historically specific meaning and practice of domestic labour. In conclusion, the findings which are presented in this thesis are discussed in the context of other recently published work which addresses the analysis of women's unemployment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research has been made possible by a postgraduate award from the ESRC. I would also like to acknowledge the extensive practical and emotional support my family has given me. This has always been gratefully, if not gracefully, received.

Ray Pahl has supervised my work, continuing to apply his considerable critical abilities in the face of both rebellion and depression. He has been a stimulating supervisor throughout and in the last year has given me substantial encouragement in the difficult task of writing-up. The fact that the thesis has been completed according to schedule owes much to his distinctive style of supervision.

I would like to draw attention to the fact that, while Kent University has housed my postgraduate study, it was Sussex University which nurtured my interest in sociology. As an undergraduate at Sussex, I benefited from an exciting inter-disciplinary intellectual environment, as well as from the encouragement of teaching staff who gave me the confidence to apply for research grants.

I am, of course, extremely grateful for the help I received from the women I met during fieldwork, who were prepared to spend considerable amounts of time with me, as well as to reveal much about their lives.

Finally, I want to thank Jane Dennett for typing the thesis and for refusing to panic in the face of apparent crisis. She is one of a number of women whose friendship and support have been invaluable throughout this period of research.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN'S UNEMPLOYMENT	1
(a) An Introduction to Women's Unemployment	2
(b) Accounts of Unemployment	4
(i) The 1930s	4
(ii) The 1950s and 1960s	9
(iii) The 1970s and 1980s	11
(iv) Women's health	13
(c) Official Counts of Unemployed Women	14
(d) Reserve Army Theorists	17
(e) Conclusions	24
Notes to Chapter One	26
CHAPTER TWO APPROACHES TO EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION	27
(a) Redundancy	28
(b) Towards an Explanation	32
(c) Investigating Women's Unemployment	40
(d) Research Design for Personal Biography	46
(e) Summary	51
Notes to Chapter Two	53
CHAPTER THREE ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S LIVES: 1939-1950	55
(a) Introduction	56
(b) Wartime	57
(i) Family life	57
(ii) Housekeeping routines and methods	66
(iii) Visions of the future	72
(c) Reconstruction	82
(d) Conclusions and Summary	92
Notes to Chapter Three	94
CHAPTER FOUR ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S LIVES: 1951-1980	95
(a) The 1950s and 1960s	96
(i) The home-centred family: Housing, planning and education	96
(ii) Women's roles in the family and the community	106
(iii) Married women in paid employment	114
(b) The 1970s	120
(i) The dream turned sour	120
(ii) Women's inequalities	123
(iii) Married women's paid employment	128
(c) Conclusions and Summary	135
Notes to Chapter Four	137
CHAPTER FIVE PATHS TO ANALYSIS: THE CASE OF MRS OATES	138
(a) Introduction	139
(b) Events in a Biography	141
(c) Preliminary Considerations in Analysis	149
(d) Analysis and Discussion	152
(e) Conclusions	164
Note to Chapter Five	167

CHAPTER SIX EMPLOYMENT PATTERNING: TYPES AND EXPLANATIONS 168
(a) Introduction 169
(b) Six Types 175
(i) Climbers, sliders and walkers 175
(ii) Leapers 175
(iii) Fallers 179
(iv) Hoppers 183
(c) Discussion 185
(i) Climbers, sliders and walkers 186
(ii) Leapers 189
(iii) Fallers 194
(iv) Hoppers 197
(d) Conclusions 202

CHAPTER SEVEN ATTITUDES TO DOMESTICITY 204
(a) Introduction 205
(b) Types of Attitude to Domestic Labour 208
(i) Unchanged positive attitude 208
(ii) Unchanged negative attitude 214
(iii) Changed positive attitude 214
(iv) Changed negative attitude 214
(c) Discussion 222
(i) Unchanged negative and changed positive attitude 222
(ii) Unchanged positive attitude 227
(iii) Changed negative attitude 232
(d) Conclusions 236

CHAPTER EIGHT ASPECTS OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF DOMESTIC LABOUR: THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY 239
(a) Introduction 240
(b) Domestic Labour 244
(i) Cleaning 244
(ii) Caring 247
(iii) Making ends meet 251
(c) Being a Housewife 254
(d) Conclusions 260

CHAPTER NINE DEVELOPING THE HISTORY OF DOMESTIC LABOUR: THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES 263
Part One The Nineteenth Century 264
(a) Introduction 264
(b) The Angel in the House: Middle-class domesticity 274
(c) Working-class domesticity 274
(d) Conclusions/Summary 286
Part Two The Inter-War Years 287
(a) Introduction 287
(b) Household Composition 288
(c) The Housewife's Work 291
(d) Influences on Domesticity 296
(e) Conclusions/Summary 302
Notes to Chapter Nine 305

CONCLUSIONS 306
(a) Introduction 307
(b) Discussion 307

Appendix A Selected Statistics on Unemployment 317

Appendix B Schedule for Interviews with Employers 318

Appendix C Schedule for Interview 1 319

Appendix D Schedule for Interview 2 320

Appendix E Schedule for Interview 3 324

Appendix F Problems with Method 327

Appendix G The Outlines of Twenty Employment Histories 329

REFERENCES 336

INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter of this thesis, sociological writing about unemployment since the 1930s is discussed, and it is argued that this deals with male rather than female experience and behaviour. A research interest in the meaning of unemployment for women is expressed, and in chapter 2 early approaches to its empirical investigation are described. At this stage, it was envisaged that empirical work would be structured around the experiences of a group of women who had been made redundant from paid employment. A relatively uncomplicated research design, collecting information about the behaviour of such women, was planned. An early, and counter-intuitive, finding is discussed fully in chapter 2: that no women had recently been made redundant in the area which had been chosen for fieldwork investigation, despite high local rates of registered unemployment. Considering this finding in more depth, it is shown both that women may lose jobs even though they are not made redundant or called unemployed; and that women may lose one job but take another, under worsening conditions, and thereby escape the usual definitions of unemployment. These findings prompted a radical shift in research design and methodology, and this is fully discussed in chapter 2. Here it is argued that women's unemployment may be most appropriately understood in the context of all the other sorts of work that women do, since these form the framework within which unemployment is constructed and experienced. A distinctive research methodology was developed to investigate the meaning of all kinds of work. In essence, the approach derives from the qualitative tradition of life historians and symbolic interactionists, and is informed too by recent feminist critiques of much empirical social science. Twenty women were interviewed three times each. They were aged

between 45 and 55, and the main focus of the interviews was to explore the meaning and practice of work of all kinds during their lives. A full employment history was constructed for each woman, paying attention to the ambiguities and complexities of their lives.

In chapter 3 and 4 the years through which this age-group has lived are discussed in some detail. The aim here is to locate individual experience in a much wider social and historical context, as one way of enabling sense to be made of it. There is an emphasis on those aspects of social history which may have been particularly relevant to women in the age-group which was studied during fieldwork, and a wide range of sociological and historical material is used in these chapters. Taken together, they chart the main influences on a group of women who were born at one particular time, and they provide a descriptive and perhaps explanatory backcloth to the detailed discussion of their personal biographies which is to follow.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 present the main findings from the analysis of empirical data. The qualitative, interactionist approach to fieldwork produced complex and unwieldy data, and the problems associated with their analysis are demonstrated in some depth in chapter 5. The whole chapter is devoted to the discussion of one particular case, exposing and attempting to unravel the layers of complexity and ambiguity that surround it. This analysis of one case reveals a method which can be used to study the rest of the fieldwork data, investigating the different strands of employment patterns, domestic practices and domestic attitudes.

Fieldwork data are used to discuss the women's employment and domestic labour in chapters 6 and 7 respectively. In chapter 6, a typology of

employment patterning is developed, and used to describe and begin to explain employment behaviour over the whole life-cycle. The importance of women's attitudes to and practices of domestic work is repeatedly demonstrated, and these are discussed in more analytical depth in chapter 7. Here, distinctive attitudes to domestic work are identified, and links are traced bweeen these and women's different experiences of paid employment. An attempt is also made to identify the main influences on the development of different attitudes to domestic labour. Throughout these two chapters, attention is paid to the process by which attitudes and practices change during the life-cycle.

Having demonstrated empirically that women's unemployment takes place in a complex web of domestic and paid work, chapters 8 and 9 develop an historical analysis of domestic work. It is argued that an exploration of the past practice of domestic labour will contribute to a clearer conceptual understanding of its current form. Chapter 8 draws on a wide range of secondary evidence from the seventeenth century and demonstrates that both the practice and meaning of domestic labour are historically specific. It also argues that the seventeenth century was a particularly important period in the development of social and cultural meanings of domestic labour, since the spread of Protestant ideas at this time moulded a new ideology of gender which produced a concept of womanhood derived from performing domestic labour in the home. Having presented a specific case-study of domestic labour in the seventeenth century, chapter 9 discusses its developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries a little more generally. Again, particular attention is paid to considering both the cultural meaning and the empirical practice of domestic labour

and to identify a range of ideological and material influences on its changing nature. The inter-war development of one particular style of domestic labour is discussed in some detail, and it is argued that a convergence of domestic standards and ideals between the social classes was apparent for the first time in one particular section of society. It is suggested that a distinctive feature of this style of domestic labour was the emergence of the full-time housewife, who typically ran a house with very little help from servants, and who lived, again for the first time, in a nuclear family with only one or two children. This discussion of the inter-war years ends the analysis of the historical development of domestic labour at the point that chapter 3 began: with the years when the women studied during fieldwork were children.

A short concluding chapter sets the arguments which are developed in this thesis in the context of three other recent publications dealing with women's unemployment. It is demonstrated that, while the authors develop different research strategies, certain findings are presented by each. In conclusion, it is suggested that the distinctive contribution made by this thesis to the study of women's unemployment lies in its reappraisal of the terminology of unemployment, and its reconstruction of the concept of women's work.

CHAPTER ONE

PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN'S UNEMPLOYMENT

In this chapter I introduce the main topic of the thesis - women's unemployment - and present a preliminary review of unemployment literature. I argue that unemployment as a generic term encompasses too great a variety of types to be satisfactorily studied as a whole, and I suggest that gender is an important variable in structuring both the experience and the incidence of unemployment. Ethnographic, statistical and theoretical approaches to unemployment are briefly assessed in terms of their pertinence to explanations of the female case, but all are found to be inadequate in certain respects. The literature which specifically deals with women's unemployment has not yet, it is claimed, developed an analysis which is sophisticated enough to account for the complexities of female patterns of employment and unemployment.

(a) An Introduction to Women's Unemployment

The decision to study unemployment was taken in the context of widespread debate about the social and political consequences of rapid increases in the level of recorded unemployment. In the summer of 1976 the total reached one million, and unemployment became the political issue of the decade. By 1980 there were officially two million people out of work, and the annual review of the Manpower Services Commission presented a dramatic account of the year:

> The main feature of the labour market during 1980 was the effect of the economic recession, which turned out to be even more severe than had been anticipated ... redundancies were being announced in much greater numbers and new engagements by employers hit the lowest level since 1948. By the end of 1980 unemployment was 800,000 higher than at the beginning of the year and was rising more quickly than at any time since the War (MSC, 1981, p.4).

Some accounts of unemployment concentrate on its impact on the whole of society, for example predicting that it may 'disrupt post-war consensus,

and create the conditions for unprecedented social unrest' (Middlemas, 1980, p.477), while others focus on the deleterious effects on the individual: 'for the majority of people, unemployment produces a stress reaction which for many results in a strain on their physical and mental functioning' (Hayes and Nutman, 1981, p.82). Social commentators from diverse intellectual and political backgrounds agree, however, about the urgency of the need to achieve a better understanding of unemployment.

The frequency with which the term unemployment is now used invites the assumption that its meaning is unproblematic. Yet a glance at statistics showing the relative extent of unemployment in different social groups reveals variations which are so marked that they constitute a serious challenge to the idea that unemployment can ever be said to have one meaning (see Appendix A). It therefore seems that analyses of unemployment can best proceed by selecting one group from the total mass of the unemployed and subjecting it to detailed scrutiny, drawing conclusions which relate primarily to this chosen group, although they may have implications for the study of the whole. Here the chosen category is women.

This choice was initially prompted by general reading about women's work and a realisation that it is almost always different from men's in important respects, although the strength of these differences fluctuates according to factors such as life-cycle stage or marital status. In 1981, for example, 42 per cent of women worked part-time, compared with only 6 per cent of men (Social Trends, 1984, p.63); in 1982, full-time manual women workers received average hourly earnings of £2.00, compared with a male rate of £3.50 (New Earnings Survey, 1982, A62 and A63); and in 1981, 47.2 per cent of women compared with 78.1 per cent of men were

economically active (Social Trends, 1984, p.58). Such differences between male and female work are both reflected in and reinforced by wider cultural images of gender division in the workplace, that tend to equate men with a stereotype of breadwinner and women with one of pin-money earner. Discovering major differences between male and female workers led to the formulation of a hypothesis that male and female employment might also have very different characteristics, and I therefore decided that the unemployment of each sex demands separate attention. The research interest here is in women's unemployment. Direct comparisons between men and women will not be drawn, but the aim will be to take the female case and to explore it in some depth. With this broad research focus and early hypothesis, I set out to explore published work on unemployment.

(b) Accounts of Unemployment

(i) The 1930s

Substantial academic interest was first shown in the unemployed in the 1930s, and the main aim of those researching this issue at this time was to investigate and describe the daily experience of being unemployed (Bakke, 1933; Beales and Lambert, 1934; Eisenberg and Lazerfeld, 1938; Hannington, 1936; Jahoda *et al.*, 1933; Komarovsky, 1940; Liberal Women's Unemployment Enquiry Group, 1934; Newsom, 1936; Pilgrim Trust, 1938; Pruette, 1934). Finding out more about the lives of the unemployed was seen as a political priority in the 1930s largely because of spreading fears of political unrest, sparked off by the activities of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement, and fuelled by the knowledge that the majority of those who were officially unemployed had previously been in the armed forces (Hannington, 1936, chapter 2). Unemployment was highly

regionalised (Booth and Glynn, 1975; Glynn, 1980) and so it was hoped that one result of publicity about the predicament of the unemployed would be to break down some of the social divisions between different parts of the country. Two general conclusions were reached by these authors: that unemployment caused extremely family poverty and deprivation:

> Our impressions were that the economic level at which families were living in many homes visited was such as to cause nervous anxiety and in some cases physical deterioration (Pilgrim Trust, 1938, p.109);

and that job loss had a marked psychological impact which was damaging to the individual: one study found that a large section of the unemployed experienced 'despair, depression, hopelessness, a feeling of the futility of all efforts' (Jahoda *et al.*, 1933, p.54). The psychological impact of unemployment was characterised as a transition of adjustment to unemployment in which stages of shock, optimism, pessimism and fatalism could be identified (Beales and Lambert, 1923; Jahoda *et al.*, 1933; Newsom, 1936).

Women were mentioned far less often and in much less detail than were men. This was mainly because the bulk of the literature assumed that unemployment meant the inability of a male breadwinner to find paid work. Unemployed men were at the front of the public mind, put there by images of hunger marches and dole queues: a 'great army of ragged, half-starved, unnamed men' (Hannington, 1936, p.85). A glance at the titles of studies of the unemployed reflects this male bias: *The Unemployed Man* (Bakke, 1933); *The Unemployed Man and His Family* (Komarovsky, 1940); *Men Without Work* (Pilgrim Trust, 1938). Unemployed women did not have such a high public profile and although there was then, as now, a high unemployment rate among women, they were rarely given media attention. Lady Astor

tried in vain to highlight the problems of unemployed women in a House of Commons' debate on unemployment in 1930:

> The ex-Lord Privy Seal, when I tried to raise this question, told me that unemployment was not to be treated as a sex question (Parliamentary Debates, 1930, p.488).

Most of the studies, being focused on the unemployment of male breadwinners, only mentioned women indirectly, in the context of their being married to unemployed men. They showed that male unemployment affected women in the family in both emotional and financial ways. Komarovsky, for example, found that most wives of unemployed men reported increased marital conflicts due to the men becoming more irritable (1940, chapter 2), and in Marienthal it was found that male unemployment led directly in some cases to the disintegration of family life (Jahoda *et al.*, 1933, p.54). In the face of male frustration, the burden of emotionally sustaining husbands and other family members fell to women. They did not only have to keep the family's emotions on an even keel however, they had to balance finances too in their roles as housekeepers. Recent writing on the 1930s has shown that the housekeeping strategies that women adopted to cope with reduced household income were of national economic significance, and that women often substituted their own labour for that which had previously been shop-bought, such as in the production of food and clothes (Milkman, 1976, p.81). The unemployment studies also found that women often cut back their own consumption so as to allow other members of the family to have more: 'the mother, bearing the brunt of the anxiety, is often the most underfed' (Liberal Women's Unemployment Enquiry Group, 1934, p.17).

Although researchers tended to concentrate on male experiences, there

were some references to women's unemployment (Jahoda et al., 1933; Pilgrim Trust, 1938, part IV; Pruette, 1934). Here an important distinction was made between married and single women. One study suggested that job loss may have been particularly keenly felt by single women since they had often sacrificed marriage in order to pursue a career. The option to be financially independent from men had only relatively recently become available to women, as a result of increased voting and employment rights. The irony of redundancy so soon after gaining access to the labour market would have heightened the emotional damage wrought by unemployment (Pruette, 1934, chapter 3). This study also pointed out that many single women had the burden of dependent relatives and that, because of this, their experience of unemployment could be seen as parallelling that of the male breadwinner.

These researchers suggested that married women's unemployment had quite different characteristics. They argued that the meaning of married women's unemployment varied regionally, and was dependent on local patterns of married women's unemployment. One British study found that in Rhondda, for example, where there was no history of married women doing paid work, unemployment only affected married women through the impact of their husband's job loss; in Blackburn, on the other hand, married women had always expected to do factory work, and so they were directly and adversely affected both emotionally and financially by failure to find paid employment (Pilgrim Trust, 1938, p.231). The studies also queried the commonly-held assumption that married women's wages were earmarked for non-essential spending, and established that married women's unemployment could bring severe hardship to the whole family. This was partly evidenced by the finding that women were often willing to suffer a

substantial drop in status in order to continue to earn (Pruette, 1934). Women's willingness to accept less than satisfactory conditions at work was, one study suggested, explicable by reference to their alternative identities in the family, from which women's social status is primarily derived. Thus paid work would not be important in terms of establishing who women were, and

> not only is it true that women can do anything without losing prestige, it also appears true that they will do anything (Pruette, 1934, p.35).

The identification of married women with the home led these studies to conclude that 'a woman's job does not end when the factory gates close against her' (Pilgrim Trust, 1938, p.263) and that, because women were usually responsible for housework, their unemployment should not be equated with idleness. Indeed, there is a sense in which this argument was extended to suggest that married women could not accurately be defined as unemployed, since the term unemployed implies being without an occupation, whether paid or unpaid:

> The term 'unemployed' applies in the strict sense only to the men, for the women are merely unpaid, not really unemployed ... their work has a definite purpose, with numerous fixed tasks, functions, and duties that make for regularity (Jahoda et al., 1933, p.74).

The ambivalence surrounding the issue of married women's unemployment, and the suggestion that it may not be a matter for concern, were succinctly stated by another team of researchers who argued that 'it is women's employment, rather than unemployment, that is the real social problem' (Pilgrim Trust, 1938, p.234), since employment gave women a double burden of duties at home and at paid work which may have had a damaging effect on them, their husbands and their children.

In the 1930s, then, unemployment was usually treated as a male

problem, which women only experienced indirectly through their relationships with unemployed male workers. Unemployment itself was equated with registration for benefit, and it was feared that the lengthening dole queues were signs of potential political disorder or permanent loss of the work ethic. Most of the studies which were conducted during the 1930s provided reassurance on these points, since they found that unemployment was usually experienced as an individual failure and that its impact was largely contained by the family: there was no real likelihood of revolution. In the limited literature which dealt with women's unemployment, an important distinction was made according to marital status. Women living alone were often assumed to share the unemployment experiences of men: a damaging loss of identity and status, coupled with severe financial hardship to self and dependants. The case of married women, however, was treated very differently, with a strong hint that their right to work was different from men's. The main conclusion which the studies drew about unemployed married women was that they could become rapidly re-employed as housewives, thereby avoiding the enforced idleness and lethargy which, they argued, was a main part of the tragedy of the male experience.

(ii) The 1950s and 1960s

Moving on to the 1950s and 1960s, the threat of revolution had long passed and, in a period of low unemployment and increasing numbers of jobs, unemployment was no longer a matter which warranted urgent political or academic attention. One 1950s' study found that, even in an area with relatively widespread unemployment, there was little hardship because unemployment tended to be only short-term, so that trade union and welfare

state benefits were adequate to tide workers over to their next jobs (PEP, 1952). Against the economic backcloth of relative affluence and expansion, contemporary interest about unemployment shifted away from its impact on poverty levels and psychological well-being, and onto its use in the organisation of labour mobility. Several studies looked specifically at the management of redundancies, and there was a well-defined interest in social policy, proposing modifications in redundancy procedures and government management of job search (Kahn, 1964; Wedderburn, 1964 and 1965; Young, 1958). They were concerned with the mechanics of short-term unemployment and labour flexibility, in the context of the changing industrial base of 1960s' Britain.

Although one of these studies (Young, 1958) looked at an exclusively female workforce, collectively they had little to say about the specific situation of women. They attempted to suggest variables which might affect labour market experiences, but although they isolated age, health, location and skill, they obscured sexual divisions in the labour market by failing to mention gender as a variable in the experiences of unemployment.

One study broke with the 1960s' pattern of suggesting that the extent and impact of unemployment were very limited. Sinfield (1970), using data he collected in South Shields in 1963 and 1964, argued that the post-war academic focus on the redundant rather than the unemployed was based on an incorrect view that all the unemployed were victims of redundancy. His sample was collected by house-to-house interviews rather than from the records of company personnel departments, and he found high levels of poverty, depression and frustration which were all comparable with those found by the 1930s' studies. His work can usefully be seen as part of the

poverty lobby: taking the role of publicity officer for the unemployed, passing news to a public who had been wrongly informed that poverty and unemployment were confined to the past. However, he also used an all-male sample, and thus hid the extent and impact of women's unemployment in the 1950s and 1960s, about which we still know very little.

(iii) The 1970s and 1980s

The reality of a return to mass unemployment; the debate about a permanent collapse of work (Jenkins and Sherman, 1979); and the Left's call for a policy of full employment (Barratt Brown, 1978; Coates, 1978; Coote, 1981) have all brought studies of unemployment and the unemployed back into the public eye in the 1970s and 1980s. The sociological literature has expanded and diversified, but the daily experience of unemployment is still an important theme, and it charts the financial and psychological impact of job loss on the individual (Christmas, 1979; Field, 1977; Gould and Kenyon, 1972; Harrison, 1976; Hayes and Nutman, 1981; Hill, 1973; Hill, 1977; Jahoda, 1979; Jones, 1972; Kasl *et al.*, 1975; Marsden and Duff, 1975; Martin, 1983; Moylan and Davies, 1980; Seabrook, 1982; Sinfield, 1981; Wood, 1980 and 1981). These studies have much in common with those which were conducted in the 1930s, and their findings are presented with the same air of gloom:

> among the mal-effects of unemployment are a loss of a sense of personal and occupational identity, a loss of a sense of personal worth, feelings of degradation, boredom, loss of drive, depression, sloth, laziness and inertia (Hill, 1977, p.42);

> prolonged unemployment is for most people a profoundly corrosive experience, undermining personality and atrophying work capacities (Harrison, 1976, p.347).

There is a new emphasis on the relation of the individual to the welfare state, whose provision for the unemployed has become increasingly complex and extensive (Gould and Kenyon, 1972; Marsden and Duff, 1975; Seabrook, 1982). They refine the idea that unemployment is experienced as a psycho-social transition, and some identify more details in these stages (Hayes and Nutman, 1981; Hill, 1977; Jahoda, 1979). A direct link is assumed between employment and unemployment experiences, and an important theme in the work is that of how to sub-divide the unemployed. Again, the same variables emerge as did in the 1930s, with age, skill, location and health at the top of a list which still omits gender (Hill, 1973; Marsden and Duff, 1975). Linking unemployment with employment has led to an elaboration of the attempt to deconstruct the concept of work, in order to see which aspects of it structure the experience of unemployment. Jahoda, for example, lists the social consequences of work as that it provides: a time structure; contacts with people; a link to goals which transcend those of the individual; a definition of aspects of personal status and identity; enforced activity; and proof of skill (Jahoda, 1979, pp.15 and 16). Understanding this, she argues, enables understanding of precisely how and why unemployment is psychologically damaging.

In considering what this literature can tell us about women's unemployment, the main comment, as with earlier work, is that it is still overwhelmingly about men. The samples are nearly all drawn from those who are formally registered as unemployed at a Benefit Office and, as shown below (see section (c)), this reduces the likelihood of women being adequately represented. Studies which are exclusively about women are extremely scarce (but see Wood, 1980 and 1981). Once again, there are occasional case studies of single women, in which they are treated as

being very similar to men (Gould and Kenyon, 1972; Marsden and Duff, 1975), but married women's unemployment is particularly well hidden. Again, most of the references to women are as the wives of unemployed men, and there is some anecdotal evidence here of women trying to minimise the emotional and financial damage which unemployment does to the family. The studies can, in short, give little insight to the specific analysis of women's unemployment.

(iv) Women's health

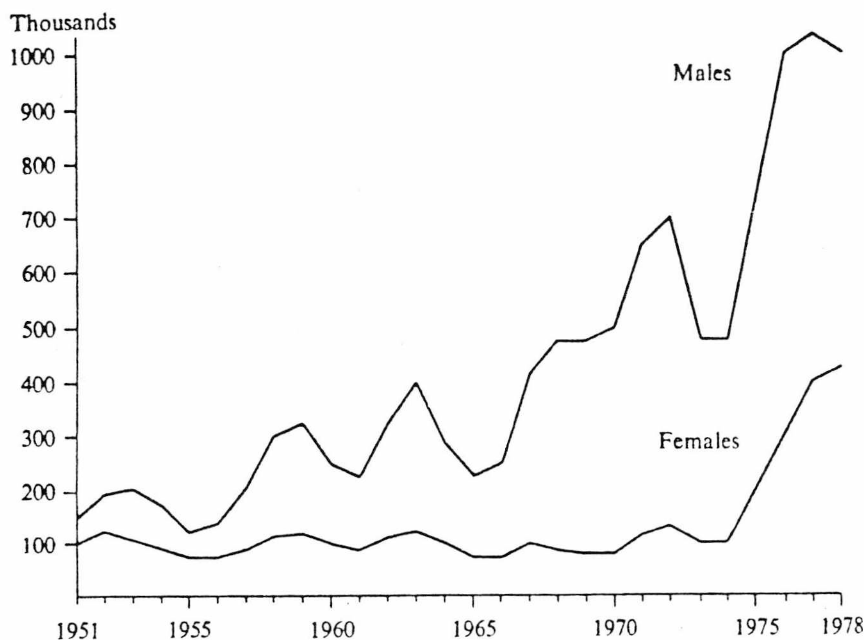
Sociological literature reporting the medical effects of unemployment is as yet limited (Linford Rees, 1981; Popay, 1981), but there has been a general consensus that unemployment 'results in a great deal of damage to the mental and physical health of the unemployed and their families' (Popay, 1981, p.106) and research in this area is increasing as a result of the current academic focus on unemployment. Women, however, have not been singled out for special attention to date. Some pertinent research has been conducted into the impact of female employment as a variable in rates of depression among women, and there is some evidence here that employment outside the home reduces the incidence of depression among women (Brown and Harris, 1978; Cochrane and Stopes, 1981; Radloff, 1975). The corollary to this conclusion is that unemployment would increase depression, but the literature does not specifically address such a hypothesis. In discussing why employment outside the home reduces depression, some argue that certain aspects of being a housewife are conducive to depression, such as its low prestige; lack of time structure; and unclear and often conflicting specifications (Gove, 1972; Gove and Tudor, 1973). This seems an interesting argument, and one which may be

useful in examining the particular experiences of unemployed women. It is, however, one which is as yet undeveloped at either an empirical or a theoretical level.

(c) Official Counts of Unemployed Women

Studies of the unemployed, as reviewed above, are only one part of the general literature on unemployment. A second source of information about it deals with quantitative measures of its incidence. Such measures reveal certain interesting aspects of women's unemployment. The following figure, for example, seems to bear out my earlier hypothesis of gender differences in both the total numbers of unemployed and in the patterns of unemployment over a period of time.

Registered Wholly Unemployed, Great Britain, 1951-1978



Source: Mallier and Rosser, 1979, p.62.

Detailed figures on the more recent period show a similarly marked divergence between men and women. Over the last eight years, as Table 1 shows, women's unemployment has risen much more dramatically than has

men's.

Table 1. Unemployment as a percentage of the economically active, United Kingdom, 1974-81.

Year	Men	Women
1974	3.6	1.0
1975	5.4	1.9
1976	7.0	3.1
1977	7.3	3.7
1978	7.0	3.8
1979	6.5	3.7
1980	8.3	4.9
1981	10.1	7.1

Source: Employment Gazette, 1982, S23.

Official statistics reveal, then, that both the incidence and rate of unemployment vary according to gender. A note of caution should be introduced here about relying on official sources, since there is little doubt that women's unemployment is under-recorded in any statistics whose definition of the unemployed relies on their becoming registered at an Unemployment Benefit Office. The Department of Employment, for example, uses just such a definition: for the purposes of constructing the monthly tables which appear in the Employment Gazette, the unemployed are

> people claiming benefit ... at Unemployment Benefit Offices on the day of the monthly count who on that day were unemployed and able and willing to do any suitable work (Employment Gazette, 1982, S23).

The suggestion that the Department of Employment figures may seriously under-estimate the number of unemployed women can be validated by data from the General Household Survey which shows the typically low registration of unemployed married women. In 1981, the survey found that 41 per cent of unemployed married women had not registered at a Benefit Office, compared with only 6 per cent of unemployed men (General Household

Survey, 1981, p.81). It has also been argued that women's tendency to register may change over time (Mallier and Rosser, 1979, p.63; Manley and Sawbridge, 1980, p.40), and so any comparisons which are made retrospectively may be doubly inaccurate. A less official source of data about women's under-registration is a Women's Own magazine survey from 1976 which found that only three in ten women who were looking for paid work actually registered as unemployed (Cox and Golden, 1977, p.62).

Because of such inaccuracies in the Department of Employment tables, the figures in the appendix to this chapter are drawn from the Labour Force Survey, which is increasingly recognised as a more reliable source of information about women's work (Allun and Hunt, 1982; EOC, 1980; Wallby, 1983a). This survey allows individuals to identify their own economic activity, and classifies respondents as unemployed if, in the week preceding the survey, they 'have not worked and were (i) actively seeking work or (ii) waiting to start a job already obtained or (iii) prevented from seeking work because of temporary sickness, holidays, etc.' (Labour Force Survey, 1982, p.19). Although it is difficult to check the accuracy of statistics collected by this method, it is reasonable to assume that they will be more reliable, in the case of married women's unemployment, than those drawn from registration behaviour, and this is confirmed by the fact that there is a significant difference between the figures produced by each method. In 1981, for example, the total number of unemployed women was 677,000 according to the Department of Employment (Employment Gazette, 1982, S23), but 908,000 according to the Labour Force Survey (1982, p.13). However, although the Labour Force Survey seems to provide the most plausible statistics of those which are currently available, they may still under-estimate the extent of women's

unemployment since they rely on a personal identification with the activity of 'actively seeking work'. A female respondent may well prefer to say she is a housewife rather than an unemployed worker, and a man responding on his wife's behalf may similarly prefer to report a dependent housewife spouse rather than an unemployed one. It is likely, then, that all official counts of women's unemployment under-estimate its incidence. This means that statistics such as those presented earlier here may, while already showing divergent patterns of male and female unemployment, only reveal the tip of an iceberg in the case of married women. I therefore turned next to writers whose interest in women's unemployment focuses on a developing theoretical analysis of it rather than on its statistical measurement.

(d) Reserve Army Theorists

A small number of authors have recently taken up the issue of women's unemployment, and they have tended to concentrate on the question of whether women can be said to form an industrial reserve army. A distinction should be made here between using the term as an essentially general and descriptive one, and using it as an important strand in a theoretical explanation of women's paid work.

Descriptive uses of the concept of a reserve army rely on the imagery which it conjures up of a pool of labour which can be drawn on in times of labour shortage and expelled from the labour market when no longer needed. It is often said (Wilson, 1977, p.158) that women have acted as a reserve over the century: that they went into the workforce in expanded numbers when they were needed during world wars or rapid industrial expansion, and were easily expelled from it in times of recession. Such a description

derives from a recognition of the importance of women's familial identities, arguing that the main reason women are particularly flexible and disposable is that they see themselves, and are seen by others, as being primarily identified with their maternal and wifely duties, so that their participation in the labour market is impermanent from the start. When they leave paid employment, women can quickly be absorbed into the home: a political and economic convenience for government and employers alike. In this descriptive sense, the reserve army idea has resulted in predictions that female unemployment would be higher than male, since 'when a crisis looms, women are the first to be sent home' (CIS, 1976, p.24). The image of women being forced back into their kitchens against their will is recurrent in contemporary radical thought (see Cox and Golden, 1977, chapter 5).

The characterisation of women workers as a reserve army of labour is made more precise by some writers who refine the concept to <u>explain</u> women's work patterns in the post-war period (Beechey, 1978; Braverman, 1974; Breughel, 1979; Humphries, 1983). This work uses the term 'reserve army' in its Marxist sense (Marx, 1912, pp.656-9), and makes distinctions within the mass of the reserve army. Braverman, for example, using data from the United States, finds a post-war pattern of declining male and increasing female participation rates. He reconciles these apparently opposite employment characteristics by reference to the reserve army thesis, arguing that

> in essence, they represent two sides of the same phenomenon: the increase in the relative mass of the industrial reserve army (Braverman, 1974, p.391).

He argues this by reference to the three sub-groups within the reserve

army, as identified by Marx in his analysis of the labour process: the floating, which comprises workers who move from one job to another as a result of technical changes; the latent, which is made up of the agricultural population when it is displaced by capitalist development; and the stagnant, which refers to labourers whose employment is irregular, casual and marginal (Marx, 1912, pp.656-9). Braverman's point is that men are joining the floating and latent reserve because of their <u>unemployment</u>, whereas women become the stagnant reserve because of their <u>employment</u>, which is insecure and marginalised (Braverman, 1974, p.391). Humphries (1983) uses the same Marxist model to reach slightly different conclusions. She argues that, until World War II, women were the latent reserve, but that they have now been converted to the floating. She, like Braverman, uses US data showing expanding female employment rates and contracting male rates to argue her case. Both authors rely on the idea that the extent and type of unemployment in any group is closely related to their characteristics as workers when in employment. Thus they argue that because women are likely to be a particular sort of worker they are also likely to be a particular sort of unemployed worker.

Other writers are testing the relevance of the reserve army thesis by specifically relating it to the British recession of the 1970s and 1980s (Breughel, 1979, 1983; OECD, 1980; Wallby, 1983a, 1983b; Werneke, 1978). They point out that participation rates challenge the idea that women are particularly disposable in times of crisis. In 1959, there were 13.8 million men and 7.2 million women in employment in the UK; but by 1978, the number of men had dropped to 13.1 million while the number of women had risen to 9.1 million (Manley and Sawbridge, 1980, p.29). Although an early article (Gardiner, 1975) suggested that this increase in female

participation rates meant the reserve army thesis should be abandoned, others conclude that 'the reserve army of labour model holds, but the simple version needs qualification' (Breughel, 1979, p.12). Such writers put forward two main qualifications to the 'simple version': one about sex segregation between industries; and one about sex segregation within industries. Sex segregation between industries is seen by several writers (Breughel, 1979; Knudsen, 1963; OECD, 1981; Wallby 1983a, 1983b; Werneke, 1978) as a key feature in explanations of differences in male and female patterns.[1] They stress that the growth in female employment in the post-war period has been predominantly in the service sector, which has been only gradually affected by cutbacks, whereas the majority of male employment has continued to be in the manufacturing sector, where cuts were harsh and swift. Thus women's concentration in service occupations has acted to delay the impact of recession on female unemployment rates. While some stress this cushioning effect (Corry, 1983), others concentrate on the delay, arguing that as cuts in public expenditure continue and new office technology is implemented, women's unmemployment will rise just as men's has done (Breughel, 1979). It is also made clear that women's protection from recession by their concentration in the service sector is no great advantage: the jobs they occupy in services are typically unattractive, and the main reason that they are mainly female jobs is that men would be unlikely to do them. Thus, women's strength in being shielded from some job loss is derived, ironically, from their weakness as employees (Breughel, 1979).

Another qualification to the reserve army model concerns sex segregation within industries. Concentrating on sex segregation in the workplace highlights characteristic differences between male and female

workers. Women are predominantly low-skill, part-time workers with intermittent work records, and this contributes to their greater vulnerability to job loss within any given industry (OECD, 1981). Breughel gives an example from industry to illustrate this point: that between 1974 and 1977, 38,000 unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in electrical engineering were lost; 18,000 of these were part-time jobs done by women, which represented a 40 per cent decline for part-time women workers compared with a 5 per cent one for men (Breughel, 1979, p.18). Other accounts of the changes within individual industries give a similar picture of women's responsiveness to change (McNally, 1979; Rubery and Wilkinson, 1971). It has been pointed out (Wallby, 1983a, 1983b) that the role of the trade unions in the process of managing redundancies deserves some detailed attention. Specifically, the practices of last-in-first-out and part-timers first, which are often agreed in negotiations with trade unions, tend to result in a disproportionate shedding of female labour. Thus sex segregation on the sectoral scale may delay the overall impact of recession on women relative to men, but at the level of an individual workplace where both men and women are employed, occupational sex differences mean that women are more likely than men to lose their jobs. In each instance, the fact of being female is the most significant influence on the structure of women's unemployment.

If sociological theories are to be of use, they have to be relevant on both descriptive and explanatory levels. The reserve army thesis seems to be descriptively fairly accurate in that it provides a characterisation of married women's employment behaviour which bears close resemblance to the statistical profile. Although doubt could be cast on the thesis by data from the late 1960s and early 1970s showing low rates of female

unemployment relative to men's, more recent figures reveal a sharp increase in the female rate: between January 1976 and June 1980 the rise in registered unemployment among women was 84 per cent and only 15 per cent among men (Breughel, 1983, p.86). Women appear to have responded to the needs of developing capitalism as predicted by the theory. They staffed an expanding service sector when employers could not find men willing to work for such low wages, and now that the sector has to contract, women are leaving their jobs. Where women have been employed at the same workplace as men, they have borne the brunt of job loss. The fact that a significant proportion of unemployed women who are looking for work do not register at a Benefit Office confirms that part of the reserve army thesis which argues that women are particularly well-suited to enter the reserve because of their domestic responsibilities and identities as wives and mothers. However, although the description offered by the reserve army thesis may be fairly true to life, it seems highly selective too, and there are several important aspects of female unemployment which are not covered. Briefly, this part of the literature does not deal with unrecorded unemployment, the process of job loss, or the experience of being unemployed. It deals with only one aspect of female unemployment: its large-scale structural change, yet this aspect seems to be the final product of a complex process of constructing and defining unemployment, and it may well be that the process itself is more revealing and interesting than its product.

The gaps in the description provided by the reserve army thesis make for inadequacies in its explanatory value too. The literature cannot explain the complexities of the process of change in women's employment and unemployment, and implies a direct relation between the needs of

capital and the actions of individuals, in what must surely be an oversimplification of reality. By ignoring the process of mediation between capitalist development and workers' lives, in which institutions such as the family or trade unions play an important part, reserve army theorists can obscure a significant part of women's experiences of work and the workplace. An important conclusion of the literature is that differences in the patterns of male and female unemployment may derive from a sexual division of labour in the workplace, which is apparent both horizontally and vertically: that is to say that women are crowded horizontally into low-status occupations as well as vertically at the lower end of the occupational scale. Although these authors assume this, they does not explain it, nor do they confront the question of how or why such a sexual division of labour developed. By arguing that capital drew on women as a cheap and flexible pool of labour in a time of rapid expansion and that women were indispensable to the process of capitalistic development in this role, these theorists are open to the criticism that they cannot explain why capital ever expels women from the workforce. Viewed from the standpoint of economic and capitalist rationality, it would make sense for capital to substitute women for men on a large scale, as new technology creates the opportunities for restructuring the labour force. Yet such a change has not taken place, and explanations of why it has not done so seem more likely to reside in sociological accounts of the relation between gender and employment than in economistic models of the labour process. Thus, the main value of the reserve army thesis seemed, at this stage of my research, to lie in its descriptive accuracy, evoking images of large-scale movements of women in and out of the workforce.

(e) Conclusions and Summary

This chapter set out to provide a general introduction to the chosen research topic of women's unemployment, arguing that a sociological understanding of unemployment has acquired a measure of urgency as rates of unemployment continue to rise. I have presented a brief review of the general literature of unemployment, from which three main conclusions can be drawn.

The first is that neither qualitative nor quantitative accounts of unemployment offer reliable information about its incidence among women, largely because they do not usually present gender as an important variable in the experience of unemployment. The second is that it does establish a concept of what unemployment means.[2] There are two key features in this: that proof of unemployment resides in registration at a Benefit Office; and that the meaning of unemployment derives from the meaning of work, which is itself narrowly defined as a numerated, paid, full-time and continuous activity which takes place outside the home. The third conclusion is that the model of unemployment which can be constructed from the literature may not be as relevant to women as it is to men. It is a model derived in essence from the experience of male breadwinners and, as such, may not apply in the case of women. The limited amount of writing which specifically deals with women's unemployment suggests that gender is an important and underrated factor in structuring the experience and incidence of unemployment, thus confirming the inappropriateness of many current accounts of unemployment in the female instance.

Taken together, these three conclusions suggest that women's unemployment is under-researched, and that it has been obscured by the

currently dominant social-scientific notions of work and unemployment. Despite a substantial literature on unemployment, very little is known about its incidence among or effect on women and, indeed, the model of unemployment which is assumed and strengthened by existing literature is so oriented to the male experience that even conceptualising the female case is problematic. The remainder of this thesis tries to find out more about the meaning of unemployment for women.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. For further details about sex segregation between and within industries, see chapter 4 below.

2. The notion of unemployment has a relatively short linguistic and political meaning. It was not conceptualised in this country until the late nineteenth century and, until then, not to have a paid job was assumed to result from characteristics of the individual unemployed person rather than from those of the labour market (Garraty, 1978, chapter 1; Harris, 1972, chapter 1).

CHAPTER TWO

APPROACHES TO EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

I begin by describing my preliminary attempts to locate a sample for fieldwork. These were unexpectedly unsuccessful and I suggest some possible reasons for this. I argue that these explanations necessitated a radical shift in methodology and conclude by outlining the method which I adopted for the further investigation of women's unemployment.

(a) Redundancy

In the previous chapter I argued that there is an urgent need for research into women's unemployment, and so logically I felt that my next task was to design my own empirical study. Constrained by the very limited resources which are available for postgraduate work, I wanted to select a group of women who would be easily identifiable, and structure fieldwork by a set of relatively uncomplicated questions and hypotheses. It was already obvious that identifying unemployed women would be problematic since a substantial number of women who are seeking work do not register at the Unemployment Benefit Office, and I decided that many difficulties might be overcome by choosing a group of women who had recently been assigned to one particular employment category. The most obvious and unambiguous instance seemed to be that of formal redundancy, and I resolved to select a group of women who had been declared redundant and to investigate the implications that this had for them. Since both motherhood and impending retirement bring considerable ambiguity to the definitions of women's unemployment, I hoped to minimise forseeable confusions by selecting only women aged 45 to 55 years for the empirical work.

When I planned this fieldwork, very little had been published about redundant women, and I therefore hoped that such a study would make a

useful empirical contribution.[1] There are, however, a number of studies of male redundancy (Kahn, 1964; Wedderburn, 1964, 1965), and I felt that it would be interesting to compare my findings about women employees with this work. At this stage, I envisaged that the fieldwork would employ a relatively simple design, based on using structured questionnaires to find out what had happened to women who had lost their jobs.

All that remained was to find a group of middle-aged women who had recently been declared redundant.[2] My thesis work was linked to a larger project investigating the political implications of the different household work strategies which can be adopted in recession.[3] The empirical work for the above-mentioned study was carried out on the Isle of Sheppey, a geographically distinctive, predominantly working-class, area off the north Kent coast. In selecting my own sample, it seemed sensible to make use of the substantial insights into and knowledge about the Island which resulted from the larger project, and to draw a group of women from the same area. During 1981, the unemployment rate on Sheppey was among the highest in the south-east, ranging between 12 and 18 per cent (Pahl and Dennett, 1981, p.13). Despite a popular belief that the south-east is relatively protected from high unemployment, the following table, giving regional figures on female unemployment, shows that the area had the second highest increase in the country between 1980 and 1982:

Women's Unemployment by Region	% Increase 1980-1982
South East	149.9
East Anglia	121.8
South West	85.0
West Midlands	165.7
East Midlands	133.3
Yorkshire and East Midlands	120.4
North West	111.7
North	77.8

Source: TUC, 1983, p.13. Cites its source as written parliamentary answers and the Department of Employment *Gazette*.

I therefore anticipated no difficulties in locating a sample of women who had been made redundant. Having read about the reserve army, I now expected to find it: women being 'particularly "disposable" in times of economic crisis' (Breugel, 1979, p.12) and women who are made redundant being 'able to disappear virtually without trace back into the family' (Beechey, 1978, p.190).

In order to trace redundant women, I made appointments with the personnel or managing directors of nine Sheppey firms which employed large numbers of women.[4] I expected, given the high rate of local female unemployment, that these people would be able to put me in touch with any women whom their firms had recently had to make redundant.

The most dramatic finding to emerge from these interviews was that only a very small number of women had been declared redundant in the previous twelve months. Of the nine firms, only one had made any women redundant in this time, and none had plans to do so in the near future. The one firm which had made redundancies had laid off four unskilled female workers and two skilled men when a large overseas order was lost. The four women were teenagers who had only just been transferred on to the payroll from the Work Employment Experience Programme and were therefore too young to be included in this research.

Finding no redundant women was unexpected and surprising, but it could have been because the search was being conducted in the wrong place. Perhaps women were being made redundant from small Island firms, or from firms whose workforces were predominantly male. In order to investigate this possibility, I adopted several strategies. Firstly, I asked the nine managers whether they knew of any Island firms which had made women redundant in recent months. Secondly, I met the manager and manageress of

the local Job Centres where more precise statistics were available. Thirdly, I analysed the data collected by the larger project to which I was attached. These three strategies all confirmed the lack of redundant women. I met Job Centre staff in August 1982, and they revealed that the most recent female redundancies had taken place in December 1981, when seven women had been laid off from the Medway Ports Authority. Although I could have followed up these women, I rejected this possibility for several reasons: they might be difficult to trace; be of very different ages and circumstances; and the number was so small that other samples would have had to be found in any case. The main survey data had included a randomly selected one in nine household survey which collected employment details about every household member. I requested a computer search of this data for women aged 45 to 55 who were, at the time of the survey, unemployed as a result of redundancy, or who had given redundancy as the reason for leaving their previous job. This produced one name and I did not feel that it was appropriate to pursue just one case.

I was therefore sure that very few women had been declared redundant on Sheppey in the previous year. Given the strength of the image of women being pushed back to the home in times of recession, and given the high local rates of female unemployment, this was a counter-intuitive discovery, and one which I felt to be worthy of further examination. I could, of course, have simply relocated fieldwork to a site where I was already aware of female redundancy, but I felt that this would have been to ignore the interesting and perhaps significant situation which I had uncovered. I wanted to investigate fully the reasons why women were not being declared redundant: to confront and attempt to explain this early and unexpected fieldwork discovery.

(b) Towards an Explanation

My interviews with employers not only revealed the extraordinary absence of redundant women; they also went some way towards providing an explanation of why this might be. On the one hand, it was because firms could reduce the numbers of female employees without resorting to formal declarations of redundancy; but on the other, it was because women were particularly valuable employees, and so were the ones who were least likely to be made redundant if the need for job loss arose. These two apparently quite different explanations are discussed in greater depth below.

Employers gave three main examples of employment practices which would eliminate the need for redundancy, while enabling reductions in the overall numbers of female staff: employing outworkers; recruiting staff on temporary contracts; and freezing new appointments.

There are substantial numbers of outworkers on the Island. Although official statistics are not collected on this type of work, the main employer of outworkers said that his company employed about 600 at the time of the interview, and had another 1,000 on a waiting list. Since the total number of women in formally recorded employment in Sheerness in 1978 was only 3,800 (Department of Employment, 1978, Employment Record II), homeworkers must have accounted for a substantial proportion of economically active women on the Island. The outwork available was mainly light assembly, or ironing and packing shirts. Such work typically involves quick repetition of intricate and monotonous tasks. One employer said:

> The job they do is very, very boring and you can only do it for a couple of hours at a time ... I think we do pay pretty well for homeworkers, for that 25 hours they get about £22[5] - and that's in their hand so it's worth about £1.30 an hour normally. You've got to be dextrous and have good eye-sight. I know the women need a lot of breaks when they do that work, and they can have them at home. It's easy work for them. There's a waiting list for the outwork, we've never had to advertise that. They've all got young children and I assume that this is the only work that they can do ... It is possible that the homework could expand in the future - we do encourage it really. It's a good way to get work done without having too many breaks (Company 9, 22 June 1982).

This statement illustrates the important point that employers claimed they had designed the outwork system in order to suit the local labour supply - in other words, employers claimed that women wanted home-based jobs. Assessing the validity of such a claim was not possible at this stage of the fieldwork, but it is worth noting that the main reason which employers gave to explain women's preference for homework was that women were tied to the home by domestic commitments; usually by the need to care for young children. Homework was advantageous to employees because of its flexibility, and the advantage to employers was not just that it is a very cheap way of getting work done since it is poorly paid, carries no fringe benefits, and has minimal production costs, but it was also that homeworkers have no job security and no rights under the employment protection legislation. If employers wished to cut back on staff, they simply stopped the supply of materials to homeworkers. They did not need to pay redundancy money or to give periods of notice.[6] An additional benefit for them was that homeworkers tended not to get other jobs if the outwork stopped, since suitable alternatives were extremely limited - this meant that they were still available if demand increased. They were a particularly flexible group, employed outside the formal economy, responding directly to employers' needs, with no intermediary barriers of protective legislation.

The second group of women who lost their jobs without being made redundant were, like homeworkers, employed on the periphery of the formal economy; these were women employed on temporary contracts. Of the nine employers, six had employed women on short-term contracts of six weeks, three months or nine months in the twelve months before the interview. They tended to operate a recruitment system which was based on maintaining

a pool of women who were willing to do short-term work, so that the firm employed and re-employed the same workers on a series of temporary contracts, which could coincide with production peaks. In this way, women were prevented from developing continuous working records, and thus were ineligible for redundancy payments, even though they might have worked for the same company for a number of years. Three of the firms created a twilight shift from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. or 10 p.m. for these workers, specifically designed to attract working mothers whose husbands could take responsibility for childcare in the evenings. Again, employers felt that their employment practices benefited women employees as well as themselves. While the use of temporary contracts allowed employers to maintain a flexible workforce which could expand and contract with fluctuating orders, employers argued that this temporary work held several attractions for women employees. This argument was again based on the view that women found this sort of work could reconcile some of the contradictions arising from the family need for a full-time housewife as well as its need for extra wages. For example, women could skimp housework for the six weeks or three months of a short-term contract, but would not want it to be left for longer than this. Some women, employers claimed, were glad of the opportunity to do paid work for the term-time only, and wanted to be at home with children during school holidays. Others found the factory work they did so boring that they needed periodic breaks from it, and others needed intermittent periods of physical relaxation after coping with both domestic and paid work. Thus, women working temporary contracts were a similar group to the homeworkers: a particularly vulnerable section of the workforce, whose jobs could be directly manipulated by employers, and who worked in this sector because

of their need to combine domestic responsibilities with wage earning.

The third strategy which employers adopted to reduce female staff without using redundancies was the non-replacement of vacancies. Unlike the previous two strategies, this one was appropriate for the formal economy. Employers could shed staff by not replacing women who left and, as was repeatedly pointed out in interviews, there was a very high turn-over of female staff. As women workers went, their jobs could - and often did - close behind them. Again the main reason that women behaved in this way lay in the conflicts between their domestic and their paid work. Obviously, a substantial number of women left jobs to have children, and each year employers could rely on losing some of their female staff for this reason. Others left because they needed a break from the strain of trying to combine home and work; or simply because the monotony of the factory work they often did was unbearable. There were seasonal patterns too, and each summer some women left factory work in favour of agricultural or tourist trade work, hoping to return to their former jobs in winter. Employers also mentioned a small group of women who only ever went to work for a short length of time, with a specific financial target in mind, leaving their jobs when they had managed to pay certain bills, on the assumption that the jobs would be available again should the financial need reoccur. It was clear, then, that women could be relied upon to leave jobs of their own accord, and that employers who wanted to cut back on staff therefore need not resort to enforced redundancy, so long as they could afford to wait for women to leave voluntarily, usually prompted by their domestic commitments.

These three strategies all relied on the women's failure to organise effective political opposition to the loss of jobs. I have already

mentioned that several employers said women welcomed the type of flexible work which was also insecure, and I found no evidence of workplace opposition to such employment practices. The manager of the local Job Centre made the point that redundancy is normally negotiated for by large unions, and that women workers on Sheppey are not normally represented by such unions:

> A lot of these redundancies you hear about, especially with the huge payments some of these blokes get, are all arranged by the union. These are the big unions, the miners, the steel men. Women just aren't in those sort of unions, and so that's another way they don't get made redundant, they don't have the unions doing it for them (Job Centre Manager, Sheerness, 3 August 1982).

Although there were several ways in which employers were shedding female labour without making redundancies, they also claimed that women were particularly well suited to the jobs they did. Employers tended to say that women possessed some biologically-determined physical skill, or that women were valuable employees because they were willing to work for low wages in poor conditions. Because of these two observations, employers were particularly loth to lose women in the event of staff cuts having to be made.

Those employers who argued that women had gender-specific physical skills which were highly valued generally mentioned women's manual dexterity, and said that women were more able than men to sustain boredom without becoming aggressive:

> We have men for the labouring jobs and for stores where physical strength is needed. Women do the light assembly. It's more dextrous work and women can do this better. Also it is more monotonous and women don't appear to dislike that - they're less militant (Company 4, 17 June 1982).

It is interesting to note here that women were ascribed qualities which are invisible but assumed as a result of gender, whereas men were expected to do jobs requiring strength and would be chosen for these only if they looked muscular and well-built, not simply because they were men.

The second reason which employers gave for preferring to employ women in certain jobs was that women were particularly acquiescent and it was usually said that this was because women were primarily concerned with their domestic roles. They would tolerate poor pay and conditions because they did not see themselves as workers, and because their paid jobs were supplementary to their husband's incomes. Several employers had had to cut back hours, lay staff off for short periods, or reduce wages, and they commented on women's easy acceptance of such conditions:

> Women are more tolerant of changes in hours and pay - it's to do with it being a second family job for them. They are less militant - they will tend to accept things where a man wouldn't. They shrug their shoulders and get on with it (Company 8, 3 June 1982).

Much of what the employers said about the attractions of a female workforce derived from the fact that women would work for low wages. Obviously, employers were keen to deny discriminatory pay policies, and stressed that women's low wages were caused by their low skill, or confinement to jobs which have traditionally attracted low pay. It is worth noting here that skill appeared to be ascribed according to gender rather than to the tasks required by the job. One employer said 'to be fully experienced in this job you need eighteen months really' (Company 2, 15 June 1982), although he claimed his female staff were unskilled and paid them unskilled wages. The research project to which this thesis work is linked included a larger study of employers and this found that there

were discrepancies in pay between semi-skilled men and women, and that these were largely explicable by the fact that women tended to be paid by piecework, whereas men were not (Pahl and Dennett, 1981, p.24). As I mentioned above, employers recognised that women were unlikely to join a union which might have challenged such discriminatory practices.

Thus interviews with employers revealed a number of contradictory images about female workers. Sometimes employers suggested that women were extremely committed to work, since they would work for any pay under worsening conditions; at other times they said that women were not committed at all, and would leave at the first hint of domestic trouble. They said that women were unskilled; but they also said that women were extraordinarily dextrous and did jobs of which men were physically incapable. They said that women worked for pin-money, but also that women needed the money so badly they would take reduced wages in order to keep some income. Contradictions were apparent too in the sorts of explanations which I uncovered as to why there were no redundant women on Sheppey. Part of the explanation seemed to be that women lost their jobs in other ways, while the rest of it stemmed from the contrasting finding that employers preferred women to men for certain jobs in any case. I would argue, however, that these two explanations are compatible and, indeed, that they can usefully be seen as two aspects of the same phenomenon of women's disproportionate relegation to the secondary workforce in a dual labour market. A dual labour market is usually held to be one in which:

1. There is more or less pronounced division into higher-paying and lower-paying sectors;
2. mobility across the boundary of these sectors is restricted;

3. higher-paying jobs are tied into promotional or career ladders, while lower-paid jobs offer few opportunities for vertical movement;

4. higher-paying jobs are relatively stable, while lower-paid jobs are unstable (Barron and Norris, 1976, p.49).

Women could be argued to be particularly well-suited to the secondary sector of the dual market because of their

> dispensability, clearly visible social difference, little interest in acquiring training, low economism, and lack of solidarity (Barron and Norris, 1976, p.53).

While I do not wish to suggest that dual labour market theory provides a full explanation of women's employment on Sheppey, it does provide a useful theoretical dimension to descriptions of it. The secondary labour force attracts fewer rewards than the primary one, and in this context redundancy emerged as a 'benefit' of the primary labour market, from which many women were excluded. Redundancy was the 'privilege' of those who had held full-time, continuous jobs, and who were members of powerful trade unions. Women were unlikely to fall into these categories, and the main reason for their exclusion lay in their responsibility for domestic work.

I should make it clear that I am not suggesting that any of the findings which I have summarised in this section had statistical significance. They are relevant only in so far as they affected the direction of my own fieldwork, and in that they contributed to the development of my analysis of women's unemployment. The findings from the interviews had dramatic implications for my proposed fieldwork, the simplest of which was that I could no longer focus it on redundancy since

there were very few redundant women on Sheppey. On a more theoretical level, discovering why this was so raised a new set of questions about women's relation to employment and job loss which were more complex than the ones which I had originally contemplated. For example, links between women's domestic roles and their labour market opportunities needed to be articulated and related to the issue of female unemployment. I now felt that analysis of women's unemployment would best proceed by understanding more about the meaning of employment for women, and I knew that this would be crucially affected by women's domestic responsibilities. I decided to postpone the specific study of women's unemployment, and to concentrate in the first instance on exploring women's relation to paid work - which would involve a consideration of work of all kinds. By doing this, I hoped to achieve a greater conceptual clarity about women and employment, which would in turn inform the development of a fuller analysis of women's unemployment. I was no longer interested in finding out information about women who had lost their jobs, but wanted instead to explore a theory of women and work from which my analysis of women's unemployment could emerge. Clearly, investigations of this sort would be a far more difficult empirical task than the one which I had planned at the outset. I therefore abandoned the relatively straightforward and tightly-defined quantitative methods which I had thought appropriate to the study of redundancy, and prepared instead to embrace a more complicated and flexible approach.

(c) Investigating Women's Unemployment

I decided that the main focus of empirical work should be on exploring personal biographies. This decision was informed by writers from three

distinct perspectives: life history; feminism; and symbolic interactionism.

There has been a recent revival of interest in the life-history method (Bertaux, 1981; Plummer, 1983), although it first became established in Chicago in the 1920s (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1918-20). It bears very close relation to oral history, which again is a relatively recent research strategy (Oral History, various years), but differs in that the life historian's main aim is to uncover the whole biography of one or more individuals, whereas the oral historian is more typically concerned with collecting highly-edited biographical details from a number of individuals, focusing on one particular research interest.

> Life history research advocates, first and foremost, a concern with the phenomenal role of lived experience, with the ways in which members interpret their own lives and the world around them (Plummer, 1983, p.67).

By constructing a life history, the researcher claims to be able to achieve a real understanding of the life of one individual, and then to be able to use these insights in the analysis of wider social phenomena. This methodological approach stresses the importance of individual action in major social change (Thompson, 1981). The approach requires a style of fieldwork which is very different from the more usual quantitative methods and, as such, 'actually functions at the very margins of sociological acceptability' (Farraday and Plummer, 1979, p.773). Since 'living with ambiguity is a central feature of life-history research and there is no easy way to plan it' (Plummer, 1983, p.90), methods for collecting life histories vary between different interviewers and subjects. However, an important principle is that individuals should be allowed to speak for

themselves, with a minimum of prompting or guiding. This means that interviews should be relatively unstructured, enabling respondents to select what they see as relevant about their biographies. There is a total rejection of pre-coded or structured questionnaires. Another principle is that of achieving totality. The aim in writing a life history is to pass on as much as it has been possible to find out about a life, with minimal editorial influence. It is therefore helpful to use diverse source material and, although the basic research tool is in-depth interviewing, life historians often make use of a range of personal documents, such as diaries, letters and photographs (Plummer, 1983). This approach obviously means that fieldwork is extremely time-consuming, so that the practical constraints on most research projects severely restrict the number of life histories which can be collected. However, those who use this method do not necessarily see small numbers as a disadvantage, since it can be argued that one life history would theoretically be enough if it could illustrate general trends (Bertaux, 1981).

A second source of insight about my methodology was recent feminist writing (Graham, 1983; Oakley, 1974; Roberts, 1981; Stanley and Wise, 1983). This has pointed out that the male monopoly of social science has led to the development of sociological methods which are best suited to illuminate the male experience. This has meant that women's experiences are either distorted (Llewellyn, 1981) or omitted altogether (Morgan, 1981).

> In much sociology women as a social group are invisible or inadequately represented: they take the insubstantial form of ghosts, shadows or stereotyped characters (Oakley, 1974, p.1).

The predominantly male profession of social science has produced a situation where '"Objectivity" is the name that men have given to their own subjectivity' (Rich, cited by Stanley and Wise, 1983, p.49). These writers go on to challenge the usual notions of what is or is not 'science', arguing instead for a distinctive, qualitative approach, based on ensuring that research should be 'sensitive to the structure of women's lives' (Graham, 1983, p.137). They point out that the quantitative method may impose an order on women's lives which is not normally there, since much of the specificity of the female experience derives from the ambiguity and confusion surrounding the demands made of them. Thus, if quantitative work relies on pre-structured categories, it denies the expression of contradictions which may form the core of female experience. These authors point out the significance of the principle that the personal is political in the dual sense that personal biography and experience are the results of broader political pressures; and also that they have much wider political validity and significance. Thus the number of women about whom data are collected is irrelevant - what is important is the depth and detail of the data and, if this is assured, then the research is valuable. Oakley states this position clearly, going on to argue that her own feminism led her to abandon the usual style of fieldwork interviewing for several reasons. Firstly, she feels that it is unreasonable for a feminist to see other women as exploitable data sources, and wants to retain a notion of equality and sisterhood which she feels is denied by the usual interviewer/interviewee relationship. Secondly, she wants to allow women to be able to use her as a means of expressing themselves, so that 'the formulation of the interviewer role has changed dramatically from being a data-collecting instrument for

researchers to being a data-collecting instrument for those whose lives are being researched' (Oakley, 1981, p.49). Finally, she feels that it is important to break with tradition and to conduct more than one interview in order to establish rapport with respondents. This means it is essential to make sure respondents enjoy being interviewed - an unusual aim. She argues that this would not happen if she presented herself as a distant sociologist, refusing to be drawn into a personal relationship with respondents, as is usually advised by textbooks. She argues that it is essential to develop trust and understanding between interviewer and interviewee, and that this relies on the interviewer being prepared to divulge information about her own life, if asked. Contrary to the received notions of the desirability of maintaining some social distance between the two participants in interviews, Oakley forcibly states the case for entering into a relationship of mutual confidence: 'personal involvement is more than dangerous bias - it is the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives' (Oakley, 1981, p.58).

A third group of writers from whom I drew ideas about my style of fieldwork was those who write from a symbolic interactionist perspective (Becker, 1970; Blumer, 1962, 1969; Denzin, 1969, 1970a, 1970b, 1981). This perspective also challenges the quantitative method, presenting a view of the social world which gives primacy to the subjective and the qualitative. There are three basic premises: that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that things have for them; that meanings derive from social interaction with others; and that meanings are handled in an interpretive process (Blumer, 1969, p.2). The idea of self is of central importance, and the construction of the self is

considered to be empirically observable, continuing throughout adult life, subject to constant renegotiation as situations change, in a permanent state of 'situational adjustment' (Becker, 1968, p.300). Social life is seen as always changing, as individuals move in and out of social situations which are both a product of and influence on the adult. What action an individual takes is seen as dependent on the sense he or she has made of the world in a process of 'self-indication' (Blumer, 1962, p.183) by which meanings are personally created. Thus human action is characterised not as a response to the wider social structure, but as a construction on the part of the individual. The idea of process is also at the centre of interactionist thought, seeing social life as a continuum with no endings or beginnings, in which the present is inseparable from the past. The methodological implications of such an approach are that empirical work should be aimed at understanding the process of interpretation which precedes individual action, and that it should be sensitive to the past and potential changes in the lives of individuals. Interactionist analysis demands that the researcher should always 'respect the nature of the empirical world and organise a methodological stance to reflect that respect' (Blumer, 1969, p.60) and, in very general terms, this means rejecting the sort of order which is imposed on the social world by structured questionnaires or by sampling techniques. Developing the theme of respect for the nature of the world, Blumer says that the researcher can only achieve real understanding of an action by seeing the world as a subject sees it: by taking on his or her role. Thus much of the sociologist's task must be to achieve a state of empathy. This would engage the researcher in a process of involvement with respondents, rather than the detachment from them which is more typical of much social

science. The focus of investigation would be to articulate the mechanisms of process and change, instead to trying to describe precisely one situation at one particular time. Motives and meanings should be explored just as much as actions, and this requires a method which is flexible enough to explore the past as well as the present experiences of an individual, and to allow the inevitable ambiguities and contradictions in this to emerge.

Drawing on interactionist ideas of process, the life historian's concentration on the role of the past in structuring the present, and the feminist analysis of the personal as political, I decided that the main focus of my own empirical work should be on exploring personal biography. Obviously, such a broad research interest requires methodological imagination.

(d) A Research Design for Personal Biography

My aims in fieldwork were both ambitious and diverse. I wanted to construct a detailed factual biography to find out what had happened in women's lives; and, in order to make sense of such data, to conduct in-depth personal interviews, pursuing notions of meaning construction, process and change. Clearly, these two goals could not be met successfully in just one interview, and so I prepared to interview respondents more than once. I decided that it would be necessary to interview each woman three times. The first interview was needed to make contact with the respondent and to construct a calendar of events from birth to 1982, paying particular attention to employment. Such a list had no explanatory value, but could serve as a research instrument for later meetings (see Appendix C for the interview schedule). At the second

interview, I planned to gather data about each area of women's lives, using an interview schedule based on different identites, such as wife, mother and employee (see Appendix D for the full schedule).[7] A third interview gave the opportunity to clear up any confusions in data which I had collected earlier, and allowed certain areas of interest to be probed in greater depth (see Appendix E for the full schedule).

Obviously, interviews such as these are extremely time-consuming and the total numbers of respondents had to be small if each case was to be pursued in the sort of depth which seemed necessary. I decided that sixty interviews was a practical target, and this restricted the total number of women to twenty. Intensive interviewing should limit the need for large-scale survey in any case since it can provide depth as a path to analysis where other methods might pursue breadth. Bertaux (1981), for example, found that although the total population of bakers was 160,000, the life-history method could reveal important findings after a small number of interviews:

> By the fifteenth we had begun to understand the pattern of socio-structural relations which makes up the life of a bakery worker (Bertaux, 1981, p.37).

My next task was therefore to decide the method of selecting women for detailed interviews.

While I had abandoned the idea of only interviewing women who shared an employment status, I still wanted to select one particular age-group, who would have some shared experiences, and whose biographies would cover similar time-spans. I had intended to choose middle-aged women for prosaic reasons to do with avoiding the complications of young motherhood

or impending retirement. The group still seemed right, but the reasons for this were now that they were located in the middle of their lives: they had experience of the past, and were mature enough to have enabled perspectives on change to have developed. Since the reason for constructing personal biography was to achieve a better understanding of women's relation to paid work, it was important to choose a group which was old enough to have had varied experiences of it. My interest remained, therefore, in women aged 45 to 55.

I reconsidered the proposed site for fieldwork at the same time as I reconsidered the whole empirical project. I had begun to wonder whether the Isle of Sheppey was, in line with much local hearsay, an extraordinary and atypical place: an outcast from mainland Britain, with its own habits and lifestyles.[8] It seemed that the only way to escape from this would be to conduct interviews with women who did not live on Sheppey, and to break right away from the Island and its image. I therefore decided to draw half the group from Faversham, a small market town the same size as Sheerness, about twenty miles away from it on the mainland. This would, I hoped, enable the recognition of any employment patterns which seemed to be specific to Sheppey, and would enable a comparison of women's labour market activities in different towns.

Selecting a group of ten women in Faversham was problematic since I simply wanted to contact women in the 45 to 55 age-range, without reference to any other form of social classification. I decided to use women's own networks and, from an initial introduction to the ex-landlady of a personal friend, I asked each woman to put me in touch with another of her age. The lines of contact were along those of friendship, residence and family. This method did not seem to produce a particularly

homogeneous group in terms of more usual sociological definitions, and this fact in itself demonstrates the inappropriateness of some of the existing models in describing women's experiences. The group is described in detail in Chapter 6 below.

In order to select a group of women from Sheerness, I decided to make use of the detailed data which were available from the main project to which this research is linked. I felt that the method I had adopted in Faversham was open to charges that it could have produced an atypical group of women. I hoped to avoid such criticism of the Sheerness group by drawing them from the larger one which had already been interviewed as part of the main project, and about which basic socio-economic data were already known. The main project had taken a random sample of one in nine households on the Island, and collected detailed information about the employment activity of each member of the household, and about their domestic organisation (Pahl, 1984). With reference to these data, I was able to contact a group of ten women which was proportionately representative of the current employment status and socio-economic group of all the women aged 45 to 55 who had been included in the larger survey.

The proposed research design as described above could, of course, still be criticised and in Appendix F I discuss the ways in which I tried to deal with some of the problems raised by the method. These have largely to do with exerting caution in the interviews themselves. One criticism, however, required more detailed attention and more complex action; and this was the claim that analysis based on the exploration of personal biography may be too limited, since in concentrating on the experiences of a necessarily small group it can reveal very little about the social world outside this group. In this investigation it could be

said that while fieldwork might tell the reader a great deal about the lives of twenty Kentish women, the information remained fundamentally qualitative and anecdotal, and could not be said to clarify the major issue of women's unemployment with which the research was originally concerned. As has been pointed out elsewhere, the data might be rich, but 'the adjective also suggests that, like a sauce, it may be too much of a good thing, more than anyone needs to put to good use' (Becker, 1970, p.52). One way to deal with this criticism would be to stress that quality, anecdote and the personal are not necessarily bad characteristics of research (Stanley and Wise, 1983, p.178) and to develop the arguments in favour of small-scale research. However, to restrict thesis work to constructing accounts of the lives of only twenty women would make the method the main feature of the thesis, and this was not my intention. While I was prepared to be methodologically individualistic, I still wanted the thesis to be predominantly about explaining and understanding women's unemployment. I therefore resolved to use more than one method in this investigation. Triangulation - 'the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon' (Denzin, 1970, p.297) - would, I hoped, enable me to develop a wider understanding of the issues raised by the empirical work.

I felt I could best complement the empirical investigation by a substantial literature search. 'When someone stands in the library stacks he is, metaphorically, surrounded by voices begging to be heard' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.163). I wanted to listen to and make sense of these voices. By developing an analysis based on both library and field-based investigations, I hoped to counter the charge that either would be inadequate. I decided that one of my first tasks in the library-based

research would be to find out more about the lives of all the women in the age-group from which I had selected twenty. I also wanted to develop an awareness of the social history of their life-time. By doing this, I hoped to be able to situate the experiences of an age-group in a specific historical context, and to arrive at a more sensitive understanding of the personal biographies which I had collected in the field. At a later stage I planned to use library resources to explore the fieldwork findings in greater and more theoretical detail.

(e) Summary

In this chapter I have described the research design for my empirical investigation of women's unemployment. I began by outlining early attempts to contact a sample of redundant women on Sheppey and presented the finding that there were very few. I argued that this raised a new set of questions for empirical consideration, at the heart of which was the confused and confusing issue of the meaning of work for women. I explained my decision to approach the study of women's unemployment through an analysis of women's relation to paid work, bearing in mind that this is closely related to women's domestic commitments. I outlined a new method, drawn from the principles of the life-history method, feminism and symbolic interactionism, each of which rejects the quantitative stance and argues instead for a sensitivity and flexibility of approach. I presented my main focus as being the construction of personal biography from which I helped to develop a theory of women's work. At the same time, I planned to carry out extensive library-based research both in order to meet the potential criticism that small-scale research can have very limited relevance for a topic as broad as women's unemployment, as well as to

extend the information I had about the lives of respondents in the chosen age-group.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Since planning the research, one important study has been published: Angela Coyle's Redundant Women (1984). I offer a critical assessment of this in Chapter 10.

2. 'Redundancy' has a precise legal meaning which is far narrower than its everyday use might suggest. Its official definition is laid down in the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978. Redundancy arises if:

   (1) the employer has ceased, or intends to cease, to carry on the business for the purposes of which the employee was employed; or
   (2) the employer has ceased, or intends to cease, to carry on the business in the place where the employee was so employed; or
   (3) the requirements of the business for employees to carry out work of a particular kind have ceased or diminished or are expected to cease or diminish; or
   (4) the requirements of the business for employees to carry out work of a particular kind, in the place where they were so employed, have ceased or diminished or are expected to cease or diminish (Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978, Section 81(2), Department of Employment, 1980, p.7).

   The reasons why employers might need fewer employees are not relevant: it could be due to a recession or to changes in technology but 'if the result is that the employer needs fewer or no employees at the establishment where they were contracted to work, those employees dismissed will have been dismissed because of redundancy' (Department of Employment, 1980, p.11). Being declared redundant is not, of course, synonymous with registration at an Unemployment Benefit Office and therefore there is no reason why married women would be especially likely to be excluded from a sample of redundant workers, although they would be under-represented in a sample of the registered unemployed.

3. This is the Household Work Strategies (HWS) project, funded by the SSRC. The HWS project ran from 1980 to 1983 at the University of Kent under the direction of Professor R.E. Pahl. See Pahl (1984).

4. Arranging these interviews was facilitated by the fact that Professor Pahl had already visited the companies to conduct his own research into Island employers as part of the larger project. The interviews took place in July 1982 and each lasted about an hour. They were relatively unstructured, given their exploratory and preliminary nature, and a list of ten questions formed the basic framework of the conversations (see Appendix B). I took notes but did not use a tape recorder since I felt that the information which I sought would be forthcoming only if an informal rapport could be established between myself and the managers, and I felt that using a tape recorder would create a barrier to this.

5. The rate for comparable work inside the factory was £2 an hour at this time.

6. Being defined as redundant carries with it an entitlement to compensatory payments for several groups of workers. Employers who make redundancy payments can claim back a percentage of it from the government's Redundancy Fund. The Fund is a separately accounted part of the National Insurance Scheme, and was set up under Section 26 of the Redundancy Payments Act 1965. It is controlled and managed by the Secretary of State, and made up from employers' contributions to the National Insurance Scheme. If employers are insolvent or refuse to pay redundancy money, employees can apply directly to the Fund for the whole amount to which they are entitled. The actual amount of redundancy pay, and the selection of certain groups in the workforce for redundancy, would normally be a matter for negotiation between management and unions. However, certain categories of employees are not entitled to payment in the event of their being declared redundant. For the purposes of this thesis, the most relevant exemption is that of employees who have not had two years' continuous experience with the company. The definition of continuity here has two aspects: one, that a work record must be unbroken for at least two years; and the other that a minimum number of hours a week must be worked: normally sixteen, or eight if the employee has worked for the same employer for five years or more.

7. These schedules served as guides for the interviews rather than as inflexible survey tools. I did not always ask each question, and certainly did not retain the same sequence in each case. They served to structure the meeting, and as a check-list so that I covered the same ground with each respondent. I did not tape-record interviews because I felt that this would constitute an unwelcome and possibly distorting intrusion. Instead, I developed an extremely fast style of writing, and took copious notes!

8. I had lived on the Island at the beginning of the research and had heard this said many times. See also Pahl (1984).

CHAPTER THREE

ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S LIVES: 1939-1950

In this chapter I begin to outline the social and political context of the individual life stories which were collected during fieldwork. I deal here with the period from 1939-1950.

(a) Introduction

As I made clear in the previous chapter, I wanted to develop a historical framework in which to situate the twenty personal biographies. I felt that this would enhance my understanding of these women, since it would allow me to understand more of the wider social and political context in which they structured their lives. Setting the parameters of such a historical framework is problematic, but at this stage I simply wanted to find out about the years through which women born between 1927 and 1937 had lived before asking twenty of these women what they had in fact done during this time, and I therefore focused on the period 1939-1980. I do not want, at this stage, to relate the findings of this research specifically to individual biographies, but they will be mentioned in this context in chapters 6 and 7 below, which discuss the findings of my fieldwork interviews. While my immediate aim in this chapter is to provide a framework in which to situate twenty personal biographies, I hope in doing this to demonstrate too the advantages of blending an awareness of social history with a more social-scientific approach. While I am not in any way claiming to be a social historian, I am trying to move away from an academic tradition which presents a selective snapshot of just one time and place in individual lives, and simultaneously to take some steps towards developing a more diverse and perhaps more illuminating style of sociological analysis.

(b) Wartime

The group of women in which I am particularly interested was aged between 2 and 12 at the start of the war. I do not want to present a comprehensive documentary account of the war years, but to highlight some features of them which might have been particularly significant for the age group. To this end, I focus discussion on three areas: first, the impact of war on family life; second, the development of distinctive routines and methods of housekeeping; and, third, the way in which a particular vision of the future was politically structured by official reports and Acts of Parliament.

(i) Family life

Obviously the war had a major impact on all aspects of family life and I pick out just some of these for discussion.

One example of the disruption which war brought to the family is evacuation. In 1939 the country was divided into reception, evacuation and neutral areas and mothers in towns and ports were put under considerable pressure to send or accompany their children to relative safety in the country:

> Throughout the summer of 1939, broadcasts, newspapers and posters waxed lyrical about the advantages of a healthy, rustic life for the children, contrasting this with an urban life of shattered glass, falling buildings, disrupted schooling and a gnome-like existence under the stairs or in Anderson shelters at the bottom of the garden (Minns, 1980, p.19).[1]

It has been estimated that between the end of June 1939 and the first week of September, between 3.5 million and 3.75 million people moved to 'safe' areas; and that in September alone, evacuation affected between a quarter

and a third of the population (Calder, 1969, p.40). The Minister of Health, Walter Elliot, commented that

> This is an exodus bigger than that of Moses. It is the movement of ten armies, each of which is as big as the whole Expeditionary Force (cited in Turner, 1961, p.75).

Evacuation was strange not only because it removed children from their families of birth, but also because it removed them from their normal social and geographical surroundings. A middle-class rural population came, for the first time, face to face with deprived urban children who were often poor, unhealthy, and ill-behaved. Thus,

> The first confrontation of the war was not that of the British with the Nazis, but of the politer parts of England with the slums: a class confrontation (Wilson, 1977, p.136).

While the middle classes expressed outrage at both the behaviour and the poor physical condition of slum children, genial tolerance accompanied the recognition of their urban ignorance of rural life. One news bulletin, by way of light relief, included an extract from a Cockney child's essay on a cow, saying 'It has six sides, left and upper and below. At the back it has a tail, on which hangs a brush' (Minns, 1980, p.23).

A second illustration of the changes war imposed on family life is that married women's work outside the home became accepted and positively encouraged. During the inter-war years, the unemployment rate was so high that women's right, and especially married women's right, to paid jobs had been widely challenged. It was often felt that women should give up paid work on marriage, and the 'marriage bar' was in operation in professions

such as the civil service and teaching.[2] All this changed during the war years and married women were encouraged by propaganda to do war work, and then congratulated for joining the patriotic band of 'Bevan's beauties'. By 1943, nearly 3 million married women and widows were in paid employment, compared with 1.25 million before the war (Calder, 1969, p.382). Another army of married women worked outside the home in a voluntary capacity: one source suggests, for example, that about one million women were working as unpaid volunteers in organisations such as the Women's Volunteer Corps (Wilson, 1977, p.134).

Clearly, the great increase in numbers of married women in employment had implications for the organisation of family life, and one remarkable feature of war-time life was the extent to which the state recognised the difficulties which women experienced in trying to work outside the home as well as attempting to fulfil their domestic responsibilities within it. The state not only recognised these difficulties, it also intervened to alleviate them, and two examples of such intervention are discussed below in the fields of child care and feeding. Indeed, the state provision of such services is one of the most outstanding aspects of women's war work. The extent of women's war work relative to peace-time work is subject to some dispute and it has been pointed out that if peace-time trends had been uninterrupted by war, about 6.75 million women would have had jobs outside the home in 1943, compared with the official estimate for that year of only about 7.5 million (Calder, 1969, p.383).[3] There is far less uncertainty about the unprecedented level of state provision of services normally performed by women in the family.

During the war, children were looked after in public nurseries to an extent which was unequalled in peace-time. In 1938 there were 1,450

full-time nurseries for children aged 0-5 years; 109 part-time nurseries for children aged 2-5 years; and 784 nursery classes in primary schools (Riley, 1979, p.83). Nursery provision on this scale produced a variety of political tensions, mainly around the issue of whether it ought to be a short-term reaction to the crisis of war, or a precursor of post-war education policies. The evidence suggests that government took care to ensure that the former image was more forcibly presented (Riley, 1979). One example of this is that the Ministries of Health and Labour provided subsidies for home-based child-minding schemes and encouraged voluntary ones with slogans such as 'If you can't go to the factory, help the woman who can' (Riley, 1983, p.117). These were popular with government both because they emphasised the temporary nature of public child-care arrangements and also because they emphasised the principle that responsibility for child-care lay with parents and the community rather than with central or local government. There were regional variations in the take-up of nursery and child-minding facilities, and also in the occupations of the mothers, but the general points remain that, firstly, child-care was available to an unprecedented extent and, secondly, that it carried no overtones of maternal neglect. Indeed, joining the war effort was seen as part of a mother's patriotic duty, and the press gave sympathetic prominence to its coverage of those women's groups which were demanding more nurseries so that more mothers could taken an even more active part in the war effort (Minns, 1980, p.38; Riley, 1979, p.85).

A second area in which the state provided services normally performed by women in their own homes was that of eating, and 'community feeding became an accepted part of government policy' (Roberts, 1981, p.5). There were several ways in which the state, while still encouraging women to

work outside the home, tried to minimise undernourishment: large factories were put under obligation to provide canteens for their workers; school dinners were provided; the Women's Voluntary Services helped to feed rural land workers; and communal feeding centres were planned. The latter plans were put into practice by the British restaurant experiment. These non-profit-making restaurants began in 1940 and were run by local authorities, who were subsidised in this by central government. Their aim was to ensure that, despite problems of food availability and the need for women to work outside the home, everyone who needed it would be able to get one hot meal a day. By 1943 there were 2,000 restaurants providing relatively cheap, nutritionally balanced food to a largely working-class clientele (Roberts, 1981, p.6). Again, there were regional differences in the provision and take-up of restaurant services (*ibid*), but the point remains that this was a new development in state intervention in the family, and one which altered the daily lives of thousands.

The greater incidence of married women working outside the home was not only disruptive to the organisation of family life in overt ways such as these, but also had the more covert effect of disrupting traditional gender roles. These were confounded both by married women's greater involvement outside the home, and by the fact that they often entered areas of employment which had previously been male-dominated, and stepped outside traditional female occupational stereotypes. The proportion of women in engineering and allied industries, for example, rose from 18 per cent in June 1939 to 39 per cent in December 1943 (Riley, 1983, p.125). Women worked in areas which were traditionally seen as male preserves, surrounded by a masculine mystique of skill and physical exertion.[4] Women managed to do these jobs, to which they had previously been denied access,

remarkably efficiently: one Ministry of Labour Report stated

> It is no exaggeration to say that the average women takes to welding as readily as she takes to knitting, once she has overcome any initial nervousness due to the sparks (cited in Riley, 1983, p.127).

Factory work provides just one example of women breaking out of their more usual sex roles while involved in the war effort. Another is the organisation of agricultural labour. By 1944 there were 80,000 recruits and volunteers to the Women's Land Army, and these women again reversed usual gender stereotypes since they left their homes and undertook physically demanding work. In the early years of the war, official propaganda displayed a concern with preserving the traditional sexual division of labour as, for example, on a poster encouraging recruitment to the women's services which asked

> What greater work could women do now than cook for the boys who are going to win the war for us? (Davis, 1982, p.103)

As war progressed, however, demand for labour outweighed such initial reluctance to re-order the sexual division of labour.

In many cases, married women's war work was done inside the home and this clearly would have altered the family environment. There was a rapid but poorly-documented increase in the numbers of women doing outwork, and these were often servicemen's wives who were tied to the home by the need to care for their young children. Paid work was particularly necessary for service wives who suffered a drop in income when their husbands joined up: in 1939 the lower service ranks were paid 2s a day, plus an allowance of 25s for a wife and two children, whereas average male wages were

between £3 and £10 a week (Minns, 1980, p.15). Outworkers were in great demand, given the labour shortage and the low rates of pay which they tolerated. While in peace-time outwork is most often associated with the clothing or light electrical industries, in the war jobs such as constructing aircraft bulkheads were carried out, involving transformation of the home still further into a site of industrial production (Calder, 1969, p.382).

Individual family lives, then, were disrupted by evacuation and by women's war effort. At the same time, the boundaries around individual families became more difficult to identify. While clearly male call-up and the evacuation of women and children are the most obvious examples of this process, three other practices all of which were encouraged by government, are mentioned below by way of further illustration.

Firstly, family perimeters were broken down by the scarcity of household resources and amenities. In 1942, the government issued Fuel Communique No. 7, stating

> Don't delay, get together with your friends and neighbours now and work out a scheme for sharing firesides this winter (Longmate, 1971, p.324).

Women and children followed these instructions and spent far more time than was usual in the houses of neighbours and friends in an attempt to pool resources and to keep morale high (Minns, 1980, p.163). Secondly, when the physical boundaries of the home were destroyed or threatened by bombing, communal shelters were provided. At the end of September 1940, 177,000 people in blitz-torn London were sleeping in the Underground system (Calder, 1969, p.212). Thirdly, older married women were

encouraged to get to know the American GIs, as substitute grandsons and sons for their own, who were away at war. In 1942 the Ministry of Food called women to invite a soldier to join their family at Christmas, to help the soldier and to alleviate their own loneliness (Minns, 1980, p.166).

Boundaries around the family were not only disordered in terms of its membership, but also in terms of its function. I have already pointed out that the state took responsibility for providing services which were normally met within the family, such as child-care and cooking. Another example of the merging of private and public was that the family became more important as a site of social activities because the leisure industry contracted. The black-out, closure of many places of entertainment, and rationing all meant that people had to look to the private world of the home and family for leisure activity which might normally take place in the public sphere:

> Enforced home life for women especially was one of the hardest changes to get accustomed to at a period in history when theatre and cinema-going as well as dances were all the rage (Minns, 1980, p.163).

This was a particularly relevant change for the young, whose adolescence was spent under bizarre conditions, just one aspect of which was this focusing of social life in the private family sphere.

In this brief discussion of some examples of the ways in which war disrupted family life it can be seen that disruption had two important characteristics: firstly, the state intervened in family life in an overt way; and secondly, massive changes resulted from this. The public world of government entered and attempted to control the private one of the

family, using the means of both emergency powers legislation as well as an effective propaganda campaign.[5] An early Mass Observation report of the war commented that

> Home is the most important thing in the lives of the English people, and home interests have been sorely tried, and are further threatened by the war ... the traditional privacy and security of the Englishman's castle have been impaired in a number of ways (Harrison and Madge, 1940, p.294).

Threatening the traditional privacy of the family's castle was of course a necessity if Britain was to wage a victorious war: the famous Dunkirk spirit was nurtured to ensure that morale and commitment were kept high. This required that everyone work together as one street, town and, ultimately, nation, and it relied too on the temporary destruction of insular family life and the promotion of more community-based approaches. The state promoted the blurring of boundaries between private and public at the local level by supporting communal child-care, canteen and refuge facilities. Through the policies of evacuation or, on a smaller scale, the adoption of GIs, it encouraged the boundaries between rural and urban dwellers, middle and working class, or American and British citizens to be dismantled. All usual definitions were confounded by the idea that Britain itself was a family, and that as such all citizens had family duties to each other, regardless of blood relationships. The absence of fathers, evacuation of children, war work of mothers, and various other government policies combined to create an altered family unit, characterised by change and confusion, disruption and discomfort.

(ii) Housekeeping Routines and Methods

One of the instances of government intervention in an area of life normally considered to be private is that of housekeeping. During the war government, by the use of rationing and a remarkably active propaganda campaign, encouraged a certain style of domestic management within the home. The general use of propaganda was itself one of the outstanding developments of these years:

> The second world war demanded a mobilisation of moral resources every bit as much as of physical resources. Morale was crucial, and this called for a major and unprecedented effort of 'education for citizenship' ... the coalition government ... put its weight behind a programme of cultural mobilisation the like of which had never before been seen in this country (Kumar, 1983, p.19).

The housewife was the target of one particular type of propaganda, and this is of particular interest here since the women under study during fieldwork learnt much of their housekeeping during these abnormal years of war.

For the duration of the war a flood of advice was aimed at the housewife, and the principal reason for this was that she was identified by government as being the manager of crucial household resources. The national economy was stretched to capacity by the industry of war, and it was essential that it use as little as possible on the domestic needs of individual families. Housewives were asked to form a 'kitchen front' against Hitler, wasting nothing and using cheaper or more readily available substitutes wherever possible. The careful use of resources was partly imposed from above by rationing which, although it covered a changing range of goods, was introduced in 1939 and continued for fifteen years. However, propaganda was also used to ensure the careful husbandry

of the ration itself, and of unrationed household resources. Government posters publicised slogans such as 'Food is a munition of war, Don't waste it'; 'Let Your Shopping Help Our Shipping'; and promoted domestic food production by the 'Dig for Victory' campaign. One series of propaganda publications featured

> a hairy and satanic Squander Bug whose leering cartoon shape cavorted through the newspapers inciting housewives to waste money and wearing a swastika to show which side he was on (Calder, 1969, p.412).

Other media were drawn into this propaganda war and extensive use was made of the women's press:

> The political power and propaganda value of women's magazines has never before or since been acknowledged or exploited as it was by the Churchill and Attlee administrations during the 1940s ... handmaiden of government and handholders of the female population, this was the dual role of women's magazines in wartime (Ferguson, 1983, p.19).

In these,

> Women journalists and letters-to-the-editor writers coaxed the public to eke out their meals with such unconsidered, and unrationed, titbits as nettles, nasturtium petals, lime blossoms, dandelion leaves, seaweed, and bracken (Turner, 1961, p.208).

The BBC joined the campaign too, and put out a daily radio programme called 'Kitchen Front' to advise on all aspects of war-time household management.

The style of housekeeping which this publicity encouraged was based on minimising consumption by a combination of personal sacrifice and

substitution of human - usually female - domestic labour for consumer goods: a scheme which comprised going-without and making-do. Government advised on this; for example, the

> Ministries of Food and Agriculture produced a series of information sheets of recipes and advice on how to maintain the nutritional value of a restricted war-time diet; with suggestions such as using turnip water as an efficient source of vitamin C (Calder, 1969, p.438).

Magazines included recipes which made imaginative use of rations and had patriotic names such as Siege or Trench Cake, and the search for the fatless, eggless cake was on (Minns, 1980, chapter 9). One housewife's diary, kept for Mass Observation, is littered with references to these domestic styles:

> I'm so very frugal nowadays, and I look at a tin of fruit longingly sometimes, now that fruit is so scarce - but I put it back on the shelf, for I think we may need it more later (Broad and Fleming, 1981, p.138).

Shortages and scarcity meant that domestic work became even more of a burden for women:

> There were closed stalls everywhere in the market today ... I wandered about with a sadness in my heart. I loved the market and the joyous spirit there - a meet-a-friend-and-have-a-chat, even when there was no money for bargains. Now, grim-faced women queue and push - and hurry off to another queue when served (Broad and Fleming, 1981, p.118).

Of course, food was not the only restricted domestic resource. Housewives also had to conserve clothing. A make-do-and-mend campaign was launched on the subject of clothes, and Board of Trade posters featured Mrs Sew and Sew, who remade the family's cast-off clothes. Make-do-and-mend classes

were arranged, and backed up by radio programmes. Again, magazines and newspapers advised, giving practical hints on how to alter and repair clothes (Ferguson, 1983, p.20). Magazines could even play an important part by querying the need for fashion to rely on clothes at all, and they diverted attention so that 'fashion sense expressed itself increasingly in elaborate attention on the head and face' (Calder, 1969, p.436). One woman recalls that utility outweighed fashion to such an extent that she dressed her children in cardigans made from dishcloths (Longmate, 1971, p.256). While this is one of the more extreme examples of war-time domestic strategies, at the other end of the spectrum much of the making-do was simply the implementation of housekeeping tips which women already practised when it was necessary:

> I get many a chuckle at myself nowadays - no hiding away my dodges and strict economies as I used to. Instead I broadcast 'how little fat' or 'how economical' my bits and bobs of recipes are. And Gran's old recipes are going the rounds (Broad and Fleming, 1981, p.173).

The great differences were that in war these became the norm rather than a response to serious financial crisis, and that they became sources of pride rather than shame.

Another campaign which government aimed at the housewife was about general household waste and recycling: 'Collecting salvage was one of the most boring and never-ending chores of the war' (Minns, 1980, p.143). That something could always be made out of what seemed to be nothing was one of the most important themes of the war years, and it fell to the housewife to perform this conjuring trick. Household salvage was collected by war workers, but housewives had to sort it, bearing in mind statistics quoted in the press such as that one newspaper could make three

25-pounder shell cups and that twenty breakfast cereal cartons could make one case for 3-pounder shells. Donations of domestic equipment as well as salvage were called for and, although the housewife would have to suffer the inconvenience of losing the tools of her domestic trade, she would, as the head of the Women's Voluntary Services pointed out in a radio broadcast of 1940,

> have the tiny thrill of thinking as we hear the news of an epic battle in the air 'Perhaps it was my saucepan that made a part of that Hurricane!' (cited by Longmate, 1971, p.281)

Donating and salvaging was not just inconvenient and time-consuming: it could mean hard work too. One plea, for example, was made to householders to strip their walls of paper for donation, and to replace it with a coat of distemper.

Thus the housewife received extensive and detailed instructions on running the home. Propaganda was also directed at her physical condition. Good housewives were encouraged to arrange their looks as well as their actions in a certain way:

> It was patriotic to be chic. You mustn't disappoint your husband by a sluttish appearance when he came home on leave (Calder, 1969, p.435).

Again this message was passed on by a range of media and 'advertisers sedulously fostered the notion that female display was good for the soul of the nation' (ibid). In 1943, for example, a Yardley advertisement in Housewife read:

> With leisure and beauty aids so scarce, it is very creditable to look our best. Let us face the future bravely and honour the subtle bond between good looks and good morale. Put your best face forward (Longmate, 1971, p.271).

Thus housewives were expected to preserve their own looks as well as domestic comfort and family health during their husband's absence.

The propaganda which was aimed at the housewife had an impact which went beyond the practical. For example, it promoted a sharper sexual division of labour by appealing to all women as one group, 'united as never before under the flag of feminity and the Union Jack' (Ferguson, 1983, p.20): united in their struggle to survive. One editor of a women's weekly recalls:

> We all had the same amount of rations, we all had the same amount of restrictions, we all could do only the best we could with make-do and mend. It didn't matter which social class you were, this was your life (Ferguson, 1983, p.19).

While clearly social class differences would have determined the resources which women had at the start of the war, and while the black market would have ensured that the wealthy had to 'make do' rather less than most, the point remains that the same housekeeping routines were encouraged, regardless of the differences in social status or household income between individual housewives. A second example of the wider implications of much of the propaganda was that it developed the symbolic role of the housewife:

> The British housewife with her ration books, gamely carrying on through the queues and bombing so that family, community and nation should hold together, symbolised our national spirit ... the housewife was _the_ heroic figure of the Second World War ... She kept the Home Front going and the Home Front was what the boys were fighting for (Wilson, 1980, p.16).

A third example of the general impact of propaganda is that the housewife was no longer presented as someone whose domestic labour was of interest only to her own family. Housework was presented as an activity of national importance, and housewives together seen as a group of workers whose job could affect the outcome of war. Finally, housewifery was not only seen as being important because it offered the potential to conserve vital resources, but also because it offered women the chance to join in the war. It was even suggested that women, preserving the sexual division of labour, could balance the sacrifices made by male soldiers by their own increases in domestic labour and decreases in domestic consumption.

During the war, then, a particular style of housewifery was encouraged by official propaganda. This style was necessitated by strictly constrained household resources. Housekeeping was an elaborate matter, involving considerable skill and knowledge, which aimed to compensate the family for inadequate provisions. Again, government issued instructions about areas of social life which were normally considered private, and made public use of typically private resources. These two spheres were linked in new ways by propaganda specifically aimed at the housewife, the new heroine of the nation's carefully-nurtured imagination.

(iii) Visions of the Future

During the war, government produced a series of reports and Acts which made explicit the process of planning for the future. The nation was about to make a fresh start, and this coincided with the passage of the age-group under study here from childhood to the brink of a new adult life. It has been pointed out by one of the major architects of plans for post-war Britain that

> statement of a reconstruction policy by a nation at war is statement of the uses to which that nation means to put victory, when victory is achieved (Beveridge, 1942, p.171).

Below I briefly discuss selected examples of reconstruction policy, giving most attention to the Beveridge Report.

The Beveridge Report captured the public imagination more than any other single government publication in war-time, and was hailed as practical proof that a new and better Britain would follow war. In her war diary, one housewife recording for Mass Observation noted:

> Never since I first listened to a speaker on the air have I felt so interested as I was tonight by Sir William Beveridge. I'll feel a bit more hopeful about the 'brave new world' now, and begin to feel a real effort will be made to grasp the different angles of the many problems. His scheme will appeal more even to women than to men, for it is they who bear the real burden of unemployment, sickness, child-bearing and rearing - and the ones who, up to now, have come off worst. There should be some all-in scheme (Broad and Fleming, 1981, p.227).

The Beveridge Report was based on demonstrating a single argument:

> Beveridge's case was a simple one ... he showed how, without any extreme measures, want could be abolished and a 'national minimum' be assured to all (Bruce, 1961, p.306).

Recommendations were made for a system of social support to meet all situations of want which might occur between the cradle and the grave. The social insurance scheme assumed that three related provisions would be made by government before it would be put into operation: firstly, allowances for dependent children; secondly, a comprehensive health

service; and thirdly, full employment (Beveridge, 1942, p.8). Beveridge argued that his recommendations were made urgent not only by the general need to abolish the first of the five giants he identified on the road to reconstruction: want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness, but also because of two demographic trends. The first was that the population was increasingly weighted in favour of the elderly, and the second was that he considered the birthrate to be dropping to a worryingly low level (ibid). The comprehensiveness of his plan led Beveridge to refer to it in his introduction as 'in some ways a revolution, but in more important ways it is a natural development from the past. It is a British revolution' (ibid, p.17). The concluding tone of the Report was highly patriotic, firmly locating it in the debate about reconstruction which took place during what Beveridge called the 'war for peace' (ibid, p.172):

> Freedom from want cannot be forced on a democracy or given to a democracy. It must be won by them. Winning it needs courage and faith and a sense of national unity: courage to face facts and difficulties and overcome them; faith in our future and in the ideals of fair-play and freedom for which century after century our forefathers were prepared to die; a sense of national unity overriding the interests of any class or section (ibid).

The Report became a best-seller on publication.

> Greeted as a wonderful, transforming and revolutionary document, with its promise of a minimum income, however meagre, to all as of right, it gave the population something positive to fight for apart from simply the defeat of Hitler; it seemed to promise a rosy future and was greeted with what one more cynical commentator described as 'a deluge of slush' (Wilson, 1977, p.140).

People queued to buy it, and it was discussed at length in the national press. It had a great impact on the country's morale and self-image

halfway through a war when optimism was flagging. Although its stated intention was to make a general plan for the abolition of want, the Report also dealt with future family relations, in so far as it was based on certain assumptions about the roles of men and women after the war. These assumptions, as well as those more explicitly concerned with the administration of social insurance, are of particular interest here, since they, as well as optimism and confidence, were transmitted to the generation which was growing up in the war.

Beveridge, as recent feminist critiques (Land, 1976, 1978; Wilson, 1977) have pointed out, both assumed and encouraged a sexual division of labour between male breadwinners and female housewives. One of the three main assumptions[6] behind the recommendations was that there would be full male employment after the war, and Beveridge assumed then that men would go out to paid work in the fully employed society, while women would stay at home to bear and rear the next generation for the new world, where poverty and hunger would be only unhappy memories. Beveridge made a major distinction between married women and the other classes of insured persons, on the grounds that

> All women by marriage acquire a new economic and social status ... on marriage a woman gains a legal right to maintenance by her husband as a first line of defence against risks which fall directly on the solitary woman (Beveridge, 1942, p.49).

He predicted that 'during marriage most women will not be gainfully occupied' (*ibid*, p.50) and because of this, as well as an assumption that married women shared resources such as housing with their husbands, he proposed that wives be paid lower rates of unemployment and disability benefits, and also that they be given the option of paying lower

contributions.

Beveridge not only assumed this sexual division of labour, he also actively promoted it, saying it was

> imperative to give first place in social expenditure to the care of childhood and to the safeguarding of maternity (ibid, p.8).

He argued that Britain needed women to have babies as a patriotic duty, and he wanted this to happen in marriage: 'taken as a whole, the plan for social security puts a premium on marriage, in place of penalising it' (ibid, p.52). He went to some lengths to stress the benefits his proposals offered the housewife, beginning with the family allowance system which he assumed would be put into practice before the main recommendations of the Report were implemented. In the Report itself he identified eight primary causes of need for social security, such as unemployment or disability, and one of these was marriage needs, which he argued would be met by his proposed 'housewife's policy' (ibid, p.124). According to this, women were eligible, if the need arose, for a marriage grant; maternity grant; share in unemployment income in the event of loss of a husband's job; widow's benefit; separation and guardianship of children benefit; and paid household help in the event of personal illness.

Thus the Beveridge Report was of great ideological importance in maintaining war-time morale and in giving form to dreams of the future. It made proposals for a comprehensive system of welfare provision in which all British people were supported and protected, guaranteed a certain level of income whatever their circumstances. An important aspect of this vision of the future was that it was made up of separate family units in

which a traditional sexual division of labour operated and women were full-time mothers and housewives, protected by a combination of welfare and male income from the economic need to work outside the home.

A second example of well-publicised government plans for the future is the Dudley Report on public housing design which was published in 1944. By the end of the war, 475,000 houses had been destroyed or rendered uninhabitable (Burnett, 1978, p.277).

> People had endured crowded, low-standard housing in the 1930s; during the war they had been bombed out, shunted around, doubled up: now, couples looked forward most of all to a home of their own (Marwick, 1982, p.58).

Reconstruction plans considered both the provision of basic survival shelters for all, which was a relatively simple matter, and also considerable improvements to the quality and design of housing, which was a more complex task, and was the focus of the Dudley Report.

The Report identified the major defects in pre-1945 housing as being lack of variety in housing type, too-cramped living space, and out-dated services (Burnett, 1978, p.282). It recommended an increase of space, and in a three-bedroomed house for example, proposed a 900 square foot minimum, compared with 750-850 square foot of earlier legislation. Women's groups such as the Standing Joint Committee of Working Women's Organisations made representation to the Dudley Committee (Riley, 1983, p.183) and this may be part of the reason for the attention given to kitchen planning in the final Report. It was recognised that families no longer wanted the two-room style of a scullery with living room and kitchen, and the trend towards a living room and kitchen/diner was begun. The kitchen interior was re-planned, taking into account the spread of gas

and electricity:

> Kitchen fittings now included sink and draining boards, working surfaces, a ventilated larder and cupboards for dry goods and crockery which were generally carried up to ceiling height: early post-war kitchens also included a small refrigerator (Burnett, 1978, p.283).

Bathrooms too were re-designed and moved up to the bedroom floor. More general improvements related to better lighting on stairs and landings, an outside store and increased cupboard space.

The recommendations of the Dudley Report were accepted and even exceeded by the Official Housing Manuals in 1944.

> In the euphoria of 1945 hopes ran high that the recommendations of the Dudley Committee would open a new chapter in the history of housing standards (Burnett, 1978, p.284).

They were part of a wider optimism surrounding plans for reconstruction which contributed to a general atmosphere that a new and better era was about to dawn, in which everyone would have a modern and convenient house to live in, which would go some way towards making up for the physical deprivations of war.

The third example of government planning for the future which I want to mention here is the Family Allowances Act of 1944. An organised campaign for family allowances dated from the end of the First World War when Eleanor Rathbone had formed the Family Endowment Society, but this had made very little headway in the face of government fears that introducing family allowances would reduce the male incentive to work (Land, 1976, p.113). In 1945, however, the Act was passed, and the birth

of the second and subsequent children made a family eligible for payment under it. After an amendment to the Act, the money was payable to mothers rather than to fathers, but the level at which it was set was considerably lower than the actual cost of keeping a child.

The passing of the Family Allowances Act was of great symbolic importance because it fulfilled the first of the three criteria which Beveridge argued would have to be met by government if the rest of his Social Insurance Plan was to work. It should be pointed out that more recent work has argued that this was not the main reason for its easy journey through Parliament and that it was only passed when it was seen as an important part of wider government economic strategy (Land, 1976, p.114; McNicol, 1980). Keynes argued that family allowances, together with continued rationing and food subsidies, would reduce the demand for wage increases and thus it can be argued that the Act was only passed in the light of this analysis.

While the economic advantages of family allowances may have recommended them to government, there is little doubt that they were more usually presented to the public as deriving from government's wish to demonstrate two points. Firstly, that it wanted to recognise and reward the housewife's war-time services in paid, voluntary and domestic employment (Bruce, 1961, p.308); and secondly, that by passing the Act, government allowed reconstruction plans to become a real possibility, thereby adding credibility to its commitment to put the war-time visions of a rosy future into practice. Family allowances were offered to the public as a token of the importance which government attached to the rebuilding of family life, and to improving the standard of living for the 'average' family.

The final example of well-publicised government planning to be considered here is that of the 1944 Education Act, introduced by R.A. Butler, later Lord Butler. This is now usually remembered as the Act which established equality of opportunity for all. The Act imposed great changes on the British educational system, and for the first time free education to a nationally approved standard became freely available to all. A coherent system of three-stage schooling - primary, secondary and further - was established. The school-leaving age was raised to 15, with a provision for raising it to 16 as soon as possible. Schools became the responsibility of local authorities, and it was stated that

> The schools available for an area shall not be deemed to be sufficient unless they are sufficient in number, character, and equipment to afford for all pupils opportunities for education offering such variety of instruction as may be desirable in view of the different ages, abilities and aptitudes (Education Act, 1944, para. 8.1).

Some of the most radical proposals in the Act dealt with further education, requiring local education authorities to provide full and part-time further education and leisure-time occupation 'for any persons over compulsory school age who are able and willing to profit by the facilities provided for that purpose' (*ibid*, para. 41).

The 1944 Act represented a highly significant public statement from government of its intention to invest in the nation's future by educating its children. It was the culmination of several other war-time documents, such as the White Paper of 1943, and it set in motion a major debate about the post-war education system. A committee was appointed under Lord Percy, for example, to consider the whole question of technical education. As with the Beveridge report, widespread publicity surrounded the Act, and

it was popularly seen as a sign that dreams of post-war equality and freedom were about to be realised.

In his March Broadcast of 1943, Churchill talked about education, making it clear that the war-time 'equality of sacrifice' (Bruce, 1961, p.39) should be rewarded by peace-time equality of educational provision and opportunity:

> It is in our power to secure equal opportunity for all ... we must make sure that the path to the highest functions throughout our society and Empire is really open to the children of every family (cited by Bruce, op. cit., p.319).

Again, government's actions were not simply prompted by the wish to repay a debt to the British people. They were also made in the knowledge that reconstruction, the efficient use of new science and technology, and the expansion of welfare services all relied on a trained and professional work force. The country needed educated workers, and a new Education Act was needed to produce them.

In summary, the examples of government planning for the post-war world which I have mentioned here all fostered feelings of positive optimism at the end of the war, based on the idea of a fresh start in which the nation's youth would reap the rewards of their parents' massive sacrifices. Children may have been brought up amid disruption and deprivation, but this took place in the context of an understanding that present sacrifices would be made worthwhile by future gains, on both an individual and a national scale. By the end of the war, visions of the future had taken on material form, moulded by government publications such as the ones discussed above, and the population was expecting a new era of equality, security and prosperity.

(c) Reconstruction

I refer here to the years 1945-50, and I want to focus the necessarily brief discussion on what were seen as appropriate roles for women in this new time, since this was particularly relevant to girls in the age-group under study.

The main point which I develop below is that highly contradictory pressures were applied to women. Specifically, the economy required both that women produce the next generation of workers and that they became paid workers themselves in order to staff the welfare state and the expanded industrial sector. It has been said that

> From the beginning the Attlee government was attempting a weird juggling feat, trying to promote ideals of family life while simultaneously desperately in need of labour for the work of peace-time reconstruction (Wilson, 1980, p.43).

There are numerous examples of government attempts to promote family life, and just two are mentioned here: the setting up of the welfare state and the rapid changes in housing planning and provision.

The Beveridge Report was discussed in detail in the preceding section. Those of its recommendations which were put into practice during reconstruction were contained in the National Insurance Act 1946 and the National Assistance Act 1948. These, together with the National Health Service Act 1946, Children's Act 1948, Education Act 1944 and the Family Allowances Act 1945 constituted the legislative creation of universal state welfare provision. Although in recent years a comprehensive welfare system has sometimes been accused of eliminating the need for the family at all,[7] at its inception the aim was to strengthen the family and to protect it from potentially disruptive tensions, such as those caused by

illness, poverty or the frustration of deprivation. It was hoped that the welfare state would provide the family in crisis with enough support to prevent either its collapse or its failure to adequately maintain family members. As I pointed out in more detail in Section (a)(iii) above, the welfare state did make general provision for the relief of poverty of all sorts, but it also assumed and strengthened a traditional sexual division of labour in which men provided and women cared. It supported family life, but a particular style of family life in which women were housewives.

The second example of government promotion of family life, taken from housing and planning policies, similarly brought general gain to the whole family, but also had a specific and more ambiguous impact on women within it. In the field of housing, the most outstanding development during reconstruction was the rapid increase in numbers and standards of new homes. Between 1945 and 1950, 806,000 new houses and 157,000 prefabricated homes were built (Marwick, 1982, p.59), although these figures should, of course, be balanced by the fact that 475,000 houses were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable by war (Burnett, 1978, p.277). The public desire for new and better housing was strong and it has been suggested that failure to meet its promised target of 240,000 new homes a year was a major reason for the Labour government's electoral defeat (*ibid*). Although the actual provision of public housing was delayed for a short time at the immediate end of the war, planning both the houses and the new communities in which they were placed was an important aspect of reconstruction, and both the Reith Committee Report and New Towns Act of 1946 dealt with this issue. Private housing was increasing rapidly and it should be noted that there has been a massive change in housing tenure

over the post-war period: before 1914, less than 10 per cent of all houses in England and Wales were owner-occupied; in 1950, 29 per cent were (Burnett, 1978, p.295).[8] The standards and design of both public and private housing showed marked improvements to pre-war norms and, for example, the Dudley Report recommended an increase in house size, and a raising of the level of services and equipment in kitchens and bathrooms (Burnett, 1978, chapters 10 and 11). It should, of course, be remembered that these new standards were not universal. The nation still carried a large, low-standard housing stock and in 1951 one-third of the total housing stock was over eighty years old, 37 per cent of all households lacked a fixed bath and 13 per cent only had access to a shared toilet (Burnett, 1978, p.278).

As with the form of welfare provision, however, the form of new housing had ideological implications which specifically encouraged family life with a traditional division of labour between the sexes.[9] The new houses and towns were planned according to a particular concept of community and 'the physical embodiment of concepts of community is based upon patriarchal assumptions about the role and life style of women' (McDowell, 1983a, p.146). Women were assumed to be solely employed by the family, and housing plans assumed and then gave physical reality to 'the segregation of women from areas of urban life other than those associated with running a home and childcare' (McDowell, 1983a, p.146; 1983b). While assumptions such as these have been in evidence since the end of the First World War, their retention at a time of major replanning is of particular significance here. In the context of building New Towns, the implicit and explicit gender divisions of urban planning were an important aspect of reconstruction. Inside the house, the gender division within a

traditional family unit was such that improvements in interior design may have been of ambiguous benefit for women. The improved interiors served to strengthen the idea that a house was serviced by a housewife, and that the home was her workplace. For example, in the private sector the kitchen became smaller and supposedly more labour-saving, so that middle-class women could manage the house without the help of paid servants, whose numbers were now very small indeed. This not only clarified the duties of the housewife, but may also have been a mixed blessing since it meant the kitchen was now too small to be used as an eating room (Burnett, 1978, p.297) and thus the domestic chores of fetching, carrying and serving would have been increased. In public sector housing, the impact of new standards on the housewife was even more striking. There is evidence that high domestic standards were a prerequisite of families being rehoused in new properties (McDowell, 1983a, p.156) and so, by being better housewives, women could actually increase the family's chances in the housing market. There are also records of housing visitors and managers handing out specific advice on housekeeping routines and standards to tenants in the new houses (<u>ibid</u>; Ungerson, 1971).

Thus the general benefits of both welfare and housing provision encouraged a particular style of family life, and this was one which meant that the provision itself had a specific - and possibly more ambiguous - impact on women. The reasons why government was keen to promote such a style of family life should also be considered.

In the first place, there were widespread fears, fuelled by the reduced birthrate and war losses, about Britain's ability to staff a large-enough army for another war, and about Britain's sharply reduced

labour force. Beveridge had made an explicit appeal to women in his Report:

> Mothers have vital work to do in ensuring the adequate continuance of the British race (Beveridge, 1942, p.53)

and during the reconstruction years there was 'what can loosely be referred to as "a climate of pronatalist opinion"' (Riley, 1983, p.153).

In the second place, there was some concern about the very high illegitimacy rates, which were seen as a potential threat to social stability. They had almost doubled between 1940 and 1945 (Minns, 1980, p.183), and propaganda appeals to have babies made it clear that the family was the only suitable site for nurturing new citizens. This was evidenced by the passing of the Family Allowances Act, described in more detail in the previous section, as one government incentive for women to have children within the confines of the nuclear family unit.

Thirdly, government needed to promote and be seen to reward the work of the housewife, since her full co-operation was necessary so that rationing could be extended.

> For the housewife the reality of life continued to be shortages and queues and this was the more dispiriting since Britain had supposedly been victorious in the war. Things got even worse. In 1946 bread was rationed, and in 1947 the butter, meat and bacon rations were cut (Wilson, 1977, p.155).

Just as in war-time, official lip-service was paid in tribute to the housewives' work. Edith Summerskill, as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food, spoke in a debate on domestic supplies about

> her whom I consider to be the Cinderella of the world - the housewife, who toils seven days a week and does overtime. We do, I feel, have many debates on economics in this House, but we never, apparently, devote a full day to discussing the conditions of the most important producers in the country - the producers of babies: babies who will become workers and solve some of our most difficult economic problems (Hansard, 1947, p.2742).

Talking in Parliament about the problems faced by the housewife was one example of the elevation of her status.

Fourthly, the end of war signalled potential revolution or serious social disruption. Promoting a return to the status quo of family life, and an improvement in its standard of living, was an effective way of encouraging social stability at such a politically sensitive time.

I do not want to suggest that government was the only influence on the emphasis to rebuild family life. As early as 1943, the Picture Post published an article called 'Why Women Don't Have Babies', which concluded that

> Probably the most constructive thing we could do now is through education - we could encourage people to think about family life at a much younger age than they do at present. It seems lop-sided that many girls should read Greek and Latin, but have no notion how to fry an egg (Scott James, 1943, p.151).

Content analysis of women's magazines at the end of the war has shown that they too played a significant part in the trend to establish 'kitchen concerns and the home-maker role' (Ferguson, 1983, p.21). Even the Communist Party daily paper, having argued for women's full-scale entry into the labour force during the war, changed its message in the late 1940s and

> led the way in presenting a more restricted view of women's interests and political potential. Recipes, clothes patterns and articles on childcare, fashion and shopping ... became the standard offering in the women's section of the paper (Davis, 1982, p.102).

The movement towards a new femininity was illustrated in fashion by the 'New Look', disapproved of on the grounds of frivolity and superficiality by the Labour government.

It is, of course, impossible to measure how far any signs of post-war enthusiasm for re-establishment of the traditional family form might have been due to government and media pressures, and how far they were simply due to the wish on the part of individuals to restore some sense of order to their lives after the chaos of war. In any event, there can be no doubt that there was a dramatic increase in the numbers of babies being born. In 1944, the birthrate per 1,000 women aged 15-44 was 76.7; in 1946 it was 84.3; and it peaked in 1947 at 91.5 (Cole, 1956, p.10) forming the now well-known post-war baby boom.

Again, the thoughts of a housewife recording for Mass Observation are relevant:

> I want to cry 'Mothers unite. Let's all be old-fashioned'. After all, babies and little ones are the oldest-fashioned thing there is ... why, we would make a new world in two short generations and wipe out bitter memories, make racial hatreds perish - and better than a man or men ever could (Broad and Fleming, 1981, p.261).

These sentiments may very well have echoed those of the thousands of women who took the end of the war as their sign to begin an unprecedented national move to have families.

Re-establishing family life in the context of reconstruction did not only mean women having babies: it also meant living in a house designed

for the purpose of family living, and enjoying an increased standard of domestic comfort. I pointed out above that there was a massive increase in the number and standard of family homes. This leads me to the second of the demands that the economy was making on women: it needed women at home to produce new workers, but it also needed them in employment to make consumer goods and to staff the new welfare state. Women were an obvious choice for the new jobs created during reconstruction because they had responded to government appeals to help the nation's economy during war-time, and it could be assumed that they would do the same during reconstruction. It should be remembered that the labour shortage was so extreme that government was also prompted to draw extensively on immigrant labour, but my remarks here are confined to its appeal for female employment.

In recent years, discussion about women's employment at the end of the war has tended to focus on their being expected to vacate the jobs they had taken on as part of the war effort. However, although images of women being ordered back to the home when soldiers returned from war have been remarkably persistent, the government did not specifically order a mass female exodus from paid work. Certainly women were expected to leave _men's_ jobs, but their employment in traditionally male areas had, from the start, been presented as a purely temporary phenomenon. Leaving these jobs was simply a sign to all concerned that the world was slowly returning to normal, and that the war was really over. Thus, although many women were sent out of men's jobs - often by the implementation of pre-war agreements that they should do so when the men returned from fighting - they were not sent home.

In 1947, the Ministry of Labour _Gazette_ reported that, in

contradiction to Beveridge's calculations,

> The need to increase the working population is not temporary, it is a permanent feature in our national life ... Women now form the only large reserve of labour left and to them the government are accordingly making a special appeal (cited in Land, 1976, p.116).

In the summer of 1947, there were 300,000 outstanding vacancies for women workers (Riley, 1983, p.133) and

> film trailers, cinema slides, shop window displays and special recruiting centres were introduced in sixty-nine districts of female labour shortage (ibid).[10]

The Ministry of Labour also specified where women were most wanted. They were needed primarily in the expanding welfare state, the clothing trade and the service industries: in short, they were wanted in all the areas where their employment would not challenge either traditional gender stereotypes or occupational segregation. Thus women's employment outside the home need not be an obstacle to the general move to re-establish a traditional order after the chaos of war.

Although government wanted women to staff certain sections of the labour market, it stressed that it was not appealing to women workers who had very young children. Their rightful place was felt to be at home. One illustration of this is the run-down of state nurseries at the end of the war. Many of the nurseries were closed: after 1945, the Exchequer's grant to the local authorities was halved; responsibility was handed over to them; and requisitioned buildings were no longer available to house nurseries. Government did not explicitly argue that women should be at home if they had young children and indeed in Parliament the reason for

nursery closure was given as under-use: women themselves simply did not want to leave young children in public hands while they went out to paid work (Riley, 1979). This can be linked to the general wish to re-establish the old order:

> The conditions under which working women got state childcare were emergency conditions: the gross event of a world war in which the demand for a labour force could temporarily override the sexual division of labour in a 'normal economy' (Riley, 1979, p.106).

The 'gross event' being over meant that the traditional family unit could be reformed and in this it was women, not the state, who bore responsibility for child-care. Given the nation's enthusiasm for 'normality' and 'the natural' after war, the under-use and closure of nurseries could perhaps have been predicted.[11]

Again, it is not possible to measure how far women who were in employment had responded to government appeals to do so, and how far they did so simply to finance the increased family standard of living which had been promised for so long. In either event, it is clear that women did not return to the home <u>en masse</u>. In 1939 approximately 6 million women were in employment; in 1948, 6,785,000; and by 1958, 7,625,000 (Riley, 1983, p.147). If government was reluctant to recruit young mothers to the workforce, it was keen to employ older married women, and they were the targets of propaganda. This can be illustrated by the fact that the marriage bar for female teachers was removed in 1944 and for female civil servants in 1945. There was a sharp increase in the numbers of married women in employment. Whereas in 1911 only one in ten of married women had a job, in 1951 the figure was one in five (Oakley, 1981, p.147).

In this section of the chapter, then, I have argued that the years of

reconstruction can be characterized by a wish to re-establish family life after the total disruption of war. While for the government such a wish was prompted in the first instance by the need for social stability, for individual families the wish simply developed from having suffered the chaos of war for so long. In this general context, however, specific demands were made of women. They were encouraged to play a traditional part in family life: to have babies and to look after the house and family. At the same time, however, they were encouraged to staff predominantly female sectors of the labour market in the welfare state and production of consumer goods. These two demands seem to have been reconciled by different female behaviour at different stages of the life cycle and, while young mothers conformed with the re-establishment of 'normal' family life by staying at home, older married women did paid labour.

(d) Conclusions and Summary

In this chapter I have identified various features of war and reconstruction which might have been of particular significance to girls aged between 2 and 12 in 1939 and 13 and 23 in 1950. As I made clear in Chapter 2, I have not suggested that these were necessarily of causal significance to women's actions in later life, but that they are essential elements in the backcloth to an analysis of individual lives of women in the age-group. Outstanding among the aspects of war which I have highlighted here were the total disruption of family life; the introduction of a distinctive system of housekeeping which was imposed by the scarcity of resources; and the creation, by government policies and propaganda, of a highly optimistic view of the future. Reconstruction

itself was marked by the re-establishment of family life, including a reaffirmation of traditional gender roles and this was encouraged by various government policies. A general increase in the standard of living was also achieved, and this was often funded by the wages from female labour. In particular, older married women entered the labour force in greater numbers than they had done during the pre-war period. In short, it was a time of great social and political change: the British way of life changed rapidly and massively at the same time as girls in this age group were growing up. Out of the upheaval, women's roles emerged as essentially contradictory: they were needed both to do unpaid domestic work at home and to do paid work outside it.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. Although, of course, some less well-publicised reasons for the propaganda campaign were the fears about not being able to preserve the health of the next generation in the face of predicted heavy war-time losses, and about a severe drop in national morale if great numbers of women and children were killed in the towns.

2. For a fuller account of women's employment in the inter-war years, see Chapter 9 below.

3. Although these figures - as any based on official counts of the employed - should be treated with caution. For example, the excess could be partly explained by a greater propensity on the part of government to 'count' women's work at a time when it was encouraging women to work outside the home .

4. Although they were doing jobs which were usually done by men, women did not work under the same conditions. Much health and safety legislation was suspended and the workplace became more unpleasant and more dangerous. The normal working day was extended to eleven hours, from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and the night shift was increased. In addition to this, women's pay was considerably lower than the male rate for the same work: in July 1943, a Ministry of Labour survey on wages showed that men over 21 earned 121s 4d while women over 18 earned 62s 11d, and men under 21 earned 47s 1d while women under 18 earned 33s 11d (Minns, 1980, p.39). In 1944, women metal workers earned exactly half of the male rate (Minns, 1980, p.41).

5. See the following section for a discussion of the use of media other than official government publications.

6. The other two were that government would provide a family allowance system and a national health service.

7. The recent adoption of the term 'Nanny State' reflects the idea that the state has taken over functions more properly left to the family itself.

8. More dramatic changes than this took place in the following two decades and are discussed in the next chapter. Here, however, the beginning of a trend should be noted.

9. These themes are discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

10. The post-war recruitment drive was highly regionalised and in some areas, such as South Wales, a pattern of full-time domesticity for married women was soon resumed.

11. The point is, however, that the demands put upon young mothers meant that many of them did not want to work outside the home. The conflicting demands made of women to have paid employment as well as to take full responsibility for child care could only be met if women returned to the labour market once their children were at school. Such a trend became more marked in the following decades, but was begun in these reconstruction years.

CHAPTER FOUR

ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S LIVES: 1951-1980

In this chapter I continue the task of presenting a brief social history of the period through which the age-group under study have lived. I deal with the period from 1951 to 1980 and, again, I do not attempt to produce a comprehensive account of these years, but instead highlight general trends which I suggest might have been particularly relevant for women in the chosen age-group.

(a) The 1950s and 1960s

(i) The home-centred family: housing, planning and education

During this period there was a marked concentration on improving the physical standards of family life for the masses, and I illustrate this here with examples from housing, planning and education policies.

The widespread destruction of houses during the war meant that a large-scale rebuilding programme became a priority after it. 'There was no longer any hesitation by the state in involving itself in a housing policy' (Burnett, 1978, p.277) and promises to rebuild became a major issue in the 1945 election campaign. By 1951, 900,000 new homes had been built and in 1954 there was a record number of 348,000 (ibid). There was also a dramatic change in tenure, with a shift from private and council tenancies to home ownership. In 1950, 29 per cent of all houses in England and Wales were owner-occupied, compared with 40 per cent in 1961 and 49 per cent in 1970 (Burnett, 1978, p.301; Toland, 1980, p.28). The standards of privately and publicly-owned houses converged during the period, and one aspect of this was a standardisation of house size and number of rooms (Burnett, 1978, p.276).

The interior quality as well as the quantity of houses was improved during this era. The Parker Norris Report of 1961 was not mandatory, but

set standards for both private and public builders and can be cited here as an example of contemporary ideals for the home. Interestingly, it related many of its proposals directly to changes which it identified in the British way of life and its first section dealt specifically with 'new patterns of living'. The recommendations both reflected and enabled the use of the home as a leisure centre for the family, and to this end guidelines were given for increased space and for extended upstairs and downstairs heating systems. In the Report, rooms lost their more formal ritual values, and took on functional designations, becoming, for example, living or dining rooms: 'The Report ... marked the public demise of the "parlour"' (Burnett, 1978, p.290). Parker Norris paid particular attention to the kitchen, and to the labour which was performed in it. Now, for the first time, architects assumed that domestic labour would be exclusively performed by the housewife, working from the kitchen. With this in mind 'special attention was devoted to the kitchen in a final effort to elevate it from the dreary scullery to the heart of the house' (ibid). Kitchens were designed as pleasant workplaces, whose efficiency was to be improved by plans based on time-and-motion studies. These introduced rational worksurface/equipment alternate sequences, and improved fitments, lighting and electrical installations.[1]

Planned and actual improvements in housing were not restricted to the physical standards of the homes, and planners sought to create a particular sort of community in which to locate the new houses:

> Community ... has been set up as the ideal towards which social, economic, and physical planning should be aiming in the development of new residential areas of all types (Thornes, 1976, p.42).

The concern to establish an enhanced sense of community developed not only from the chaos of war, but also from post-war worries about the degeneration of social and family life during the rapid urbanisation earlier in the century. During the 1950s and 1960s, several studies appeared which found that a sense of community was lacking, both on new estates (Young and Willmott, 1957) and in well-established areas which were receiving an influx of new industries (Stacey, 1960). There were publicly-expressed worries that the new urban industrial age had no firm moral code, and that social relations within it were becoming increasingly anomic and alienating, a potentially serious threat to social stability. Because of this, planners set out to re-create a sense of community, and this they did largely by reference to a nostalgic model of rural village life in a bygone and unspecified era when, it was assumed, social relations were of a more rewarding, supporting and socially cohesive nature.[2] The planned buildings themselves echoed a bygone age, as remarked upon in one study of an estate with extensive post-war building:

> In England the new is only acceptable if it embodies the old, and nowhere has this lesson been more fully learnt than in house design ... the houses privately built after 1945 express ... hankering for the first Elizabeth and for earlier times by stained 'Cathedral' glass which is used for the top halves of doors and in the round windows of halls and lavatories (Willmott and Young, 1960, p.21).

A rural theme was also pursued:

> The newest, flat-fronted versions of the suburban house often boast a band of white-painted clapboarding, reminiscent of the charming rural architecture of Kent and the coastal districts of Essex (cited in Burnett, 1969, p.298).

Ironically, even high-rise flats, which ultimately came to be seen as

symbols of urban decay, were at first planned as part of this search for rural calm. Encouraged by government subsidies for high-rise developments, local authority architecture produced 'designs for "vertical garden cities" and "communities in the air" packaged to appeal to the garden-loving, anti-urban British' (McDowell, 1983a, p.159).

The creation of a qualitatively improved community was not only pursued in visual ways. Several sociological studies of social life on new estates made recommendations for planning which would recreate the social relations of village life, and these proposals became incorporated into the general vision of the way to achieve a rewarding community life (Kuper, 1953; Willmott and Young, 1957, 1960). For example, it was suggested that planners design roads in the shape of a banjo rather than a straight line, so as to increase residents' chances of meeting neighbours (Willmott, 1963). The importance of leisure buildings was stressed, so that the whole family could join in the community. Modern equivalents of the village hall were sought so that the community spirit had physical space in which to develop (Wirz, 1975, chapter 8).

Housing and planning policies, then, are good examples of the post-war emphasis on improving the general standard of family life. They publicised the idea of a fresh start, of new worlds away from city slums and bomb damage, and they suggested that social problems, such as loneliness or delinquency, could be solved by architectural intervention. They sought to provide the environment for the new life which had been planned throughout the war years, whose vision had been offered as a reward to the British people for their many sacrifices during the war. The themes of optimism and promise which I discussed in Chapter 3 were turned to reality by the boom in building new and better houses and

estates.

These policies also assumed and encouraged a specific role for women, as full-time wives and mothers, and this is of particular relevance here. There is little doubt that, just as the kitchen became the heart of the home in new plans, so women were seen to be the heart of the kitchen. As already mentioned, many of the changes in kitchens were prompted by the decline in domestic service, and the general observation that

> Housewives who formerly confined their energies to the drawing room and dining room now found themselves cooking, washing, cleaning and generally maintaining houses which had not been designed with a primary view to convenience, and spending much of their time in kitchens which were 'fit' only for servants (Burnett, 1978, p.273).

The new houses were meant to bring great improvements to women's conditions of domestic labour, but in doing so they reinforced the idea that housework was women's work. Indeed, by reducing some of the most physically exhausting aspects of housework, architects joined a general trend to 'upgrade' housework, and to promote housework and motherhood as being fulfilling and enjoyable occupations. Housework could no longer be assumed to be the heavy domestic labour of paid servants, but was presented as the 'chosen' occupation of all married women. Thus,

> The drudgery must be removed so that the more stimulating and rewarding aspects of childcare and beautification of the home could have a higher priority; the theme of 'the housewife's home is her factory' was part of the broader theme of 'homemaking as a career' so popular after the war (Wilson, 1980, p.22).

By providing higher quality modern homes, private and public authorities alike were also increasing the domestic standards expected of

women in the home. In the private sector this can be evidenced simply by the observation that since standards in new housing were assumed to be perfect, women had perfection to live up to. There was no excuse for dirt or disorder, and there was every facility to produce elaborate meals. Women were given all modern aids in their new factory-inspired kitchens, and were expected to be a reliable and highly-achieving workforce. In the public sector, there was evidence of more precise and overt imposition of domestic standards. Selection of tenants for the new estates was often based on reports submitted by housing visitors, who would fill out forms grading the type of person, furniture and cleanliness. Thus the new houses set higher standards for cleanliness, and their occupancy could be held out as an incentive to housewives elsewhere as a reward for diligent housewifery.

The new estates accelerated the processes of separating the spheres of home and work, and identifying women with the former and men with the latter (McDowell, 1983a, 1983b). The whole concept of community which informed these plans equated women with moral order and social relations, and assumed that women would

> create a miniature version of the domestic idyll, set in subtopian pseudo-rural estate surroundings ... wives remain protectors of the true community (Davidoff _et al._, 1976, p.175).

Moreover, while housing and planning policies promoted one image of women as housewives, they gave equal emphasis to another of women as mothers. In both images, the emphasis was on the family unit, within which women played their traditional parts of housewives and mothers. Women and children together inhabited and brought alive the home and community; men

were expected to leave this environment each day in order to earn the money to maintain both it and their families. Thus, this vision of community relied on women being full-time wives and the bearers and rearers of children, and on men being breadwinners. The physical separation of new homes from the centres of industrial employment, coupled with poor transport links, reduced the possibility of women doing part-time paid work, or of being able to move far from the home and school at all during the day (McDowell, 1983a, 1983b). Thus women were physically as well as emotionally tied to the new houses and estates.

Housing and planning policies of the 1950s and 1960s, then, can be seen as both reflecting and nurturing a certain ideology of family life, which placed a great emphasis on improvements to both qualitative and quantitative standards, and which expected women to play a particular role as full-time wives and mothers. Further examples of the focus on improving family life and strengthening the division of labour within it can be taken from the field of education.

The main point to note here is that, despite the emphasis on equality in the 1944 Education Act, distinctions on the grounds of gender were both marked and officially encouraged. 'Official and popular ideologies of girls' education throughout this period stress the primacy of women's domestic role' (Birmingham Feminist History Group [BFHG], 1979, p.51). These distinctions derived from the assumption that girls would be full-time mothers when they left school, and that boys would be full-time paid workers. Girls' education was, therefore, geared towards the domestic rather than the academic, and one report even argued that academically successful girls in particular should be guided towards maternity, for eugenicist reasons:

> It is especially important that intelligent girls, carrying as they do genes of good intelligence, should be good mothers and make the most of their gifted children (Lloyd, 1952, p.15).

Many educational principles such as these were influenced by John Newsom, whose writings on girls' education were published in 1948 and had the reactionary theme of returning to former, more closely demarcated, gender roles:

> The brave new world he looked for was a return to pre-suffrage days: 'The future of women's education lies not in attempting to iron out their differences from men, to reduce them to neuters, but to teach girls how to grow into women and to relearn the graces which so many have forgotten in the last thirty years' (Newsom, 1948, p.109 cited in Wilson, 1980, p.33).

Newsom wanted girls to be trained not only as wives and mothers, but as consumers too. He included a section on women as purchasers in his book, arguing that

> Woman as purchaser holds the future standard of living of this country in her hands ... if she buys in ignorance then our national standards will degenerate (Newsom, 1948, p.103 cited in Wilson, 1980, p.36).

Despite the 1950s' expansion in education provision, girls continued to be taught to be wives and mothers rather than members of the paid work-force. Even by 1963, little had changed:

> For all girls ... there is a group of interests relating to what many, perhaps most of them, would regard as their most important vocational concern, marriage ... at the age of 14 and 15 ... many girls are ready to respond to work relating to the wider aspects of home-making and family life and the care and upbringing of children (HMSO, 1963, p.37).

Thus educational policy provides an example of the concentration on

women's roles as housewives during the 1950s and 1960s. Nevertheless, it would have directly affected only a minority of the age-group under study here. Wider theories about the role of the mother were of more direct relevance to them since during the 1950s the majority were in the age-group most likely to have a family.

During the 1950s, there was a general emphasis on maternal education and the importance of maternal behaviour in affecting the later adult lives of young children. This was prompted by several developments:

> The combination of the loss of life on the front and at home, the consistent fall in the birth rate over a period of time, and the revelations as a result of evacuation both about the separation anxieties of children away from their mothers and the inadequate standards of childcare amongst the working class in middle-class eyes, all led to a concern with motherhood (BFHG, 1979, p.54).

The importance of mothers in promoting their children's healthy psychological development was scientifically proved by Bowlby, whose research appeared in popularised, paperback form in 1953, and was extremely influential in moulding contemporary ideas about motherhood. His work causally linked maternal deprivation in childhood with later delinquent behaviour, and was generally interpreted as providing proof of a child's need for a full-time mother. One discussion of this and other examples of Bowlby's work summarises some of his findings thus:

> The child <u>can</u> be left briefly with its father, granny or a neighbour for emergencies, or for a trip out for the mother ... but ... such expeditions are potentially dangerous, needing careful preparations: brief diversions, or brief necessary work is permissible for the mother, but it is a risky undertaking (Riley, 1983, p.101).

Bowlby's work encouraged the identification of women with full-time

motherhood, and argued that this was the duty of any caring female parent. By stressing the importance of emotional as well as physical care, it modified the usual job description of a mother - this no longer comprised feeding, cleaning-up and supervisory work, which could easily be delegated, but became a highly complex process demanding particular emotional and nurturing skills. Bowlby did not conclude that maternal deprivation could be avoided simply by mothers being with their children. Indeed, he argued that

> A child is deprived even though living at home if his mother ... is unable to give him the loving care small children need (Bowlby, 1953, p.14)

and that such a situation resulted in partial deprivation, which

> brings in its train anxiety, excessive need for love, powerful feelings of revenge and, arising from these last, guilt and depression. A young child, still immature in mind and body, cannot cope with all these emotions and drives (ibid).

Thus his ideas both expanded and professionalised the role and work of maternity.

Promoting ideas such as these was facilitated by an effective multi-media campaign of maternal education. The child welfare movement was still expanding, and state-financed mother and baby clinics aimed to teach women how to care for their children so that they would not grow up to be delinquents (BFHG, 1979). By the mid-1950s there were over 200 Family Planning Associations, more than two-thirds of which were on local authority premises, and these stressed the importance of limiting family size so that the quality of life and parenting could be maximised (BFHG, 1979, pp.58-9). There was a great increase in mass-produced leaflets as

part of the campaign. One contemporary study of women's lives noted that 'a cult of home-making and motherhood is fostered by press and propaganda' (Myrdal and Klein, 1956, p.145) and women's magazines in particular

> concentrated on child-centred mothering as well as on the importance of domestic skills (Wilson, 1980, p.39).

Bowlby's message was being passed on efficiently: that women should see motherhood as a full-time and highly-skilled occupation.

Thus the education of both mothers and children provides a third example of the way in which public policies of the 1950s and 1960s emphasised the development of a new home-centredness and an association of women with a particular type of full-time domesticity. In the next section I consider whether family life matched its ideal form as evidenced by these policies.

(ii) Women's roles in the family and the community

There seems little doubt that in general terms the assumptions which lay behind the policies discussed above, and the way of life which they encouraged, were put into practice. New houses were built, and families moved into them. Social life became more concentrated on the family and home, and the outstanding development in this context was the establishment of television-watching as a major national pastime. In the early 1950s very few homes had television sets, but by 1961 75 per cent of households owned one (Toland, 1980, p.33). Other home-based entertainments such as cine-photography and record-playing became more popular as they became technologically more efficient and far less expensive (ibid). The biggest drop in cinema audiences which has ever

been recorded took place in the 1950s.

One general effect of the standardisation of public and private housing was that it became more difficult to identify private housing. Further, as mortgages became more widely available, it was more difficult to estimate the occupation or social class of individuals by the houses they occupied. This erosion of differences was remarked on in one study of a suburban estate thus:

> The suburb as a whole certainly bears a middle-class stamp, probably more now than ever before. On the way to work electricians and bank clerks wear the same sort of clothes, and, what is more, so do their wives. They sometimes drive the same sort of cars, and sometimes the interiors of their houses are indistinguishable too. In each you can watch the same television set from the same mass-produced sofa (Willmott and Young, 1960, p.23).

Such convergence meant that new means of expressing status differences were sought by owner-occupants who wanted to distinguish themselves from tenants, and by tenants who wanted to emulate owners or to improve their own standing on an estate.

> It became ever more important to accentuate the identity of the private house by such symbols as a distinctive facade and front garden (Burnett, 1978, p.295).

Thus time spent on gardening or extensions was not seen as a waste but as an investment in improving status in the community. During this period there was a marked increase in home improvements and DIY (Toland, 1980, p.29). Another way to advertise status was by the conspicuous consumption of domestic equipment:

> Where nearly everyone is a stranger, there is no means of uncovering personality ... judgement must therefore rest on the trappings of the man rather than on the man himself. If people have nothing else to go

> by, they judge from his appearance, his house, or even his Minimotor. He is evaluated accordingly (Young and Willmott, 1957, p.162).

The growth in ownership of vacuum cleaners, washing machines and refrigerators was particularly marked. In 1956, for example, about 8 per cent of households had refrigerators, compared with 33 per cent in 1962 and 90 per cent in 1978 (Toland, 1980, p.32). Consumer patterns such as these have led one author to remark that

> The principal change in the home environment this century has not occurred through improvements in architecture or building standards, but as a result of the equipment that has become available for people to buy to put in their homes (Forty, 1975, p.40).

The growth in consumer goods was not restricted to large items: gadgets such as mincers, mixers and peelers all became cheap enough for mass consumption during the 1950s (Forty, 1975), but were still modern enough for their ownership to enhance status.

Again I should point out that some of these developments began in the inter-war years, and this theme is explored in greater depth in Chapter 9. In the 1950s and 1960s, however, what had been a trend among the middle classes during the 1930s became mass practice. The studies of new estates in the 1950s and 1960s to which I am referring here were by no means restricted to middle-class suburbia. One study, for example, which was based on interviews with tenants on a new London County Council estate commented particularly on new standards of pride in the home:

> When people move to Greenleigh, the standard of life, measured by the quality of housing, is at once raised. They attempt to bring the level in other respects up to the same standard. Furniture and carpets have to be bought ... Moreover, the house is only the beginning. A nice house and shabby clothes, a neat garden and an old box of a pram, do not go together ... Smartness calls for smartness (Young and Willmott, 1957, p.162).

Several cultural and community studies from the 1950s and 1960s commented on women's roles in this new, family and home-centred way of life. The overriding theme here was one of optimism: not only about women's experiences but also about the rewards of the modern style of family life. An important aspect of this was claimed to be the development of a more equal partnership between husband and wife. One general history of women which was published in 1953 concluded optimistically that

> Today she has learnt to recognise the true gold in an equal partnership, and it has become hers, to keep and to cherish (Brittain, 1953, p.241).

Several contemporary studies referred to this pattern, and related it to the general move to a more home-centred existence:

> Modern conditions of work, both in the factory and in the home, have eliminated much of the drudgery in the lives of ordinary people in recent years; and a consequence seems to be that many young couples are now able to enjoy the simple pleasures of bringing up a family as never before (Newson and Newson, 1963, p.244).

This particular study of child-care practices found that there was also a marked change in paternal willingness to be involved in caring for children, and that this drew the genders closer together. It concluded that:

> The emancipation of women in one generation has been followed by the domestication of husbands in the next; and, in the home, many of the traditional distinctions between what used to be considered women's work and men's work are wearing rather thin (Newson and Newson, 1963, p.133; see also Willmott and Young, 1960, pp.30-1).

Another study pointed out that conjugal intimacy was related to previous social relations:

> If husband and wife come to marriage with loose-knit networks, or if their networks become loose-knit after marriage, they must seek in each other some of the emotional satisfaction and help with familial tasks that couples in close-knit networks can get from outsiders (Bott, 1957, p.218).

While findings such as these echo the hopeful tone of public policies dealing with family life, it should be noted that such optimistic conclusions were not universal and that other authors highlighted a less enjoyable side of family life for women. Many young mothers were isolated on the new estates, trapped in their homes both by poor transport and by ideological pressures to provide their children with constant care. The lonely housewife was particularly well-documented in those studies which looked specifically at the impact of post-war planning and rehousing policies on social relations in the community (Mogey, 1956; Willmott and Young, 1960; Young and Willmott, 1957). These generally established that many policies had been socially disruptive, and they made recommendations to revise policy so that authorities do 'not uproot more people, but build the new houses around the social groups to which they already belong' (Young and Willmott, 1957, p.199). They found that the housewife was one of the main casualties of these disruptive housing policies, being uprooted from her traditionally supportive social networks of family and childhood friends, and marooned on new estates on the outskirts of towns and cities where neighbourhood ties did not adequately replace those of kinship obligation. One study of housewives with at least one child was carried out in the early 1960s and found that

> A picture emerges of a rather isolated, extremely family-centred existence, with the focus not on the extended family but on the nuclear family (Gavron, 1966, p.100).

This study also made a distinction between working and middle-class

housewives, finding that:

> many middle-class wives felt they were becoming rather isolated, but they attempted to do something positive about it, such as joining the Housebound Wives' Register (Gavron, 1966, p.142)

whereas the working-class women tended to remain in isolation, cut off from traditional support networks. Although findings such as these seemed to contradict the optimism which guided public policies such as housing, they were not taken as a serious challenge to them since there was a general consensus that, although young housewives in the brave new world might be facing new problems of isolation, such problems could be solved by architectural and planning initiatives to promote social interaction.

One focus of such initiatives was to preserve the ties of the extended family. The work of the Institute of Community Studies was particularly influential in the context, exploring the hypothesis that when families were rehoused away from their extended families the quality of life suffered and their social support systems became inadequate (Willmott and Young, 1960; Young and Willmott, 1957). Some of this research has more recently been referred to as 'the studies that put working-class mums on the middle-class map' (Frankenberg, 1976, p.43). Such studies created a stereotype of a matriarch at 'the head and centre of the extended family' (Young and Willmott, 1957, p.49). They argued that

> Most women take it for granted (however inappropriate the image) that this is where Mum belongs - 'on a pedestal' (Young and Willmott, 1957, p.50).

The difference between the experiences of women from different generations was obvious here: the matriarch was middle-aged, with adult children, and provided a stark contrast to younger married women on the new estates.

Following on from the theme of a matriarchy, those writing about social life in the 1950s and 1960s argued that male and female experiences were very different, thus providing empirical evidence which supported the assumptions of housing and planning policies. One study gave a detailed account of the daily routine of a husband and wife, and found that 'sometimes the split between the lives of husband and wife has been driven so far that they hardly seem to inhabit the same world' (Willmott and Young, 1960, p.27). While these authors suggested that such a pattern had been exacerbated by the spatial separation of spheres which was encouraged by new housing developments, studies of more traditional communities discerned the same patterns:

> A man's centres of activity are outside his home ... the wife's position is very different. In a very consciously accepted division of labour, she must keep in good order the household provided for by the money handed to her each Friday by her husband. While he is at work she should complete her day's work - washing, ironing, cleaning or whatever it may be - and she must have ready for him a good meal (Dennis _et al._, 1956, pp.180-1).

It was found that young women tended to see themselves as potentially full-time housewives and mothers:[3]

> The work of a woman is entirely bound up with the family and she sees herself always as part of a family unit (Stacey, 1960, p.125).
>
> Young women in Ashton see their future in terms of being married and running a household; they have no prospects of professional or other social interests and activities outside the home (Dennis _et al._, 1956, p.182).

The female 'career' of housewifery and motherhood took a particular form on the new estates where, as I argued above, domestic standards could be a conspicuous proof of status. A number of authors pursued 'the theme

that the Englishwoman's home is her factory' (Frankenberg, 1966, p.225), and considered the question of who set the standards in this workplace. In the areas of newer housing:

> Although interaction with neighbours is at a minimum, their presence is felt. They are perceived as watchful eyes looking for faults in the housewife's craftsmanship as wife, housekeeper and mother (Frankenberg, 1966, p.231),

while in the longer-established areas

> the women's occupation - housework - is a skill learned from and shared with the mother (Klein, 1965, p.187).

The strength of the mother-daughter tie was one of the major themes of these studies (Stacey, 1960, p.124; Townsend, 1957, p.67):

> When she marries, and even more when she leaves work to have children, she returns to the woman's world, and to her mother ... they share so much and give such help to each other because, in their women's world, they have the same functions of caring for home and bringing up children (Willmott and Young, 1957, p.61).

The women's world revolved around housework and childcare, but also included the creation of a network of community networks and support. Women were the 'main bearers of neighbour relations' (Kuper, 1953, p.42) on new estates, and they were the most active in forming residents' associations and meeting neighbours (Frankenberg, 1966, chapter 8). In longer-established districts, it was women who staffed the alternative welfare state of the three generation family which, the studies found, was the main reason why these localities demonstrated remarkable social cohesion (Young and Willmott, 1957, pp.196-7).

In summary, the lives of young wives and mothers in the home in the

1950s and 1960s reflected the home-centredness and sexual division of labour which was prompted by certain public policies such as housing. In the discussion here, however, it has become clear that the image of the full-time wife and mother which was recurrent in public rhetoric may have been romanticised. In reality, as the studies began to show, many women of the generation who came to adulthood after the end of the war were becoming increasingly isolated. Similarly, the image of the full-time wife and mother was inaccurate since statistics reveal that one of the most remarkable features of the 1950s and 1960s was the rapid increase in the numbers of married women in paid employment. This is discussed further below.

(iii) Married women in paid employment

During the 1950s and 1960s there were several changes in the general patterns of women's paid work and perhaps the most marked of these was the increase in numbers of married women in the work-force. While the female proportion of the total labour force had remained at the relatively stable figure of approximately 30 per cent for about a century (Tilly and Scott, 1978, p.70), more women than ever before were getting married,[4] and this meant that the number of married women in the labour force increased steadily throughout the period. In 1961, 29.7 per cent of married women were economically active, as compared with 42.2 per cent in 1971 (Social Trends, 1984, p.58).[5]

Since the majority of married women also have children, there has been a rapid increase in the numbers of mothers in employment. In the light of theories of maternal deprivation, a lively public debate about this issue developed in the period under discussion here, and a number of studies of

women employees and their families were conducted with a view to assessing the claim that women's employment had a detrimental effect on their families (Cartwright and Jeffreys, 1958; Jephcott et al., 1962; Klein, 1965; Myrdal and Klein, 1956; Smith, 1961; Yudkin, 1963; Zweig, 1952):

> The married woman who leaves her home each day and goes off to work has become a familiar, if controversial, figure in Western society. Some see her as a symbol of freedom, but to others she is the epitome of irresponsibility and neglect (Jephcott et al., 1962, p.19).

One study was actually funded and commissioned by the Council for Children's Welfare (Yudkin, 1963), while another was conducted by a university medical department (Cartwright and Jeffreys, 1958). the studies all found that there were no causal relationships 'to suggest that children whose mothers went out to work were relatively neglected or handicapped either physically, intellectually or emotionally' (Cartwright and Jeffreys, 1958, p.171; see also Yudkin, 1963, conclusions). They established that very few women who had paid jobs also had children under the age of three and that, even where this was the case, satisfactory child-care arrangements were made, usually with the help of close relatives, so that children were not put at risk in any way. The care of older children was also found to be perfectly adequate.

Studies such as these highlighted the contradictions in official attitudes to women, fostered by the need for women both to rear children as well as to staff the expanded labour market:

> The government is either ambivalent or without policy. One minister may denounce working mothers as contributors to juvenile delinquency at a time when another department is seeking to attract them into teaching or into hospitals (Yudkin, 1963, p.27).

Having interviewed women, researchers found that:

> Many of them are eager to come forward, and many more would be willing if it were made easier for them to combine their family responsibilities with an outside job. They ought to be helped to help themselves (Myrdal and Klein, 1956, p.162).

Just as planners assumed that social isolation could be overcome by changes in planning policies, so these social scientists assumed that difficulties experienced by the working mother could be overcome by legislative changes to the conditions and organisation of the labour market. They argued that women would continue to want to earn wages; and that labour would continue to be scarce, and therefore made a variety of proposals for policy changes, such as recommendations for more flexible working hours (Klein, 1965, p.132); extended public facilities for the supervision of children after school and during school holidays (Yudkin, 1963, p.177); leniency in allowing time off for the care of sick children (Yudkin, 1963, p.179); and a reconsideration of the tax liabilities and relief of working married women (Jephcott, 1962, p.175). Clearly an important characteristic of these recommendations was that the responsibility for child-care lay firmly with the working mother rather than the working father, and that her paid employment had to be secondary to fulfilling duties in the home. Proposed changes in labour market conditions were meant to adapt to the needs of the working woman in terms of her maternal role rather than that of employee.

This research also offered some insights into the lives of working mothers and, in particular, addressed the question of why mothers chose to work outside the home. Asking this question was itself a sign of the prevalence of the idea that the home was women's 'natural' environment and

that for them to move outside it was necessarily problematic. Studies suggested that there were two main reasons for the increase in numbers of mothers working outside the home. The first was that women were bored and lonely and wanted a change from full-time domesticity. This ideal-type representation referred in particular to women whose children had gone to school. The argument was that decreased family size, coupled with improved housing standards and household technology, had dramatically reduced the hours of domestic labour needed to run a home, so that women were not so much seeking to escape domestic labour in entering paid employment, as looking for new occupations when the need for their domestic labour declined: 'they appeared to be less in revolt against pots and pans, than not quite sure how to fill their day' (Jephcott, 1962, p.106). Their loneliness was found to be aggravated by the social relations on modern housing estates (Zweig, 1952, p.56; Jephcott, 1962, chapter 7) in a way which had also been suggested by the community studies:

> Tired of mooching around an empty house all day, waiting for her husband and children to return, with no-one to talk to and with the neighbours 'snobbish' and 'spiteful', Mrs Hooper had taken a part-time job. 'If I didn't go out to work, I'd get melancholic'. Her verdict of Greenleigh - 'it's like being in a box to die in out here (Young and Willmott, 1957, p.133).

The second theory which social scientists put forward to explain the increase in numbers of mothers working outside the home was that women wished to improve the family's income so as to enable the purchase of 'luxury' consumer goods, and a rapid improvement in the family standard of living. The great shift towards improved living standards and increased consumerism relied on a substantial augmentation of the family income. In

many cases this could not be effected by the male breadwinner alone, and so wives sought paid work. Thus some authors found that the money earned by such married women 'appears to be a means of increasing their standard of living rather than of keeping the wolf from the door' (Klein, 1965, p.38; see also Jephcott et al., 1962, chapter 10). This meant that women 'viewed going out to work not as neglect of their family, but as a sign of their concern for it' (Jephcott, 1962, p.135) and

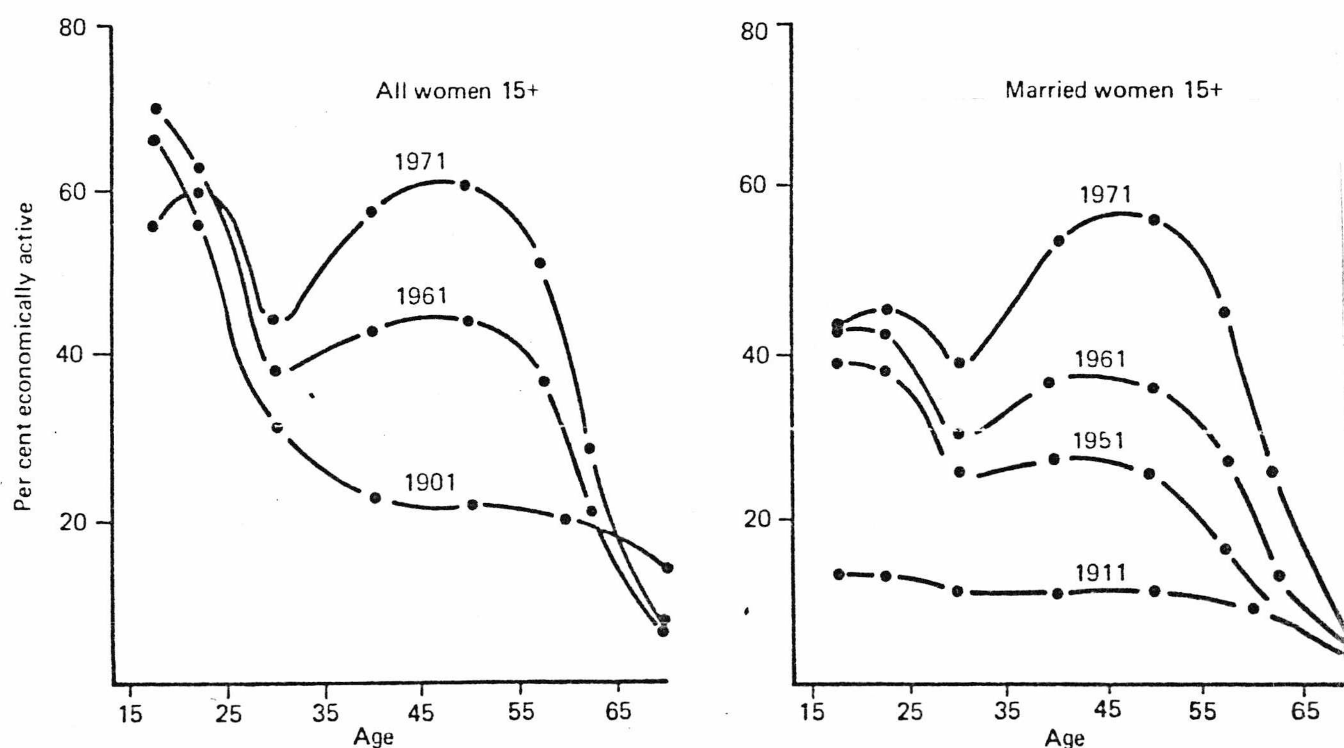
> indeed, many argued that the neglectful mother was the one too indifferent to seize today's golden, and perhaps fleeting, opportunity to benefit the children by raising the physical standards of the home (Jephcott et al., 1962, p.171).

Married women's paid employment was therefore found to be very closely related to their domestic roles in two senses. Firstly, waged work was an extension of domestic work since it was an additional service which housewives provided for the rest of the family; and secondly, waged work was only carried out in gaps which had developed in the timetable of domestic routine as a result either of increased use of labour-saving household equipment, or of the reduced needs of growing children. Thus the account of working mothers produced by social scientists in the 1950s and 1960s was highly optimistic: they argued that such work fitted unproblematically into a linear progression from full-time motherhood to part-time work, so that women simply substituted one kind of labour for another in their overall job of looking after the family. Authors suggested that the double burden was not so much a doubling of the load as a splitting of it, so that the newly-constituted whole of women's paid and domestic labour would be no more problematic for women than the previous one of an exclusively domestic workload had been.

Official statistics from the period suggest that when married women took on paid work they engaged in a process which was rather more complex than that of simple substitution however. Married women tried to combine paid work and motherhood, and they did so by adopting two main strategies.

Firstly, they worked part-time. The increase in married women employees was mainly an increase in part-time workers: in 1951, only 12 per cent of employed women were part-time, whereas by 1976 this had risen to 40 per cent (Mallier and Rosser, 1979, p.58). Secondly, women developed different employment patterns over the life-cycle. The following figure shows clearly the development of a bimodal employment pattern, in which the number of women leaving the workforce in early adulthood was fairly constant, while that of women re-entering it after an absence of a few years increased dramatically during the 1950s and 1960s:

Emergence of the Bimodal Pattern in Women's Employment, 1901-1971



Source: Hakim, 1979, p.5.

These two strategies had implications for the types of job which married women did, since part-time employment and broken service records both acted to reduce the likelihood of career success. Women were disproportionately represented at the bottom of the occupations which they followed, and they also tended to work in 'women's jobs' where part-time work predominated. The labour market was heavily gender-segregated throughout the period. In 1971, over half of all working men were in occupations where they outnumbered women by at least nine to one, and one-half of all working women were in jobs where they formed 70 per cent or more of the workforce, despite the fact that women only formed a third of the total national workforce (Hakim, 1979, p.23). Women also tended to be restricted to a relatively narrow range of jobs, usually linked by their close relation to the domestic chores which women have traditionally done in their own homes. In particular, women did caring jobs in the welfare state which paralleled those they did for their own families. Women's pay was also typically low, and the average women's wage was only 56 per cent of the average men's in 1955 (Cole, 1956, p.239).

Despite women's relatively low achievements in paid employment then, sociological writing in the 1950s and 1960s concentrated on the more positive aspects of their employment. In particular, it emphasised women's unproblematic combination of paid and domestic work, as well as the idea that women's wages simply added the icing to a family cake which was already of substantial proportions.

(b) The 1970s

(i) The dream turned sour

During the 1970s, the sociological literature dealing with aspects of

social life displayed a marked change in mood. In brief, the shift was from optimism to disillusionment and pessimism. The living standards of a great proportion of the population continued to rise during the 1970s. The trends in increased quality and quantity of housing, and increased home ownership continued: by 1978, over 50 per cent of houses were owner-occupied, and about 90 per cent of all households had the sole use of basic amenities (Toland, 1980, p.28). Home improvements and extensions increased rapidly during the decade, partly perhaps because of the fall in the length of the normal working day (Toland, 1980, p.29). Domestic standards continued to be high, and the mass marketing of yet more consumer goods showed that conspicuous consumption continued to be a way of life for many. If infant mortality rates are a useful measure of the health of a nation, then Britain was doing well: the rate had dropped from 33.5 per 1,000 live births in 1960 to 17.9 in 1976 (Townsend and Davidson, 1982, p.91). As livin standards rose, however, one of the most important themes of the decade was the rediscovery of inequality and poverty, that

> in the 1970s we are no further forward towards putting into practice the Beveridge principle than we were in 1945. A series of reforms ... are ... necessary if some of the worst pockets of poverty in Britain today are to be eliminated (Meacher, 1974, p.107; see also Abel Smith, 1969; Land, 1972; Young, 1974 and 1975).

A great amount of research into poverty and inequality was carried out during the 1970s. A poverty lobby campaigned vigorously on behalf of the poor, and phrases such as the 'wage stop' and the 'poverty trap' came into common usage. Particular groups within the poor were identified and it was shown that the poor were not necessarily the workshy but were often the elderly, single parents, large families and low earners. One piece of research found that nearly 40 per cent of the population in the town under

study was poor (Coates and Silburn, 1970, p.67). This study destroyed many myths:

> The most important single cause of poverty is not indolence nor fecundity, nor sickness, nor even unemployment, nor villainy of any kind but is, quite simply, low wages (Coates and Silburn, 1970, p.62).

The rediscovery of poverty in the middle of an affluent Western society with a fully functional welfare state led to a general reconsideration of the concept and measurement of poverty. Theories of relative poverty and multiple deprivation were developed since 'much of the rediscovery of inequality since the 1960s has been a rediscovery of inequalities in the plural' (Westergaard and Resler, 1975, p.19). Housing again emerged as a political issue, and the work of pressure groups such as Shelter highlighted the persistence of housing shortages and the inadequate provisions made for the homeless.

Another aspect of multiple deprivation was that of restricted access to education, and in the 1970s a number of studies appeared which found that, despite the 1944 Education Act, children still tended to end up in the social strata from which they had come. Social mobility through educational achievement had been very limited indeed: power, and access to it, was still restricted to an elite class which was largely defined as such at birth (Coxon and Jones, 1975; Stanworth and Giddens, 1974; Urry and Wakeford, 1975; Westergaard and Resler, 1975):

> There are no signs that mobility could rise on a scale to produce anything like the state of equal opportunity to which conventional ideology and policy claim to aspire. The obstacles to that goal are deeply entrenched in the divisions of society (Westergaard and Resler, 1975, p.319).

Findings such as the above all prompted a general recognition that the new world which had been promised by post-war welfare state legislation had not materialised. Despite an overall increase in standards of living, inequality thrived and certain groups of society were particularly disadvantaged and deprived. A sense of doom and impending crisis developed, and fears of the total break-up of even an inefficient welfare state were fuelled by the Labour Government's 1976 White Paper on public expenditure which outlined a programme of major cutbacks in state services. This began by identifying two problems: that

> popular expectations for improved public services and welfare programmes have not been matched by the growth in output - or by willingness to forego improvements in private living standards in favour of those programmes (Cmnd 6393, 1976, p.1)

and the recommendations focused on restricting spending rather than on increasing output. The Conservative election victory of 1979 was seen by many as heralding the beginning of the end of a welfare state which had not, in any case, been successful in its aims of bringing about equality of opportunity and an assured standard of living to all.

(ii) Women's inequalities

In the context of this general disillusionment and focus on the persistence of inequalities, particular attention was paid to women's inferior position, relative to men. The rise of the women's liberation movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s drew public attention to the issue, and while the media gave disproportionate attention to incidents such as the disruption of the Miss World contest in London in 1970, there was also a general spread of information about women's position in

society. The women's liberation movement articulated six demands: equal pay; equal educational and job opportunities; free 24-hour nursery care; free abortion and contraception on demand; financial and legal independence; an end to discrimination against lesbianism and the autonomy of women's sexuality; and freedom from intimidation by threat or use of violence. Germaine Greer's The Female Eunuch was reprinted six times in 1971, and five times in 1972, saying that 'ungenteel middle-class women are calling for revolution' (Greer, 1971, p.11).

Greer called for revolution and also claimed to be able to see the first signs of it in Britain:

> When I addressed a very mixed and uneccentric audience at an adult education centre on Teeside ... soft-spoken nervous women spoke in front of their husbands about the most subversive ideas. Nurses are misbehaving, the teachers are on strike, skirts are all imaginable levels, bras are not being bought, abortions are being demanded ... rebellion is gathering steam and may yet become revolution (Greer, 1971, p.311).

The changes which were actually made were more reformist than revolutionary, but this did not detract from their significance. They were taking place through the formal and traditional means of Parliament: for example, the Equal Pay Act of 1970 and the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 sought to remedy women's continued inequality in the workplace; the Domestic Violence Act of 1976 and the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act of 1977 sought to protect and rehouse women who were the victims of domestic violence;[6] and the 1970 Matrimonial Proceedings and Property Act recognised that women's unpaid domestic labour should entitle her to a share in the family home in the event of divorce. Thus, women's equality with men in legislative terms was gradually increased. In December 1975, the Government set up an Equal Opportunities Commission with the general

aim of working

> towards the elimination of discrimination to promote equality of opportunity; to review the workings of the Sex Discrimination and Equal Pay Acts and, where necessary, to suggest amendments to these laws (Coussins, 1976, p.110).

The Commission also had the power to conduct formal investigations where discrimination was suspected, and to issue non-discrimination notices in the event of contraventions of the law being found. If the employer failed to comply with the notice, the Equal Opportunities Commission could apply for an injunction to enforce compliance.

Thus the 1970s can be seen as the start of a new era of opportunity and equality for women, coinciding with public recognition that the general equalities which had been promised by the welfare state had not materialised. However, while the period between the setting-up of the welfare state and the finding that it had not worked was some twenty or thirty years, the period which preceded disillusionment was much shorter in the case of setting up a more equal world for women and one early guide to women's improved rights under the various new laws stated in its introduction that

> These have only been token concessions. Women are still treated as men's inferiors and dependants. They are still exploited and oppressed (Coote and Gill, 1974, p.17).

Despite the Equal Pay Act, women were still paid significantly less than men, as the following table shows:

Female wages as a percentage of male wages

1970	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
55	56	62	64	65	65	64	65

Source: Reid and Wormald, 1982, p.124.

Sex Discrimination legislation too was found to have had limited effect:

> Anyone reading newspapers in the past five years would imagine that women, rather in the manner of astronauts, had done the impossible. The news of the first woman judge, the first woman to lead the Opposition, the first woman professor of brewing, the first woman rabbi suggests that there is now very little for women to complain about in employment prospects. If one woman can do it so, the feeling goes, can they all. A useful counter to this list of firsts is trying to spot the tenth woman judge, a female majority in the Cabinet, the female vice-chancellors of British universities. Sightings here will be conspicuous by their absence (Mackie and Pattullo, 1977, p.72).

Social scientists who investigated the effects of the new equality legislation found them to be extremely limited (Coussins, 1976; Snell, 1979), and one paper given to a conference convened to discuss mothers in employment concluded that:

> Despite some recent gains in the position of mothers in employment, most notably in employment legislation and vocational training, large gaps still exist in the range of entitlements and provisions available to them (Fonda, 1976, p.50).

Once women's continued inequality had been demonstrated, many writers attempted to explain it (Barker and Allen, 1976; CCCS, 1978; Coussins, 1976; Kuhn and Wolpe, 1978; Mackie and Pattullo, 1977; Mitchell and Oakley, 1976). Some, for example, highlighted the importance of sex roles and explored the ways in which education and the mass media contributed to the social reproduction of gender inequality (Blackstone, 1976; Chetwynd and Hartnett, 1978; Deem, 1978; Faulder, 1977a; Marks, 1976; Sharpe, 1976; Shaw, 1976). Others argued that patriarchal relations take their specific form from the dominant relations of production (Bland _et al._, 1978; McDonough and Harrison, 1978), and attempted to articulate the precise

relation between gender and class. Delphy (1977) developed a radical feminist analysis, posing men as the 'main enemy'. At the same time, some authors argued that the home was an equally important site of oppression for women as the workplace, and they therefore focused on an analysis of domestic labour and the conditions of housework (Benston, 1970; Coulson, 1975; Gardiner, 1975; Harrison, 1974; Oakley, 1976a, 1976b; Dalla Costa and James, 1972; Seccombe, 1974).

The fact that there was such a surge of academic interest in women's subordination during the 1970s did not affect mass media images of womanhood:

> How to get your man and keep him has been the basic message hammered home and home again in every conventional woman's magazine over the last fifty years, and never more so than in the last twenty, when it has suited powerful commercial interests to add their voice and pressure to confirm women in their traditional role of docile home-maker, serene, selfless guardian of the health and family (Faulder, 1977b, p.174).

One survey of magazines from the period found

> the enduring nature, continuing value and desirability of the family as a social institution remained a cultural ideal throughout the 1970s, as did marriage itself (Fergusson, 1983, p.104).

However, while the desirability of domesticity continued to be the main ideological message in women's magazines, the popular media did recognise, for the first time in peace-time, that women worked outside as well as inside the home. Magazines carried time-saving recipes to aid the working mother, as well as articles about her rights in employment and stories about the great career successes of a small number of highly-achieving women. These messages were often in conflict, but this was conveniently ignored by magazines whose pages

> simultaneously presented ... messages on two wavelengths. 'Yes, get out there and show the world you are someone in your own right', but also, 'remember you must achieve as a wife and mother, too' (Fergusson, 1983, p.189).

The development of this stereotype of the working mother increased the pressure on women. The escalation of what was expected of married women can be illustrated by Shirley Conran's best-selling Superwoman (1975), a guide to household management which caught the spirit of the media age by showing women how best to juggle their different roles, and to achieve highly as wives, mothers, housewives and employees.

Thus the 1970s can be characterised as a period of growing disillusionment with the 'achievements' of the welfare state and with the whole of the post-war dream of a new world. As part of this general process, it was publicly recognised that women were particularly disadvantaged, and that this was especially evident in their experiences of paid employment. Women's participation in the workplace increased, just as it had during the 1960s. Between 1951 and 1976, the female working population increased by 30 per cent, and by 1976 there were 9.86 million women in those jobs which were counted by official statistics (Mallier and Rosser, 1979, p.54). I would now like to consider the working lives of these women in more detail.

(iii) Married women's paid employment

Figures showing the economic activity rates of married women from the age group in which I am particularly interested reveal that they rose during the life-cycle, and that these women would have been more economically active during the 1970s than at any other stage in their married lives:

Year	Age Group	Percentage of married women economically active
1951	20-24	36.6
1961	25-34	29.5
1962	35-44	54.5
1986 (projected)	45-54	73.2

Source: Land, 1976, p.118, who cites Department of Employment sources.

In recent years a number of studies have been published which give details about the lives of women workers in general and, while the books themselves were often published in the 1980s, the research on which they were based was carried out in the 1970s, the period under discussion here (Cavendish, 1982; CDP, 1978; Hunt, 1980; Pollert, 1981; Porter, 1982; Purcell and Bennett, 1979; Wajcman, 1979).

These studies illustrate clearly the bimodal career pattern which was also shown by earlier national statistics. Women in the workplaces studied tended to be either young and single, or over 30 years old and married with school-age children. For older women, paid work had to be fitted in with the care of the family:

> The housewife is not a free labourer, she still has the house to clean, the children to look after, the husband to care for. The home and family are the limiting conditions under which a woman can take a second job (CDP, 1978, p.35).

Young and single women tended to see their paid work as a transitory stage before beginning the real business of starting a family (Hunt, 1980, p.99). For the youngest factory girls in one study:

> The job was a meal-ticket - they didn't expect job satisfaction and couldn't consider it as a career. They had to make the best of the little spare time they had, dressing up, going out drinking and dancing before they were tied down with a family and had to save (Cavendish, 1982, p.161).

It should be noted, of course, that these young girls were looking for husbands, so their social activities were not only a short-lived experience of self-indulgence, but were also part of a mating process which would culminate in their giving up paid work in favour of full-time motherhood. A vicious circle was shown to be operating here: because the girls wanted to marry, they saw paid work as impermanent and were willing to take boring jobs with low job satisfaction. This in turn increased their determination to find husbands, since 'marriage and children were also a way out of the factory' (ibid).

My particular interest here is the age-group which was middle-aged in the 1970s, and my remarks here are therefore mainly concerned with the older, married woman worker. The studies show clearly the importance of domesticity to such women:

> None of the women was in any doubt what her 'real' work consisted of. The task was, essentially, to maintain, service and take responsibility for the care of their homes, husbands and children (Porter, 1982, p.119).

Women often became ill because of trying to meet the demands of both home and work (Cavendish, 1982; Pollert, 1981), and one study found that often the only way in which women could reconcile these demands was to take sick leave with the express purpose of doing housework (Pollert, 1981, p.119). This was a risky business and could not be relied upon as a regular strategy, however, and in general women had to resign themselves to lives which were marked by a complete lack of leisure:

> For working-class women there is no relief, no escape. A break from wage work merely brings them face to face with a pile of work at home (Pollert, 1981, p.118).

The question of why married women went out to work was raised by these authors just as it had been by those writing in the 1950s and 1960s. The main reply was that they needed the money. However, unlike the literature on women's paid work in the 1950s and 1960s, which had equated women's earnings with the purchase of luxury goods, these studies found that 'the phrase pin-money was about as meaningful to them as an account at Harrods' (Pollert, 1981, p.82). In particular, the women 'said they did so _for_ their families; so that their children could have more than they had had' (Purcell and Bennett, 1979, p.12). One study showed that only 5.5 per cent of working women with husbands spent their own wages on themselves or on luxuries like holidays, and 75 per cent spent them on essentials such as rent, food and bills (CDP, 1978, p.47).

In emphasising the importance of the economic incentive to working mothers, one study made the point that

> It is much less threatening for a wife and mother, when asked outright, to say (even to herself) that she is working for the family's sake rather than for her own; that she is working to keep house and home together rather than to keep her own sanity (CDP, 1978, p.49).

Thus women may have worked outside the home in order to avoid loneliness and frustration within it. However, it should be remembered that such problems were exacerbated by poverty. When 'the only available alternative to having a job was to be isolated at home in rather harsh financial circumstances' (Wajcman, 1979, p.165) housewifery was readily rejected in favour of doing something about that poverty by leaving the home in order to earn. Ironically, the studies found that once women took

on paid work, they came to value the home even more, as a refuge from work itself, and from the dual demands of home and work. Thus women were found to be in a situation where

> a home to relax in that you could call your own was about all you could hope for - it could almost make up for the work (Cavendish, 1982, p.162).

This is not to say that improved income was the only benefit which paid work brought to married women in the 1970s. Although the economic motive prompted the initial decision to re-enter the labour market, once women were in jobs they found other rewards. Research showed that women enjoyed the companionship of other workers, as well as the chance to get away from a house which often seemed empty once the children had gone to school. In particular, such women found that friendships with other workers could help them to cope with the pressures in the lives, often by exchanging anecdotes about domestic trivia: 'the collective "laugh" about their domestic trials was a vital relief for their mixed feelings' (Pollert, 1981, p.116). Working in predominantly female industries meant that women tended to develop a sense of gender solidarity which was found to be supportive. Together, they could make light of the husbands:

> Men! Well, they don't understand - they don't have to look after the children, they don't have to run the family, they just don't understand these things, they think life's just one big merrygoround (CDP, 1978, p.7)

or employers:

> The individual manager, the 'boss' was verbally stripped, like the emperor with no clothes (Pollert, 1981, p.153)

who in fact exerted so much control over their lives.

These studies, then, showed clearly that the combination of being a wife, mother, housewife and employee was problematic for most women, and that the optimism of earlier studies was not borne out. They showed that while, in the first place, women did paid work to improve the family standard of living, they received other benefits too, such as friendship and support, which could help them to better endure their domestic difficulties. In this way they showed up well 'the apparent separation, but actual integration, of the domestic and industrial arena' (Hunt, 1980, p.2).

Married women in this age-group in the 1970s were not only earning money by working outside the home. Recent research has thrown some light on the incidence and conditions of homeworkers during the period (Cragg and Dawson, 1981; Crine, 1979; Hakim, 1980; Hakim and Dennis, 1982; Rubery and Wilkinson, 1971; TUC, 1978),[7] and one source suggested that in 1978 there were 380,000 homeworkers, including some 130,000 childminders (TUC, 1978), and that the bulk of homeworkers were female. Although homework is often associated in the public mind with early industrialisation, characterised by women working in the so-called sweated trades, one useful article on the way in which homework can be fitted into the labour process pointed out

> that outwork is not an anachronistic phenomenon but forms one of the range of possibilities continually open to firms organising production (Rubery and Wilkinson, 1971, p.120).

Typically the rewards of homework were far below those of work outside the home. Health and safety legislation was not applicable in many cases, and women had to supply heat, light, space, cleaning, breaks, as well as their

labour. Many of the jobs done in the home were industrial and involved substantial wear and tear with, for example, fibres, solder, dirt or fumes contaminating the furnishings and atmosphere of the house (Cragg and Dawson, 1981, p.5). Payment for homework was low, usually on a piecework basis (Crine, 1979). One study found that homeworkers themselves were unclear about how much they were paid, usually because the nature and supply of the work varied considerably from week to week (Cragg and Dawson, 1981, p.15). Homeworkers in this study had all had previous experience of working outside the home, and had taken a serious drop in wages (Cragg and Dawson, 1981, p.21). Given such low rewards, the obvious question is of why anyone did jobs such as these. The studies found that the answer lay in their finding that women saw themselves as having no real alternatives. The main reason women gave for doing homework was that they were restricted to the home by their responsibilities for childcare. The great majority of respondents in one study would rather have worked outside the home, and planned to do so again once their children were old enough to be left (Cragg and Dawson, 1981, p.34). Because of their primary commitment to full-time childcare, these women tended to see the chance of <u>any</u> wages as an unexpected and welcome bonus, and this accounted for their acceptance of the worst pay and conditions in the labour market:

> There was undoubtedly a tendency for some women to reconcile themselves to low wages by viewing them as somehow 'extra' income: the benchmark for judgement was frequently no income at all, rather than any concept of a fair rate for the job (Cragg and Dawson, 1981, p.40).

One important aspect of homework was that much of it lay outside the formal economy and was therefore not recorded by official statistics. During the 1970s there was widespread recognition that a huge amount of

work was unenumerated and media attention was drawn to the existence of a black economy. Women's work was particularly likely to be unrecorded: temporary secretarial work (McNally, 1979), seasonal agricultural jobs or casual catering employment were all examples of women's jobs which tended not to be included in official tallies. Such jobs were likely to have been held by mothers choosing such work because it could be combined with childcare. Although homework has traditionally been associated with low-skill occupations, the technological advances of the 1970s opened up new opportunities for homeworking among highly qualified computing staff (Huws, 1980). Again, women in these jobs worked from home because of their responsibility for childcare.

(c) Conclusions and Summary

I have highlighted several aspects of the period from 1951 to 1980 which, I have argued, were particularly relevant to women in the age-group from which I drew a fieldwork sample. I showed that this agegroup entered adulthood at a time when the ideologies of family life, the home, and a traditional sexual division of labour were very strong, and that these were enshrined in public policies such as housing, planning and education. At the same time, the welfare state was expanding and a mood of optimism prevailed, stressing the development of a new equality and a higher standard of living. However, the improvements in living standards were expensive, and were often made possible by the wages earned by married women, whose mass return to work after the birth of children was one of the most striking features of the period. This in turn meant that the 'idyll' of full-time domesticity could not be put into practice. By the 1970s, the dreams and realities of a newly-affluent consumer society had

turned sour. Poverty, inequality and women's subordination to men were all rediscovered. Middle-aged women were out at work, in the worst jobs, and the new legislation of the 1970s which had been aimed at bringing about women's equality had done little to change their basic problems, many of which derived from the fact that they still bore the dual burden of domestic and paid labour.

Clearly there would have been huge variations in the experiences of different groups of women, according to, for example, region, type of housing, family size, social class, income, marital status, and age. In order to move from the general to the specific, and from the descriptive to the explanatory, it would be necessary to take a small group from one age-group, and to examine its experiences in depth. This was the focus of my fieldwork, which is discussed in depth in the next section of this thesis.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Many of the improvements to interiors which were recommended by Parker Norris were ones which had been planned in the design-boom years of the 1930s, when a new blend of functionalism and artistic form for the home were created (Forty, 1975; Giedion, 1948, part IV), and this is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9 below. However, although domestic design for the few was pioneered in the 1930s, 'only in the 1950s did the world that was promised in the 1930s, decent housing with proper fittings and appliances, become at all real to most people' (Forty, 1975, p.62). Thus, while fitted kitchens spread to middle-class suburbia in the inter-war years, they did not reach the mass housing market until after the war.

2. While Davidoff et al. (1976) show that such a view of the community can be traced back to the nineteenth-century growth of suburbia, they also argue that it has continued relatively unchanged. My argument here is that although such visions were rooted in an older tradition, they were only applied to the mass of working-class and middle-class housing after the war, with the boom in new housing.

3. Although, as discussed in the following section, such a self-image was later proved to be inaccurate since women did usually enter part-time paid employment in later life.

4. First marriage per 1,000 spinsters (by age group), Great Britain

Age	1911	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971
16-19	14	19	21	51	76	93
20-24	94	111	103	213	259	249
25-29	106	118	115	154	166	168
30-34	58	64	58	76	72	75
35-39	29	33	28	39	37	38
40-44	16	17	15	21	21	21

Source: Social Trends, 1973, p.78

5. By way of comparison, 81.4 per cent of all men were economically active in 1971, compared with 86 per cent in 1961 (ibid).

6. The DHSS Committee on Domestic Violence took extensive evidence from the findings of Erin Pizzey in the first women's refuge, which she founded in 1971 in Chiswick. Her book, Scream Quietly or the Neighbours Will Hear was published in 1974, and did much to alert the public to the dangers which were often hidden in the home-centred family.

7. I am not suggesting that homework was developing in a particularly dramatic way in the 1970s, but that recording it through social scientific investigation was a new event. Thus only in the 1970s could it be fully recognised as being an important aspect of women's employment.

CHAPTER FIVE

PATHS TO ANALYSIS: THE CASE OF MRS OATES[1]

In this and the following two chapters I discuss the findings of the fieldwork interviews which I carried out with women born between 1927 and 1937. Here I present one case in depth, in order to illustrate the complexity of the data which I collected, and to discuss the problems associated with its analysis. In conclusion, I use this intensive study of a single case to suggest how analysis of the rest of the data might usefully proceed.

(a) Introduction

As I explained in Chapter 2, fieldwork interviews were focused on constructing comprehensive employment histories for each of a group of twenty women, paying attention to the reasons which women gave for acting in the way they did. The interviews revealed the full complexity of personal biography, and the data they produced were rich and extensive. This was exciting for me as a researcher, but also presented major problems for analysis. Women's lives were shown to be messy and full of contradictions, and they could not easily be confined to the usual social scientific categories. I needed to find a way to make sociological sense out of this data: of organising and understanding it, while remaining sensitive to the ambiguity and fluidity which was one of its central features.

Those writers whose work I had found helpful when formulating my general approach to fieldwork had less to offer when it came to analysis. Indeed, some of the major theorists, such as Blumer, have undertaken very little empirical work at all by which to demonstrate the success of the guidelines which they make for it. Others who have conducted fieldwork from an interactionist perspective make it clear that analysis is a highly

individual process. Plummer, for example, provides excellent guidelines about the planning and execution of life-history research, but is far more vague when he discusses the analysis of data collected by such a method:

> It entails brooding and reflecting upon mounds of data for long periods of time until it 'makes sense' and 'feels right', and key ideas and themes flow from it (Plummer, 1983, p.99).

Clearly, such a process cannot be learnt from a textbook, as Plummer goes on to point out:

> It is ... the hardest process to describe: the standard technique is to read and make notes, leave and ponder, re-read without notes, match notes up, ponder, re-read and so on (ibid).

Thus authors who advocate the qualitative technique have revealed much about how to approach fieldwork: about entering into the world of the studied individual and trying to understand how he or she constructs a self and a sense out of the social world, but very little about what exactly to do with the detailed data which is produced by such an approach.

I decided to proceed by taking one case and subjecting it to intensive scrutiny. I felt that presenting one case in depth would illustrate vividly the complexities of the personal biographies which I had collected and the problems which these had presented for analysis. The systematic exposure of such complexities might then be part of a process of unravelling them. I could, of course, present each case in this way, but this would not only take up a great amount of space, but would be unnecessary since I can develop the arguments which I want to present here by reference to just one biography.

I have chosen Mrs Oates for this case study. There was no outstanding

reason for this choice and there are some unusual aspects in her biography which could be seen as untypical. However, I would argue that every individual case has unusual aspects which are uncovered if it is explored in enough depth. Thus the important point in analysis is to identify the unique features of the case, rather than to reject its study because of them. However, I should point out that some interviews inevitably produced more comprehensive data than others, and that Mrs Oates was one of the more articulate and thoughtful respondents. In addition to this, she had once begun to write her autobiography, which she showed me, and I felt that this gave an added dimension to my understanding of her life.

(b) Events in a Biography

In this section I present the biographical details of Mrs Oates' life, as far as they could be established during the course of our three meetings. I begin by presenting a condensed employment history which may make the reading of the longer following section slightly easier. I have presented this list of events in much the same form as I collected it at the first interview, although I did not construct it all on one occasion: there were gaps and inaccuracies to be tidied up each time, and what follows is the final version after three 'sittings'.

1931 Born in Ormskirk, Lancashire
1945 Left school. Worked as a canteen assistant.
1947 Became a receptionist for an optician.
1947 Returned to being a canteen assistant.
1948 Became a clerical assistant.
1948 Became an auxiliary nurse.
1949 Moved to Sheerness to live with a married sister and worked as a waitress.
1950 Moved to Yorkshire and became a resident hotel waitress.
1951 Became a nursing auxiliary in London.
1952 Moved to Sheerness again, worked as a waitress and got married.
1953 Left paid employment and had a child.

1959 Had a second daughter.
1965 Worked full-time in a factory, collating paper.
1966 Became a sales ledger clerk in an accounts office.
1967 Returned to being a full-time housewife.
1971 Became a part-time shop assistant.
1977 Returned to full-time housework.
1977 Got a morning office job and went to evening classes to obtain book-keeping and accountancy qualifications.
1982 Took a job as a company accountant for a trial period of a few months, in the afternoons.
1982 Left the office job and became a full-time accountant.
1982 Changed the organisation of the job, to being in the office in the mornings and at home in the afternoons.

As well as collecting this basic data on employment history, I also gathered information about other areas of women's lives, and more details about their employment behaviour. I now want to summarise such data with reference to Mrs Oates and to fill out the brief timetable of events which I have just presented. I should point out here that I have edited the information considerably, presenting only the material which I felt to be most relevant to understanding her relation to employment a little better. I should also make it clear that, as in any account of fieldwork, what I am summarising here is Mrs Oates' view of herself: a retrospective account of her past actions. 'In a sense the subject becomes a sociologist during the course of the study' (Denzin, 1970, p.244) and so, to be strictly accurate, each sentence should perhaps be prefaced by 'Mrs Oates says that ...', but this would produce a rather tedious and eccentric account, which I have chosen to avoid. It should also be remembered that what is reproduced below is not necessarily what happened, or all of what happened, but what Mrs Oates chose to tell me about what happened and, indeed, what she was able to remember about what happened. As far as possible, I have made sure that the value judgements which do appear are hers rather than mine. For example, when I say that the family was poor, this is to use her words rather than impose my assessment of their

standard of living.

Mrs Oates' father was 63 when she was born. At 65 he was forced to retire from his job as a compositor, although he had wanted to stay on longer because the family was so short of money. Her mother had never had a paid job because of a disability, and she stayed at home looking after her six children in conditions of severe poverty. Mrs Oates left school at 14 because the family, which was by then headed by her widowed mother, needed her wages badly. Neither she nor her family had ever thought of alternative courses of action:

> I left for economic reasons. My mother was a widow and couldn't afford to keep me on. Nothing else occurred to her anyway. There was no question of anything else. I wanted to leave. I thought it was being grown up.

She got her first job through the local labour exchange and stayed in it for nearly two years. By this time she had become fed up with the conditions of canteen work, and changed to become a receptionist when a friend told her about the vacancy. However, this involved a train journey which proved to be more tiring and time-consuming than she had expected, and she left after a couple of months to return to the canteen. After a few more months she managed to find a job as a clerical assistant, but found the work boring. She soon left to join a friend who was a nursing auxiliary.

When she was 18, Mrs Oates left her home-town to live with a married sister in Sheerness who needed help in the home while pregnant with her first child. This move also relieved the poverty and over-crowding in Mrs Oates' mother's house. Mrs Oates got a job as a waitress, and was able to pay her sister for her keep. Once the baby was born, she was no longer

needed or wanted by her sister, and Mrs Oates answered a newspaper advertisement and got a job as a resident waitress in a Yorkshire hotel. Again she was bored by hotel work and soon left, to become a nursing auxiliary in London.

Mrs Oates had met her husband while she was living with her sister, but did not marry him for two years. They married in 1952, when she was 21, and by this time she was working again as a waitress in Sheerness, having left her nursing job in order to get married. She began married life living with her mother-in-law, but they saved hard and after six months went to live in rented furnished rooms so that they could have some privacy when their first child was born, a year after the marriage:

> It wasn't planned: we were as green as grass both of us. I'd not been married long at all. I wanted a baby very much, but I didn't know anything about what it meant. It was like a little girl wanting a doll.

The period of first-time maternity was not a particularly happy one for Mrs Oates. She was very worried about her daughter and about her ability to look after her. She also felt that her housework was not good enough. Her mother 'hadn't the health or the incentives to have any standards at all' and she had vowed to do far better than this, setting out to have a perfectly clean and tidy home. She found, however, that a young baby combined with little money and poor housing meant that she could not live up to her high standards, and this upset her. Six months after the baby was born they moved to a small rented cottage which was condemned. They stayed there for two years until they were allocated a council house, after which housework became easier, because of the improved amenities.

Six years after the first child, Mrs Oates had a second, planned

daughter. This time she was well prepared for motherhood and they entered a phase of family life which she now looks back on with pleasure. I asked her which were the happiest years in her life and she replied:

> When the children were in their pre-teenage years. There were the four of us here, as a family. We did do things together, talk about things. We had loads of reference books and they'd need such a lot of help with their studies. We were all so close and involved ... they were a joy and a delight. I used to look forward to school holidays so they'd be home.

Her husband was very actively involved in this phase of family life. She says that he was very close to the girls, and that he shared all his leisure time with them. Both parents helped their children as much as possible with education, and Mr Oates taught them to play the piano, with one of the girls passing the Grade 5 examination on his tuition alone. Mrs Oates felt it was important that she be at home with her children full-time, and that the care and attention she was happy to devote to them compensated for any material deprivations caused by her failure to earn wages.

When the youngest daughter was 6, Mr Oates became seriously ill with a nervous breakdown. He spent two years away from work and Mrs Oates found a job in a factory, earning the family wage. At first she had a job which meant she had to stand all day, and she found this physically exhausting. After a year she managed to find a clerical office job, in the sales ledger section of an accounts department. She saw this as a strictly temporary arrangement to cope with the crisis of her husband's illness and as soon as he recovered she gave up her job and returned to being a full-time housewife.

Mrs Oates went back to paid work four years later, when her younger

daughter was 11, so that they could afford to send her to a private secondary school. The decision to do this was prompted by the fact that the Island schools had recently adopted the comprehensive education system which Mr and Mrs Oates felt would restrict the development of bright children. Their elder daughter was about to leave grammar school and go on to teacher training college, and they felt that the younger one would not have the same opportunities in the altered state system. They decided therefore to send her to a private convent, and Mrs Oates got a job in a shop to pay for this. She spent all her wages on the fees, and on buying and running a car to take the girl to and from school. Any money left out of the wages was sent to the elder daughter away at college.

During this time there were various tensions between Mrs Oates and the owner of the shop where she worked. When the daughter left school and the immediate need for wages was reduced, Mrs Oates had an argument with the manageress which resulted in her resigning the job. She then spent two months at home, thinking about the future, now that both her daughters had grown up and were no longer living at home. She decided, for the first time, to pursue job satisfaction rather than simply wages and that, in order to achieve this, she would need to gain some qualifications. She therefore got a secretarial job, in the mornings only, and went to night school to gain business and accountancy qualifications. She sought financial qualifications because she had some experience of book-keeping in the shop and in a previous office job, and had found it enjoyable. After five years she had passed several examinations and was approached by a friend working at a firm whose accountant had died suddenly and for whom an immediate replacement was needed. Although she was not fully qualified she got the job, on a part-time trial basis in the afternoons at first,

extending this to full-time and giving up her secretarial job as this proved to be a success. Later she was able to arrange her full-time work so that she could be in the office half the day and at home for the other half, so as to be with her husband who had taken early retirement and was physically weak.

Until now I have presented additional bibliographical information as it specifically relates to Mrs Oates' paid employment, since this was the main focus of the interviews. However, the interviews also highlighted unpaid work of all kinds.

Mrs Oates has spent a lot of her time on unpaid domestic work and the first instance of this was when she went to live with her married sister to help with the extra work involved when she had her first child. Mrs Oates ran the house during the pregnancy and helped with all the preparations for the child. Once she left her sister, she did not do a great amount of unpaid domestic work until she set up her own home. She gave up paid work on having a baby and did all the domestic chores. As I pointed out above, she found housework difficult at first, battling against the odds to be the perfect housewife and mother. Gradually she learnt to relax her standards, and she became more skilled at those parts of housework which she still felt to be important, such as cooking:

> I do make sure we both get nourishing food. I've made a point of learning about vitamins and proteins. I do a lot of home cooking, pies and cakes.

All her married life, Mrs Oates has done all the housework, which has included the gardening and decorating. She has felt that this is fair, because her husband earned the main family wage except when he was too ill to do so. She had hoped that her husband's retirement, coupled with her

return to full-time work, would bring substantial changes to the amount of housework which she does, but this has not happened:

> There's been a bit of a role reversal. I earn the money and work all day while he stays at home. He does do a few more household tasks than he did before, but not very many. He finds it as boring as I do .. he almost always makes the cups of tea ... he peels the potatoes every day, and he makes the beds. He does quite a lot really.

She has, however, relaxed her attitudes to housework and moved domestic perfection down her list of priorities as she feels that she now does other things, and that the responsibility for a perfect home should be her husband's, since he is at home all day.

Another sort of unpaid work has been the caring which Mrs Oates has done, and still does, for elderly relations. She spent a lot of time looking after Mr Oates' mother until her death nine years ago. For the last couple of years of her mother-in-law's life, Mrs Oates did all her household chores for her, such as shopping, washing and cleaning, as well as visiting her as often as possible. In more recent years, Mrs Oates has begun to look after her brother-in-law. He is the husband of the sister with whom Mrs Oates lived when she first left Lancashire. Although he is only 62 he is physically weak, and she talks about him as though he were much older. At the moment he eats with them two evenings a week and spends holidays and Sundays with them, and Mrs Oates expects to look after him more as he gets older. This is not a job which she particularly relishes and one of her dreams now is 'for my brother-in-law to find himself a nice wife to look after him'. It is also the source of some conflict between her husband and herself since he feels that she should not give up so much of her time and energy to her brother-in-law.

(c) Preliminary Considerations in Analysis

Before going on to deal with the further analysis of these biographical data, I want to brief mention two of the methodological issues which they raise. These are typical of the difficulties encountered by those undertaking qualitative research of this kind. They cannot be neatly solved, but confronting them in discussion is one way of reducing the distortions which they may impose on the research.

The first problem is one which I have already pointed out: that of the selectivity of the data. Mrs Oates selected what she was willing to tell me, and I had to consider how far she may have concealed important parts of her life from me. There was at least one area which I was aware of here. Five years ago Mrs Oates' elder daughter left home after a major family scene and there has been no contact between them since, although the two sisters are in touch. Mrs Oates tried to talk about this on more than one occasion, but it was impossible for her and she broke down in tears each time. I did not want to probe this area of distress and made it clear that I was happy to leave the subject alone. Nonetheless, there is something of a mystery here. Mrs Oates says she longs for her daughter to return to the family and that any overtures from her would be welcome so long as her daughter apologises for whatever it was that she did. I could not find out any more than this about it, and simply accepted that it was something which had seriously damaged Mrs Oates' relationship with her daughter. This was at least an area which I knew existed: there may have been other areas of which I was not aware. There is little I could do about this, other than to recognise that the data can never be fully complete and to try and be sure that I had done everything I could to establish a degree of trust with the respondent which meant that those

areas which were most important to her would be discussed in the interviews. The fact that Mrs Oates did at least mention the painful separation from her daughter satisfied me that this was indeed the case here.

A second issue of methodological interest is that of how far what Mrs Oates said was influenced by her perception of what I might want to hear. Again, it is impossible to conclusively resolve this question, but it is important to at least consider the direction in which influence might work. I identified at least four possible areas of influence in this biography. Firstly, Mrs Oates may have felt that her material achievements were to my eyes limited, since she still lived in a council house and had little in the way of consumer goods, and this could have led her to exaggerate the poverty of her childhood and thus the relative success represented by her current standard of living; and also to over-emphasise a choice to prioritise other areas of spending, such as the private education. Secondly, Mrs Oates may have stressed the importance of education in deference to my own identity as a highly qualified female student. Thirdly, she may have wished to minimise marital conflict, since it is something of a taboo subject. Fourthly, I may have encouraged a process of thinking over the past which was new to Mrs Oates. She may not normally do this, and may have hurriedly thought up answers to my questions which would not be the same answers she would give if she was asked the same questions the next day.

In dealing with these points, I can only make considered and reasoned guesses, but I think none of them, in fact, is completely true, although each may have a limited relevance. The childhood poverty was described in such graphic detail both in the interviews and in the autobiographical

chapter that its truth was undisputed. Clearly, too, they have spent a lot of money on private education and related expenses and, had this money been diverted into general household spending, the standard of the interior of her home would have been substantially higher. Similarly, while I was interested to hear that Mrs Oates puts a very high value on education, I felt that the proof of this was in the sacrifices they had made to educate their daughters and that it was in no sense a commitment which had been produced, out of politeness, for the duration of the interviews. The issue of marital conflict may be something of a straw man here, but I mention it because several features of Mrs Oates' life seemed to be made particularly hard because of attitudes adopted by her husband and, from my own perspective, I felt that they were potentially disruptive. For example, Mr Oates' failure to take over the housework, his frequent depression and emotional demands, and his constant complaints about the brother-in-law were all things which would have annoyed me, and I wondered if they annoyed Mrs Oates more than she was willing to admit to someone whom she had met only three times. She did mention that the issue of looking after her brother-in-law caused arguments between her and her husband, and there were a few hints that Mr Oates inflexibility had led to rows. This again was not a subject which I felt it was appropriate for me to explore, however, and I simply noted that there may have been more domestic tension than was being talked about. Finally, I did not feel that I encouraged Mrs Oates to impose a rapid and false order on her past. When she had left her shop job in 1977, she had spent two months at home, taking stock and considering her future. This period of reflection meant that she was able to handle introspection well, and to identify what had been important and unimportant about her past.

These two points of methodological interest show that, although case studies rely heavily on a relationship of trust between interviewer and respondent, there are ways in which such trust can be scrutinised. By double-checking dates, trying to estimate the extent of my influence, and being alert to areas which might be too painful for respondents to talk about, I was able to at least render the trust slightly more quantifiable than it might otherwise have been.

(d) Analysis and Discussion

Thus the first stage of the analysis was to check and recheck the data for inconsistencies and inaccuracies. I did this at each interview so that, by our last meeting, there were no obvious loose ends. In Mrs Oates' case, the data had been verified by phone calls to a sister who still lived in Lancashire and Mr Oates had been called into the room on several occasions to help with recall. In general, Mrs Oates had little trouble remembering the past and had kept many documents to which she referred on the inevitable occasions when she did get confused.

Having done this, the second stage was, following the interactionist stance of the whole way in which the empirical work had been conceived, to look at the data from the point of view of Mrs Oates: 'to get inside the defining process of the actor in order to understand his action' (Blumer, 1969, p.16). Various parts of the interview schedule had been designed to explore how the subject made sense of the world and of her actions in it. I had, for example, asked direct questions about different stages in the life cycle and about what each woman saw as being the most important of these, and had also created opportunities during interviews for women to talk about what reasons they now put forward for their past behaviour.

Below, I report on the meaning which Mrs Oates gave to her life history. I should point out that I have covered some of this material in the previous section, largely because these sort of biographical data do not easily lend themselves to bring broken down in this systematic way.

The impact of extreme childhood poverty was outstanding in the account of herself which Mrs Oates gave. Mrs Oates felt that the poverty had affected her life in several ways. Firstly, it had made her want to get away from home as soon as possible: to be 'grown up', to leave school, and to start a new life under new and more hopeful conditions. This made her keen to go and live with her sister when the chance came, and keen to set up a home of her own once she met her husband. Secondly, it made her particularly determined to provide for her children. She said that her main aim, having provided them with a level of material comfort far in excess of that of her own childhood, was to create the educational opportunities for them which she had never had. I asked what she felt that her main achievement in life had been, and she replied:

> I suppose my biggest - it's my husband's and mine - was the contribution we made to the children's education. When they were doing exams we were always here and would give them all the help we could. If we didn't know things they were never brushed off. We'd find out for them. I think we made a big contribution during those years.

Thirdly, the poverty was a standard by which she measured later material comfort and this was so low that she later valued highly what others might well have taken for granted. The opening of her autobiography captures this well:

We (the four children) were packed like sardines in a 'three-quarter' bed. Tim and Emmy were in the middle with David on one side of them and me on the other. I shall never forget those nights ... The floor was bare, dirty boards and there was just enough room for the bed, a battered chest of drawers and the inevitable bucket which was used during the night as a lavatory ... Periodically Mam said 'this room wants some brushing up and that bucket stinks, I'll have to get some disinfectant of some sort'. As far as I can remember, it never did get further than being talked about. We all jumped into our place in the bed and Mam made the bed over us (it was never made before bedtime) trying to give us an equal share of the bedclothes. These consisted of a sheet, a blanket, several old coats ... and when it was very cold we simply did not undress ... Many nights, lying on my back with half a buttock overhanging the bed, with the bedclothes as usual covering exactly half of my body, hot tears would drench my face and run into my ears, tears of despair. The most terrible part of all was that I thought life would go on like that for ever ... If only I had known then that one day I should have a home of my own with a large, clean bed to sleep in, I think I would have been able to bear it better ... To this day, I tend to regard my bed as most women would a diamond tiara. My husband says he has never known anyone sleep with such active enjoyment ... In one way or another, this way of sleeping, or trying to sleep, must have affected us all ... Emmy sleeps with a deep frown creasing her forehead and still grinds her teeth. Tim is in the habit of giving his wife a violent push, probably imagining himself back in that overcrowded bed. It affected me in that I still look on a good night's sleep as a luxury.

Mrs Oates also stressed that her husband has played an important part in determining the form her life has taken. When I asked her what she would now say was the most important decision she has ever made, she immediately replied that it was to 'marry the man I did', saying that 'he has certain standards that, if you keep up to them, he's not disappointed and you find you are a success', and that she tried hard to achieve in this way and has gained pleasure from doing so. This has meant different things at different times. In general, it has meant putting the full-time care of the home and family at the top of her list of priorities, and being prepared to make sacrifices for the children whenever necessary. It has also meant devoting a considerable amount of time to helping her husband through his emotional difficulties:

> He's very easily cast down and needs a lot of encouragement and especially from someone who isn't like him, who has a more cheerful frame of mind. He's easily sunk into gloom. All through the years he's gone into these phases. My role has always been to cheer him up out of being cast down.

Mrs Oates also pointed out that she felt she has had little choice in her life, and that its shape has emerged from the lack of alternatives available to her. For example, her poor childhood meant that she had to leave school as soon as possible and get the first job which was available. Similarly, when she got married she wanted a home of her own, to grow up and have a fresh start. Her husband was in his mid-30s and she felt that they had little choice over when to get married: 'I think it was a question of if we didn't then he never would' and so they began married life before they were able to get a house of their own, and lived with Mr Oates' mother. Their first child was not planned, and so there was little choice involved in when they started a family. In later years, Mrs Oates was affected by the illness and premature retirement of her husband, and the death of her sister, which left her brother-in-law a frail widower. Both of these were events over which she had little control, but which had serious consequences for her.

Mrs Oates felt that her changed employment status in recent years had been an important change in her life. She said that this had come about through a slow gain in self-confidence:

> When I was younger I was more willing to do menial tasks, even though I knew I could do better. I'm not willing to do that now. What made me change over a long period of time was that ... you realise gradually that you can do a bit more than the average.

Mrs Oates presented her own paid work in relatively simple terms, identifying clear reasons for it which were based on her domestic responsibilities:

> When I first worked it was to keep the whole family, when my husband was ill. Then it was to pay for my daughter's private education at a convent, to run a family car , to help my other daughter at college ... now I work to keep us.

Looking back on it, Mrs Oates felt that her father was an important influence on her life, particularly in that he had encouraged the whole family to read. Although financial circumstances did not allow her to pursue education during her childhood, she felt that it was from him that she first learnt the general value of education. She said that this view was further strengthened once her elder daughter went to grammar school where her teachers and classmates stressed the importance of qualifications in a way which was not typical among the people with whom she had previously had contact.

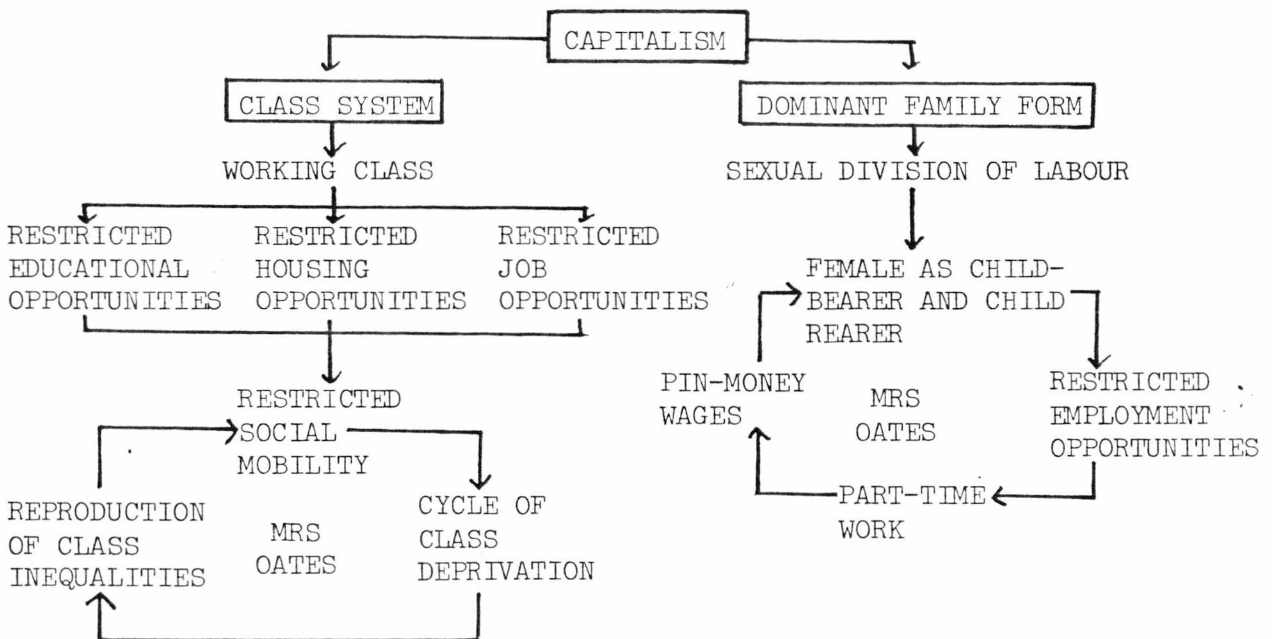
Thus Mrs Oates saw her life as being moulded primarily by the poverty of her childhood and by her commitment to her roles as wife and mother. She saw these two as related, in that the early experiences meant she placed great value on establishing a new life for herself, and her husband and children were the means by which she sought to achieve this.

In the third stage of analysis I shifted emphasis. This was the point at which looking at the world from the point of view of Mrs Oates had been done enough: rather than finding out more about what she thought, I had to decide what _I_ thought about Mrs Oates. This return to the stance of observer rather than participant is of course a necessary stage in any fieldwork, which would otherwise turn into an endless exercise of collecting data of increasing complexity.

This third stage aimed to set the broad parameters of Mrs Oates' life in more overtly sociological terms, to get an idea of the blend of limitation and opportunity out of which the individual life story had

developed. This approach derived from a sociological approach which emphasises the structural limitations on human action. According to this perspective, Mrs Oates' case would be best illuminated by focussing on the way her life chances were restricted by her social class. Her working-class childhood meant that she had no formal educational qualifications, restricted labour market opportunities and low aspirations. The idea of social reproduction accounts for Mrs Oates' marriage and maternity: that a complex process of ideological pressure leads families to reproduce in virtually unchanged form across the generations, thus ensuring social stability and cohesion. Under capitalism, the argument goes, a certain sort of family form is particularly functional, in which women bear and rear children and perform domestic labour while men are the breadwinners. This style of analysis can be shown diagrammatically:

Structural Influences on Personal Biography



Thus, Mrs Oates' story would fit in at the point where the diagram becomes circular: trapped in a cycle of opportunities which are restricted by both class and gender. This third stage of analysis was concerned with generalities above all else. It sought to establish the most important overall influences on Mrs Oates and the boundaries within with she was creating a distinctive life pattern.

The fourth stage in analysis turned to the specificities of personal circumstances and to resolving some of the apparent ambiguities of biography. This was another stage at which I drew heavily on the principles of social interactionist thought, in particular on the idea that human behaviour is reactive rather than interpretive. Blumer makes the point in this way:

> Instead of the individual being surrounded by an environment of pre-existing objects which play upon him and call forth his behaviour, the proper picture is that he constructs his objects on the basis of his on-going activity (Blumer, 1962, p.182),

going on to stress that:

> From the standpoint of symbolic interaction the organisation of human society is the framework inside of which social action takes place and is not the determinant of that action.

Thus, what is important in trying to understand an individual's action is not the broad set of opportunities within which he or she operates, but the meaning which the individual ascribes to such opportunities and the process of constructing this meaning.

From this perspective, Mrs Oates' childhood, for example, took on a rather different significance. The salient point was not so much that it took place among the deprived working class, but that Mrs Oates

experienced this as unpleasant, to the extent that she wanted more than this for herself and her children, and that she was prepared to make some sacrifices for this. Similarly, when she married, the point was not so much that she married a working-class man thereby increasing the chances of repeating a cycle of class deprivation, but that, for her, this represented entry to the adult world and taking on a new status, with a new set of ambitions. Thus, from her point of view, it was not at all more of the same, but rather the symbolic and actual marking of a fresh start.

At this stage of analysis, I sought to resolve some of the apparent contradictions in individual biographies. This can be illustrated by two examples from Mrs Oates' case. Firstly, although her attitude to paid work in middle age was highly instrumental since she only did it to earn the money to finance her daughter's education, she did not maximise her earning potential at this time by seeking either promotion or further training. Second, despite her working-class background, she retained and realised an image of herself and her family which transcended the limitations imposed by class, and her children went into middle-class occupations.

The first of these two examples can be explained by reference to the idea of roles and identities, as used by writers from an interactionist perspective (Brim, 1966; Stryker, 1967; Turner, 1967). McCall and Simmons (1966) have usefully developed the concept of a role identity which they define as

> the character and the role that an individual devises for himself as an occupant of a particular social position ... his imaginative view of himself as he likes to think of himself being and acting (<u>ibid</u>, p.65).

They go on to suggest that an individual adopts a number of role identities, each of which is appropriate for different social situations and that these identities are patterned in a 'hierarchy of prominence' (ibid, p.74). They argue that identifying the hierarchy of prominence of an individual's role identities enables a fuller understanding of his or her social behaviour. Such an approach can be applied to the example from Mrs Oates' biography. In early middle age, her primary roles were as wife and mother and this realisation explains the apparent paradox that although she wanted to earn she did not attempt to increase her earnings by training. Her chosen identity in employment was as a working mother rather than as a career woman. Her family roles were ranked above her employment ones, and training or applying for promotion would have required a high level of identification with paid work and the role of a career woman. This would not have been compatible with maintaining the roles of wife and mother at the top of her hierarchy of identities.

The second example of apparent contradiction is that Mrs Oates seemed to have broken away from the cultural norms which would normally be ascribed to a person from her social class, and to have broken the pattern of children entering the same social class as their parents. This paradox is illuminated by the concept of reference groups (Brim, 1966; Shibutani, 1962; Stryker, 1967a, 1967b). A widely accepted definition of a reference group is as

> that group whose presumed perspective is used by an actor as the frame of reference in the organisation of his perceptual field (Shibutani, 1962, p.132).

Such a group could be as small as only one person, or as large as a social class. It need not give a stated response to an individual's behaviour,

but would be functioning as a reference group so long as the individual simply imagined its response to any proposed action. In Mrs Oates' case, it is clear that certain small reference groups outweighed the influence of the larger and more general one of social class. Her father, for example, was a very influential figure, and he taught her the importance of reading and education. Her husband too did this after they married, and he encouraged her to see further education as a goal for their children. His particular personality, given to introversion and depression, meant that the house in which the children grew up was quiet and bookish, so that they were encouraged towards educational achievement. Another important reference group for Mrs Oates comprised her elder daughter's grammar school friends and teachers. This group led her to believe that dreams of her children going to college could be turned into reality, and this in turn meant that she was willing to make sacrifices to achieve this. Similarly, the girls inhabited a social world in which the reference groups which were dominant in their working-class backgrounds were contradicted by those which they encountered at school. Since the views of their parents coincided with the ones they met at school, their educational success can in fact be seen as an explicable, rather than contradictory, development.

Thus, looking at roles and identities was helpful in understanding certain aspects of Mrs Oates' biography and I was able to make more sense of her experience in sociological terms by developing this approach and rethinking her life according to the changing roles and hierarchies of identities over the life cycle. Again, this can be shown diagrammatically:

Mrs Oates' Biography: Roles and Actions

Roles	Consequences
Stage 1	
*1. Child	Inherit parental class position
2. Sibling	Live in over-crowded housing
Stage 2	
1. Sibling	Called on to look after sister in times of need
Stage 3	
1. Wife	Live with husband; influenced by his social and cultural standards; household standard of living set by his (low) pay; take on the female role in a traditional division of labour
2. Daughter-in-law	Live with husband's parents
Stage 4	
**1. Wife	As above, stage 3(1)
**1. Mother	Spend as much time as possible caring for children
Stage 5	
**1. Wife	Replace husband's breadwinning when necessary; other consequences as above, stage 3(1)
**1. Mother	As above; take on any job to support children
3. Employee	Take any job available in order to earn wages
Stage 6	
1. Wife	As above, stages 3(1) and 5(1)
2. Employee	Develop career so as to increase job satisfaction and earning potential
3. Mother	Reduced demands once children have left home
Stage 7	
1. Wife	As above, stages 3(1) and 5(1)
2. Employee	As above, stage 6(2)
3. Sibling	Look after brother-in-law.

* These numbers refer to the hierarchical ranking of roles in each stage.

** These are of equal prominence in this stage.

Although the diagram is generalised, it serves to show how the pattern of Mrs Oates' life was far more complex than was suggested by the third stage in analysis, which produced a rather monotonous account of its parameters only.

From this diagram it is clear that Mrs Oates took decisions in the context of her social as well as her material circumstances. What she did depended on who she was as much as it did on what resources she had, and who she was changed over time. I wanted to identify stability as well as change, however, and one constant feature was her identification with domesticity. This in turn changed over the life cycle, as the diagram shows. At first, as a single adolescent, she had to help an older married sister; later she had to be a housewife and wife; then a mother too. At the moment she has returned to being a wife and housewife, with the additional burden of caring for an infirm brother-in-law and frail husband. Obviously the point here is that of her specific interpretation of these domestic roles. Not everyone would have gone to help a sister, for example, or gone out to paid work to support children during a husband's illness. Mrs Oates' interpretation of the domestic was, as I suggested above, heavily influenced by the deprivations of her childhood. However, it was also shaped by the general mood of the times, and the particular ideological pressures to which women were subjected. In Chapters 3 and 4, I argued that women in her age-group were put under particularly strong pressures to develop a certain style of domesticity: to identify themselves as traditional wives and mothers, and only enter paid work through the medium of the domestic role. Mrs Oates' case illustrates this process: all her paid employment was closely related to her role within the family, and it would be unhelpful to examine one of these two roles while ignoring the other.

In following these four stages of making sociological sense of each life story, I moved closer to an interpretive understanding of the case, and to an understanding and identification of some of the more general

influences on each woman's life. But it was also clear that this sort of analysis could be continued indefinitely: having completed the four stages, I was ready to go back and interview the women again, since the more I found out about them, the more I was able to specify exactly what I wanted to know. In Mrs Oates' case, for example, further interviews could usefully have probed further about domesticity or her marital relationship. However, I had already completed sixty interviews and the resource limitations of postgraduate work meant that I could not easily increase this number. In any case, I was sure that I had enough data to make a contribution to the analysis of women and unemployment: it was now a matter of wielding it to apply to the problem in hand.

(e) Conclusions

Having used Mrs Oates' case to demonstrate both the complexity of the data which I had collected and the difficulties associated with its analyis, I would like in conclusion to consider whether this case study can illuminate the process of relating the mass of fieldwork data to the study of women's unemployment. Obviously one case cannot be help up as proof of any major conclusions here, but my argument is that it can provide a legitimate challenge to existing theories if it does not easily fit into them, and this is to follow those life historians who stress the value of a single case study as an indicator of broader trends and conceptual clarity (Bertaux, 1981). I was able to identify four main ways in which Mrs Oates' story seemed to challenge the usual approaches of studies of employment and unemployment and, as I go on to point out, these had specific implications for the style of further analysis of fieldwork data.

Firstly, the case showed that each of the jobs Mrs Oates had done,

taken in isolation, was open to a number of different interpretations. These could only be sorted out by understanding what came before and after each of the jobs. This would be in contrast to more traditional approaches to unemployment or employment, which analyse a specific situation at one time, taking jobs out of their sequential context. For example, Mrs Oates' part-time secretarial job could perhaps be seen as a typical example of semi-skilled low-status female work, and it would be easy to assume that it fitted into a model of women as under-achieving employees, working part-time in order to meet their domestic commitments. In fact, Mrs Oates worked part-time so that she had enough time to undertake demanding evening education, as a strategy in a longer-term plan of career development.

Secondly, Mrs Oates' story confounded the usual boundaries between employment and unemployment. She was only registered as unemployed at one stage when, as a single teenager, she had left a job because travelling proved to be expensive, and it had taken her several months to find another. However, there were times when her situation had something to do with unemployment, if by this we mean a failure to find a job which the individual is capable of doing and willing to do. For example, when she was collating paper in a factory, she was looking for other work but could not find it for a year.

Thirdly, Mrs Oates' case illustrated clearly that domestic and employment spheres are closely related for women, and that each can affect the form the other takes. For example, she left the labour market altogether when her children were very young, and at first she only returned to it when she felt that the material benefits she could provide for the children through her paid work were greater than the benefits her

full-time presence in the home could bring.

Fourthly, it was clear from this biography that 'the domestic' or 'women's familial roles' are far more complicated than is usually thought. The most important point here was that it was not so much the biological fact of motherhood which constrained Mrs Oates' employment chances, but her own interpretation of the social role which this entailed. Thus Mrs Oates' experience of unemployment and employment was mediated through her interpretation of the domestic role, rather than by the role itself. Her story afforded some insights into complications surrounding the meaning of the domestic. The demands made on her changed as children grew, parents became elderly, and her husband became frail. Her own standards changed and housework, for example, became a lower priority for her in middle-age than it had been earlier. At the same time, changes outside her own life which affected her experiences of domesticity were taking place: technological developments and a generally increased standard of living affected work in the home. Similarly, the social norms of what constituted good housewifery or mothering were changing. Wider social and political developments defined the alternatives which were available to Mrs Oates. For example, Mrs Oates felt that she had to look after her brother-in-law once her sister died. This feeling was not only prompted by the social norms governing the intensity of family ties, but also from an inadequate system of welfare support for the single elderly, and from her brother-in-law's inability to pay for help.

From these four general conclusions, interpretations of domesticity and changes in behaviour during the life cycle emerge as being highly significant aspects of personal biography. While these are not typically discussed by those who write about unemployment, it has become clear that

each is a key element in determining women's labour market activity. Thus, while I knew at the outset that women's domestic roles were closely related to their employment activity, interviews highlighted that this relation had to be understood in much more detail, with particular attention being paid to its changing nature, and to the influences on such a change. The intensive study of one case has highlighted these dual concerns with understanding more about domesticity and more about changes in behaviour over time, and in the next two chapters I explore these issues in greater depth.

NOTE TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. All the names by which I refer to women in the fieldwork group are fictitious.

CHAPTER SIX

EMPLOYMENT PATTERNING: TYPES AND EXPLANATIONS

In this chapter I present a detailed description of the employment behaviour of the twenty women whom I met during fieldwork. I suggest that the more commonly-used occupational classifications do not provide an adequate framework for the analysis of this material and I begin to develop a more complex typology of employment patterns.

(a) Introduction

Analysis of any fieldwork data must begin with a structured description of the data and this is my intention in this chapter. However, choosing what to describe and the style of description is a fraught task, which could be completed in many different ways and which is itself part of the analytical process. In what follows, although I collected data about every aspect of women's lives, my main focii are women's employment behaviour and the influences on it. Much of this description may seem to ignore a significant proportion of the information which I collected about the fieldwork group. However, finding out the detail was necessary for me to build up a complete picture of each woman, and it was only by doing this that I could select with confidence the parts most relevant to my immediate research interests.

Finding a way to structure description about female employment activity is itself problematic, since the complexities of personal biography, as illustrated in the previous chapter, defy many of the usual sociological categories. I argued in that chapter that in order to make sense of particular jobs, they have to be placed in a sequential context. I therefore sought a style of describing employment histories which would enable the recognition of sequences of behaviour. The word 'sequence', however, may suggest a necessary relation between the different stages of

an employment history, and I wanted to avoid this implication. I chose instead the term patterning in relation to grouping together the different employment histories which I had collected during fieldwork. Brown uses this notion in his writing on employment histories, arguing that

> it is important to consider how far ... work histories are patterned and may be considered as constituting distinct types (Brown, 1982, p.130).

Bertaux too has developed the idea of patterning and argues that one aim of life-history research should be to discover the 'patterns of practices' (Bertaux, 1981, p.36) in individuals' lives. Identifying patterns meant that I could present women's employment in terms of sequences and trends rather than as a series of separate events. It also meant that I could continue the interactionist emphasis, looking at the whole of each woman's employment history rather than at its constituent parts, seeing it as a set of fluid relations rather than the sum of a number of quantifiable facts.

Thus I planned to structure my description of women's employment behaviour, as a preliminary stage in analysis, by identifying a series of employment patterns. To do this, I made use of the idea of travel and routes. Starting with women's occupational status at the time of the interviews, I looked retrospectively at the routes by which they had arrived there, and identified six possibilities. These classifications of routes derived from two simple observations. First, that in order to arrive anywhere, progress has to be made upwards, downwards or sideways; and, second, that travel will be either continuous or intermittent. These observations suggest six types of routes - or employment patterns - and, for the purposes of reference and easy recognition, I made up names for

each of them. These approximated to the style of travel: climbers, leapers, sliders, fallers, walkers and hoppers. Climbers were women who had a career in the traditional sense of the word, whose occupational status moved steadily upwards in a continuous pattern of promotion. Leapers also moved upwards, but the pattern was interrupted. Sliders moved down the occupational hierarchy with no breaks in their employment careers, and fallers moved down too, but intermittently. Walkers kept the same occupational status throughout a continuous employment history, and hoppers kept the same status but revealed a disrupted pattern of paid work. These categories were, of course, developed from the employment experiences of a group of women of a similar age. At various times in their lives, women would have fallen into different categories, but Table 1 shows how they fitted in at the time of the interviews in 1982.

Table 1: Employment Patterning: Six Routes

	Continuous	Intermittent
Upwardly mobile	Climbers 0	Leapers 7 (Abbott, Baker, Ellis, Ingham, Oates, Sand, Tate)
Downwardly mobile	Sliders 0	Fallers 4 (Field, Gales, Jones, Kemp)
Immobile	Walkers 0	Hoppers 9 (Clark, Davies, Hall, Lane, Martin, Neal, Page, Quin, Reed)

The advantages of this method of grouping the women can be briefly demonstrated by comparison with another, more frequently used, approach. Table 2 lists each woman's occupation at the time of the interviews, and the information presented in this Table is supplemented by Appendix A to this chapter in which I compile a very brief employment history for each of the women under study.

Table 2: Occupation of women at the time of interviews

Name	Economic Activity	Occupation
Abbott	Part-time	Play-group leader
Baker	Part-time	Teacher
Clark	Part-time	Production line worker
Davis	Part-time	Shop assistant
Ellis	Full-time	Teacher
Field	Full-time	Nursing auxiliary
Gales	Unemployed	Seeking employment
Hall	Part-time	Self-employed astrologer
Ingham	Full-time	Craft-centre supervisor
Jones	Part-time	Care assistant
Kemp	Part-time	Canteen assistant
Lane	Part-time	Homework, light assembly
Martin	Full-time	Production line worker
Neal	Part-time	Home help
Oates	Full-time	Company accountant
Page	Full-time	Shop assistant
Quin	Part-time	Cleaner
Reed	Part-time	Homework, light assembly
Sand	Full-time	Deputy matron
Tate	Full-time	Chief stewardess

* These are fictitious names, used to preserve the anonymity of respondents.

A well-known technique of employment classification is the OPCS category

of socio-economic groups. Using it in Table 3 to classify occupations at the time of interviews, the women would be sub-divided thus:

Table 3: Socio-economic group

Socio-economic Group		Name of woman	Total in Group
I	Professional	Baker, Ellis, Oates	3
II	Employers and managers		0
IIIa	Other non-manual	Ingham, Sand, Page, Abbott, Davies	5
IIIb	Skilled manual	Hall, Tate	2
IV	Semi-skilled manual	Field, Jones, Kemp, Neal	4
V	Unskilled manual	Clark, Martin, Quin, Lane, Reed	5
Unemployed and seeking work		Gales	1

See OPCS, 1980, p.x and 1982, Appendix 1.

Such a grouping has little direct relevance to the style of analysis which I wished to pursue. Women with very different jobs, such as Mrs Abbott and Mrs Page, share categories. On the other hand, women with similar jobs, such as Mrs Kemp and Mrs Quinn, are in different groups. Further, since there is no possibility of recognising different employment histories from this sort of classification, it does not enable identification of the employment patterns which I felt to be such an important aspect of analysis.

The six employment patterns which I identify in Table 1 should be seen as a typology rather than a classification. Developing the use of typologies as a means to analysis has long been used by social scientists in their attempts to impose order on a social world which is at best

complex, and at worst chaotic. Weber is often seen as the master of the art, in particular from his writing about the ideal type - 'a technical aid which facilitates a more lucid arrangement and terminology' (Weber, 1948, p.324). The ideal type is chiefly a heuristic device, and therefore it does not matter if empirical phenomena do not exactly fit with every detail of the type. The ideal type is

> constructed by the abstraction and combination of an indefinite number of elements which, although found in reality, are rarely or never discovered in this scientific form (Giddens, 1971, p.141).

While the six employment patterns are perhaps too general to be, strictly, ideal types, they do form a typology in that they deal primarily with ordering description as an aid to analysis, and in that they do not require that every case fit a type in its every detail.

This six-cell typology of employment patterns facilitates recognition of two important characteristics of the group: first, that no-one had been continuously economically active during adult life; and second, that women arrived at their current jobs from very different employment backgrounds. Neither of these important features of the group could have been identified using more traditional occupational classifications. Despite this, it remains a general typology and one which may be said to equate with very well-known notions of social mobility. However, it should be pointed out that analysis of social mobility is not normally combined with the analysis of current occupations and so its use is unusual here. In the next section of the chapter, I discuss each of the types in greater detail, making extensive use of case-study material. I want to present a clear picture of what these twenty women had done in terms of paid employment during their adult lives, and to use the typology to arrange

the women into groups. In each sub-section, I introduce the type briefly, and then present a short case history by way of further illustration.

(b) Six Types

(i) Climbers, sliders and walkers

There were no women in any of these categories. Since the emphasis here is on description, discussion of why no women followed these types of career pattern is deferred.

(ii) Leapers

This career pattern was evident among seven cases. The main characteristic of the group was that, at the time of the interviews, women were doing jobs with higher status than ones which they had held at some previous stage in their lives. This group could be further sub-divided into those who achieved seniority after a period of adult education, and those who achieved it by promotion in one particular occupation.

Mrs Abbott, Baker, Ellis, Ingham and Oates all embarked on a period of training once they had had children, and had been out of the labour market for a number of years. Four of them became full-time students when a local teacher-training college ran an entry scheme for unqualified mature applicants, and the fifth took a part-time day job while attending adult education classes in the evening. While they did not all finish their training, and were not all doing the jobs for which they had been trained, they were all in jobs which they had only been able to get because of their period of adult education.

Case study: Mrs Baker, Leaper Number 1

Mrs Baker grew up in London. She left school at the age of 16 with the School Certificate. Although she had wanted to take more examinations and to aim for university entrance, her working-class father refused to support her further education. She became an office clerk and went to evening classes to learn to type. She became engaged and she and her fiance saved as much money as they could before their wedding. After a two-year engagement Mrs Baker married and she and her husband moved out of London in order to buy a house, and commuted to work in the city.

Mrs Baker found commuting time-consuming and tiring, and she often got behind with her housework, which she found upsetting. She therefore resigned from her office job and found local work in a shop. This meant that she could maintain her standards for housework, which she now says were very high. After some months of shopwork, Mrs Baker had a child and left her job to look after him. She did not give much thought to her decision to become a mother:

> Once you were married you had a baby. I think it was as simple as that - all brain-washing and conditioning.

After two years at home, Mrs Baker had to find paid employment because they were very short of money. She managed to get office work locally, and her relatives helped with child care. Her husband's commuting, the mortgage repayments, and the cost of running the house were all more expensive than they had estimated and the couple soon decided to move back into rented accommodation in London. Mrs Baker then spent a number of years in part-time office jobs taken on a temporary basis, so that she could balance the need to earn money with the need to look after their

child. By the time her son was seven, they had saved enough to be able to afford another mortgage, but only on a property outside London. They moved to Faversham in 1963, and Mrs Baker became a full-time housewife. They were still short of money, however, and she became increasingly depressed. She took another office job and, on going back to paid work, found that its benefits were not only economic:

> I felt we were hard up and that was why I was depressed, so I went to work to earn money, but I realised when I started that it was the company I'd missed.

After eighteen months, Mrs Baker had an operation which forced her to spend six weeks in bed, during which time she reassessed her current state of mind and her future:

> I realised I got depressed at home and would have to work for the rest of my life, and wanted to do an interesting job, more than punching machines, so I set out to get a career.

At this time, she happened to read in the local paper about a mature student's entry scheme run by the teacher-training college and she subsequently trained as a primary school teacher. After six years in a full-time teaching post, Mrs Baker had what she now feels was 'a sort of a breakdown' and handed in her resignation. She was under considerable pressure: at work, because of problem pupils and staff shortages; and at home, because her husband was ill, her son was taking examinations and her recently-widowed mother-in-law became very clinging and demanding. After the immediate period of breakdown and crisis was over, Mrs Baker began again to be depressed at home and went back to teaching, but this time on a part-time basis. She and her husband had developed an interest in Italy and had begun to take relatively expensive holidays abroad. They had also

begun to redecorate and furnish their home. Neither of these activities could be kept up on Mr Baker's wage alone. Mrs Baker still works part-time, either on supply or on short-term contract work, and expects to continue this pattern until retirement.

Mrs Sand and Mrs Tate had both risen to positions of some seniority through promotion with the same employer. Each had taken a post in an unskilled capacity and, by applying for internal vacancies as they became available, had risen to positions of considerable status within the organisation.

Case study: Mrs Sand, Leaper Number 2

Mrs Sand's education was seriously interrupted by evacuation, and she left school early and went to work as a resident domestic as soon as possible. Later in the war, the large house where she worked was used as a home for evacuees and, since Mrs Sand did not enjoy looking after these children, she left and began to train as a nursery nurse, which again was a residential post. Shortly after qualification she married and left her job, spending two years as a full-time housewife, moving homes frequently to be with her airforce husband. Once he became attached to one particular base, she got a job in a factory, which she chose because a friend of hers already worked there. She left this post to have the first of her two children and stayed at home with them until the youngest was five. She then worked as a playground supervisor for a period of five years, during which time they moved to Sheerness: her husband's home town. Once the youngest child was 10, she felt that she could do a full-time job again, and applied successfully for the first one which she heard about, as a care assistant in an old people's home. Since then, her wages have

been spent on items which could be seen as non-essential, in that her husband's income has been high enough to pay for food and clothes, as well as the mortgage and upkeep of a small terraced house. Mrs Sand has always been dissatisfied by life in Sheerness and has used her wages specifically to buy comforts to compensate for this. She particularly resented what she sees as the lack of social facilities on the Island and a very restricted night life. She has spent her wages on frequent foreign holidays, and found that these improved the quality of her life greatly. They have had a bathroom extension, several redecorations, a greenhouse and various small renovations. They have a lot of consumer durables, from leather furniture to a microwave oven. In order to maintain the lifestyle which she now sees as preserving her sanity, Mrs Sand has had to continue to earn and, if at all possible, to increase her earning potential. This has been made possible by the opportunities for promotion at the Home where she worked, and each time a vacancy has occurred she has applied for it. She found that, as she moved up the grades, the work became more interesting so that the job itself, as well as the wages it paid, compensated for her lack of social life. She now works full-time as Deputy Matron and, since her qualifications are not adequate for promotion to matron, expects to continue at this grade until retirement.

(iii) Fallers

This category is made up of women whose employment status at the time of the interview was lower than it had been at some previous stage in their lives. There were four such women and they can be divided into two groups. The first made a choice to abandon their previous employment status while the second dropped from it against their will.

Only Mrs Jones decided to abandon a promising career and to turn being a housewife and a mother into a full-time job. Although she is now in employment, her job at the time of interview was at a much lower grade than the one which she had held before having children. While many women in the group substituted domestic employment for a paid occupation, the point about this type of woman is that she made a decision to relocate ambition to the domestic sphere, and that this was a decision which she did not alter in the light of subsequent events.

Case-study: Mrs Jones, Faller Number 1

Mrs Jones left school at 15 because, although she was an able and promising pupil, her working-class family could not support her through further education. She got the first job she could, as an assistant in a laboratory. She had been pleased to leave school because, as the only child from her street to win a place at the grammar school, she felt that she was living a double life and was under considerable social pressure to conform both to the middle-class standards of the school and to the working-class ones of her home. However, she was intellectually bright and developed an interest in the laboratory work. Gradually she educated herself at evening class and went to university at the age of 21. She left after a year, having failed the first-year examinations, and feeling unhappy in the university environment. She again worked in a hospital pathology laboratory, and eventually gained a technical degree through in-service training. She became engaged while at university, but this relationship ended when she was 22. This led her to rethink her life and to adopt a strategy of becoming a career woman in a short-term plan to forget and compensate for unhappiness. She found the life-style of a

single woman lonely and unsatisfactory and, when she met her husband, readily reverted to an earlier self-image as full-time mother and housewife. They had four children, three of whom were adopted, and Mrs Jones gradually transferred her ambitions from direct to indirect achievement:

> I have lost the desire to succeed - I've had to - and now get more pleasure from watching them succeed. Really I have made others succeed, my children, but especially my husband; he would still be the head of a small village school if it wasn't for the help I've given him in running a home and so he hasn't had to give any time up for that. He is the head of a big town primary school, doing an OU course, and also has become ordained as a worker priest. All that is through me really, and I do get a lot of satisfaction from that really.

Mrs Jones has a paid job at the moment, escorting a handicapped child to school each day, for which she receives £15 a week. Her husband volunteered her for this vacancy when he heard, through his own teaching job, that the social services department were having difficulty filling the vacancy. Mrs Jones does not, however, see this as work, and counts it as part of the extensive voluntary work she does in the community. She has elaborated the housewife role so that it is a demanding and totally absorbing way of life, despite her children having grown up. She has always seen housework as a job of work, and specifically as a domestic science. She sees herself as a scientist and a manager, and has developed and enjoyed a range of traditional domestic skills through which she has pursued goals of household orderliness, routine and cleanliness. She has always done a substantial amount of voluntary work for neighbours and organisations, and is active in the Women's Institute, Mothers' Union, Townswomen's Guild, Age Concern, Meals-on-Wheels and Citizens' Advice Bureau. Her husband's recent ordination has increased her involvement in

general parish duties, and she expects that this will continue to be a demanding role.

Three women - Mrs Field, Mrs Gales and Mrs Kemp - had an occupational status below one which they had held at an earlier stage in their employment histories which they had not themselves chosen. While the women in the group discussed above made a personal choice to move down the occupational hierarchy, these three women did so against their wishes, and were extremely unhappy as a result.

Case-study: Mrs Kemp, Faller Number 2

Mrs Kemp left school at 15 with no qualifications, and went to work in an office. Impressed by the lives of the secretaries she saw about her, she went to night school to get shorthand and typing qualifications. She stayed with the firm for a total of eleven years and became personal assistant to the managing director. She left this job to have the first of two children, having continued to do paid work after her marriage so that they could afford to buy and furnish their home. Mrs Kemp had expected to be a full-time housewife for ever, but when the youngest child was still a baby, the family was so short of money that she had to find paid work. Tied by two children, the only employment she could find was doing homework as an assembler of electrical parts. As the children grew older, she felt able to work outside the home and was keen to do so. She not only needed the money badly, but also found that being a full-time housewife was not as enjoyable as she had imagined it would be, once the children were at school. She wanted to work again at the job for which she had trained - as a personal assistant.

Despite using every means of job search available to her, Mrs Kemp had

extreme difficulty in finding a job. Partly this was because the time she had spent at home created a gap in her employment record, and partly it was because her responsibility for child care limited her availability for employment. However, she eventually managed to get a part-time office job and, four years after that, a full-time job as a waitress and shop assistant. She left this because of an argument with the manageress, and was forced to return to homework. For the next nine years, she did a succession of temporary, unskilled jobs, unable to find the personal assistant job she wanted. She has taken jobs to cover staff sickness, holidays, absenteeism and seasonal peaks. She now says, 'I'm always a filler-inner, I am, that's the story of my life'. Her current job is as a tea-lady in a factory. She is reconciled to, though saddened and embittered by, her failure to get a job as a personal assistant:

> I've just got to a dead end, I don't see much changing, I'm resigned to it now, I would have liked it to have been different obviously, but I'm just resigned.

(iv) Hoppers

This group is made up of women who, although they had held more than one job, did not move up or down in terms of occupational status. The jobs they had held were all unskilled and low-paid, and were often ones which are typically associated with women workers, such as cleaning, home-helping, auxiliary nursing or catering. There are no obvious sub-divisions within the group.

Case-study: Mrs Martin, Hopper Number 1

Mrs Martin left school as soon as she could, with no qualifications, and

went to work in the same factory as her mother. She started courting her husband at 13 and married him when she was 18. She left her job then, so that she could concentrate on building up a home, looking after her husband and starting a family, which they did as soon as possible. Mrs Martin had two sons, and looked after them on a full-time basis for fourteen years. When the younger son was nine, she got a job as a cleaner for two hours a day, at a pub opposite their house. Mr Martin's wages had not increased in the same proportion as the growing demands of a young family, and Mrs Martin had wanted to earn wages for some time but did not feel she could do so until her sons were well-established at school. She felt that the cleaning job was suitable because in the school holidays she was close enough to her children to be called upon in an emergency. This job did not pay as much as the family needed and, once the younger boy went to secondary school Mrs Martin took a full-time job, doing light assembly work in a local electrical company. After three years she found the strain of working full-time and doing all the domestic chores in the household unbearable and she looked for a job with fewer hours. She found factory work which, although it was full-time, had working hours arranged in a way which was convenient for her: from 7.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and had Friday afternoons free. She was able to keep up with domestic chores as well as to bring home full-time wages. After only a few months, however, she was made redundant and had some difficulty in finding another job. A friend told her about a part-time cleaning job for two hours each evening and she took this, relieved to find some means of earning a wage. After a year, the factory where she had worked was sold and started production again. She was offered short-time contract work at the factory, and took this in addition to cleaning, so that she worked long hours for periods of

six weeks to three months, followed by a spell of shorter hours of cleaning only as orders at the factory fell. After two years of this she was made redundant from her cleaning job, and she continued at the factory on a temporary basis. Six years later she was made a member of permanent staff, as a result of another change of ownership.

Although a substantial proportion of Mrs Martin's life has been spent in paid employment, she says that 'my attitude is very simple - I'm a housewife'. She has always wanted to leave paid work and was always optimistic about the chances of this happening. Unfortunately, her husband's wages have always been low and he has periodically been out of work and she has felt that she could best provide for her children by earning, rather than by simply being at home full-time. Her children have now grown up and left home and, for the first time, she could leave paid work without bringing about a dramatic fall in her standard of living. However, she hopes now to improve their home and is saving up to have a house extension built so that they can have a bathroom. She speaks of her employment experiences in a very negative way, and points out that she has 'never had a decent job yet'.

(c) Discussion

Having presented the employment patterns of the group in some descriptive detail, I now want to move towards a more analytical stance, and I consider below some of the reasons why certain women followed one type of employment pattern while others pursued a different course. Again, I deal with each of the types in turn.

(i) Climbers, sliders and walkers

I have already pointed out that no women followed continuous employment patterns. This was a predictable finding, since the hallmark of female employees has come to be their exit from the labour market to coincide with their entry to full-time domesticity. In general the main reason that women did not follow continuous employment patterns was that they all had children, and that they all equated maternity with full-time domesticity. Although nine of the twenty women left paid work on marriage rather than on pregnancy, eight of these hoped to start a family as soon as possible, and two of these were pregnant at the time of the marriage. They left their paid jobs in order to build a home in readiness for having and looking after children on a full-time basis.

This employment pattern is often described as one of 'dropping out of' the job market, as a result of substituting domestic for career ambition. However, interviews revealed a more subtle process whereby the jobs which women took before marriage could themselves be seen as a preliminary stage in a career of domesticity.

This point can perhaps be most effectively demonstrated by reference to those women who actually began a period of full-time training when they were young, and who might therefore have been most likely to pursue a pattern of building a continuous career. These are the women who would be most open to charges of having 'dropped out' of the job market on marriage. There were five women in the group: Mrs Abbott, Field, Gales, Jones and Sand.

The cases of Mrs Abbott and Mrs Field can be considered together here because they are so similar: both gave up nursing training in their final year in favour of marriage, at a time when student nurses were not allowed

to marry and continue with their training. Both came from unusually unstable homes, disrupted by marital break-up and parental death and both now say that this resulted in their developing particularly strong desires for emotional and financial stability and security. They wanted to leave unhappy homes as soon as possible, despite the poor earning and housing prospects for young, single women. Residential jobs provided them with the opportunity to leave home and to establish new lives of financial and emotional independence and self-sufficiency. It was for this reason, rather than any to do with qualities intrinsic to the actual job of nursing, that Mrs Abbott and Mrs Field began to train as nurses. Having done this, each turned her attention to the next stage in a longer-term ambition to create families of their own to replace the ones which they had lost as children. Mrs Field now says:

> Being a wife didn't really figure very highly in my way of thinking. My husband was older than me, I think I was looking for a father-figure ... I just saw it as the next stage, and I think it was that I really wanted security.

It is important to note here that she did not give high priority to the identity of being a wife per se; her overall concern was to live in a family again, and becoming a wife was just one part of this plan. Mrs Abbott too saw entering a marriage as a necessary strategy in constructing a family of her own, but she was more convinced by the glamour and romance of marriage than Mrs Field had been. She now says that her ideas of marriage came 'straight out of Georgette Heyer' and says

> Marriage was a way out for me, a way of getting the stability I'd never had ... I had an idyllic view of it all, a cottage in the country with dogs and children ... it was planned, it was all part of the idyll I had of marriage, starting a family young.

Another case, Mrs Sand, also began training as a nurse, but she completed the course and qualified as a nursery nurse. Her early career was very similar to that of Mrs Abbott and Mrs Field: she qualified and they did not simply because of the different timing of meeting their husbands, rather than because of any greater commitment to a career on her part. Although she did not come from a broken home, she had been evacuated as a child, and now feels that the disruption this caused strengthened her wish to marry and create a stable family unit of her own. She married her husband soon after meeting him, and gave up her nursing job so that she could be with him on a full-time basis.

Mrs Gales was the fourth woman to enter full-time training and she qualified as a draughtswoman, leaving her job after seven years, when she had her first child. She had greatly enjoyed her job, because of the life style it enabled her to have rather than because of the nature of the work. She trained with the London Metropolitan Water Board, where there was a young staff with a lively social life, and where she met her future husband. She had initially gone to work there because two of her school friends had already done so, and she envied their high wages and exciting social activities. She had thought of herself not as a career woman but as making the most of her opportunities in a limited period of paid work before becoming a full-time mother. She had always expected to marry young and had seen this, and not paid work, as her central life interest:

> We just got married so that we could live together really ... it was how the world was then and I just followed, I didn't know any different ... we thought we'd have a baby before I got to my late twenties which was considered an old age to start then.

Mrs Jones also began to train full-time, when she went to university at

the age of 21. She left after having failed her first-year examinations, however, and pursued the rest of her education by in-service training. Her training was not so much in preparation for a career as it was to successfully complete her interrupted education. She now says that adolescence was an extremely difficult time for her, caught between the demands made by a middle-class grammar school and those made by a working-class family. She was unable to reconcile these and reduced the pressure by leaving school early - an option which was also forced on her by her family's inability to support her through the sixth form. She felt dissatisfied by this course of action and was keen to pursue education. She did not, however, plan to become a 'career woman', and wanted to become a full-time wife and mother in her twenties.

Thus, these women who embarked on what could potentially have been continuous employment patterns disrupted these by their entry to full-time domesticity. This so-called 'drop-out' behaviour is often explained as being the substitution of one goal for another, but interviews demonstrated that going into a career could be a preliminary stage in the business of building a family: it could be a way to leave one home, and a short-term strategy in achieving an overall ambition to create a new one, so that 'dropping out' could be one stage in a series of compatible strategies adopted by women in a general search for adult status and identity. These women in particular, and the rest of the group in general, did not so much 'drop out' of a career as fail to 'drop into' one in the first place.

(ii) Leapers

In seeking to explain why some women were upwardly mobile after re-entry

to the labour market there is one outstanding factor: all the women except one experienced, after re-entering the labour market, a period of 'taking stock', during which they reassessed their attitude to paid work and decided that they would be in employment for a substantial number of years. For five of the seven women, this had been a temporally distinct phase, during a period of sick leave, unemployment or part-time working.

All the women had re-entered the labour market, after having had children, because of an urgent need for money. There were of course diverse causes of shortage, and different notions of poverty, but the primary reason for taking on paid work was to earn money. For all the women this return to the labour market at this stage was unplanned - whenthey had left to have children they had not expected to return. However, once back in paid work they reconsidered their future working lives and all decided that they would remain in employment for the foreseeable future. Again, there were different reasons for this: for example, Mrs Ellis, as a divorcee with three children, knew she would have to continue supporting them; Mrs Baker realised that she got depressed when she was a full-time housewife; and Mrs Sand realised that the goods her wages could buy and the job satisfaction she might achieve could compensate for the dreariness of life on Sheppey. They all decided that paid employment was, for them, no longer a short-term strategy to pay certain bills: it was to be a permanent feature of their lives and they readjusted their commitment to and expectations of it in the light of this. After taking stock, these women did not just want jobs of any sort, as they had in the past - they wanted to find employment which would bring long-term satisfactions and this meant they had to pursue career development.

In four cases, the decision to maximise employment opportunities coincided with a well-publicised scheme for unqualified mature students to attend a local teacher-training college. Mrs Abbott, Baker, Ellis and Ingham all took advantage of this. Clearly, though, the simple fact of availability was not the only influence on their entry to full-time training. Interestingly, each of these four women had shown academic promise at school which had not been followed up in adolescence. Mrs Abbott, Baker and Ingham had all wanted to stay on at school, but their working-class fathers had been unable or unwilling to support their further education and they had left in order to take a job and be able to contribute to the family income.

Three of the four women had personal contact of some sort with teachers. Mrs Abbott's husband had trained as a teacher since their marriage. Mrs Baker's child proved to be unusually bright and his success at school meant that she became involved with his education and teachers far more closely than might have been expected. Mrs Ellis became politically active and met a number of teachers through this. Married to an unskilled farm labourer, this was the first time that she had made friends with professionals. Thus, coming into contact with teachers might have made the choice of teaching a more likely one for these women. They did not talk about feeling a particular vocation to teach, but simply presented their training as having been the only opportunity of career advancement which was made easily available to them.

Only Mrs Oates entered adult education other than teacher training. She went to night school to study, while working part-time during the day and after several years she became a part-qualified accountant. Going to teacher-training college was not such an obvious choice for her as it had

been for the other four women in this group. Partly this was because she lived further away from it. There were poor transport links with the college from the Isle of Sheppey, as well as considerable psychological barriers to commuting off the Island. It was also because Mrs Oates had no background of academic promise or achievement. She had left school at fourteen and become a canteen assistant and neither her teachers nor her family had ever considered the possibility that she might do otherwise. She chose to train as an accountant because, working as a shop assistant, she had become involved with invoicing and stock control, and says that she became fascinated with 'numbers and figures'. As her daughters became academically successful she came into contact with teachers and with other able children and this encouraged her to feel that she, too, could benefit from education.

The two women who were promoted to their positions of seniority differed from the five women discussed above in several ways. Neither had ever thought of, nor had suggested to her, the possibility of staying on at school after the official leaving age. Neither had had a distinct period of taking stock once they had re-entered the labour market after having had children. Both were working in jobs which offered opportunities for promotion, and both wanted to continue full-time employment, so that part-time day-time education was not practically possible. However, they had each re-assessed their paid work and strengthened both their commitment to it and their sense of ambition. As the rest of the group had done, they maximised the resources which were most easily available to them.

I have argued that the most important characteristic of all the women in this group, in terms of explaining their employment pattern, was that

they underwent a period of taking stock during which they made a firm commitment to career development. I should point out that this commitment was made in the context of women's other responsibilities, as they perceived them, and that these other responsibilities were seen as being primarily domestic. Women did not begin to take stock until such time as the children were at school and it was only then that they felt able to reconsider their own lives and futures.

Their careers developed as the next life-stage after full-time domesticity. They also developed as a result of clearly rejecting any extension of full-time domesticity. While they had all been relatively satisfied with the experience of full-time maternity, they found that once the children were at school they no longer wanted to be at home on a full-time basis. The shift from maternity to housewifery was one which they did not enjoy, and their subsequent employment patterning demonstrates the way they chose to avoid this. Mrs Abbott, for example, enjoyed bringing up her children and says that her main achievement to date has been 'having stuck to my guns through married life and given the stable background I set out to'. However,

> the idea of being a housewife to me is awful, a very low-status occupation, being always dependent on the charity of someone else, and extremely boring.

She repeatedly mentioned her hatred of the economic dependence of housewives:

> the humiliation of having to plead for money ... the enforced financial inferiority has been the thing above all others - being made to plead for money - I have nearly gone over that.

She welcomed the opportunity to go to teacher-training college not only

because it meant that she could increase her earning potential, but also because it meant that she had an 'excuse' not to do so much housework. Indeed, although an unplanned pregnancy prevented Mrs Abbott from qualifying as a teacher, she now runs her own playgroup and is able to afford to pay a woman to come and do housework for her one morning a week.

Thus the women who were leapers tended to be prompted to do so by their negative attitude to housework, which they only acted upon once children went to school and the child-care aspect of being a housewife was significantly reduced. Spurred on by their wish to create a life away from housework, as well as by their assessment of the family's financial needs, they each underwent a period of taking stock and assessing the future. As a result of this, they decided on a path of career development and then maximised on the most readily available employment opportunities.

(iii) Fallers

I have already pointed out that one reason that women fell in terms of occupational status was that they chose to do so. Mrs Jones had a promising career which she did not pursue once she had had children. I pointed out in Section (c)(i) above that Mrs Jones never made a choice to become a 'career woman': she pursued training in order to complete the education which her working-class background had denied her; and was happy to leave her job when she had children, and to devote herself full-time to their care. Other women in the group, such as Mrs Gales and Mrs Abbott, had also left promising careers in favour of full-time domesticity. The difference between them and Mrs Jones lies in their employment pattern after having had children. Mrs Jones went into paid work at a lower grade than her earlier experience might have warranted, while Mrs Gales and Mrs

Abbott sought equivalent or higher grades. Thus the next point to consider is that of why Mrs Jones did not attempt to rekindle her career prospects.

The answer to this lies in her attitude to domesticity, which in turn structured her attitudes to paid employment. She went back to paid work because of a commitment to domestic work, rather than to paid employment. She took on a job with the social services department, escorting a handicapped child to school each day. She was asked to do this by her husband who, knowing his wife's involvement with charitable work of various kinds, felt sure that she would do the job when he heard that the vacancy remained unfilled. She took the job firstly out of loyalty to her husband, and secondly out of her general wish to give practical help to those less fortunate than herself: her decision had nothing to do with developing a career.

The other women whose career patterns were characterised by falling were Mrs Field, Gales and Kemp. These women did not choose to fall: they made a choice to leave the labour market to have children, but had hoped to return to it at a higher grade than was later proved possible. Mrs Field was about to take her final nursing examinations when she left paid work in order to marry. She spent seventeen years at home as a full-time housewife and mother, and was very happy during that time. However, when her youngest child went to school she became lonely and depressed and looked for a job for primarily therapeutic reasons. She went back into nursing as an auxiliary and found that she enjoyed the work, as well as the increase in the family standard of living which it afforded. Like the leapers, she had a period of taking stock at this stage, and decided that she wanted to complete her training so as to develop her job satisfaction

in the long run. She therefore applied to the local hospital to train, but was refused on the grounds of exceeding the upper age limit. She now feels very bitter about this, and the fact that she can never progress beyond her current grade as a nursing auxiliary. Mrs Gales had also re-entered the labour market for primarily therapeutic reasons, once her youngest child had left school. She became a tracer in a drawing office but was made redundant after six months. Since then she has been unable to find work. Mrs Kemp was discussed in detail in Section (b)(iii) above. At the time of the interview she was working as a part-time tea-lady, despite her secretarial qualifications and experience. She, too, had been looking for work for a number of years.

Each of these three women was particularly highly motivated in her search for work and this was evidenced by the fact that each was prepared to take a job at a lower grade than she wanted in order to do any work at all. Mrs Field and Mrs Gales were prompted to look for work because of their dissatisfaction with the life of full-time housewife once their children had left home. In Mrs Gales' case a return to work had been suggested by doctors treating her for depression; while Mrs Field had reaslised herself that she was becoming clinically depressed and needed to develop an interest outside the empty home. Mrs Kemp's motivation for paid employment was fuelled by the constant deficit between her husband's wages and the expenses associated with bringing up a young family and owning their own home, and also by her memories of the pleasures which job satisfaction could bring. Thus each of the women, faced with disappointment in her job search, chose to take less satisfactory employment rather than to drop out of the labour market altogether.

The main reason that these women fell in terms of employment status

was that they dropped out of the labour market in order to have children. This was in turn due to general features of the labour market: in particular, that paid work is organised in such a way that combining motherhood and employment is highly problematic, and that a discontinuous employment pattern is associated with a decline in chances for occupational success. Each of the women wanted to work at a higher grade, but was not able to do so at a time when job opportunities were generally narrowing, and employers did not need to make special arrangements for the convenience of women with children, since there was a plentiful labour supply.

Thus explanations of why women fell derive partly from characteristics of the women themselves - in that they chose to interrupt their careers in order to have children - and partly from the characteristics of the labour market - in that its organisation did not facilitate women's continuation of a career after a period of full-time domesticity. Thus a salient point about this type of career pattern is perhaps not that of why women failed to regain their earlier occupational status but, instead, that of why they had shown promise or evidence of occupational achievement in the first place. I discussed this in Section (c)(i) above, arguing that what could have been seen as the pursuit of a career was in general more usefully understood as a preliminary stage in a transition to an adult womanhood: a state which women planned would involve full-time domesticity.

(iv) Hoppers

Nine women in the group can be characterised as hoppers, moving from job to job without effecting any major changes in grade. They form a sharp contrast to the group of leapers, discussed in Section (c)(ii) above.

While I argued that the leapers had readjusted their attitude to paid work once their immediate responsibility for child care was ended, the women who 'hopped' retained the same attitude throughout their adult life. This can be summed up as being 'detached': they did paid work, but they perceived themselves as wives and mothers rather than workers, and they always hoped to be able to give up their paid jobs in the near future. The fact that they were all economically active at the time of the interviews shows that this optimism was largely ill-founded, although it was not thereby diminished.

At school these women were low achievers. They, their teachers and their parents all expected that they would leave school as soon as possible and go into unskilled work, and this they did - often into jobs which were arranged for them by their families. They saw these jobs as a way of filling the time before marriage and as a means to saving enough money to be able to get married and start a family. In this, of course, they were not particularly different from the leapers. The great difference between the groups emerged when women re-entered the labour market after a period spent looking after children. While leapers typically spent some time taking stock and deciding to strengthen their commitment to paid work, hoppers followed a contrasting path.

In general, hoppers did not <u>want</u> to go back to paid work, and did so only because of severe financial necessity. These women saw themselves as full-time wives and mothers, and had planned to remain as such for the rest of their lives. They had expected to bring up their children and then to develop grandparenthood into a time-consuming activity. Their ambitions were focused completely on their homes and immediate families. There were variations between them in terms of the form these ambitions

took and the level of income which they defined as hardship. In some cases, such as Mrs Clark, Hall and Page, poverty was absolute and derived from the fact that they were either single parents or married to men who were unemployed. For others, money was needed for a specific purpose: for example, Mrs Reed took on homework when the first of her nine children married because the family budget could not meet the additional costs of weddings. Mrs Lane, Quin, Neal and Martin all took on paid work in order to meet general housekeeping costs. Mrs Davies went to work in businesses owned by her mother and mother-in-law, in order to fulfil the ties of family obligation rather than because she wanted paid employment. When these women went back into paid work, they hoped that it would be a purely temporary measure. Their main aim was to earn enough money in order to be able to leave again. Often they managed to do this, but only for a limited time, returning to employment as soon as budgets were again over-stretched, and again taking the first jobs which became available to them.

Because they wanted to be full-time housewives rather than employees, this group of women tended to take jobs which were most easily compatible with fulfilling their domestic duties. They worked part-time, did homework and did seasonal work so as to reduce the difficulties of combining child care with paid employment. They did not become emotionally involved with their employment, taking relatively undemanding jobs which did not challenge their domestic identities. Despite this, these women expressed considerable feelings of guilt about working outside the home. They felt torn between their wish to be full-time mothers and their wish to earn money to ease the family budget. Before their return to paid work, their image of the 'perfect' mother had been relatively

uncomplicated, if highly demanding, and was based on her full-time location in the home, performing domestic labour. Now, faced with the realities of restricted incomes and unrealised material dreams, it seemed as if they might be able to help their children best by leaving the home to earn more money, and improve the family's standard of living. At the same time, women felt that there was a continuous social pressure on them to be full-time mothers and an insinuation that employed mothers were neglectful. They were consumed with guilt and uncertainty about the best way to act, and were caught in a situation where any course of action would bring its own set of problems.

The hoppers did not in general change their attitudes to, or pattern of, paid employment in the years subsequent to initial re-entry. They continued to do paid work and continued to hope that they would be able to leave. However, their immediate need for money changed slightly, as their children grew. While at first their wages were an essential part of the family budget, the family's expenditure diminished when children left home, and the women's desire for wages changed in two main ways as a result of this. Firstly, they wanted money in order to give their married children financial assistance and in order to provide a higher standard of living for their grandchildren. Secondly, they wanted money in order to finally perfect their own domestic standards. While children were young, they had been the first priority for family spending, but later on domestic ambitions of a more material kind could be pursued. Mrs Neal, for example, worked part-time while the children were young in order to increase the weekly housekeeping money, but once they left home was able to divert this to more specific spending on the house. She has never been interested in her paid employment:

> I just do what comes along. It's just a job, I don't bother ... I've never really thought. Never wanted to do any special job.

but has always wanted to bring up healthy children and to have a nice home. The children are now adults, and she and her husband are in the process of buying the council house which they have recently redecorated and refurnished.

> I've always wanted it to be as nice as this. Because I didn't use to have so much I really appreciate it now and enjoy looking after it. I like to see it all clean and nice. I don't mind housework at all. I get pleasure from it all being so nice.

In this way paid employment has been a means to the end of material achievement in the domestic sphere, rather than to any advancement in a career. Thus, while leapers became disenchanted with full-time domesticity when their children went to school, hoppers remained primarily identified with the domestic and their interests came to focus more on the internal standards of the home as the need for child care decreased.

In developing this argument, it is clearly necessary to consider why hoppers should share this distinctive attitude to domesticity. There seem to be three main reasons. Firstly, they were low achievers at school and had never considered any future except that of becoming full-time wives and mothers. Secondly, they had experienced direct poverty as children or as young adults, and this meant that they saw the achievement of what others might consider to be a relatively modest standard of living as a major success and important ambition. Thirdly, their financial circumstances in adult life were such that to be full-time wives and mothers was difficult, and therefore this remained as a goal to which they aspired. This could in turn be because they were married to working-class

men earning low wages, or because marital breakdown had led to their becoming single parents.

Thus it seems that women who became hoppers did so largely because they did not want to be in paid employment at all, and they took short-term and unskilled work in order to fulfil their immediate needs for money in a way which would not compromise their primary commitment to the domestic sphere. This is not to say that these women always chose to change jobs: they were often laid off against their wishes, but this was largely because the sort of unskilled work for which they were available was typically insecure. The continuing involvement with domestic achievement which was a defining characteristic of this group seems to have stemmed from the fact that limited household income meant it had been impossible for them to meet their coveted domestic standards at least until middle-age. Being a full-time housewife remained an ambition for these women, and one which, paradoxically, could be best pursued through their continued paid employment of a particular type.

(d) Conclusions

The main aim of this chapter was to present a typology of employment patterning which would guide both the description of women's paid work and the analysis of it. I identified six general types, to be used as means rather than ends in this analysis, and the women in the fieldwork group fell into three of these. Some women were leapers, who moved upwards in terms of occupational status, and who also developed a negative attitude to full-time domesticity as the demands of child care relaxed when their children grew. Others were fallers, whose occupational status declined largely as a result of the inability of the local labour market to meet

their demands for suitable paid work which was compatible with looking after young children. A third group were hoppers, who did a series of very similar jobs, and who maintained and enhanced domestic ambition during the life cycle. Thus, while clearly the structure of local labour market opportunities for women was an important determinant of the types of employment pattern they followed, I have suggested that this was heavily influenced too by women's different attitudes to domesticity. In the next chapter I develop this argument and use fieldwork data to explore the analysis of domesticity.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ATTITUDES TO DOMESTICITY

This chapter has the same structure as the previous one: it identifies a typology, describes it, and then considers some of the reasons why certain women followed one particular course, while others followed another. In the previous chapter I focused on women's experiences of paid employment. Here I concentrate on the domestic sphere.

(a) Introduction

I have already identified links between women's attitudes to domesticity and their employment behaviour. I have suggested that women who were leapers - whose jobs had increased in status and reward over the years - also tended to have negative attitudes to domesticity. Conversely, women who were hoppers - whose jobs had very similar status and reward during the life-cycle - tended to have positive attitudes to domesticity. I have also argued that a third group of women who were fallers - whose jobs had fallen in terms of status and reward - felt differently about their fall depending on their different attitudes to domesticity. Having, in this general sense, established that attitudes to the domestic are important in determining patterns of female involvement in the labour market, my next task was to investigate the issue of women's experiences of the domestic in more depth.

I approached this investigation by reference to a typology. The arguments in favour of this method of analysis were developed in the previous chapter, and they are equally relevant here. Constructing a typology seemed to be the most effective means of structuring description and analytical discussion about the group's domestic attitudes and behaviour.

Linguistic confusion surrounds the study of domesticity, and this can both reflect and perpetuate the limitations in the sociological analysis of it. In order to preserve some clarity in the following account, I restrict discussion in the first instance to domestic labour, rather than the less well-defined concept of domesticity. I refer to domestic labour here in its most general sense as being the work which is done in the home to ensure the survival and well-being of household members. I see it as comprising several tasks, which can be roughly grouped into two types: those which are necessitated by the care of people, most usually children and husbands; and those which are necessitated by the maintenance of a home. Throughout the analysis I have maintained a conceptual distinction between domestic labour itself, and women's attitudes to domestic labour. Although, as I make clear, the two are closely related, changes in one may not be mirrored by changes in the other and so the preservation of such a distinction is necessary.

In considering the form a useful typology should take, it became clear that it should retain the emphasis on change and patterning which I had established in the interviews themselves, as well as in the analysis of women's employment behaviour. This was necessary because it was clear that women's attitudes to and experiences of domestic labour changed during the life-cycle. In the simplest sense, domestic labour changed as the number of children in a family increased. At a more complex level, women who enjoyed domestic labour when it was equated with full-time motherhood could reject it when it came to mean looking after a house and husband on a full-time basis, once children had left home. Changes in women's domestic labour during the life-cycle have often been obscured by those who have written about it. The domestic labour debate, for example

(Benston, 1970; Coulson, 1975; Dalla Costa and James, 1972; Fox, 1980; Gardiner, 1975; Harrison, 1974; Seccombe, 1974) attempted to produce a materialist account of women's subordination by establishing the economic significance of domestic labour under capitalism, and assumed that domestic labour was a single, unchanging activity. Even those writers who have tried to describe the daily experiences of housewives (Friedan, 1963; Gavron, 1966; Lopata, 1971; Oakley, 1974a, 1974b) have often oversimplified domestic labour by interviewing women who are also the mothers of young children. The theme of changing domestic labour during the life-cycle is one which has generally been under-developed in sociological writing, and this is an imbalance which I hope to avoid here.

I identified the main types of change in domestic labour during the life-cycle. Firstly, there could be changes in domestic practice as household resources, members and domestic technology change. Secondly, there could be changes in women's own attitudes to domestic labour. To concentrate on the first of these two aspects of change alone would produce a typology based simply on the life-cycle, and I felt that this would not provide an adequate framework for discussing the complexities of women's different domestic labour behaviour. Instead, I concentrated on the changes in attitude to domestic labour. This would, I hoped, retain the qualitative approach of the whole fieldwork exercise, and enable an explanatory dimension which might have been clouded by the adoption of a life-cycle model.

Focusing on women's attitudes to domestic labour produced a relatively simple four-cell typology. Women's attitudes could have changed or not changed during the life-cycle. The attitudes themselves could, at the time of the interview, have been positive or negative: women could have

liked or not liked domestic labour. Reference to such a typology divided the group of women in the following way:

Table 1: Attitudes to Domestic Labour, Four Types

	Positive	Negative
Unchanged	9 (Clark, Davis, Jones, Lane, Martin, Neal, Page, Quin, Reed)	0
Changed	0	11 (Abbott, Baker, Ellis, Field, Gales, Hall, Ingham, Kemp, Oates, Sand, Tate)

In the rest of this chapter I present each of these types in a little more detail by using case studies to illustrate them. I also discuss the groups in greater depth, linking them to the different patterns of employment behaviour which I identified in the previous chapter, and suggesting some of the reasons why women fell into one type rather than another.

(b) Types of attitude to domestic labour

(i) Unchanged positive attitude

There were nine women in the group. All had very positive attitudes to domestic labour and spoke about gaining substantial job satisfaction from it. It was also clear that these women had not changed their attitudes to

domestic labour during their lives, although their domestic practices had changed. They had always seen domestic labour as a potentially enjoyable activity, and their plans for the future revealed that they had the same attitudes to their future domestic labour as those they had held in the past. Within the group two smaller groups could be identified, those who had achieved what they had set out to in terms of domestic labour, and who had no wish to change their current domestic work; and those who had not yet fully achieved their domestic ambitions, but who hoped to be able to do so in the near future. These two types are referred to here as achievers and aspirers.

Case study: Mrs Clark, an aspirer

Mrs Clark enjoys doing domestic labour. She is divorced, and has had seven children, one of whom died in childhood. Only two children still live with her. She does all the housework and cooking for the family, and feels that this is a perfectly fair arrangement because it is part of what she sees as her maternal duty. She has high standards for her housework and says that she would not want her sons to help because they would not do the work as efficiently and as well as she does. The only time that housework ever upsets her is when she falls behind in her weekly routine of chores, but she makes sure that this only happens very rarely.

During her life, Mrs Clark's domestic practice has changed, but her positive attitude to it has not. The changes have derived from changing household composition; altered family income; and developments in domestic technology.

Obviously, now that Mrs Clark has fewer children at home she is able to concentrate on achieving standards of domestic order and cleanliness

which were impossible when seven children lived in a three-bedroomed terraced house. She revels in the new domestic standards that she is now able to meet:

> I'm trying to get it all how I want it now. I'm getting it all how I want it. I'm getting a new fridge and cooker and having a new kitchen floor. I've had all new electrics in. I'm getting it all nice now, at last.

Now that Mrs Clark has only two dependent children, she is able to afford both the new domestic appliances and materials for home improvement which have enabled her to improve her domestic standard of living. On the day of one of the interviews, she and her sons had just finished redecorating the stairs and hallway. Increasingly, she is able to include non-essential tasks such as these in her domestic labour, in a way that was not possible when the children were young and there was only just enough money for food, clothes and rent. Obtaining new domestic equipment is not only dependent on the ability to afford it, but is also the result of developments in the design and production of such goods. Mrs Clark remembers that at the start of her married life:

> I never had a vacuum, I had a broom and a brush and that was hard work - I never had a washing machine either. I had to do it all in a bucket on a primus stove and a mangle. It really was hard work.

A final change in the content of Mrs Clark's domestic labour is that, since her divorce, she has not had to look after a husband. She was married for fourteen years, and her husband left her when she gave birth to her youngest child.

Despite these changes in domestic practice, however, Mrs Clark's attitude to domestic labour has remained relatively constant. She has always tried to meet as high standards as possible, and the only change is

that this no longer means she has to do housework until 11 p.m., which was her normal routine when the children were younger. She has always derived a great amount of satisfaction from domestic labour and, when it was impossible for her to have the house as tidy and clean as she would have liked, she gained satisfaction instead from the knowledge that her children always wore clean clothes, despite the limited washing facilities. Even her attitude to being a wife has remained intact. She has never understood why her husband left her:

> I was a good wife, doing all the right things - cooking, cleaning, keeping the children nice and clean and tidy

and feels that the explanation lies in the sexual attraction that a younger woman held for her husband.

At different times in her life, Mrs Clark has been able to approximate to her domestic ambitions to differing degrees. She went out to paid work when there was not enough money to pay for essentials, although she felt that this meant she could not be 'the perfect housewife'. Earning an income was, paradoxically, the only way that she could meet other standards she set for herself, such as the desire to keep the family independent of state benefit; well-clothed; and in a house with adequate furnishings. She still works full-time, and hopes to be able to afford to give this up and become a full-time housewife once the children have all left home. The irony of this ambition is that by then it will be too late for her to become the full-time mother which she has always wanted to be.

Mrs Clark has always placed domestic achievement at the centre of her ambition, and feels that bringing up the children has been the biggest achievement of her life. From the day her first child was born, her main ambition was to produce healthy children who would not fall foul of the

law and, to date, she has been successful in this. However, she feels that she has not yet fully succeeded in two respects. Firstly, she has not yet replaced her husband and feels that she would very much like to be a wife again, and to have a successful marriage. Secondly, she works outside the home, even though she has two dependent children, and she still feels guilty about doing this, feeling that it impedes her complete success as a mother.

Mrs Clark's plans for the future do not suggest she is about to alter her life-time's attitude to domestic labour. She hopes to marry a close friend, and to create the marital harmony which has until now eluded her. She hopes to remain in close contact with her children, each of whom she sees almost every day, and she expects that she will become very involved with her grandchildren. She says

> I'd like to stop working and do polishing and dusting and watch TV ... I'll have grandchildren to look after ... I've got one now and one due, and there'll be more of that sort of work I should think.

She hopes too that she will be able to finish the home improvements she is currently involved with, and that the house will finally match up to her exacting standards. She also hopes to be able to leave paid work and to achieve her life-long ambition to be a full-time wife and mother.

Case-study: Mrs Jones, an achiever

Only Mrs Jones came into the category of having always liked domestic labour and of having achieved what she had set out to do in this respect. I discussed her case in some depth in the previous chapter (Section (b)(iii)), and so simply summarise her case here. She had always wanted to be a full-time wife and mother, although this ambition was thwarted

first by a broken engagement and then by infertility. Mrs Jones spent a period of living alone, developing a career and independence in order to forget the unhappiness of her personal life, but was not fulfilled by this life-style. She still wanted to be a wife and mother. She married in her late-twenties and adopted three children, giving birth to her own child when she was forty. She has enjoyed bringing her children up; taken pleasure in helping her husband to succeed professionally; and found the challenge of housework and running the home stimulating and satisfactory. Talking about her domestic labour in general she says: 'I like it, a lot of it is a hobby for me - washing, cooking, ironing and decorating. I enjoy domestic sciences'. She hopes that her life will remain broadly similar in the future with, simply, an expansion of voluntary philanthropic work if her husband becomes a parish priest, as is now planned.

Although Mrs Jones has had such a consistently positive attitude to housework, her domestic practice has changed over the years. At first they had no household gadgets, and the work was physically difficult. At times she has been in paid work and found that she has had to give priority to only the most essential domestic tasks. The changing number of children in the household has altered the hierarchy of domestic tasks too, and Mrs Jones found that housework in particular had to give way to the demands of young children.

> Before the children I wanted the house to be perfect. The children put it into perspective. I used to try and have a spotless house - they soon stopped that!

Now that the children are older, she has reordered the domestic work, still doing most of it, but deciding a list of priorities which no longer

has to be set by the needs of babies. She has reduced the cleaning, which she likes least, to a minimum, and has expanded the aspects she enjoys the most, such as cooking. She now owns a range of gadgets, which are both labour-saving, such as the hoover, and labour-extending, such as the mixer, which opens up a new range of cookery work to her. As Mrs Jones' children have grown, she has taken more responsibility for her aged mother and an elderly neighbour. She now does substantial amounts of domestic work for each of these, and expects to do more in the future. If Mrs Jones' mother becomes too frail to continue living alone, it is understood that she will come to live with Mrs Jones and her family. Thus, despite her consistently positive attitude to domestic labour, Mrs Jones' domestic practice has altered markedly over the years, and may continue to do so as the household membership continues to change. Mrs Jones is happy both in her current domestic work and with what she has planned for the future.

(ii) Unchanged negative

There were no women in this category. Because the emphasis in this section is to describe each of the types, I defer discussion of why there were no women in the group to section (c)(ii) below.

(iii) Changed positive

Again, there were no women in this category and I discuss the reasons for this in (c)(ii) below.

(iv) Changed negative

There were eleven women in this group. They all had positive attitudes to domestic labour when they were young, but as they grew older their

attitudes changed dramatically and they became disenchanted with domestic labour. They spoke in a very negative way about domestic labour, and their plans for the future revealed that they assumed they would continue to dislike it. Again, there were two smaller groups: one was made up of women who disliked domestic labour but who still hoped to make major changes in their domestic practice which would result in a reduction of domestic work. The second group was made up of women who also disliked domestic labour, but who had managed to organise their lives in such a way that they did minimal amounts of domestic work and sought satisfaction in other areas of activity. I have called these two groups aspirers and achievers, as before. There were three aspirers: Mrs Abbott, Gales and Kemp; and eight achievers: Mrs Baker, Ellis, Field, Hall, Ingham, Oates, Sand and Tate.

Case study: Mrs Abbott, an aspirer

Mrs Abbott says now that

> housework has not been a joy or an interest to me, I've had to do it because I'm female, but I don't enjoy it one bit,

and that

> the idea of being a housewife to me is awful - a very low-status occupation. Being always dependent on the charity of someone else. Also, extremely boring.

Her dislike of housework is intensified by the conflict that it causes between herself and her husband, whose meticulous standards she is unable to satisfy. Mrs Abbott does not have a happy marriage and she particularly resents having to do domestic labour for a husband who is not only ungrateful, but who also refuses to give her an adequate amount of

money for housekeeping. At the moment two of Mrs Abbott's four children live at home. She still has a young child and it is because of him that she stays in a domestic situation which is far from satisfactory. Her two older children have now married, and she measures her success in motherhood by the way that she has been able to allow them to be independent of her. Thinking of the future, Mrs Abbott would like to live apart from her husband, and to develop a career as a teacher. She is aware that this is 'all a bit of a pipe-dream', but still hopes that she will at least be able to follow a private correspondence course for nursery school teachers, and that this will enable her to set up her own nursery group.

Her current attitude to domestic labour is in sharp contrast to the one she held as a girl and young woman. Mrs Abbott had an unhappy childhood during which her parents separated and divorced. In her teens she lived with her mother and grandmother in a home which was dominated by domestic tension. She left as soon as she could, and went to train as a nurse. She married soon after meeting the man who became her husband, and did not complete her training because of this. She had an entirely romantic notion of married life in one sense:

> I had an idyllic view of it all - a cottage in the country with dogs and chickens ... I thought being a wife would be lovely and beautiful and romantic.

She was not only pursuing romance. She also wanted the stability which had been missing during her childhood. She resolved to have a large family and to create a settled home life for them and herself. She wanted to be a full-time wife and mother and spent her teens in eager anticipation of this career as a domestic labourer. She married at 18 and

had her first child at 19.

Once she had children, Mrs Abbott did no paid work for seven years. During these years her domestic labour was made up of caring for young children, looking after her husband, and doing housework. She thoroughly enjoyed the first of these activities, but disliked the other two. Looking after her husband became a task which she bitterly resented as he became more and more critical of her:

> I was under criticism from the word go - constantly and perpetually and without ceasing. He is very pedantic and orderly and I just am not like that at all. My husband thought I was perverse in not doing it, but I just was incompetent really: I didn't keep the house beautiful.

The marital relationship was further damaged by the fact that Mr Abbott retained control over his salary so that Mrs Abbott had to ask him for every item of expenditure she planned. She was often met by a refusal.

At this stage, the physical labour demanded by housework was extremely arduous, and the family had a very restricted amount of domestic technology:

> I used to have only one water tap and an outside loo. With no electricity. The housework really was very hard.

Mrs Abbott remained a full-time housewife until her youngest child was 3. This was both because of her very strong belief that young children should be looked after by their mothers:

> If you have children you should look after them properly, not as an afterthought

and because she positively enjoyed the task of full-time mothering. She says that

> I loved watching the development of the personality in the young child. And, not having had my own family background, I really wanted one.

However, early dreams of an idyllic marriage had been replaced with the unpleasant reality of a demanding husband and inadequate household resources. She was disenchanted with the world of domestic labour, except in so far as it involved her in the work of looking after her own young children.

This disenchantment with the experience of domestic labour led Mrs Abbott to seek paid work outside the home, even though at an earlier stage she had wanted to be a full-time housewife for the rest of her life. She worked part-time in a playgroup: a job she took because her youngest child could accompany her there. Working outside the home improved her life in general, because of the extra income it afforded her. She was able to buy domestic technology to ease the housework and in more recent years has been able to pay another woman to come and clean the house one morning a week. Mr Abbott's critical attitude has continued, however, and Mrs Abbott sees herself as a failed and incompetent housewife, referring to her employment as a cleaner as 'skiving', and feeling guilty about her continued inability to meet her husband's high standards of household order and cleanliness.

Thus Mrs Abbott has changed both her attitude to domestic labour and her domestic practice during the life-cycle. Her plans for the future involve more change, as she hopes to live apart from her husband. This would enable her to set her own, more relaxed, housework standards, as well as to employ a woman to clean for more hours a week than at present, in a relationship free of the guilt which her husband currently imposes.

Case study: Mrs Ingham, an achiever

Mrs Ingham does not like doing housework, looking after her husband, or looking after the two adult daughters who still live with her. However, she has now negotiated a situation whereby she does not feel under pressure to do any more domestic labour than she already does, and she does not have any plans for major changes in this area of her life. The only pleasure she could be said to derive from domestic labour comes from the sense of pride that she expresses about having finally come to terms with the fact that she does not like domestic labour, and feeling no guilt about doing as little of it as possible. She says that, even though she is in full-time employment, she now has more leisure than ever before, because the children's needs have contracted and because she is now able to relax and ignore the strictly unnecessary domestic tasks. Her hopes for the future are now all to do with her work in paid employment rather than in the home.

Mrs Ingham's attitude to domestic labour has changed dramatically over the years, as the hierarchy of domestic tasks has shifted. When she first married, Mrs Ingham was very keen to live in what she saw as a traditional way: to set up home with her husband, and to be a full-time wife, mother and housewife:

> I thought it was a woman's job to do the housework.

Having been an only child, she particularly wanted to have a larger family, and to develop a child-centred way of life. She equated this with full-time housewifery. She had the first of her three children a year after her marriage. She now looks back to the years of being the mother

of young children as the happiest of her life. She had her children in four years, and looking after them was a very demanding task. Because it was so difficult, her husband gave her as much help as he could, and she felt that the domestic labour was in many ways a shared burden. She thoroughly enjoyed having her daughters at home, and the experience of being a full-time mother lived up to her expectations. As the first child went to school, however, Mrs Ingham began to feel differently about her domestic work. Beginning to lose the pleasure she gained from her children's day-time company, she was left with housework which she did not enjoy, and she resented the feeling that she had been left alone to do all the work for the rest of the family. Now that one child was at school, Mr Ingham stopped helping in the home, and the children were still too young to be able to make a contribution. Mrs Ingham felt that the bustling family life which she had planned was about to culminate in her becoming a lonely housewife in an empty house. She therefore decided to seek paid work outside the home. Realising that she would be alone much more often as the children grew up, she decided to pursue a career rather than just to take a short-term unskilled job. After several years, she qualified as a teacher, and is now a full-time supervisor of an arts and crafts centre run by the Manpower Services Commission.

Throughout the years of working outside the home, Mrs Ingham found domestic labour a source of considerable conflict. She and her husband argued about how much each should do, and she found she disliked housework itself more and more, and increasingly refused simply to service her husband. While she still enjoyed being a mother, she did not enjoy either the housework generated by a family, or the arguments about how much her daughters should help in the house. Mrs Ingham says that her marriage was

'really shaky' during these years of domestic conflict. Mrs Ingham feels that her confidence to reject domestic work came from the knowledge that she was making a contribution to the family in other, material, ways by earning a salary. She no longer felt that domestic labour was a 'woman's job' but that it should be shared between those who benefited from it.

In recent years, Mrs Ingham's attitude has changed again in that she no longer focuses on her desire to ensure that the whole family share the domestic burden. She has now decided that she would prefer to do a smaller amount of domestic work herself than to have arguments about who should carry out a greater number of tasks, and so she has relaxed her standards considerably. She is now far less houseproud than she was, and is only prepared to do what she sees as the minimum of domestic work. She plans to continue to do domestic work in this way; she is happy with her marital relationship; and she is quite prepared for her children's eventual departure from the home. She is interested in pursuing her career rather than her domestic work, and hopes to increase the small amount of freelance art work that she now does. While Mrs Ingham's ambitions as a young woman were centred on housewifery, they are now located in achievement outside the home itself.

Thus, many of the changes in Mrs Ingham's domestic practice have derived from changes in her attitude to domestic work. She no longer, for example, hoovers every day. Other changes stem from different causes. Technological development has meant that the tools of domestic labour are different, and as the children have grown, different domestic labour has been created by them. There are, of course, different ways of responding to changes of this sort, and differences in attitudes to domestic labour mould these different responses. Mrs Ingham has specifically made use of

new kitchen equipment, not to expand her range of culinary skills, but to minimise the time she spends in the kitchen. Similarly, because of her attitude of disenchantment with housework, she used the extra time created by her children's entry to school to develop a new career outside the home, rather than to elaborate new domestic practices in the home.

(c) Discussion

Having outlined these four types of attitude to domestic labour, I now want to discuss them in more depth, to develop the description of the types, and to include an explanatory dimension in the account.

(i) Unchanged negative attitudes and changed positive attitudes

There were no women in either of these categories, and I discuss the reasons for this below. If women had fallen into these groups, they would have had negative attitudes to domestic labour when they were young. In fact, all the women in the fieldwork group had markedly positive attitudes to domestic labour at this stage of the life-cycle, and the possible reasons for this form the basis of the following discussion.

The similarity of women's attitudes to domestic labour at this stage is itself remarkable, given that the group experienced very different material conditions during childhood and adolescence. The differences in material conditions derived partly from the well-known influences of different household sizes and different household income. Such differences were exacerbated by the impact of war, which meant that families were disrupted by the sudden poverty brought by events such as bereavement, bombing or evacuation. The marked material differences between women did not, however, affect what they wanted to become in the

future, and all wanted to achieve in the domestic sphere rather than in that of paid employment. Specifically, they wanted to leave the parental home, marry, have children, and become full-time housewives.

The strength of these girls' ambitions to marry and have children can partly be explained by the fact that, as I pointed out in Chapters 3 and 4, the generation under study here was subjected to particularly strong propaganda about the importance of family life and a traditional sexual division of labour. There was a general wish to re-establish domestic order after the chaos of war, and these women were part of that trend. Their memories of war were of the abnormal: and they wanted to establish a new normality and at an individual level; this meant starting a new family life.

The war also brought great shortage, and this had two effects on the group I studied. On the one hand, it meant that they saw domestic labour as a highly-skilled task, as I described in Chapter 3. They learnt about this from their mothers, and could often still remember certain domestic practices from that time. Mrs Neal, for example, says

> I remember having to save boxes and tins. And the rationing. It did make you save and it's meant that now I always make sure I've got a stock cupboard. A lot of repairing and darning. I still do some things like that.

Secondly, the shortages had an impact on women's ambitions for the future. They wanted to set up their own homes, and to ensure that their own families would not know the same deprivations. As Mrs Baker says:

> it was a time of austerity, a sober, very conventional time. People got into the father, mother and two children attitude of mind.

There were in any case few options for women born between 1925 and 1935. The era of so-called equal opportunity had not yet begun, and the

chances of women being able to support themselves in adulthood by paid work were very remote. As Mrs Gales said,

> I didn't see myself as having any alternatives then. There were two single women in their late 30s in my office and I thought I didn't want to end up like them really, doing boring office work to support myself, getting nowhere.

The women whom I met were not particularly well-qualified, with the single exception of Mrs Jones, who could have, and did, support herself for some time. Even she, however, had pursued her training to escape from the unhappiness of a broken engagement, and saw her career as a short diversion from a temporarily unsuccessful domestic plan. In general, the jobs the women had were not ones which presented a particularly attractive alternative to full-time domesticity, as the following list shows:

Table 2: Employment Prior to Marriage

Mrs Abbott	Trainee nurse
Mrs Baker	Office clerk
Mrs Clark	Factory operative
Mrs Davies	Shop assistant
Mrs Ellis	Hotel general assistant
Mrs Field	Trainee nurse
Mrs Gales	Draughtswoman
Mrs Hall	Actress
Mrs Ingham	Factory operative
Mrs Jones	Pathologist
Mrs Kemp	Secretary
Mrs Lane	Laundry assistant
Mrs Martin	Factory operative
Mrs Neal	Factory, presser
Mrs Oates	Nursing auxiliary
Mrs Page	Factory, presser
Mrs Quin	Shop assistant
Mrs Reed	Typist
Mrs Sand	Nursery nurse
Mrs Tate	Waitress

Many women saw marriage as a means to adult status. Those who wanted to leave the parental home before marriage were generally faced with the

often unattractive option of residential work, such as domestic service. By getting married, they could leave home and enter the world as adult women: wives rather than girls.

Having got married, all the women in the group had a child, and looked after the child on a full-time basis. All spoke very positively about their experiences of domestic labour at this time. This was primarily because domestic labour was dominated by the need to look after children, as housework or looking after husbands became of secondary importance. Women enjoyed full-time maternity and there was a remarkable similarity between all the women's positive attitudes to full-time domestic labour at this stage in the life-cycle, despite other differences between them. Even Mrs Hall, who was working as an actress by the time of her pregnancy, supporting an unemployed husband, talked about first-time motherhood in much the same way as did the rest of the group:

> I did get one baby book and follow it quite closely. That was the only period in my life that I behaved in a very conventional way. I was so proud of her - a really good, beautiful baby - I revelled in her - I did everything the proper way. It all seemed so miraculous to me.

There are several reasons the women's attitudes to full-time motherhood were at first all so positive. Firstly, having a child was the first stage in the general post-war ambition to establish a new, safe world, as I have already described. Secondly, being a mother was a role in which women's achievements could be higher than in the unskilled work they had typically done before motherhood. Mrs Yates, for example, worked in a variety of unskilled jobs before her marriage; either in factories or in domestic service, and has great difficulty in reading or writing. She says:

> I'm nuts about littl'uns. Babies. I love them even now ... I couldn't help them in education. They'd ask me questions from school and I couldn't help ... But they have learned things from us - to be truthful and honest and help the older people. They've taken all that in and have been very good.

Thirdly, women found that being in the house all day brought them into contact with a new social circle of women: neighbours, relations and friends. During the interviews, many stories were told about these times, recalled with affection. These women had often been socially isolated before their marriages, under strict parental control. They had been unsure of themselves when they first married, but the identity of mother tended to give them a new self-confidence. Most were, of course, still very young women: fifteen had become mothers before they were 23. Fourthly, full-time motherhood brought a clear identity. At this stage in their lives the women said they had experienced few conflicts. They felt that society, partners, relations and friends had all expected them to have children and, for once, they knew what was expected of them and were able to succeed.

Clearly, such happy memories of full-time motherhood are tinged with the rosiness of nostalgia, and these very positive attitudes present a marked contrast to many contemporary accounts of first-time motherhood (Oakley, 1979, 1980). One important aspect of retrospection, however, is that it enables comparison with what follows, and it was in this context that women found it to be such an enjoyable experience. These positive attitudes were not, however, static during each woman's life. After the phase of first-time motherhood, the marked differences between women's attitudes to domestic labour which I described in the previous section began to emerge.

(ii) Unchanged positive attitudes

Nine women in the group did not alter their basically positive attitudes to domestic labour, even though their domestic practice changed considerably. These women all wanted to be full-time wives and mothers and this was an ambition which they had not achieved at the time of the interview, with the exception of Mrs Jones, who saw her small amount of paid employment as voluntary community work.

I deal with Mrs Jones' case first here because it is different from the rest. The difference between her and the other women in this group is mainly rooted in material difference and her husband's income was probably the highest in the group. Her husband is a headmaster who has been able to afford to maintain a wife and four children with a comfortable standard of living. Male income is not the only cause of material differences between women, of course, and Mrs Jones' relative affluence contrasts sharply with, for example, the poverty of Mrs Abbott whose husband is also a teacher, but who does not allow his wife access to his salary. Mr and Mrs Jones are also a remarkably careful couple, who made plans for their future together, and who have been prepared to forego short-term consumer spending for what they felt was the long-term gain of a full-time housewife. Their unusually detailed planning was partly the result of the sorts of people they are, but it also stemmed from the fact that they were in their late 20s when they married; that they are active Christians who felt that family life was an awesome undertaking; and that their initial infertility led them to adopt children which necessitated a period of introspection and deliberation. Thus the material resources to allow Mrs Jones to become a full-time housewife were available, but using the material resources in the way I have described was the result of a

particular attitude to domestic labour.

In addition to this general feeling that a family needs a full-time housewife, it should be noted that Mrs Jones enjoys domestic labour. This explains her failure to return to full-time paid work once her children became adolescent. At one stage, Mrs Jones had returned to paid work on a part-time basis, so as to enable the purchase of a large, family house. She had found this generally unsatisfactory, however, because of the conflicting demands of home and work. She felt that the demands of home life were unnegotiable, and was happy to leave paid work when she became unexpectedly pregnant. As the hierarchy of domestic tasks changed throughout the life-cycle, she elaborated those she enjoyed and minimised those she did not. She still feels that one reason she enjoys domestic labour so much is that she has now chosen to do it. She could have an interesting job using her high qualifications, but has opted for the home, in a choice which she does not regret. Thus, a combination of material comfort and individual decision have culminated in Mrs Jones' continued positive attitude to domestic labour.

Eight of the women in the group of twenty still liked domestic labour, but had not achieved what they had wanted to in terms of it. These women had all, from the time they married, wanted to be full-time housewives. They had been unable to fulfil this ambition in the long term, although each had left paid employment for a period of full-time mothering which they had enjoyed. These eight women were also all in the group which I identified in the previous chapters as 'hoppers': they took jobs with poor rewards in the hope that they would soon be able to leave them and fulfil their ambitions to be full-time housewives again.

Having already discussed why women had such positive feelings about

domestic labour in general, the remaining question here is one of why these women did not become disillusioned with domestic labour during the life-cycle. Part of the answer to this lies in the limited financial resources of the group. The women had experienced poverty both as children and in the early years of marriage. The poverty mainly resulted from the low wages of their husbands, and none of these women was married to a skilled man. In two cases, poverty had been made worse by divorce; and in four cases, families of six or more children overstretched already limited resources. Because of this experience of poverty, women appreciated the material gains they were able to enjoy in later life. They enjoyed doing housework when it meant hoovering new carpets, or polishing more furniture than they had ever hoped they would own. In all these cases, women had gone out to paid employment to improve the family's standard of living, and they saw the possession of material goods as an important goal. As they acquired more goods, they gained more pleasure from the domestic labour of caring for them. These women had not, however, become so affluent that they were able to become full-time housewives, and the irony of their situation was that they could not afford to look after the home that they had coveted, in the way in which they wanted to do. They still wanted to be full-time housewives, and so part of the reason for their continued pursuit of domestic achievement was precisely that they had not yet been able to attain it. They remained faithful to a dream which was as yet unfulfilled.

Another characteristic of this group which may explain their attitude to domestic labour is that their qualifications were so low that the job satisfaction they could achieve in paid employment was low, and far below that they had experienced as full-time mothers. At the time of the

interviews; two worked in a factory; two in a shop; two did light assembly homework; one was a home help; and one was a cleaner. These jobs were typical of the ones they had done during their lives: unskilled work typically associated with women, with low job satisfaction. They could have entered training, but, as I pointed out in the previous chapter, they did not generally do so because they never planned to be in a job for a long time. Their ambitions remained located in the domestic sphere, and these were ones which they were still pursuing at the time of the interviews.

The fact that half this group had six or more children is significant here. For such women, there was no obvious point at which domestic labour of one type was replaced by domestic labour of another. As women's youngest children went to school, the eldest tended to have children, so that the middle-aged women had grandparenting as well as mothering duties. Such women did not experience a time when they could reassess their attitudes to domestic labour. They had not yet achieved what they had set out to, and maternity had not yet been supplanted by housewifery in the hierarchy of domestic tasks.

A further characteristic of the group is that it contained the only four women in the sample who had experienced the death of one or more of their children. These women, Mrs Clark, Page, Lane and Martin, all spoke about the tragedy in some detail, and said that it had made them far more appreciative of their family than they had been before. In a sense, this too contributed to their attitude to domestic labour: they felt keenly that it was a great achievement to bring up children who survived, and so did not feel the need to look outside the home for different challenges.

The husbands of women with positive attitudes to domestic labour

tended to be unrewarding jobs themselves. This contributed to the general feeling that the home, rather than paid employment outside it, was the site of achievement and satisfaction. Seven of the nine men had unskilled jobs at the time women took paid work after having had children, and four of these involved working in factories in unpleasant conditions. Thus career development was alien to the men, and so it is perhaps unsurprising that the women too did not consider it to be an option.

A final feature of this group is that it tended to be made up of women whose own mothers had not been in paid employment after their marriage. This was true in six of the nine cases. Most of the women talked about having learnt their domestic skills and attitudes from their mothers, and so it is perhaps unremarkable that such a marked similarity emerged. Although the women in the group worked outside the home, they did not want to do so, and so the similarity between women and their mothers is at the level of attitude rather than practice.

Thus I have argued that women who liked domestic labour did so mainly because poverty in the past had increased their satisfaction with the higher domestic standards they could afford in later life. The number of children women had was important too, because it affected changes in domestic labour during the life-cycle and meant that some women had been involved with the care of young children - a task which they positively enjoyed - for the last thirty years continuously. This group had not rejected domestic labour and the role of full-time housewife mainly because they had not yet been able to achieve the plans they had made for taking on such a role. Opportunity and behaviour blended in a circle of restriction: because women wanted to be full-time housewives they did not develop a career, and therefore they had low job satisfaction outside the

home, compared with which full-time domestic labour retained its appeal.

(iii) Changed negative attitudes

I discussed in section (c) above why these women may have held such positive attitudes to domestic labour in the first place. Here I want to focus on the change in attitude after such early optimism and satisfaction.

An outstanding feature of this group was that women had fewer children than the women in the previous category had. In the previous group of nine women, only two had two children, and both of these had given birth to another who had died; one had three; and the remaining six had four or more. In this group of eleven women, only Mrs Abbott had four children, four had three children, three women had two children, and three had one child. It could be argued that these women had fewer children because of their negative attitude to housework, but I would suggest that the relationship was not causal in this sense. Rather, smaller families affected women's later attitudes to domestic labour in two main ways. Firstly, the lesser expenses generated by a small family meant that women were more likely to be able to realise the material aspects of their domestic ambition at an early stage in their married life. These women did not in general come from more affluent homes than the previous group of women had done, and at the time their families were young there was little difference in their husband's incomes. By having small families, however, they were able to enjoy a level of material comfort from a relatively early phase in their adult lives. This meant that the satisfaction gained from such comfort was less intense: it had not been waited for over such a long period, and it had not been the result of a

long period of struggle. Secondly, smaller families meant in general that the life-cycle stage of looking after pre-school children was reduced, and the contrast between this and the subsequent one of mothering school age children was more marked. This meant that the process of the shifting hierarchy of domestic tasks was highlighted, and women had more opportunity to consider their own job satisfaction as the job itself changed.

These women's negative attitudes to domestic labour derived primarily from their dislike of housework rather than their dislike of looking after their children or husbands. In general while the group enjoyed being full-time mothers so long as at least one child was in the home all day, they did not enjoy domestic labour once the house was empty, and housework dominated the domestic experience. It was at this stage that they made the imaginative leap from seeing themselves primarily as wives and mothers to seeing themselves as employees. As I discussed in detail in the previous chapter, this group, at differing times and with different degrees of success, pursued career development and, at the time of the interviews, were nearly all in paid work. It was the extent of their satisfaction with paid work which tended to determine whether they were aspirers or achievers in terms of their attitudes to domestic work.

The three aspirers had not achieved the job satisfaction which they had hoped for when they returned to paid work: Mrs Abbott was still unqualified, working in a playgroup; Mrs Gales was unemployed, having been made redundant; and Mrs Kemp was a tea-lady rather than a personal assistant. Each of them had seen paid work as a means of escape from housework they did not enjoy, as well as a means of increasing the family standard of living. Failure in the labour market had resulted in an

inability to gain job satisfaction and so the women were still aspirers: trying to create a viable and more satisfactory alternative to domestic labour. Their failure was not due to personal characteristics, but was the result of events which typically take place in many women's lives. Mrs Abbott's training was curtailed by an unplanned pregnancy; Mrs Gales was made redundant because of a last-in-first-out selection principle which mainly affected women who had only recently re-entered the labour market; and Mrs Kemp had found that leaving the labour market to have children had devalued her qualifications. Thus the group was formed of women who had experienced obstacles in the labour market which were primarily the result of gender. Because they were unsuccessful in paid work, these women still had to do more domestic labour than they wanted to do. They continued to hope, however, to change this in the future by finding more rewarding employment outside the home.

The achievers were different from aspirers in that they had, with the possible exception of Mrs Field, achieved what they had set out to in the labour market. Namely, they had been able to relocate ambition in the employment sphere, and had been able to succeed in their hopes for career development. Mrs Field's failure here was the result of an age restriction on entry to nursing training, but she had succeeded in other respects, in that she was in full-time employment which she positively enjoyed.

Both groups of women developed negative attitudes to housework after the children had gone to school. As I suggested in the previous chapter, another feature of this group was that it contained many of the girls who had shown some academic promise at school, and I would argue that this was an important part of their subsequent ability to relocate ambition outside

the domestic.

I have already pointed out that smaller families made for greater material comfort among the group, and that this meant that women could achieve certain domestic ambitions at a relatively early stage in their lives. Obviously, household income was an important factor too, and in this group seven of the eleven husbands were skilled or professional workers at the time women went back to paid work, compared with two in the group of nine women who retained positive attitudes to domestic labour. While at this stage the earnings of the two groups of men were not dramatically different, husbands of the group of women who developed negative attitudes to domestic labour had better prospects. Thus it was possible for women to take a longer-term view of their own futures, in the context of a relatively secure assessment of their husbands' employment pattern. Women also saw their husbands gaining job satisfaction outside the home and this encouraged them to feel that they too could expect this at a later stage.

A final characteristic of this group which is of relevance in considering why it developed negative attitudes to domestic labour is that nine out of the eleven women's mothers had done paid work after marriage. As I pointed out in the previous section, women said they had learnt about domestic labour from their mothers and here it seems that if their mothers worked outside the home, women felt this was a suitable course for them too to follow.

Thus the group set out to achieve in the sphere of paid employment once they had become dissatisfied with domestic labour. I should point out that involvement in paid work had the effect of legitimating a limitation in women's involvement in domestic work, as well as simply

providing an escape from it. These women expressed feelings of considerable guilt about not liking domestic labour, and while they were at home full-time this guilt was made worse. By leaving home to go to a paid job, however, they could claim to be making an important contribution to the family in a different way. They also felt justified in asking for help from other members of the household if they worked outside the home. Similarly, they could allow themselves to reduce the domestic labour they did. Mrs Gales, for example, mentioned that when she was a full-time housewife she had tried to wash the living room curtains every week. As a paid employee, she felt this was unnecessary since she was demonstrating in other ways her willingness to care for the family.

Thus I have argued that the women who grew to dislike domestic labour were prompted to do so when housewifery rather than maternity headed the hierarchy of domestic tasks. This shift was itself exaggerated by the smaller families these women had. I have also argued that early material comfort paradoxically acted to reduce job satisfaction with domestic labour and that this, coupled with women's observations of the experiences of their husbands and mothers, as well as with their memories of academic promise in adolescence, prompted women to relocate ambition in the sphere of paid employment. By doing this, they were able to minimise the amount of domestic labour they did.

(d) Conclusions

In this chapter I have presented a broad typology of attitudes to domestic labour which has served as the framework for a general discussion of these. I have identified two main groups of women: one of which has become disenchanted with domestic labour while the other has not. I have

suggested a variety of reasons for these different attitudes. For example, different material circumstances are important, but so too are the different experiences of women's husbands and mothers. In general, I have suggested that an important influence on women's attitudes to domestic labour is the assessment that they make of their chances in the labour market. This is in turn affected by a variety of factors, such as women's schoolgirl experiences, or the opportunities afforded to women by the local labour market at any given time. Throughout this chapter and the one preceding it, I have highlighted the very close links between women's attitudes to domestic labour, their domestic practices and their activity in the paid labour market. This has made clear the need to understand more about domestic labour as part of the overall attempt to understand more about women's paid labour. In the rest of this thesis I concentrate on exploring the concept and practice of domestic labour in more detail.

This chapter has demonstrated four main points about domestic labour which I want to stress in conclusion here. Firstly, I have shown that domestic labour is not a static human activity. It changes during the life cycle, and I have suggested that the notion of a changing hierarchy of domestic tasks provides an appropriate descriptive dimension here. Secondly, I have demonstrated a distinction between meanings and practices, showing that because women view domestic work in individually distinct ways, they display different domestic practices too. Thirdly, I have shown that domestic labour is moulded by different material circumstances too, such as income, and this contributes to the fact that it is individually specific. Fourthly, I have argued that one of the reasons domestic labour takes different forms at different times is that

social and technological circumstances change. For example, 'making-do' had a particular meaning for the war generation; and hoovering has only become a mass housework activity in recent decades. Thus, domestic labour can be seen as historically specific too. Taken together, these four conclusions focus on the social construction of domestic labour which, as I pointed out in the Introduction, is often ignored by those who write about it.

In the next two chapters I explore the theme of the social construction of domestic labour in greater depth.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ASPECTS OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF DOMESTIC LABOUR: THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

In this chapter I use a variety of secondary evidence from the seventeenth century to demonstrate that both the practice and meaning of domestic labour are historically specific. I suggest that the seventeenth century was a particularly important period in the development of domestic labour since the spread of Protestant ideas at that time moulded a new concept of womanhood derived from female duties in the home.

(a) Introduction

In the previous two chapters I demonstrated the close links between women's domestic labour and their paid work. I suggested that women's different attitudes to and practices of domestic labour are important influences in structuring their experiences in the paid labour market. Investigating domestic labour is therefore of fundamental importance to the sociological study of women's unemployment and, having used fieldwork material to gain certain insights about domestic work in the 1980s, I now employ a much broader perspective to investigate its historical development. By developing an awareness of the range of material and ideological factors which have moulded the meaning and practice of domestic labour in the past, I hope to understand more about its current form, and to make a contribution to the broader analysis of women's work in the 1980s.

As I pointed out in the introduction to chapter 7, many of those who have written about domestic work have not produced a clear definition of it. Some authors do not address the issue of definition at all (Benston, 1970; Coulson, 1975; Fox, 1980; Gardiner, 1975; Harrison, 1974; Seccombe, 1974), while others use loosely defined concepts. Oakley, for example (1974a, 1974b) confuses housewife and mother by her choice of sample,

which was exclusively made up of mothers of young children. The first task in this chapter, therefore, is to present a working definition of domestic labour. The term is understood here to have two dimensions, both of which can be investigated historically: one of constraints, and one of evaluation. Constraints are those factors which define the physical boundaries within which the precise form domestic labour takes is negotiated. They have a material form, and examples are income, household composition and housing standards. Constraints determine what activities domestic labour comprises at any given time. Evaluation is the process by which domestic labour is given a social value and meaning. This is largely affected by cultural and ideological processes, and creates in turn the social relations within which domestic work is carried out. This cultural stereotype of domestic labour crucially affects the housewife's own experience of it. These two dimensions of domestic labour correspond to a distinction which is made throughout this chapter: that between domestic labour as a physical activity, and domestic labour as playing the social role of being a housewife.

In trying to be specific here about what is meant by domestic labour, and to make it clear that housework is only one part of it, it is broken down into constituent parts. Doing this for use in retrospective analysis is problematic since

> being a housewife ... is a condition which is socially defined and its definition changes at different historical moments' (Hall, 1980, p.44).

The point is to deconstruct domestic labour into activities which are flexible and general enough to be relevant over a considerable time-span. For the purposes of the following analysis, domestic labour is seen as

having three elements: cleaning, caring and making ends meet. Each of these can involve several different tasks which are, as will be demonstrated, separately and together historically specific.

Before considering the first of these aspects of domestic labour, it should be made clear that the conclusions here have had to be inferred from secondary evidence since information about women is so limited, largely because

> Imaginatively, she is of the highest importance, practically she is insignificant. She pervades poetry from cover to cover, she is all but absent from history (Woolf, 1929, p.66).

There is a sense in which the lack of data can itself be taken as a piece of evidence since, from it, we can deduce women's restricted access to the public, visible and recorded sphere. However, scarcity of data should also encourage a more imaginative use of sources: for example, one study (Stenton, 1942) analyses place names and suggests that a preponderance of female images shows that women played a more public role pre-industrially than is usually thought. Such a methodology is adopted here: there has been no new historical search, but rather an attempt to make new connections and to ask different questions of existing material. To this end, data were drawn from writings on a variety of subjects, from architecture, geography and religion as well as the more standard historical accounts.

In this chapter I also make use of secondary evidence from probate inventories, account books, domestic conduct books and religious tracts. Probate inventories provide a uniquely detailed account of household contents and are a valuable research instrument (van den Woude and

Shurman, 1980). As a result of a 1529 statute, which was in force until 1782, an inventory of moveable goods and chattels had to be produced under oath by administrators of an estate when the probate of a will was granted. The two main limitations of such inventories are that they were not obligatory for those leaving goods valued at less than £5, and that adult women leaving a husband did not have them made. Account books were kept for all the larger establishments and many remain intact. These have the obvious drawback of having been kept only by the relatively wealthy, but since they document the employment of servants too, they can cast an indirect light on poorer sections of society. The accounts can be remarkably precise, and Sarah Fell, for example, even recorded giving a ha'penny to a peasant woman (Penney, 1920: August 1674). The first domestic conduct book in circulation in this country was translated from the French in 1487, but it was not until the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that such books were widely published and circulated. There were four main topics in books of this type: marriage; the legal elements in matrimony; husband and wife relations; and the government of the family, including housekeeping and the upbringing of children (Powell, 1917, p.101). Such books are largely proscriptive rather than descriptive but, as such, can tell us about a cultural portrayal of the ideal household. Similarly, religious tracts, sermons and catechisms are a source which can reveal more about their authors than their readers, but they provide information about religious orthodoxy on several issues. The circulation of religious tracts was greatly increased in the seventeenth century with the ending of censorship in 1641. In 1640, twenty-two pamphlets were published, while 1,996 appeared in 1642, mainly dealing with religious or political matters (Briggs, 1983, p.134).

Circulation was not restricted to the upper strata of society since popular literacy was more developed than is often thought, with one estimate suggesting that by the mid-seventeenth century 60 per cent of men in the larger towns of the south could read (Laquer, 1976, p.255). Using diverse sources such as these, then, this chapter examines the practice and ideology of domestic labour in the seventeenth century.

(b) Domestic Labour

(i) Cleaning

'By all accounts, pre-industrial women were sloppy housekeepers by today's standards. Instead of the daily cleaning or the weekly cleaning, there was the spring cleaning' (Ehrenreich and English, 1979, p.129). It is unlikely that much cleaning took place in overcrowded labourers' cottages, which were dominated by the smoke from fires burning in the middle of them, and by the bulk and dirt of animals. Housing for labourers meant 'a one-room hovel of sticks and dirt' (Everitt, 1967, p.442). There were mud floors in most houses, covered with layers of straw, for which no cleaning was necessary. Even richer households had only rush floors, the bottom layers of which were undisturbed for twenty years or more. According to records of Diocese properties, planking did not appear until the mid-seventeenth century, and then was restricted to the parlours of a rich minority (Barley, 1955). In the case of clothes, what cleaning was done tended to be very infrequent, with an accumulation of washing for some months (Ehrenreich and English, 1979, p.129). Most people had very few clothes: one inventory shows that a pauper widow left one old gown, two petticoats, two shifts, an apron and a pair of shoes (Moore, 1976, p.354), while even a yeoman left only one doublet, one or two jerkins, a pair of

breeches, one hat, two or three bands, two shirts, two pairs of stockings and one pair of shoes (Moore, 1976, p.20). Probate records (Havinden, 1965; Moore, 1976) make no mention of cleaning equipment, and 'since each wash required the carting and heating of many buckets of water, there was a considerable disincentive to achieve higher standards of cleanliness' (Ehrenreich and English, 1979, p.129).

In the small number of upper-stata households, a different picture emerges. The household account books and diaries (Goff, 1930; Penney, 1920; Webb, 1857) show that house and clothes cleaning was done, though infrequently, by female employees who were paid at a daily rate. The cleaning women tended to be the wives of men already employed on the estate, and the names in the accounts show that the women were employed for a variety of unskilled jobs in the house and on the land, and that cleaning was just one of these. These books show that typically a number of women were employed to do the house-cleaning full-time for a few days, but that it was an infrequent event, being done perhaps twice yearly. Cleaning seems to have been regarded as an unskilled labouring job, and was certainly paid for at that rate. In the 1670s, Sarah Fell paid casual women on average a daily rate of 1d for cleaning, whereas a wheelwright was paid 6d. One common practice for clothes cleaning on a smaller and more regular scale was that local women would take clothes into their own homes and launder them there for the estate owners.

The fact that so little cleaning went on in the seventeenth century is not, of course, fully explicable by the finding that the physical conditions of most clothes and houses did not warrant it. Cleaning is not just done because something is dirty, but because someone decides that cleanliness is preferable to dirtiness, usually for aesthetic or hygienic

reasons. There is little sign that the interiors of houses were thought to be sources of aesthetic satisfaction, and this would have restricted the amount of cleaning thought necessary. For the poorer sections of society 'life was ... lived in public' (Aries, 1962, p.405) as a result of overcrowding indoors. Aries demonstrates this by a review of contemporary art, finding that the main character was the crowd. In larger houses most social activities took place in the courtyards, and interiors were of limited interest. Furniture was kept to a functional minimum, an inventories and wills show (Havinden, 1965; Moore, 1976). Even the rebuilding of large country houses between 1560 and 1640 did not bring about a great increase in the comfort or hygiene of the homes: it meant that there were visual improvements, such an ornamental plasterwork, beam mouldings and tapestries, but not any increased concern about the maintenance of these decorative features (Barley, 1967). Similarly, although clothes became invested with new social significance as the London season gained popularity during the century (Clark and Slack, 1976, chapter 10), fashion and elegance were far more important than was laundering.

Even the detailed domestic conduct books made very little reference to the need to clean (Powell, 1917, chapter 4), and it was not seen as a goal of household management in the way that, for example, cooking, efficiency and domestic order were. It was not until much later that the idea of bacteriological contagion brought dramatic urgency to the pursuit of cleanliness in the home so that 'in the light of Germ Theory, cleaning became a moral responsibility' (Ehrenreich and English, 1979, p.152).

It has been argued, then, that seventeenth-century cleaning differed from its modern counterpart in three main ways: it was undertaken only in

a small minority of households and then very infrequently; when it was done, it was usually done by casually-employed female labour; and it was not linked to any notion of hygiene or aesthetic value. The one respect in which it remains remarkably similar is that it was women's work: women ordered that it be done and employed other women to do it. The fact that the work was casual may provide the reasons for this gender concentration. Men tended to be employed continuously in agricultural work on the estate, partly because this work required a superior physical strength. Roberts (1979), for example, develops the argument that women's work allocation was based on their actual physical weakness, using evidence about female harvest labour between 1450 and 1750. This meant that women were left to do whatever other jobs became available in the local labour market, cleaning being one of several, as a wage-earning supplement to their small-scale domestic production. Household books of larger estates show that women were a minority among regular, full-time staff, but a majority among casual employees (Scott Thompson, 1937, chapter 6).

(ii) Caring

Caring here refers to the responsibility of smoothing the lives of household members in everyday ways. It has a practical side to it, providing a range of personal services which are surplus to those needed for survival; and an emotional side to it, providing comfort and support.

The twentieth century has been called the century of the child (Ehrenreich and English, 1979, p.164) - at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the culture of childhood had not emerged (Aries, 1969; Laslett, 1971, chapter 4), and neither had the ideology of mothering.

There were no special clothes, toys or

rooms for children, and little evidence that they were even expected to pursue different occupations from adults. Thus the care of children was, for the mass of women, not particularly time-consuming and children were largely left to find their own amusements in and around the cottage until such time as they could be of use in helping their parents in domestic production. Children usually left the household at an early age, for one of a number of reasons: an attempt to find employment; a preference to live with relatives; a need for support from relatives on the death of a parent; or entry into an apprenticeship.

In richer households the picture was slightly different, although the tradition of child mobility was maintained, being largely inspired by the parental concern that their children make suitable marriages, through meeting the children of other rich households. The practice of sending children away from home early was remarked upon by contemporary travellers from Europe, who saw it as evidence of a surprising lack of parental affection (Harrison and Royston, 1965, p.167). An earlier example can be drawn from feudal child custody law. In the event of widowhood, mothers did not usually raise their heirs. Custody was not normally contested through the courts, and in cases where women did make a plea for guardianship, it was based on their wish to make economic gain on the child's marriage rather than to secure the companionship of the child (Sheridan Walker, 1976).

There was little public concern about the education of labourers' children of either sex, but there was interest in educating the sons of the gentry. A 'conspicuous enthusiasm' (Wrightson, 1982, p.184) for their education had first become apparent in the sixteenth century with an expansion in grammar schools and universities, from which girls were

excluded. If girls were educated, it was by domestic tutors, employed to teach pupils in their own homes (Wrightson, 1982, chapter 7). Thus education was a commodity to be purchased on the open market, using professionally-qualified staff, rather than an activity which could be undertaken by housewives.

There is little evidence that caring for the elderly was a typical family burden in the seventeenth century. In the first place, not many people survived into old age. In the second, when they were bereaved, people did not usually move house and were more likely to pursue companionship and support by remarriage than they were by moving in with their children (Laslett, 1971, chapter 4 and 1977, chapter 5).

Cooking is an activity which falls under the heading of caring when it extends beyond meeting the survival needs of household members and becomes equated with a demonstration of love. Cooking was certainly a female responsibility, but it does not seem to have developed into a caring activity by the seventeenth century. For labouring women, mealtimes were not even regulated, and the organisation of the day was highly task-oriented, so that meals would be eaten when there was time between agricultural jobs (Thomas, 1964; Thompson, 1967). The diet was frugal, consisting mainly of bread, pulses and dairy produce, supplemented occasionally from poaching (Drummond, 1939, chapter 3). This sort of food needs long, slow cooking, yet inventories show that there was a very small number of cooking utensils in most houses (Havinden, 1965; Moore, 1976), which would suggest that the common method was to have one large pot hanging over the fire, which needed little intervention from a cook. Many houses did not have kitchens and, where there were kitchens, they were not always used for cooking. One late-sixteenth-century collection of 109

probate inventories shows that although seventy-six houses had a separate kitchen, ten were used as brew houses, others as general stores, and twenty made no mention of cooking equipment at all (Havinden, 1965, p.20). In the Trent Valley villages until 1640, kitchens only appear in five out of ninety-four labourers' houses, according to probate evidence (Barley, 1955, p.298).

Richer women had a different relation to cooking and had done so for a considerable time. Their diet was sumptuous and food had a quite different meaning from the simple means to survive which it afforded the poor (Drummond, 1939, chapter 3). Recipe books abounded, and certain foods were invested with new significance as new habits and customs were imported by travellers (Bradley, 1912; Fussell, 1953, chapter 3). Food became a trend and the style of running a kitchen was something which was dictated by fashion. Wealthy women began to develop a role as consumers, going to markets in rapidly-expanding urban centres, in search of seasonal specialities or delicacies of an unusually good quality (Davis, 1966, chapter 3). As cooking and its attendant activities became more socially and culturally important, it became a profession, with an elaboration of equipment and staff hierarchies, and richer women had less to do with it (Bradley, 1912; Hall, 1980; Scott Thompson, 1937, chapter 6).

One aspect of cooking over which wealthy women exercised some control was its medicinal aspect, and one way in which these women cared for their families through cooking was by maintaining and planning herb gardens, mainly for their health-giving properties. Generally, giving medical attention was one type of caring for which all women held responsibility. They were expected to have diagnostic, nursing and apothecary skills. These tasks are well documented in the folk studies and in recipe books,

which also give the remedies for common illnesses (Hole, 1940 and 1953). The first household conduct book to have a section on housewifery puts medical care at the top of the list of required skills,

> one of the principall vertues which doth belong to our English hous-wife; you shall understand that sith the preservation and care of the family touching their health and soundnesse of bodie consisteth most in her diligence, it is meet that she have a physicall kinde of knowledge (Markham, 1615, Book 2, p.4).

In the seventeenth century, then, the caring aspect of domestic labour was extremely limited: parental responsibilities were minimal; caring for the elderly by their offspring was not typical; and elaborate food preparation was not seen as a way of providing special care for the family. Generally, caring as a component of domestic labour had not developed, and the focus was still on survival.

(iii) Making ends meet

This aspect of domestic labour relates to the task of transforming family resources such as wages or land use into meeting the everyday needs of the family for survival. Where necessary, this included taking on paid work to bring more money into the household.

Women's responsibility for providing food can be seen as early as the fourteenth century, when gaol delivery rolls for 1300 show that foodstuffs, often of very low value, comprised 30 per cent of the goods which women stole, whereas they accounted for only 12 per cent of male thefts (Hanawalt, 1976, p.133). Women's prominent roles in food riots during Enclosure in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries demonstrate clearly their gender-specific responsibility for feeding the family (Wrightson, 1982, chapter 6). For most women, making ends meet took the

form of food production, which was mainly done on land over which the family had cultivation rights, either as general rights of common or as specific cultivation rights in lieu of wages for male labour. When production for domestic consumption failed, whether as a result of bad weather or a loss of land rights, labouring women had to work for wages so as to be able to buy food for the family. Often this food was bought from the land-owner's household, and surviving account books show that these transactions were overwhelmingly conducted by women (Penney, 1929, Introduction).

Waged work for most women was marginalised, seasonal, unreliable and varied at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Women were mainly estate workers, albeit in a very irregular capacity. They did the lighter field work or provided personal services to the estate family, such as sewing or cleaning. The wages women earned at such jobs were low, on average about half the male rate (Hamilton, 1978, chapter 2). Women generally did the unskilled work, and one study of 8,000 apprenticeship indentures in London between 1574 and 1644 found that none were female (Brodsky Elliot, 1978, p.224). During the seventeenth century, the impact of the Enclosure Acts (Butlin, 1979) meant that labouring families lost their land rights, resulting in widespread poverty and destitution, as families tried to live off the wages of a sole, male breadwinner. During the preceding century, there had been a dramatic price rise (Burnett, 1969, chapter 2), and this too meant that family members had to maximise their earning potential if they were to survive. Women were forced to take on any available work, and the new industrial occupations offered work which could be done in their own homes (Clark, 1919, pp.86-92; Jones, 1968; Pleck, 1976). Putting-out work such as nail or needle-making was

compatible with other, seasonal agricultural work for women, as it became available.

There is little evidence that large numbers of wealthier women did waged work to make ends meet, and neither did they take part in direct food production. Much has been made of the economic activity of women from the middle and upper strata at this time (Hilton, 1975, chapter 6), especially in putting forward the argument that capitalism brought about a dramatic change in this activity (Clark, 1919, Conclusions). It is clear that many women were economically active from a very early stage and, for example, research using the letter books of the City of London, Court rolls, and wills demonstrates well women's trading roles as early as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Abram, 1916). However, this evidence should be treated with caution. Many of the women concerned were without male support: single women, working to support themselves; women taking over their husbands' responsibilities while the men were at war (Stenton, 1977, chapter 6); or widows, taking over their husbands' jobs both to support the family and to preserve the business for their children to inherit. It was, for example, common practice for men to bequeath tools and guild membership to their wives, on the understanding that they would be passed on to male children at the age of 21 (Abram, 1916). Generally, the wealthier women did not work for economic reward, precisely because their social background meant that their wages were not needed. However, if the family fell into poverty as a result of crisis such as bereavement, the married woman would take up employment in order to make ends meet.

Making ends meet was, then, a major part of domestic labour for most women, whose lives displayed a complex process of dividing time between waged work, reproduction and domestic production. This flexibility has

led to the adult married women being called 'the cornerstone of the family economy' (Tilly and Scott, 1978, p.60), providing whatever extra labour the household needed to survive.

(c) Being a housewife

Having considered the practice of housework, I now want to discuss the ideology of being a housewife. I argue below that the seventeenth century was a pivotal period in many ways, when various significant changes were underway: these included a reassessment of the role of housewife. A small number of feminist academics (Hall, 1980; Hamilton, 1978) have already discussed links between Protestantism, women and housewives, but these links have generally not been given enough academic attention.

The earlier mediaeval attitude to women contained a major contradiction, so that 'most women found themselves perpetually oscillating between a pit and a pedestal' (Power, 1926, p.401). In the Church, women were seen as the creations of the Devil, inferior and evil, with a lustful and corrupting sexuality, and men's route to salvation lay in preserving celibacy. In the aristocracy, on the other hand, the cult of the Virgin Mary had been adapted into chivalry, an extreme code of manners based on idolising women. These two dramatically opposed views of women can be reconciled, since 'in one sense both combined to give women an other-worldly role - they were seen as in no way central to political or economic life' (Hall, 1980, p.46).

Protestantism offered women, for the first time, a realisable path to salvation, and religious ideology could be reconciled with the constraints of daily life. Women's inferiority to men was, in the Protestant creed, newly rational and contained no contradictions. The reformers 'were

asserting male dominance and superiority with an intellectual precision wholly alien to the woman baiting of the Mediaeval past' (George, 1973, p.159). Protestant thought on the specific husband to wife relation seems to have covered a fairly wide spectrum, and later interpretations of it have therefore varied. The constant theme is that of women's subordination to men, but variations lie in the extent of the subordination. One end of the scale is occupied by John Knox, arguing that women has to bear two great punishments for her part in the Fall: firstly, the 'dolor, anguishe, and payn' of childbirth, and secondly 'a subjection to her selfe, her appetites, and will to her husband, and to his will' (Knox, 1558, p.15). The Puritan sects were at the other end of the scale: they preached that women were the equal partners of men and were equally able to minister the word of God (Thomas, 1958). Thus, for some

> the Puritan attitude to women was ... more humane than earlier conceptions, in which women of the poor were close to cattle. Their attack on old customs like the churching of women to cleanse them after pregnancy and upon the popular religious belief that women were naturally shameful and unclean represented a new humanity (Rowbotham, 1973, p.9).

Generally women were seen as the help-mates of men, as always inferior partners in making the household into a family unit, with God as the spiritual and man as the secular head. The themes were submission and caring: women should submit to men just as men submit to God, and should care for the family in a spirit of selfless devotion, which would bear spiritual rewards in the after-life, rather than immediate, secular gains.

One of the central Protestant principles was that the individual household was a proper site for religious fulfilment, and 'the image of the proper wife supplanted that of evil woman in religious literature'

(Hamilton, 1978, p.73). In the earlier literature, religious purity had been seen as ultimately dependent on celibacy, but now the writings of St Paul were followed:

> 'Forbidding to marry', he wrote to Timothy, 'was the doctrine of the devils', and this was taken, in the light of the seventh commandment, to mean that everybody had better be assumed to be under orders to marry (Haller, 1941/2, p.244).

The key to carrying out God's will in the family lay in replicating the power relations of the Church within it, so that man was head of the family in the same way that Christ was head of the Church. Children were invested with a new significance as they came to be seen as being born evil, so that parents had to minimise the potentially polluting influences of children by enforcing strict religious observance in the home (Thompson, 1974, chapter 7). Men were expected to spend the day-time earning wages outside the home, and it fell to women to take the responsibility for instructing children and guiding their religious development. Protestantism not only decreed a hierarchy within the nuclear family, it also made clear the general principles on which this hierarchy should be based. Love of God and family members was important and so, too, were the ideas of self-sacrifice and duty. Reward became definitely placed in the other-worldly sphere. Earlier, it seems, the main influence on family decisions was the consideration of their economic consequences. Now, moral worth and heavenly reward were also taken into account: to care for others in the family might not carry any monetary or even emotional reward, but it was definitely worthwhile since it was an opportunity to give evidence of religious piety and goodness. Women could hope to win God's blessing by caring for the family's spiritual and bodily welfare.

Protestant thought, then, clearly included a radical re-interpretation of the family and of women's role within it, which meant that the caring and servicing of men and children became important parts of domestic labour. However, 'it is a little surprising to meet this Victorian conception of womanhood so clearly portrayed in the first half of the seventeenth century' (Stenton, 1957, p.146), and so the question of how far this Protestant code was translated into the everyday lives of women has to be discussed here.

For the labouring classes in the seventeenth century, financial hardship prevented the abandonment of household survival strategies: this meant that women could not give up waged and productive labour in order to care for their families on a full-time basis, and 'the peasant judged his woman by her capacity to labour and to breed more hands for toil' (Rowbotham, 1973, p.3). Although there is little evidence that labouring life changed substantially at this time to conform to Protestant laws (Wrightson, 1973), this is not to say that the lower strata were unaware of the ideas, or that their attitudes about women were not changing. There was high church attendance and a surprisingly wide circulation of sermons and tracts (Laquer, 1976). Women themselves often played an active part in the Church (Thomas, 1958). The ideas of the Protestants were widely spread by the rapidly-expanding clergy, who were fast becoming formally trained. In 1640, 84 per cent of the clergy had degrees, compared with only 23 per cent in 1580 (Wrightson, 1982, p.209). One part of the training was to present the primary clerical role as being pastoral care, and this included instruction in family life. One important part of Protestant advice to wealthier men was that they should assume responsibility for the moral and religious education of servants, and this

meant that the lower strata, in particular the single girls who made up the greatest proportion of live-in servants at this time, were taught a Protestant code to emulate in their own, later, married lives. So, although financial restraint may have meant that women from poorer families had to go on working for wages as well as being housewives, there can be little doubt that they were slowly and surely absorbing Protestant ideas about the desirable form that family life should take.

However, 'the reformers of popular beliefs and manners were successful above all among the middling and upper ranks of urban and rural society' (Wrightson, 1982, p.225). Women from the upper ranks were conspicuously religious: they were active Church members, eager to demonstrate to the local community their compliance with religious instruction. Some of the most extreme Protestant advice was aimed at the aristocracy, by those who thought that many such women had entered too fully into the world of men (Gagan, 1954, Introduction; Wright, 1935, p.506). John Knox's famous outburst, 'the first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women' was prompted by his outrage at women in positions of national power,

> to promote women to beare rule, superioritie, dominion, or empire above any realme, nation, or citie, is repugnant to nature, contumelie to God, a thing most contrarious to his reveled will and approved ordinance, and finallie it is the subversion of good order, of all equitie and iustice (Knox, 1558, p.11).

Clearly this represents the early extremities of Puritan thought, but there is little doubt that the aristocracy was called upon, and was able, to make immediate changes in its way of life: men could not allow their wives to be educated, politically active or in authority, and the seventeenth century witnessed a female retreat from power (George, 1973).

Protestant ideas were very clearly acted upon by the middle strata: 'Women ... became in the seventeenth century the subject of heated debate as the effort mounted to define the bourgeois family and bourgeois individualism' (George, 1971, p.407). The middle strata were expanding rapidly during the century, with a restructuring of an occupational order which had formerly been based on agriculture. Between 1540 and 1640 the aristocracy was fast losing ground to a new bourgeoisie (Everitt, 1969). With the increased importance of towns, as a result of the development of trade and commerce (Burnett, 1969; Clark and Slack, 1976), there were plenty of opportunities for the spread of Protestant ideas along trade routes (Hill, 1963), and for the setting-up of Protestant communities. There were close links between the Court and the Churches, with a standardisation of pulpit tracts between London and the provinces (Stenton, 1957, chapter 4). The bourgeoisie was looking for an identity, and Protestantism could provide it. Just as the Protestant ethic moulded the money dealings of bourgeois men (Weber, 1930), it also dictated the style of their family lives, so that bourgeois women were their housewives and help-mates. The bourgeois adoption of the Protestant model of the nuclear family can be illustrated by seventeenth-century housebuilding, which was largely inspired by the wish to establish specifically private dwellings, in order both to redefine the family as a close and intimate group and as a non-productive residential unit (Hamilton, 1978, chapter 2).

Protestant thought, then, included a clear specification of the ideal woman. The model was, by another name, a housewife. Her main functions were to service and care for her husband and children on a daily basis. Her reward for this was not monetary but spiritual, relying on notions of

duty and devotion. The Protestant revolution not only created and sanctified the housewife role, it also made it clear that the nuclear family was an appropriate site for religious practice, urging believers to create their own nuclear families as a route to salvation. Reformers defined a clear role for men which could easily be incorporated into everyday life: they were sanctified as heads of households with a duty to provide for their families. The emphasis was on the male duty in the waged labour market and on the proper way to achieve success in it. The housewife clearly emerged at this time: once there was a separate home-based role for women to which were attached a set of values quite different from those of waged labour. Although optimum material conditions for adopting the practice of full-time domestic labour existed only in non-labouring social groups, in particular the growing middle strata, poorer families were exposed to this new ideology of gender and began to absorb its central themes.

(d) Conclusions

In this chapter I have tried to make a contribution to the task of developing a sense of the history of domestic labour. I have argued that, in order to study domestic labour, the concept has to be deconstructed into constituent elements, and three were analysed: cleaning, caring and making ends meet. It was shown that these activities are in a constant state of flux, both in terms of what each comprises, and in terms of their relative ranking. One set of influences on them is the material conditions of society and the household, which define household resources; and another is the ideological conditions which invest certain parts of domestic labour with meaning and value, while ignoring others. Thus, the

first major conclusion of the paper is that both the actual practice of domestic labour and the ideology of being a housewife are always historically specific.

The second conclusion is that the general balance of material and ideological constraints affecting the practice of domestic labour can be periodically upset, and that a highly significant example of this is the seventeenth-century spread of Protestant ideas and influence. Its importance lay in its creation of a new ideology of gender, according to which women's role focused on the unpaid servicing of the family in the home.

The third conclusion is that certain features of this Protestant ethic of the household remain intact today. For example, the work is concerned above all with the care of others; it is unpaid; it is seen as having moral rewards; and it is a predominantly female occupation, a substantial part of the social construction of womanhood.

Some writers see the seventeenth century as a watershed in women's history:

> the lives of women changed profoundly during the seventeenth century. Their activities, behaviour, their place in the order of things, the ideal towards which they were to strive: nothing remained the same (Hamilton, 1978, p.22).

I have shown here that such a claim is dubious since, in arguing all women are equally affected by change, it assumes that women share a life style. In this chapter I have demonstrated that there were great differences between women during the seventeenth century, and that change of any sort would have had different impact and consequences at different social levels. Thus assertions such as Hamilton's, above, need some modification: it was the ideology of womanhood which changed dramatically

during the seventeenth century, rather than the actual practice of most women's lives, and an important aspect of this change was the specification of women's work in the home. A new ideology of gender had been articulated, so that by the end of the seventeenth century women's lives were beginning to be proscribed, not so much by their income or social background, as by the fact of their gender, and being a housewife had become an important element in the ideology of gender for women.

CHAPTER NINE

DEVELOPING THE HISTORY OF DOMESTIC LABOUR: THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

In this chapter I present a brief account of changing attitudes and practices of domesticity during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I pay particular attention to suggesting what may have been the main ideological and material influences on change.

Part I The Nineteenth Century

(a) Introduction

I have passed over the eighteenth century between this and the previous chapter. This is because resource restrictions have limited the scope of this enquiry, rather than because the eighteenth century was an uneventful phase in the history of domesticity. By choosing to concentate on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, I am able to link the consideration of the past with that of the present and, specifically, to develop an understanding of the recent past which may afford insights into the experiences of those women whom I met during fieldwork.

In the previous chapter, I pursued an analysis of domesticity by the relatively precise documentation of specific domestic practices and ideology. I now want to use a different approach. Having considered the early origins of the modern-day housewife, I want to look in a more general way at how the practices and ideology of housewifery have developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I concentrate on large-scale change and the possible influences on it, and am concerned with identifying major trends and patterns in housewifery. By doing this, I hope to both demonstrate that domestic labour has a history which is as complex and important as that of waged labour, and to sketch the outlines of this history over the last 150 years.

(b) The angel in the house: Middle-class domesticity

I begin here by considering the ideology and practice of domesticity in the middle and upper classes. It should of course be remembered that the middle classes form a minority within English society, although their numbers were rapidly expanding as industry, commerce and administration all developed. One estimate suggests that, by the middle of the century, the middle classes comprised roughly one-sixth of the total population (Burnett, 1978, p.95). However, as I argue in section (c) below, middle-class ideas and styles of domesticity directly affected working-class practices too.

Perhaps the best-known image of the nineteenth-century middle-class woman is as the 'angel in the house' (Christ, 1977). Here,

> the woman, as wife and mother, was the pivot of the family, and consequently the guardian of all Christian (and domestic) virtues (Alexander, 1976, p.61).

Such women were expected to concern themselves primarily with family matters, to take responsibility for the moral development of household members, and to be 'passive, submissive and pure creatures' (Vicinus, 1977, p.xix). Their lives were dominated by pressures to serve their husbands and to sacrifice themselves (Dyhouse, 1981, Chapters 1 and 2), and they received in return the stylised idealisation of women which characterises much Victorian culture (Vicinus, 1977). Many writers have concentrated on the symbolic functions of this angel in the house ideal, and this has perhaps tended to underplay the empirical realities of such women's lives. The angel in the house did not only have spiritual functions, and she was not only a passive recipient of male commands. She also had a demanding schedule of domestic work, and this forms the basis

of the following discussion.

The enduring popularity of the angel in the house image is partly based on the belief that middle-class homes were staffed by a retinue of servants whose work could be supervised and directed by the middle-class housewife with minimal personal exertion. Yet such a belief is ill-founded since, although a rise in the number of servants was an important development during the nineteenth century,[1] this rise was not caused by an increase in the number of servants employed in each of a constant number of households but, rather, by an increase in the number of servant-employing households. Indeed, the increased practice of employing servants led to criticism in domestic manuals and the wider media that middle-class women were in danger of losing their traditional domestic skills (Branca, 1975a, Chapter 2). Most middle-class homes were simply serviced by one or two young maids-of-all-work, who worked alongside the housewife. In the 1871 Census, two-thirds of female servants were general ones (Horn, 1975, p.18) and, figures from the 1851 and 1871 censuses show that in London 34 per cent of servant-employing households had only one servant, while 25 per cent had two (McBride, 1976, p.19).

Much of what the housewife and her servants actually did in the home was dominated by the pursuit of order:

> her special task was the creation of order in her household, the regular round of daily activity set in motion and keep smoothly ticking over by continued watchfulness (Davidoff _et al._, 1976, p.155).

In general terms, the housewife pursued order by careful household planning. One example of this was her attention to domestic timetabling. Ordering time in this way was seen not so much as a means to efficiency as it was as evidence of domestic calm and competence. Detailed daily

routines were drawn up by the housewife (Horn, 1975) and analysis shows that advice on household timetables accounted for about one-third of the contents of domestic manuals at this time (McBride, 1976). Another example of planning was the active part which housewives played in determining the appearance of the interior of the home, and styles and furnishing acquired a new social significance (Burnett, 1978, p.110). Similarly, the use of the house was planned. Although architects designed the houses, housewives executed their plans within them, and together they created and preserved a new internal order in the home. Boundaries between the public and private parts of the house became more marked as the use of rooms became more specialised and servants were increasingly restricted to the back, underground and attic parts of the house (Davidoff, 1983, p.27). For the first time, such distinctions came generally to be seen as a mark of gentility (Davidoff and Hall, 1982, p.333).

More specifically, the housewife pursued order through her housework. Cleaning, for example, was carried out in a particular way, so as to achieve order, rather than hygiene:

> Nineteenth-century cleanliness ... had more to do with tidying and polishing - sparkling glasses, gleaming silver, brass, copper and polished wood - than our notions of dirt control (A Place for Everything and Everything in its Place) (Davidoff, 1976, p.128).

Housework tasks such as clothes and home cleaning were increasingly carried out with the use of domestic machinery. Domestic equipment became more widely available and affordable, and middle-class women were the ones most likely to make use of it: upper-class women had servants to perform the labour, and working-class women could not afford the machines (Branca, 1975a, Chapter 3; Daunton, 1983, Chapter 10).

The housewife was not, of course, only responsible for housework. An important aspect of the nineteenth century was the increased public attention which was paid to children (Pinchbeck and Hewitt, 1973, Vol. II). Hundreds of books and articles were published for a target audience of middle and upper-class women, aimed at instructing them in the art of rearing children (Branca, 1975a, Chapter 6). Housewives were expected to play a major part in educating their children, especially in the case of their daughters whose education was often limited to part-time tuition by a governess in their teenage years (Dyhouse, 1981, Chapter 2). Women also had to instruct their children in the increasingly elaborate code of manners which prescribed what was considered appropriate behaviour for children. For example, children were forbidden to speak at meal-times (Vigne, 1975); became restricted to certain parts of the house; and their participation in general household events was limited.

Thus the housewife's duty to children was augmented during the century as standards of child-care became more demanding. The increased attention devoted to the quality of childhood can be further illustrated by child-bearing practices. For example, contraception began to be used among the middle classes during the 1860s and 1870s (Banks, 1954; Branca, 1975a); and new obstetric techniques were developed by male doctors for use on middle-class women (Branca, 1975a, Chapter 5) in an attempt to improve infant mortality.

Housewives did not, of course, only work inside the home. They had social duties in the wider community which consisted of visiting and receiving guests. They developed a range of drawing-room skills, such as playing musical instruments, singing, sketching and embroidering, in order to elaborate a particular style of social manners. Middle-class

housewives were also expected to carry out charitable duties in the wider community. Philanthropic visiting of the homes of the poor was one example of these, and this was an increasingly popular female middle-class activity during the century (Hall, 1979; Summers, 1979).

The middle-class housewife, then, had a range of duties which far exceeded those suggested by the simple image of the angel in the house. One aspect of the 'angel' image which is particularly pertinent, however, is that of women's exclusive identification with the house. During the nineteenth century, middle-class women were only exceptionally employed outside the home, and these exceptions by and large consisted of unmarried women. Married women did not generally perform waged labour, and so an important characteristic of their housewifery in the nineteenth century was that it was a full-time occupation.

Turning now to briefly consider some of the main influences on this middle-class style of housewifery, I highlight two main areas: the development of industrial capitalism; and the spread of Evangelicalism.

Industrial capitalism had varied implications for housewifery. In the most general sense, the form it took in nineteenth-century England encouraged a sharpening domestic division of labour. The concentration of production in urban areas, and the development of suburbs, increased the sexual division of labour; the association of men with the public world of industry, commerce and administration; and the association of women with the private world of domesticity and the family (Davidoff _et al._, 1976; Davidoff and Hall, 1982; Daunton, 1983). Paid employment for middle-class women declined, and this implied a more obvious female identity as housewife, together with a male one as breadwinner. More specifically, industrial capitalism produced a bourgeoisie which was keen to establish

an identifiable life-style (Harrison, 1979, Chapter 4). There was a rapid increase in the number of men holding middle-class occupations, and they could demonstrate their upward social mobility by their domestic style. In addition to this, there was for the first time a blurring of working and middle-class incomes as, for example, multiple-earner working-class households realised an equivalent wage to the poorer-paid male professional breadwinners, such as the clergy (McKendrick, 1974, p.187). This meant that establishing social status by life-style became a more necessary task, and housewifery practice was an effective means here. The bourgeoisie which emerged from nineteenth-century industrial capitalism was particularly concerned with protecting its new-found privilege. Achieving this at the family level demanded the establishment of a monogamous family unit so that passing property and privilege through the generations could be certain to retain the family line:

> for men whose identity and meaning were determined by the property they owned the purity of the women before marriage, and their fidelity during marriage, were essential to guarantee certainty about inheritance (Humphries, 1981, p.27).

Some of the detailed aspects of housewifery too were directly influenced by the spread of industrial capitalism. The increase in domestic equipment, for example, was enabled by technological advance and improvements in production methods. Less tangibly,

> the use of time was an important aspect of housekeeping efficiency and it was related to the introduction of a new kind of work discipline with industrialisation, typified by factory work but touching many aspects of life (McBride, 1976, p.29).

Women carefully planned their household time both because time was being revalued in the new time and money equations of capitalism, and also because the spread of factory and office work meant that the male working

day became more regulated. Thus the spread of industrial capitalism had both material and ideological implications for the organisation and practice of housework: its influence ranged from the production of household tools to the general allocation of tasks in a sexual division of labour. Other factors were of significance too, however, and religion is one example of these.

Although secularisation is generally considered to be an important characteristic of industrialisation, religious belief and practice were still evident on a large-scale in nineteenth-century Britain. For example, according to the 1851 census, 60 per cent of possible attenders went to church on a specified date (Harrison, 1979, Chapter 5). Other examples of public demonstrations of religiosity were the popular middle-class practice of making substantial contributions to church funds, or ensuring that elaborate church funerals and memorial stones accompany death. This type of religiosity was generally prompted by a wish to demonstrate allegiance to the middle class, both for the purposes of identification as well as to suggest that middle-class privilege was somehow divinely decreed. Another type of religiosity was apparent in nineteenth-century England, and this was the active Evangelicalism which in turn dominated the whole of Victorian morality. Evangelicalism was concerned overall with reform, both at the level of the national morality and at the level of individual self-improvement (Hall, 1979). Evangelicalism had particular implications for women, who were always expected to marry and to thereby become subordinate to their husbands. It was felt that women, in their roles as wives and mothers, had an important part to play in the moral re-armament of a nation threatened by the chaos of industrialisation since

> the Evangelical concern with national morality had, as its premise, their belief that religion should be a daily rule of life rather than a question of doctrinal purity (Hall, 1979, p.17).

For example, women could education their children in religious matters; establish an ordered household routine both to allow time for religious observance as well as to 'reduce the possibilities of collapse into the natural condition' (Hall, 1979, p.17); and carry out philanthropic community work (Summers, 1979). The rearing of children was seen as a particularly important part of a woman's religious duty.

The establishment of a particular style of domesticity in the nineteenth-century was, then, influenced by religious ideology as well as by the material and ideological developments of industrial capitalism. Until now, I have dealt mainly with the ideal of the angel in the house, as enacted in its near-perfect form. I should point out that not all women accepted the role expected of them, since

> the household could be not only an 'earthly paradise' but its opposite, a 'hell on earth', a prison (Davidoff et al., 1976, p.163).

It is often assumed that domesticity is simply accepted by women, yet I would argue that the history of domestic work includes radical protest just as does the history of productive work. The protest does not, however, necessarily take the easily recognisable form of organised labour movements. Below I present three examples of ways in which middle-class women expressed opposition to the style of domesticity which was imposed on them by the ideal of the angel in the house.

Firstly, many women simply refused to co-operate physically in the domestic round, and they took to their beds in what has more recently been

called 'a morbid cult of hypochondria - "female invalidism"' (Ehrenreich and English, 1973, p.22). I am not suggesting that these women deliberately feigned illness in order to avoid housework but, rather, that their opposition to the social roles demanded of them was manifested by a physical inability to perform them.[2] A second, more direct, example of women's dissatisfaction with the angel in the house ideal is that of their radical political organisation. This was the period when women became active in fighting for the vote, forming a political movement which was extraordinary not only because of its militancy and rapid growth, but also because of the overwhelmingly middle-class backgrounds of its early participants (Ramelson, 1967; Rowbotham, 1973, Chapter 15). And, 'from the very beginning of the organised women's movement the "right to work" was recognised to be an essential part of real emancipation' (Strachey, 1936, p.122). Thus, middle-class women were not only fighting for the vote, they were also fighting for the right to an alternative way of life to the narrow one of the angel in the house. Thirdly, women's opposition to the angel in the house ideal can be evidenced by their practice of birth control. One of the most interesting demographic developments in the nineteenth-century was the spread of birth control among the middle classes. No-one has satisfactorily answered the question of why the middle class adopted birth control at this time, although the wish to maintain a high standard of living would have been of some importance, as Banks (1954) has argued. Branca, however, presents a persuasive argument that the spread of birth control from the 1840s was a direct result of middle and upper-class women demanding release from the physical burdens which were put upon them by excessive childbirth. She points out that the contraceptive methods which were used were ones which placed control in

the hands of women: the contraceptive sponge, syringe and diaphragm (Branca, 1975a, p.130), and develops the point:

> if the Victorian women continued to have the traditional number of children, it would be virtually impossible to implement the changes in child-rearing because they demanded increased and elaborated care for each and every child (Branca, 1975a, p.112).

In deliberately restricting the number of children she had, the angel in the house was refusing to comply with the ever-increasing demands which were being made of her.

The style of middle-class domesticity which I have described here was dependent on an income capable of supporting a full-time housewife. As I pointed out at the beginning of the section, however, this would have only been possible among a minority of the population. In the next section I focus on the experiences of the majority: the working classes.

(c) Working-class domesticity

Working-class domesticity developed in conditions of extreme hardship. Most people were living in towns (Harrison, 1979, p.27), and here the general housing standards were low, since urban centres had not been able to provide adequately for the vast influx of immigrants. Between 1801 and 1911, the total population of the country increased over four times, but the urban population increased 9.5 times (Burnett, 1978, p.139). There was a great amount of overcrowding and one 1887 survey found that one-third of the families of working men in one parish occupied single rooms or less: the 'less' could mean sharing a cellar in the literal underworld of towns and cities (Burnett, 1978, p.67). There is now very little record of the domestic practices of those living in these squalid conditions, but it seems reasonable to assume that the battle for survival

was so demanding that it precluded any attempt to develop a certain style of domesticity. Here I discuss domesticity among those sections of the working class which could afford to live in a house or flat, and which could afford a standard of living which was above subsistence level.

While middle-class married women tended to be full-time housewives, working-class women were usually involved in wage-earning activity so that domestic labour was only one part of their daily work. However, women's involvement in paid work changed during the century, since one of the most dramatic effects of industrialisation on working-class life was the erosion of opportunities for women's paid employment. One account of women's work from 1700 concludes that

> industrialisation, far from 'emancipating' women, led to a contraction of some of their traditional functions in the economy - to a degree from which they have yet to recover (Richards, 1974, p.337).

While women had traditionally been employed in agricultural production, enclosure had led to an increase in productive homework and domestic industry, and these were the two major employers of women in the mid-eighteenth century (Pinchbeck, 1981, p.306). Industrialisation meant that families migrated to urban centres, so that women had to abandon their former domestic employment. There were few new areas of female opportunity in the industrial world, and women's paid work became even more flexible and diverse, taking any possible means of earning money, so that

> this unfettered anarchy of the female labour market gave women's work a sort of pre-industrial character strangely at odds in a self-consciously industrial age (Alexander, 1976, p.108).

For example, many women drifted into prostitution (Fried, 1969; Chesney,

1970; Walkowicz, 1977); some took in lodgers (Davidoff, 1979); and others did domestic work for other working-class women whose paid employment meant that they could not meet their domestic responsibilities. In certain regions, women worked in factories, and were often initially employed as part of a family unit in the early stages of factory production, when employers paid a family wage to men on the understanding that they would buy the labour of their wife and children in order to meet production demands (Anderson, 1971). In other industries, such as coal-mining, women were employed with much the same terms and conditions as children, doing jobs which were lower paid and less skilled than men. Over the century, however, women were gradually excluded from factory work by the introduction of a series of Factory Acts, and by the end of it even those women who still had full-time employment in the factory had had their hours of employment seriously reduced. Many women then did large amounts of outwork, under even worse conditions than those they had experienced in the factories (Cadbury, 1906). Although women's employment in the nineteenth century is a complex issue, it is clear that, while married women were doing less paid work outside the home, they were not necessarily becoming full-time housewives. As well as performing domestic labour, they were also engaged in seasonal or part-time work, both inside and outside the home.

Thus the changing organisation of household work was an important feature of nineteenth-century working-class domesticity. This was not only true at the general level of the time women had available to do domestic work, but also at the more specific one of the organisation of each day. During the nineteenth century, a particular routine was imposed on working-class domesticity as, for the first time, this became

inflexibly linked to the timetable of an industrial working day. For example, in pre-industrial times it had been possible to leave food bubbling in a pot all day, to be taken when wanted; meal-breaks now became carefully measured and regulated. Food had to be ready on the table if it was to be fitted into a dinner break. Household work had to be routinised on a weekly and monthly basis as well as on the daily level. In an agricultural age, the household had been organised according to seasonal rhythms. Industrial jobs were more stable and regular, and this necessitated the standardisation of domestic work. At first, the industrial working day was only introduced by coercion, using piecework incentives or punitive fines (Holley, 1978, Chapter 5; Pollard, 1963), and it may be that one reason for workers' unwillingness to comply with the new hours was that domestic labour had not yet been modified to efficiently service such regular employment outside the home.

A great number of examples of the new industrial domesticity came from those areas where women were employed in factories, and can be found in the debates over the impact such employment had on the family (Humphries, 1981, p.25). Although women had always been economically productive, the conditions in modern industrial work meant that they could not easily combine paid and unpaid work as they had pre-industrially:

> for women the separation of work and home and the new discipline of the factory made their diverse activities less easy to combine ... not surprisingly, they stopped breast-feeding as soon as they could. Instead the babies were fed with watered-down, often infected, cow's milk (Rowbotham, 1973, p.57).

In some parts of Lancashire, a distinctive diet emerged, based on the pot-roast which could be left to cook all morning while women were in the mills, and then eaten in the mid-day break. The practice of child-minding

spread, as did that of the more unscrupulous baby-farming (Chesney, 1970, p.414; Hewitt, 1958, Chapter 10; Rowbotham, 1973, Chapter 11), and working-class women increasingly paid other women to do their clothes-washing too. All these examples of a new domesticity to meet the demands of industrial production show a new urgency in the daily round: women adopted diverse domestic strategies to meet new and increasingly conflictual demands made on them.

Adopting strategies such as these in order to complete household work was not only evidence of the difficulties working-class women experienced in meeting demands; it was also a sign that women felt it necessary to achieve domestic standards which were higher than those necessary purely for survival. Paying someone to look after children, for example, was a sign that mothers felt supervision of children to be a priority. Similarly, spending wages on clothes-washing seems to suggest that higher standards of personal cleanliness were developing.

During the nineteenth century there was a general working-class retreat to the home in the face of the brutal conditions of the industrial workplace. As the home became a haven for the working class, so the domestic standards expected of it rose. For example,

> the parlour was a shrine to respectability and domesticity. It reflected a reorientation of working-class culture from being work-centred to home-centred (Daunton, 1983, p.277).

This theme that the working class could find a respectability in the home which was denied them in the factory is repeated in accounts of nineteenth-century domestic life, and clearly has implications for the housewife. For example,

> the big jump - the first step towards social distancing and the 'respectability gap' - was the transition from one room to two, for two rooms implied a separation between living and sleeping, and the further possibility of separating parents from children, or adult males from adult females. Two rooms were the irreducible minimum of respectability, the difference between a home and a mere shelter. With two rooms one could begin to take pride, to cook and clean, furnish and decorate, comfort and cherish the family (Burnett, 1978, p.67).

In the northern cities, back-to-back housing was the most common form of working-class accommodation, and this afforded families rather more privacy, with accordingly greater scope for the elaboration of domesticity:

> a home on which a 'respectable' housewife could lavish considerable care and pride - cooking, cleaning and polishing, whitening doorsteps and windowsills (Burnett, 1978, p.75).

Women did not only pursue respectability by domestic standards of appearance, by also by the elaboration of a code of domestic manners. For example, there was, for the first time, a distinction made between the private and public in working-class homes. The front and back of the house became distinct, and the front part was increasingly reserved for occasions of some formality or special celebration. The back lanes of back-to-backs were still relatively communal, with children playing games and women hanging out washing, but the front door was used much less often and became a clear barrier between the family and the world outside (Daunton, 1983, Chapter 11), and a sign that the family's status as derived from its style of domesticity could exceed that derived from the participation of its members in paid labour.

The physical work associated with creating this new domestic respectability was heavy. Few homes had piped water, and the pollution of industrialisation added to the dirt problem. Working-class women could

not generally afford domestic technology to lighten the burden of housework, so that it remained arduous and exhausting.

Within the home, the sexual division of labour was becoming more marked. Again this was related to the regulation of the male working day since this now included a clearly identifiable amount of leisure time. Not only did men have hours 'off' during the day, they also had days off. By the 1870s, Saturday was an almost universal half-day holiday, and the working week dropped 60 hours in 1850 to 56.5 in 1874. The Bank Holiday Acts of 1871 and 1875 secured Boxing Day, Easter Monday, Whit Monday and the first Monday in August as Bank Holidays. The pertinent point about this newly-created leisure time here is that it meant the home became increasingly associated with leisure for men. It was the place they returned to after work, not a place in which they did work. For women, there was no such increase in leisure: they may have had more time to spend in the home, but as domestic expectations rose, they had more work to do in the time which was available. The sharpening of the sexual division of labour in this way meant that there was an elaboration of the wife's role as a domestic servant to her husband, the breadwinner (Hartmann, 1979). The male breadwinner status was enhanced by a sharp increase in male wages in the 1870s (Daunton, 1983, Chapter 11; Harrison, 1979), and this encouraged the view that men were entitled to a disproportionate share of family resources, such as food (Humphries, 1981).

During the nineteenth century, children's roles in the home changed. I have already mentioned that in the middle class there was a formalisation of childhood, so that certain manners and behaviour were felt to be appropriate to it. In the working class too, a new awareness

of childhood developed. At the beginning of the century working-class children were sent out to paid work at a very early age, and

> the exploitation of little children on this scale and with this intensity was one of the most shameful events in our history (Thompson, 1970, p.384).

During the century, however, children's hours of work came under public scrutiny and were restricted by legislation. The very first Factory Acts were mainly concerned with children. The 1802 Act regulated the hours of apprentices, and in 1819 children under nine were barred from factory and were subject to restrictions on the total number of hours they worked. Schooling for children, however, was not made compulsory until 1880, and so most of the century can be seen as a period of transition in the method of caring for children, with a move to state provision of care. The enhancement of childhood meant that children as well as men became family members who mothers were urged to service. They were no longer small wage-earners, but entitled to some special place in the family's internal hierarchy.

It seems, then, that major developments in working-class domesticity took place in the nineteenth century. Women's roles as domestic labourers became distinct from those as paid workers and a new urgency appeared in their routines of household work. Many new tasks were incorporated into domestic work, as the expectations of the home increased and it became more often seen as a potential mark of social respectability. Although I have already mentioned some of the main influences on these developments, I now want to discuss these in more depth.

Throughout the preceding account, I have highlighted the impact of industrialisation on working-class domesticity.

> The process of industrialisation is necessarily painful. It must involve the erosion of traditional patterns of life. But it was carried through with exceptional violence in Britain (Thompson, 1970, p.486).

Obviously such a process had an impact on domestic as well as industrial work and, to summarise, I have argued that this meant the sexual division of labour was sharpened as men's identity as breadwinners was clarified while women's paid work became irregularised. Industrial timetables imposed order on household routines, and the home became a haven from the unpleasant industrial environment. Patriarchal relations in the home were strengthened as it became a place in which men who were exploited and humiliated at work could dominate and rule. Turning to the home could be a 'mechanism to assert independence and identity within a setting of subordination' (Daunton, 1983, p.266).

Thus industrialisation had a general and dramatic influence on working-class domesticity. The other main impact on developments in this area came from the middle classes. During the nineteenth century, for perhaps the first time, working-class domestic aspirations began to coincide with those of the middle classes, such as in their mutual pursuit of respectability. There were several channels by which the middle class could exert influence on the working class. For example, many working-class girls were servants who learnt about domestic work from their mistresses. Rapid urban migration had disrupted the traditional pattern of learning through the extended family, and young girls were instead taught by their female employers. In earlier times, households which kept servants were so affluent that household practices would have been quite inappropriate in the servants' homes, but in the nineteenth century this was not so often the case and the young maid-of-all-work who

worked alongside her mistress learnt a trade which she could modify for use in her own home after marriage.

The middle classes also influenced working-class domestic skills by means of the state education system. By 1870, the state had to place an adequate elementary school within reach of every child and as the Factory Acts increasingly excluded children from paid work, they spent more time in school, available for tuition by teachers from the middle classes.

I do not want to suggest that the middle-class influence on working-class domesticity was some unexpected consequence of schooling or servant training. On the contrary, there is evidence that the middle class was extremely concerned about threats to social stability, and that encouraging a certain style of working-class domesticity was one strand in its attempt to retain control over the working class. Thus, for example,

> the educational policies devised by Church and State in the second half of the nineteenth century aimed to 'civilise' the working class and to bring the structure and organisation of working-class family life into line with middle-class values and canons of 'respectability' (Dyhouse, 1981, p.79).

Middle-class fears of serious social unrest were fuelled by the French Revolution and by the political organisation of working men in Britain in the first part of the nineteenth century (Briggs, 1979; Nairn, 1972; Thompson, 1970). The male working class had been radicalised by exploitation in the factories and it began to form a coherent whole whose

> new solidarity was not only a solidarity with, it was also a solidarity against (Thompson, 1970, p.531).

The severity of the threat which such organisation was seen as presenting to social stability can be illustrated by the extensive resources invested by government to police and repress them (Thompson, 1970, Chapter 4). As

well as the specific fear of revolution, there was a general middle-class uneasiness about the growing 'state of apartheid' (Thompson, 1970, p.195) between the lower and middle social strata as the traditional ties of agricultural communities were shattered and workers became a class apart in the anomic system of factory production. The middle class felt that, so long as working-class ideals of domesticity were broadly similar to those of the middle class, the widening of the social gulf between the classes could be checked as the development of revolutionary counter-cultures was impeded. More specifically, it was hoped that, by encouraging a certain sort of domesticity, working men could be disciplined. Philanthropic educators, for example, taught schoolgirls to create welcoming homes for their husbands, so that the girls themselves could act as agents of social control, curbing the drunkenness and irregularity of working-class men (Marks, 1976).

An outstanding example of middle-class fears about working-class domesticity is the debate over women's employment in factories, which was dominated by references to the middle-class ideal of woman as the angel in the house. Two related arguments were put forward: firstly, that the factory work corrupted the morals of the individual women; and secondly, that women's factory work disrupted family life to such an extent that the social fabric was under threat. Jane Humphries' useful case-study of the 1842 Mines Act puts the point about morality clearly, emphasising

> the incompatibility between the exploitation of female workers with their very _womanhood_ as conceived by the male bourgeoisie. Working women could not but be thought of in relation to the male bourgeois's own sister, wife and mother (Humphries, 1981, p.28).

Bourgeois men wanted to impose the same morality on working women as they did on women from their own class, and this meant excluding them from

factory production, which was seen as a highly unnatural location for women. Although much of the opposition to female employment in the factories stated the inhumanity of the working conditions there, it can more usefully be seen as deriving from a sense of moral outrage, caused by the reports of scantily-clad women working in close co-operation with men. Humphries describes one piece of evidence to the 1842 Report:

> which reveals the commissioners, subcommissioners and bourgeois witnesses as obsessed with the 'morals' of collier women. 'Morals' meant sexual behaviour ... Mr Symons, for example, rather than appreciating the physical effort involved in dragging unwheeled corves along underground passages, and with the indignity of the belt and chain, was instead obsessed with the location of this harness on the female anatomy (Humphries, 1981, p.25).

A second strand in the argument was that, since these women were the pivots of the home, family life itself was under threat of total disintegration as increasing numbers of married women left the home to perform waged labour and thereby become morally corrupted. Here the concern was not so much that individual women were being corrupted, but that the whole British nation might be undermined by the breakdown of stable family life:

> many of the campaigners for protection were more concerned about social stability than the real situation of working-class women (Rowbotham, 1973, p.57).

Thus much of the public rhetoric put forward in support of factory legislation rested on ideas about what constituted appropriate female behaviour, and these were in turn derived from the middle-class ideal of the angel in the house.[3]

(d) Conclusions/Summary

During the nineteenth century, important developments in domesticity were taking place in all social classes. In the middle class, the ideology of the angel in the house was not particularly new, but the extent of the impact of such ideology was dramatically increased as more families joined the middle class and as middle-class influence grew through channels of social control, such as the education system or factory legislation. The role of domesticity as a counter-revolutionary force was specifically stated in open debate, and the domestic practices of the working-class came under public scrutiny for perhaps the first time. At every level of the class structure, the sexual division of labour was deepening as wage-earning opportunities for men increased and those for women decreased. While in the seventeenth century an ideology of gender had been elaborated, it was not until the nineteenth century that the material conditions for men to be family breadwinners were created. Thus there was a homogenisation of male roles in every social class. While the ideology of female roles was further elaborated with the strengthening of the angel in the house ideal, the material conditions of women in working and middle-class homes remained very different. The essence of the difference lay in the amount of time women had to do housework, which was in turn specified by their varied participation in paid work. Thus, although the ideology of the full-time housewife was clarified, and certain 'protective legislation' was passed to increase female conformity to such a stereotype, most working-class women could not afford to leave paid work altogether, and so their domestic work was dominated by a shortage of time. In all social classes, the routinisation of domestic work was a key

nineteenth-century development as the massive reorganisation of productive work imposed a new order on the home. The new roles of productive work gave primacy to men in their wage-earning activities, and this provided a new rationale for the internal hierarchy of the home, in which women were subordinate. Thus, as in the seventeenth century, particular domestic styles developed during the century, and these were the result of a complex blend of material and ideological factors. I continue this general consideration of a social history of female domestic labour below, dealing with the first part of the twentieth century.

Part II The Inter-War Years

(a) Introduction

In the following account I highlight three outstanding developments in domestic labour. Firstly, there were changes in the composition of the household; secondly, there were changes in housework practices; and thirdly, there were changes in the ideology of domesticity.

Again, my arguments are developed from the experiences of one particular section of society. I am not dealing, for example, with the estimated third of the working class which still lived in sub-standard or slum property (Burnett, 1978, p.243). I am focusing on the domesticity of the middle classes and the better-off working classes amongst whom changes and the setting of trends can be most readily identified. This section of society was increasing rapidly at this time and, on the basis of non-manual occupations alone, the middle class increased from 20.3 per cent of the total population in 1911 to 30.4 in 1951 (Burnett, 1978,

p.244).

(b) Household composition

Inter-war changes in the composition of the household related to the numbers of servants, full-time housewives, and children which they contained. Similar changes took place in both working and middle-class households, and this resulted in an increasing homogeneity of household composition between the two.

In middle-class homes, there was a marked decline in servant numbers. In commuter areas of London, for example, the number of servants per 100 families fell from 24.1 in 1911 to 12.4 in 1921 (Horn, 1975, p.167), and the difficulty of finding domestic staff became a subject of public debate. Working-class women had left domestic service in large numbers for the war effort, and they were reluctant to return to its humiliating conditions and poor rewards (Braybon, 1981). During the Depression years, the media and politicians urged unemployed women to re-enter domestic service, which was the only area of female employment still offering mass vacancies. Such campaigns were largely unsuccessful, however; domestic service as a whole declined, and those who were employed in this way tended to be employed on a daily or hourly basis rather than in the residential style of the nineteenth century.

The decline in servant numbers meant that in the middle classes the home was increasingly managed by a solitary, full-time housewife. This was also becoming more generally true in the working class: not because paid help had declined, but because the narrowing of married women's employment opportunities meant that women were more often unemployed, and

thereby became full-time housewives.

I argued above that industrialisation brought a general decline in married women's employment, and this process continued during the inter-war years, having been accelerated by the First World War itself. During the war, women had entered traditionally male jobs, and

> while the war continued, people talked about 'readjustment' not unemployment (Rowbotham, 1973, p.117).

However, at the end of the war many women lost their jobs and became unemployed (Braybon, 1981). One contemporary source reported that in 1920 proportionately more women then men were unemployed, although unemployed women received very little public attention or sympathy (Anthony, 1932, Chapter 7).

> Women's position in industry by the early 1920s was possibly worse than it had been before the war. The good-humoured contempt which had characterised much of the criticism of women until 1914 was replaced by outright hostility and a determination to keep them out of men's jobs at all costs (Braybon, 1981, p.208).

The Depression of the 1920s and 1930s meant that

> jobs became not duties which war-time propaganda taught girls it was patriotic to perform, but privileges to be reserved for potential breadwinners and fathers of families. Women were commanded to go back to the home (Holtby, 1934, p.112)

and as Depression deepened

> women were the obvious scapegoats. There was a widespread belief that the employment of women had actually caused unemployment (Rowbotham, 1973, p.129).

I am not suggesting that there was no paid work available for women.

There was a rapid expansion in the service sector and this created a number of jobs for women. However, most of these were filled by young, single women, who were the cheapest employees.[4] Restrictions on married women's work were easy to implement and, for example, a marriage bar was introduced to the professions in the 1920s, and oral history provides illustrations of working-class women being forced to leave their factory jobs on marriage (Taylor, 1977). By 1931, only 10.7 per cent of married women had formal empoyment (Hall, 1977) and women entered full-time housewifery on a new, mass scale. This entry to domesticity should not be seen as necessarily being a retrogressive step for women. The conditions of paid work for women had been appalling (Cadbury, 1906; Black, 1915) and the double burden of domestic and paid work had been extremely difficult for women, as I suggested in my account of the nineteenth century above. Even those women who were able to earn enough to pay someone else to help them in this battle must have felt that they were losing it when, for example, eight shillings of an eighteen-shillings weekly wage had to be paid to a childminder (Roberts, 1982, p.159). Thus

> pre-war married working-class women, in so far as they conspicuously thought about the question at all, perceived their emancipation as a movement away from outside paid employment and towards domesticity (Roberts, 1982, p.148).

The third change in household composition at this time was a decline in family size. While birth control had first been in evidence among the affluent middle class in the mid-nineteenth century, it was not until the inter-war years that it was adopted by the working class. Over 70 per cent of couples who married in the 1870s and who survived until the woman was past child-bearing age produced four or more children, but over 70 per

cent of those marrying in the 1920s produced less than four (Hair, 1982, p.42). While average family size in 1871 was 5.8, it fell to 2.2 in the 1930s (Burnett, 1978, p.245).

Together, these three changes in household composition produced a smaller family unit which was typically serviced domestically by a full-time housewife. I now want to consider the domestic work which was performed by this housewife.

(c) The housewife's work

During the inter-war years, many changes took place in both the routine of housework and the methods by which it was carried out. The new domestic routines were derived from Christine Frederick's Scientific Management in the Home, which was published in England in 1920 and gave detailed advice about rationalising the layout of kitchens by, for example, fitting working surfaces of a standard height. This had been directly influenced by Taylor's experiments with scientific management methods in the factory, and the discovery that improvements in production could result from time-and-motion studies and mechanisation. These discoveries led to the 'organised work process kitchen ... known as the stream-line kitchen' (Giedion, 1948, p.613), which became mass-produced from 1930 onwards. This was based on identifying the different processes involved in each domestic chore, timing them, and then finding a way to reduce the intervals between them. In the Ladies Home Journal, for example, food preparation was broken down into the stages of collect-prepare-cook-serve, clearing away was divided into remove-scrape-wash-lay-away; and ways of streamlining the process were devised (Giedion, 1948; Hartmann, 1974,

p.193). The bureaucracy associated with housewifery increased as it became a more timetabled event. Women were encouraged to make lists, charts and seasonal timetables to enable the task of household management to be completed successfully. Clearly, the full implementation of such a style of housewifery would have been too stylised for many women to implement. However, it became a widely-publicised ideal by which women adjusted their own aspirations of housewifery. This process was aided by the launching of a mass market of women's magazines. For the first time, magazines dealing with domestic matters aimed to reach both middle an wo king-class women (Fergusson, 1983, p.17).

Such methods of household efficiency were, of course, dependent on the introduction of domestic technology. The content of domestic work changed rapidly as a result of the development of three types of conveniences: services, such as gas, water and electricity; consumer durables, such as irons, vacuums and refrigerators; and semi or non-durables, such as canned food and ready-made clothing (Hartmann, 1974, Chapter 3). The example of electricity demonstrates the trends, and was the most rapidly-changing service. In 1910, less than 2 per cent of househould were connected to electricity, but by 1939 this figure had increased to 75 per cent. Its price fell, and hire-purchase facilities were extended to those who wanted to buy the new electrically-driven appliances. By 1938, one estimate suggests that two-thirds of mass-produced goods were sold by hire purchase (all from Forty, 1975, pp.41-2). There were dramatic increases in consumer durables too. Irons were the most-bought new appliances, and by 1939 80 per cent of all wired homes had an electric iron. Vacuum cleaners were the second highest-selling device, and 30 per cent of all homes had a

vacuum cleaner by 1939 (Forty, 1975, p.59). Semi and non-durables were also popular. A new vocabulary of trade names evolved, as illustrated by this description:

> Ewbank'd inside and Atco'd out, the English suburban residence and the garden which is an integral part of it stand trim and lovingly cared for in the mild sunshine. Everything is in its place. The abruptness, the barbarities of the world are far away (Richards, 1973, p.13).

These new household uses of technology were advertised in the expanding mass media. Advertising as a means of selling not only a product but a way of life was becoming far more widespread than ever before, and the housewife became the target of advertisers' attention. New homes, for example, were promoted as including "labour-saving" kitchens and bathrooms (Davis, 1981, p.79) and clearly the person whose labour would be saved was the housewife. Advertisers in general made much of the labour-saving qualities of domestic technology. For example, one style of vacuum cleaner was brand-named 'Daisy' and sold as a substitute for servant labour (Forty, 1975, plate 97). The expansion in advertising domestic goods and styles was part of the general economic need to develop a consumer market, and this was one in which women were identified as having a particular role to play as the managers of household consumption (Gittins, 1982, p.42; Hall, 1977, p.71).

Although domestic technology was marketed on the grounds of its efficiency, it should not be assumed that women's time was necessarily saved by it, and it would be more accurate to emphasise changes in the qualitative nature of housework (See Vanek, 1973; Hartmann, 1975). Much of the drudgery was removed by new technology, with one example being the

gradual replacement of coal fires by electric, reducing the dirty and tiring work of coal-carrying. However, new jobs were found so that, for example, an electric or gas iron might be used to iron garments which had previously been left crumpled. The same jobs could be done more often, and new ones could be invented. More recently, it has been noted that:

> each of them - the dishwasher, the roll warmer, the freezer, the blender - is the material embodiment of a task, a silent imperative to work (Ehrenreich and English, 1979, p.161).

Related to this was the general rise in expectations of domestic work as the housewife's equipment became more sophisticated. For example, the introduction of a regulo gas thermostat in 1922

> had an important effect on the standards of cooking expected of the housewife: without it she had every excuse for singed joints and burnt cakes but with it, any failure to produce perfectly cooked food was a reflection of her abilities (Forty, 1975, p.55).

New technology did not change the housewife's general commitment to performing domestic labour for her family. Indeed, the more efficient methods of housework simply helped her to provide a fuller service: just as Taylorism in the factories improved the service to customers, so improved routines and mechanisation in the home were meant to benefit husbands and children.

One aspect of this general process of improving the standards of domestic work was the changed focus on child care. A decline in family size did not bring a parallel decline in maternal duty, and one of the key characteristics of the new, smaller family unit was that it became child-centred. Quantity in numbers of children was sacrificed in order to secure a certain quality of childhood, and the task of doing this fell to

housewives (Hall, 1977). The newly-perceived need to create a proper environment for healthy childhood was one of the main influences on the development of domestic efficiency:

> all the things the domestic scientists concerned themselves with - the correct ways of cleaning, sorting, scheduling - were only the stage setting, and not the central drama. Now we turn to the human actor for whom the stage was set. And in the twentieth century that is ... the Child (Ehrenreich and English, 1979, p.165).

The new emphasis on the child was in turn influenced by discoveries about maternal and infant mortality and morbidity:

> the development of psychological theories related to the importance of childhood, of medical opinion emphasising the need for better standards of nutrition, health and hygiene during childhood all contributed to an increasingly elaborate ideology of childhood. Central to this ideology was the concept of a happy, clean home environment (Gittins, 1982, p.182).

Concern about the health of children and mothers had been increased by the low physical standards of recruits to the First World War, and the realisation that the empire's safety might lie in the hands of an army which was too weak and sickly for the purpose. In the early years of the century, a series of government reports and social enquiries were published which all pointed to the very low standards of hygiene in many working-class homes and, when a Ministry of Health was created in 1919, one of its six departments was that of maternal and child welfare. Policy makers were sure that the root of infant mortality lay in maternal ignorance and so they launched a campaign of education (Lewis, 1980). Motherhood was presented as an occupation which had to be taught, and this was carried out at expanded mother-and-baby clinics; in women's own homes by health visitors and midwives; or in the hospital which women were urged

to see as the appropriate place to give birth.

Thus the housewife's work was changing during the inter-war years, as the methods and tools of housework changed, and as more attention was paid to child care. Again, I should stress that the argument I have developed above applies only to that section of society which could afford to implement such changes. For a significant minority of the population, the inter-war years were ones of continued extreme poverty and deprivation as male unemployment soared. This was likely to affect domesticity in two main ways (see Chapter 1 above). Firstly, women had to substitute their own labour as housewives for services or goods which could be bought on the market. For example, they made clothes and patched them laboriously and painstakingly. Secondly, the Depression increased the focus on domesticity and the trend to a family-centred life-style since it increased the need for the home to be a place of retreat from the harshness of a world which could not provide work for every male breadwinner. In this context, the loss of wages did not mean that the male worker lost his status in the home: women still gave their husbands more food than other family members, and increased the emotional support they provided for them (The Pilgrim Trust, 1983; see also Milkman, 1977, for an account of this process in North America).

(d) Influences on domesticity

In the previous two sections I have presented a brief account of the main changes in working-class domesticity during the inter-war years. I now want to suggest the most significant influences on these changes.

The changes I have already described represent an elaboration of the

housewife role and housework itself in the context of a general enhancement of a home-centred life-style. This new focus on domesticity can, I argue below, be seen as the result of pressure from government and political organisations as well as of a change in individual ambitions for family life.

Government's encouragement of the style of domesticity which I have already outlined can be illustrated by reference to policies in two areas: firstly, women's rights; and secondly, housing provision. With the first extension of the franchise to women in 1918, the government embarked on a series of Acts which increased women's legal rights, such as the Matrimonial Causes Act 1923, Guardianship of Infants Act 1925; Summary Jurisdiction (Separation and Maintenance) Act 1925; and the Widows and Orphans and Old Age Pension Act 1925. However, women's rights were only improved in the context of their marital and family roles, rather than, for example, in the context of their roles as paid employees. No legislation aimed at establishing women's independence was passed, and government policies in general both assumed and strengthened a sexual division of labour based on breadwinning men and dependent women (Lewis, 1983). Government also went some way towards improving the rights of pregnant women and the mothers of young children by increasing the numbers of child-health clinics and the resources available for health education (Lewis, 1980). Again, this action confirmed and elaborated the ideology of women as mothers, and thus contributed to the general development of an ideology of domesticity.

Government also encouraged a certain style of domesticity by its housing policies. Again, there were fears of social unrest as working men

with fighting experience returned from war, expecting the 'homes for heroes' which they had been promised by election campaigns, and reluctant to accept the same squalor and injustice they had endured before the war (Gilbert, 1970, p.142). It was hoped that the threat could be defused by a massive house-building campaign. Between the wars, 1,112,000 new homes were built by local authorities and, by maintaining low interest rates and encouraging building society finance, government enabled the construction of 2,886,000 new homes for private ownership (Burnett, 1978, 246). Government ensured that the standards of the new public housing were higher than ever before. The Tudor Walters Committee reported in 1918, making recommendations which

> were revolutionary, constituting a major innovation in social policy and in the future of working class life (Burnett, 1978, p.246).

For example, it recommended more space per house: a wider space between houses to create more light; and side access to houses so as to reduce the numbers of back streets and alleyways. Much of the new state building copied the suburban style adopted by middle-class private housing, and the homogenisation of housing standards between the private and public sectors, and thus between the middle and working classes, was one of the most important aspects of the domestic changes of the period. Thus government took action which created the material conditions for the new domesticity and, by strengthening women's legal rights as wives and mothers, contributed to the development of a particular domestic ideology.

The elaboration of the housewife role was also influenced by pressure from women's political organisations, and housewives became the focus for political attention for the first time. Groups such as the National

Birthday Trust were formed, and existing groups such as the Women's Co-operative Guild turned their attention to mothers' rights. In 1915, the Guild published the results of an enquiry it had conducted into the working-class experience of child bearing and rearing. This proposed a national scheme to improve the conditions it had identified as unacceptably low, and its demands for maternity services of all sorts formed the basis of campaigns throughout the inter-war years (Llewellyn Davies, 1978, pp.207-12).

There was a marked increase in the membership of those organisations which took up the housewife's case in the public sphere at this time, and other examples of these are the Women's Guild, the Townswomen's Guild, the Mothers' Union, the Women's Institute and the International Co-operative Women's Guild. Several of these, such as the Townswomen's Guild, had been formed in response to women's enfranchisement, with a view to educating women to use their votes in an informed way. Thus their concentration on the rights of the housewife can be seen as a development with political significance, based on the premise that

> a policy, co-ordinated and based on a definite conception of the right position of the home-maker in the social organisation of an industrial community, would prove of immense value to industry, the home, and society of the future (Anthony, 1932, p.166).

The International Co-operative Women's Guild also took up this theme of the political power of housewives in its explanation of the meaning of international co-operation for women:

> one often hears it said if only things were controlled by mothers a new world would be built. Well, here the mothers have control, here they can build a new world without giving up any of their home duties (International Women's Co-operative Guild, 1934, p.5).

Thus women's organisations as well as government contributed to the formation of an ideology of domesticity in which the home and, specifically, the housewife and her work were seen as being of great social and political importance.

Although I have cited these political influences on the new style of domesticity, I do not want to suggest that this was imposed on an unwilling population. The people too sought stability, and saw the family as a means of attaining it. I have already argued that many women welcomed the chance to be housewives rather than suffer the exploitation of paid employment, and men of course would have reaped the benefits of new domestic comforts. I should also point out that the disruption of world war had led to a strong wish to re-establish a new and better family life, just as was to happen again in the aftermath of the Second World War (see chapters 3 and 4). The mass of the population was as keen as was government to establish stable family life: to turn inwards and protect their own, providing them with a higher standard of living than ever before. Social stability was particularly courted by those who were uprooted from their former, sub-standard homes, and relocated in the suburbs:

> the families that initially settled in the new estates were pioneers, building a new frontier ... therefore, they needed all the security they could obtain ... stability and a sense of continuity ... came from their home itself (Oliver, 1981, p.80).

As the 1930s progressed, of course, threats of another major war began and, again, turning to the family was one way to cope with the fear brought by such a threat.

The new domesticity did not only consist of a general focus on family

and home. It also, as I made clear above, meant new housewifery practices. These were the result of varied influences which I have already mentioned. For example, experiments in factory production in America affected notions of domestic efficiency; and technological advance enabled new domestic tasks to be carried out by the housewife. Other discoveries invested housework itself with a new meaning as, for example, when links between disease and diet were conclusively established for the first time. Then, cleaning was no longer an activity which was part of the general ordering of the home and caring for material possessions in the pursuit of aesthetic pleasure and social status: it became an attempt to banish disease from the home. Theories of contagion and bacteriology meant that sanitation and public health were highlighted. Keeping the home clean was an important chore and

> in the face of this ubiquitous bacterial menace, who was to be responsible for the public health? The answer ... was the housewife (Ehrenreich and English, 1979, pp.142-3).

Taken together, these new domestic practices constituted a considerable enhancement of the domestic role and this in turn can be linked to the decline in married women's employment. Thus, as

> women began to spend more of their time in the home ... they also began to attach greater importance and meaning to the home, and these meanings eventually developed into a complex system of values, norms and beliefs glorifying, or at least trying to glorify, their new situation of domesticity (Gittins, 1977, p.93).

This raises the final point which I want to make here: that these varied influences on domesticity were together forming a modified ideology of domesticity. In this, achievement for women was increasingly measured by

their performance in the domestic sphere and, more specifically, by their efficiency in housework practices and by the health of their children. There were, as I have already suggested, new means by which to develop ideology in the inter-war years. The increased number of women's organisations, for example, played a significant educative role and, more importantly, the growth in advertising created a new media for the transmission of ideals about what was considered desirable for the home. The general mass media too was developing: the BBC was founded in 1922 and by 1939, 75 per cent of all families had a radio (Gittins, 1982, p.42); there was almost universal literacy and a great increase in magazine and newspaper readership. Thus, during the inter-war years not only did ideas about domesticity change, but the means by which these could be communicated became more efficient, reaching a mass audience for the first time.

(e) Conclusions/Summary

In this part of the chapter I have considered the development of the social history of domesticity during the inter-war period. I have argued that in he years after the First World War a new style of domesticity was apparent which focused on the increasing importance of the home and family. Housing availability, amenities and standards all rose dramatically and became available to a far wider section of the population. The trend was typified by those living in newly-built homes, where both design and life-style enabled the implementation of a new form of domestic economy, based on notions of time and motion efficiency which had been adapted from those in factory organisation. Family size fell,

and home life became focused on children. This focus was reflected and reinforced by the expansion of the child and mother welfare services, and by a whole programme of maternal education which was aimed at improving the health of the nation's children. There was a marked homogenisation of domestic experiences between women from different classes, and the upper working class and middle class in particular merged as their housing standards improved and the same style of domesticity was adopted by each. The spread of services such as electricity led to far-reaching changes in work inside the home, and much of the hardest physical drudgery was reduced, while new jobs were created. At the same time, servant numbers dropped and houses were serviced almost exclusively by the wives of the men who owned them. The full-time housewife was no longer a status symbol of a small band of elite men, but the 'typical' married woman, whose labour market opportunities were further restricted during the recession, after a severe curtailment at the end of the First World War. The ideal and practice of domesticity which I described above was a new phenomenon in the inter-war years, but one which had not yet spread to every social class. A significant section of the working class still laboured under conditions of poverty in which full-time housewives were still an unattainable luxury.

I have argued that influences on change in the form and ideology of domesticity are diverse. The influence of religion has declined dramatically and that of science has increased, in a generally rationalised world. Medical, scientific and psychological discoveries have moulded the goals of domesticity, but structural developments such as the decline in married women's employment, the improvements in the housing

stock and the expansion in the consumer industry have played a part too. The precise form domestic labour takes at any given time results from a combination of these influences working in a changing process of action and reaction.

NOTES TO CHAPTER NINE

1. In 1801 there were 100,000 servants; in 1851, 1,300,000; and in 1881, 2,000,000 (Branca, 1975, p.25). Most of these were single young women, and by 1851 one in three women aged 15-20 was a domestic servant (Best, 1979, p.123).

2. This is a complex subject and it is clear that some women were defined as ill as soon as they stepped outside the narrow social roles which were defined for them (Duffin, 1978). It is also true that the high levels of female morbidity neatly coincided with doctors' needs to find new fee-payers (ibid). I am thinking here, though, of women whose only symptom of illness was a lethargy which prevented them from being efficient housewives.

3. There were, of course, other arguments in favour of protective legislation. For example, it was suggested that reduced hours would improve worker efficiency as women would not only be less tired themselves, but would also have more time to look after their husbands. Many feminists too argued in favour of the legislation, seeing it as a means by which women workers would be afforded a new legal recognition and protection (Webb, 1901). It should also be pointed out that the passage of legislation was eased by the lack of opposition from working-class men. This may have resulted from their hope that employers would no longer depress wage levels by paying reduced rates to women, and that their own wives would give them greater attention in the home once released from some of the burden of paid labour (Humphries, 1981).

4. The female wage rate was still half that of the male, and even by 1938 the average wages of women in industrial occupations were 32/6d a week, compared with a male rate of 69/- (Brittain, 1953, p.136).

CONCLUSIONS

(a) Introduction

In these conclusions I situate the results and arguments which have been presented by the thesis in the wider context of sociological debate. Very often, conclusions simply summarise systematically what has gone before, but this approach is not followed here because I have already presented summaries and conclusions at the end of each chapter, and see no reason for potentially tedious repetition. Instead, I return to the research topic which I identified at the outset - women's unemployment - and discuss the general insights about it which have been developed in the thesis.

During the period of writing this thesis, three useful pieces of work on the sociology of women's unemployment have very conveniently been published (Coyle, 1984; Marshall, 1984; Martin and Roberts, 1984). In order to relate my own work to current sociological debate, I discuss it below in the context of the diverse approaches used by these writers. The fact that the timing of these three publications has coincided with the end of my period of research highlights both the considerable sociological interest in and diversity of approaches towards the issues I have explored, and makes clear their relevance to an understanding of contemporary society.

(b) Discussion

The distinctive element of this thesis may been seen in its methodology, which was described in detail in chapters 1 and 2. This approach can be characterised as the blending of apparent opposites. For example, unemployment was investigated by interviewing women who were employed;

paid work was explored by finding out about unpaid work; and the present was analysed by studying the past. I use these seeming paradoxes to structure the following discussion of the thesis.

The reasons for interviewing employed women in a study of unemployment were discussed in Chapter 2. The benefits of such a strategy were shown in chapters 5, 6 and 7, where it became clear that the ambiguities of women's experiences of employment and unemployment may be their most distinctive feature, and that it is at the boundaries of traditional categories of employment that much of women's work takes place.

This approach is comparable to that of Coyle, who interviewed women of diverse employment status, each of whom had been made redundant some months earlier. One of the study's major findings is that women who are made redundant tend to take other jobs rather than be without paid employment, and that in times of recession these other jobs are likely to have worse conditions and lower rewards than the ones which have been lost. This enables the prediction that, as recession deepens and jobs decrease in reward, women, rather than men, may increasingly take what jobs are available. Such interesting insights are not afforded by research concentrating on women without paid employment. Martin and Roberts only interviewed women who were not in a paid job in their survey about women's unemployment. The major conclusion of the part of their work which deals with women's unemployment (Martin and Roberts, 1984, chapter 7) is to present a new categorisation of non-working women (*ibid*, p.82). Five categories are suggested, referred to as the 'unemployed-permanently economically inactive continuum' (*ibid*). This categorisation is developed as a descriptive rather than an explanatory

device, and in suggesting its limitations below, I do not wish to detract from the obvious importance of describing the experiences and employment behaviour of women who cannot find paid work. Indeed, Martin and Roberts' work makes a substantial contribution to our awareness of women's unemployment, amassing a completely new data set about women's unemployment, which brings visibility to areas of women's lives which have previously been obscured (see chapter 1 above). However, the description is perhaps scanty in that it avoids mention of women who are unemployed in the sense that they are unable to find the paid work they want. The fieldwork described in this thesis (and, indeed, that carried out by Coyle) showed that women, such as Mrs Kemp, often take a part-time job when they want a full-time one, rather than be faced with the prospect of full-time unemployment. The notion of partial unemployment is particularly relevant to women, and can be revealed by interviewing women who are in work, as well as those without a paid job.

A second paradox which is developed in the thesis is that understanding paid work can be approached by an analysis of unpaid work. As was demonstrated empirically in chapters 5, 6 and 7, women's paid work is closely related to their unpaid work. For example, whether or not women see themselves as being available for paid work depends on the extent of the domestic work they undertake and this, in turn, is individually negotiated. Differences in domestic attitudes and practices were revealed by chapters 6 and 7 to be perhaps the single most important influence on the patterns and experiences of women's paid work. Having highlighted this importance, chapter 7 of the thesis used fieldwork material to identify different types of attitudes to domestic labour, and

to suggest the main influences on each of these.

By investigating domestic labour empirically, the thesis has highlighted the importance of the life-cycle in determining women's employment behaviour. In chapters 6 and 7, links were made between the changing structure of domestic work over the life-cycle and women's altered participation in the paid labour market. This life-cycle perspective was used in chapter 6 both to develop the argument that women's employment experiences may be best understood in the context of their earlier working lives, and to suggest the notion of employment patterning as a heuristic device.

Coyle also recognises the relevance of women's domestic work to their experiences in the paid labour force. Although her approach is thus broadly similar to that used above, she does not link the life-cycle perspective to her consideration of the domestic, and this limits her ability to unravel what she identifies as being the 'mesh of social relations, production, and the family and gender' (p.20) in which women's response to redundancy has to be understood.

Martin and Roberts do not specifically address the issue of women's domestic labour, but they do so implicitly by paying attention to the importance of the life-cycle in affecting women's participation in paid employment. Their study makes use of extensive quantitative analysis to chart women's employment according to 'a life-time perspective' (p.iii), and this makes clear that understanding the changing domestic demands of the life-cycle is an important aspect of developing a more detailed account of women's employment and unemployment.

A third apparent contradiction in this thesis was that the past was

used in order to study the present. This was true both for the women's own past and for that of society as a whole. First, in chapters 3, 4, 6 and 7 an historical dimension in the sense of the individual life-cycle was developed. It was shown in chapters 3 and 4 that an awareness of the general social history through which women had lived enabled the identification of certain important influences on their employment experiences. As I pointed out above, Coyle and Martin and Roberts have also highlighted the importance of the life-cycle perspective, but they do not develop an analysis of the historical processes by which an individual life is influenced.

A second dimension of the past was explored in chapters 8 and 9, which discussed the historical development of domestic labour, drawing on a wide range of published material. This investigation was prompted by the empirical evidence of links between domestic labour and paid employment which was presented in chapters 2, 5, 6 and 7. In chapters 8 and 9 the concept of domestic labour was deconstructed, and examined in some detail so that the complexities and details of its development could contribute to understanding about its contemporary form. Neither Coyle nor Martin and Roberts adopt this approach, and their work is located in an empirical and contemporary context. Marshall, however, also makes the point that insights about the present may be afforded by investigations into the past. Specifically, he suggests that studying the social construction of the concept of citizenship would suggest ways in which women's 'right' to work is structured by a complex variety of social influences, whose composition changes over time. Marshall's article is clearly too short to allow him to develop a sense of the history of women's right to work, and

he puts the argument forward as a guide for future resarch into women's unemployment, having identified what he terms as the current 'resounding silence' (p.250) on the issue.

Thus this thesis has approached the study of women's unemployment through apparent paradoxes, some of which are shared by others who are currently researching into women's unemployment, while others stand apart. This distinctive methodological style is discussed in some detail in chapter 2, where the methodological approaches of other writers are reviewed. Indeed, the detailed presentation of methodological issues is itself a distinctive feature of the thesis, and chapters 1, 2 and 5 and the appendix to chapter 2 all deal with them. There are two aspects to this presentation. Firstly, in chapters 1 and 2, published studies of unemployment and general methodologial stances are discussed, and the chosen method described and situated in its broader intellectual context. Secondly, in chapters 2 and 5 and the appendix to chapter 2, there is a discussion of the specific methodological difficulties that are associated with investigating female experiences, from the perspective of an academic tradition which has been, it is suggested, mainly derived from male experience and behaviour. By contrast, Coyle gives little attention to methodology, simply stating that she held taped conversations with fifty-nine women and fourteen men (p.5). She does not discuss why she chose certain women for interviews, and she does not reproduce her interview schedule. Martin and Roberts occupy the other end of the spectrum, in the sense that their account of methodology is so detailed that it is presented as a separately bound report. However, this has the effect of excluding discussion of method from the main text and it is only

briefly mentioned, in a short description of sampling techniques, pilot surveys, and response rates (pp.4-5).

This thesis has been influenced by qualitative rather than quantitative research perspectives. This is not to say that it has been exclusively conducted on the small scale since, although the fieldwork reported in chapters 5, 6 and 7 relates only to a small group, the more general bibliographic work has considered material relating to much larger populations. In essence, however, the empirical approach has been qualitative, exploring depth rather than breadth, and meaning rather than description. Although Marshall's article is a review of published material and not the report of his own empirical work, he also reflects the stance that qualitative understanding about how and why certain practices have developed may be as interesting as charting the exact extent of the practices themselves. Coyle's study followed a qualitative design, discussing a wide range of issues in unstructured conversations with a limited number of women. Her book makes extensive use of case-study material, as do chapters 5, 6 and 7 above. Martin and Roberts adopted a contrasting quantitative research strategy, conducting 5,588 interviews based on a structured questionnaire. They attempted to blend qualitative and quantitative techniques by carrying out a series of mainly qualitative pilot interviews, so as to structure the main questionnaire in the most appropriate form (p.4). In the main text, however, they do not use the qualitative style of presenting case-studies, and their published work is predominantly a quantitative study, despite certain qualitative principles having been employed in the planning stages.

The three published accounts of women's unemployment used different

methodological styles, then, and the thesis adds a fourth. It remains to briefly consider the results which were obtained by these diverse methods. In the thesis, a number of general findings were presented. First, it was shown that the sociological terminology of unemployment is ill-suited to describe or to explain women's labour market behaviour and experience. Second, it was seen that an important aspect of developing a more appropriate approach is through the analysis of domestic labour, since domestic labour plays an influential part in structuring women's participation in and responses to the paid labour market. Third, it was demonstrated that domestic labour has two aspects: one of meanings and one of practices, and that these vary between different women and over time, for a number of reasons. The reasons themselves were explored by empirical research in the field as well as by drawing on a wide range of published material.

Marshall also makes the first of these points, and indeed this forms the focus of his paper, which is not long enough to develop other aspects. Martin and Roberts also make the first of these points, although they are concerned with the problems associated with fitting women into official employment categories, rather than with the larger conceptual difficulties of the meaning of work, which were addressed above. Although they do not specifically make the second of these three points, it is suggested by their demonstration of close links between domestic and paid work. Their categorisation of five types of non-working women is itself in some senses an exploration of different attitudes to the domestic, although it is not explicitly presented as such. The third finding in the thesis is not examined in any depth by Martin and Roberts, although their reference to

the life-time perspective highlights the changing patterns of domestic work during individual lives. In addition to findings in these three areas, Martin and Roberts present a number of detailed findings about the statistical incidence of women's unemployment (chapter 7). Having demonstrated the representativeness of their sample, their concentration on describing the women in it is focused on the assertion that this will also hold for much larger numbers on the national scale. Coyle's study, too, demonstrates the three general findings highlighted by this thesis, although she does not develop them in the same detail. She goes beyond them in her specific description of the behaviour of women from two chosen factories, and uses empirical evidence to demonstrate women's firm allegiance to the labour market.

In general, then, the findings of these three recently-published accounts of women's unemployment have much in common with those demonstrated by this thesis. Although quite distinct research methodologies were adopted, and different areas of interest explored in depth by each author, broadly similar general conclusions were drawn. This would seem to confirm the arguments, expressed in chapters 2 and 5 above, about the validity of small-scale research.

Much of this thesis has been concerned with re-assessing the terminology of work. This was prompted by amassing empirical evidence which supported the argument, developed at a theoretical level in chapter 1, that the sociology of unemployment has not as yet developed a vocabulary which is suited to investigating women's lives. The results of this process have revealed one further, and perhaps also paradoxical, finding: that, by exploring women's work, more may be revealed about men's

work too. It has been demonstrated that women's work is not primarily made up of full-time, continuous paid employment and it should, in conclusion, be pointed out that this is by no means the working experience of all men either. As recession continues, and the numbers of men who are registered as unemployed rise, it is clear that narrow definitions of work will become inappropriate to an increasing proportion of the male labour force. Thus it may be that the sociological terminology of work is not simply inapplicable in the case of women, but that it is more generally inappropriate for the 1980s. Perhaps the time has come to break away from a language of work which was mainly developed by male sociologists at a time of full employment, and to concentrate instead on producing a revised vocabulary which can describe and explain the changes which have taken place in the British labour market during the twentieth century. This is a priority if sociologists are to legitimately claim to be developing an analytical framework for the clearer understanding of contemporary society. By highlighting the importance of domestic work, and by presenting some preliminary stages in a more detailed analysis of it and by showing its relation to paid work, this thesis has made some contribution to the task of reconstituting the vocabulary and analysis of work, so that women's experiences of it may be better understood.

APPENDIX A

Table 1: Male unemployment rate by age, Great Britain, 1981

Age	Unemployment rate/ 100 economically active
16-19	23.8
20-24	15.5
25-34	9.3
35-49	6.3
50-59	7.3
60-64	11.0
65 +	3.2

Source: Labour Force Survey, 1982, p.18, Table 4.15.

Table 2: Unemployment rate by region, United Kingdom, 1981

Region	Unemployment rate/ 100 economically active
North	12.2
Yorkshire and Humberside	9.8
North West	11.8
East Midlands	8.7
West Midlands	12.7
Greater London	7.6
Rest of South East	6.6

Source: Labour Force Survey, 1982, p.19, Table 4.16

Table 3: Male unemployment by ethnic origin, Great Britain, 1981

Ethnic origin	Unemployment rate/ 100 economically active
White	9.7
West Indian or Guyanese	20.6
Indian	15.4
Pakistani or Bangladeshi	20.4

Source: Labour Force Survey, 1982, p.21, Table 4.22.

APPENDIX B

Schedule for Interviews with Employers

1. Just to bring me up to date, have there been any major changes in this company since Professor Pahl was here just over a year ago?
   ... any major lay-offs, or expansion?

2. What is your policy generally in terms of women employees, compared to the men? Do you treat them differently at all?
   ... do you have a different shift system? ... flexi-time? ... part-time? ... would you be more cautious about training them because they might leave to have children?

3. Do you think that middle-aged (say between 45 and 55) women workers have got any particularly attractive qualities as workers which might make you recruit them before younger women? Or do you think there's anything particularly unattractive about having them?
   ... how do you recruit new workers when you have to? ... do you have any YOP or WEEP schemes going? ... do you find women with children have any special problems in coming to work?

4. Some people will say that women go out to work for pin-money, so that they can buy luxuries for the house and for their families. Do you think that's true of the women who work here? Do you think it's true generally?
   ... have you got many single parents here? ... or divorced women?

5. Sometimes academics call women a reserve army of labour - they say they go into work when there's a boom, and then leave it quickly when there's a recession. Do you think that's been true here, going back over the years? Do you think it will be true over the next few years?

6. If you did have to cut back, is there anything that would make women be the first to be laid off here? Do you think that women might be protected at all from redundancy?
   ... gender segregation? ... out-work? ... might you increase out-work? ... would women cut hours?

7. Do you have a trade union here? Are the women active in the union? Do you think that they are less active than male workers? What do you think the union here would feel about female unemployment and redundancies?
   ... women shop-stewards? ... staff associations?

8. People say that there is a lot of unregistered unemployment among women - a lot of women looking for work who aren't registered at the Job Centre. Do you think that's true on the Island?
   ... responses to Job Centre adverts? ... recruitment? ... waiting list?

9. If women are made redundant, do you think it would affect them differently from the way it affects men? In what ways do you think?
   ... more active in the social club? ... working to get out of the house? ... men being bread-winners?

10. Has this company had to make any women redundant over the last year?
    ... can I get in contact with these women?

APPENDIX C

Schedule for Interview 1

I'd just like to get a clear idea of what jobs you've had - right from when you left school.
What year was it when you left school, and how old were you?
And what was your first job? ... how long did you do that? ... Then what did you do?

APPENDIX D

Schedule for Interview 2

1. Parental Background
Last time we met, you gave me an outline of the jobs you've had. I wonder if you could tell me the same things now, about your mother. Can you start off with when she left school, do you know what year that was? Do you know how old she was then? And what was her first job? Did she do any jobs at home, like sewing?

And what about your father, can you tell me the same things about him?

Thinking about your mother's life and your life, which would you say has been easier? Why?

2. Being a Daughter
Are your parents still alive? How old were you when they died? And how old were they?

Where do they live now? How often do you see them? Are you in touch by phone or letter at all? When you do see them, is it usually a social call, or are you going to do specific jobs for them? What sort of jobs do you do?

Do you wish things between you and your parents were different in any way?

Have your parents given you much practical help in your life? For example, did they have you to live with them when you first got married?

Say you had to mark yourself out of 10 as a daughter, how many would you give yourself? Why?

If your father or mother was left on their own, and began to find it difficult to cope alone, what would you do about it?

Are there any other elderly relatives or friends whom you help look after? What do you do for them?

3. Being a Housewife
How many people live here apart from you, and what relation are they to you?

I want to get an idea of who does what in this house. I'll go through a list of jobs which need doing, and I'd like you to say who usually does them: makes breakfast, cooks main meal, does main shopping, checks what needs buying, washes clothes, washes sheets and towels, does the ironing, washes the kitchen floor, hoovers, tidies up every couple of days, goes in to pay the bills, feeds the pets. So who would you say does most of the housework in this house? Do you think that's fair? Why?

Do you have a routine for doing your housework - either a daily or a weekly one? Can you give me an idea of what the routine is?

Do you have standards for housework that you try to keep up to? How do you feel if you fall behind with them? Have you always had the same sort of standards? What do you think made you set those standards in the first place?

What do you like best about being a housewife, and what do you like the least?

Would you say the housework is different now from when you were first married? In what ways?

Marking yourself out of 10 as a housewife, how many would you give yourself? Why?

If you increased the number of hours you work outside the house now, would you do less housework? And what about if you did fewer hours outside the house, would you do more housework? Would it be the same jobs more often, or would you do extra jobs that you can't get done at all now?

Has there ever been a time when you lived alone? How did you deal with the housework then?

4. Being a Paid Worker

Can I just check from the list I got from you last time, how many jobs you've done altogether. I think it's x. Can I just check? Are there any more to be added to it? What about things like home-work or being an Avon lady, or very part-time jobs?

Which job did you enjoy the most? Why?

And which did you like the least? Why?

Talking about your current job, what do you like least and best about that?

What would your ideal job at the moment be? Is there any job that you would always like to have done, but never did do?

If I read out a list, can you say which of these things would be important to you now if you were to be looking for another job at the moment - just say either important or not important: type of work, rate of pay, where the job is, conditions, hours, method of supervision, social club, promotion prospects, job security, pension scheme, trade union, nice colleagues. Is there anything that I haven't mentioned which you would say is very important?

Marking yourself out of 10 at the job you do now, what would you give yourself? Why?

Would you say that you've changed your ideas much about work since you had your first job? In what ways?

Thinking about your first ever job, and the one you've got now, which would you say was the better paid, and the higher grade?

What do you think you'll do in terms of paid work for the next five years? Does the thought of that please you? Would anything stop that from happening? What about if you won £50,000 on the pools, what would you do then?

When you've changed jobs in the past, and I'd like us to go through each change, what has made you change?

Some people say that women work for pin-money, has that ever been true for you? In what sense?

Would you say your wages have been used in different ways at different times in your life? Can you give me some examples?

Being a Mother

Can I just check, how many children have you got? And how old are they now? Where do they live? Are they married? Have they started a family?

What contact do you have now with each of your children? Are you happy with things the way they are between you? Do you see them changing at all over the next five years? Would you say that your children have done what you thought was best?

When you first set standards for bringing up your children, what do you think influenced you? Did you change those standards and ways of doing things as you got older?

Marking yourself out of 10 as a mother, what would you give yourself? Why?

What have you liked best about being a mother? And what have you liked least?

If you had a 16 year old daughter living at home now who wanted to leave home and get married, what would your reaction be? What about if it was a son who wanted to do that, what would you do?

In what ways do you think things are different for children leaving school from how they were for you? Do you think they've changed more for boys than they have for girls, or the other way around?

6. Being a Wife

Can I just check, are you married now? How long have you been married?

When you first got married, what did you think being a wife would be like? Did it turn out like that?

Marking yourself out of 10 as a wife, what would you give yourself? Why?

Have you always been the same sort of wife, or have you changed over the years?

Where do you think you got your ideas from about what makes a good wife?

What have you found most difficult about being a wife?

7. Being a Resident
How long have you lived in this house? Do you own it?

Can you tell me each of the places you've lived in since you left school? Why did you make the move each time? Would you have liked to have moved house more often or less often, or was this about right?

Have you ever been involved in local politics at all - campaigns over schools or roads, for example?

Is it important to you to feel that you are a good neighbour? How many would you give yourself out of 10 as a neighbour?

In an average week, how often do you see your neighbours, and what do you do in the time you spend together?

When you go shopping in the town centre, how many people do you usually see to say hello to?

When the children were young, did you see more or less of the neighbours then?

What about when you've been at work, have you seen more or less of the neighbours then?

Would you say this is a good town for getting to know people? Do you think that's a good thing?

8. Social Class
What social class would you say your parents were? What makes you say that?

What social class would you say you are now? Why? Have you changed during your married life?

Do you think social class is important in affecting people's lives? Was it for you?

If you are filling out an official form and it asks for your occupation, what do you put down? Have you ever put housewife? What about if you're working part-time? Have you ever put unemployed?

What do you put down for your husband's occupation?

APPENDIX E

Schedule for Interview 3

1. Unemployment
I'd like to find out a bit more about the time when you were out of work, when you were looking for a job. Can I just check, you were looking for work because ... How long was it until you found a job? How did you feel about being unemployed? What did you do during the day? Did it affect other members of your family at all? What sort of work were you looking for? What did you do about trying to get work? Had you been in a trade union at your previous job? (Repeat for each period out of work.)

Have you ever been wanting to change your job, but not been able to?

Some people say that the unemployment problem would be solved if all married women who work gave up their jobs. Do you agree or disagree with this?

(Where applicable.) What would you do if you were made redundant now? What do you think the chances of that happening are? How would it affect the other members of your family?

What about your husband, how do you think he would react if he was laid off? And how would that affect the family? What do you think the chances are of that happening?

Has your husband ever been out of work? When was this? How did it affect the family?

And what about your parents, were either of them out of work? What do you remember about that time?

Have any of your children been out of work? When? How long for? How did they respond to that? What did you feel about it?

Do you think that attitudes to men being out of work have changed over the years?

What about women - do you think that people think differently about women being out of work?

Do you think that women are more likely to be made unemployed than men are?

2. Leisure Time
Would you say that you ever have leisure time - free time? When? How much? What do you do with this time? Do you wish you had more free time?

Has there ever been a time in your life when you've had more free time then you've got now? Has there been a time when you've had less? What made it different?

What about your husband, has he got any leisure time? Is it more than you

or less than you? When is it? Did he used to have more than he's got now? Did he used to have less than he's got now?

3. Life Events
Can we talk a bit more about when you left school, why did you leave when you did? Looking back on it, do you think you did the right thing?

Looking back on it, why do you think you got married when you did? What did your parents think about it? Looking back, do you think you made the right decisions about getting married?

How old were you when you had your first child? Had you wanted to start a family when you did? Did having a family turn out as you'd hoped it would? Can you give me some examples? Are you glad you had a family?

Apart from leaving school, getting married, and starting a family, what other really important turning points have there been for you, when you could say, "after that everything changed"?

If you had to split your adult life into different stages, what would they be?

And which was the happiest stage in your life? Why? What made it come to an end?

And which was the unhappiest? Why? What made it come to an end?

Looking back on it now, what do you think your biggest achievements have been?

Would you say that you are happy now? Are there any changes that would make you a lot happier now? Are they likely?

Have you ever been to a doctor about your nerves, or about getting depressed? What was that about?

Have you ever been to anyone else for help like that, like the Samaritans? What was that about?

4. Retirement
What difference will reaching 60 make to you? Do you look forward to it?

What about your husband, what about when he gets to be 65? Do you look forward to that? What particularly do you look forward to?

Have you discussed it together?

5. Religion
Would you say that you have any religious beliefs that have affected the way you have lived? Can you tell me a bit more about these? Did your children go to Sunday School? Do you go to Church?

Did you have a religious childhood?

Have your views on religion changed much during your life?

6. Politics
Would you say that, since the war, there have been any changes in the law or in government policy which have affected your life? What are they, and how did they affect you?

Do you know about the Equal Pay Act? Do you think it is a good thing or a bad thing? Do you think it is right that there should be special laws for women at work? Do you think that some other ones are needed? What, for example?

If you were made Prime Minister tomorrow, what changes in the law would you try to bring about?

Were your parents politically minded?

Do you think you stand to the left or the right of the political world?

Have you ever been active in a political organisation? Do you think that you should have been more active?

What do you think is the single most important political issue today?

Has your husband been politically active?

7. Social History
People talk about the 'flapper twenties' or the 'flower power sixties', how do you sum up the 1940s and 1950s, when you were young?

Do you think it was a good time to be young? How does it compare to today? What memories of the war do you have?

8. Time Budget
I'd like to get a clearer idea of exactly what you do, on an average day. Could you tell me exactly what you did yesterday - we'll got through it hour by hour - what time did you wake up? ... What there anything unusual about yesterday?

APPENDIX F

Problems with Method

I want to discuss briefly here some of the problems which are associated with my chosen research method.

A general problem with this sort of research is that of verification: of whether the reader of my research can be satisfied that I have collected accurate information, and whether an emphathetic approach adopted by another individual would, precisely because of the interactive nature of social life, result in the collection of quite different data. My response to this sort of query can only be to stress my commitment to spending more or less unlimited amounts of time and effort with respondents, in an attempt to obtain from them as complete a story as possible. I would argue that another interviewer would probably have been told a similar story, but with different emphases. I tried at all times to be aware of the ways in which a respondent might slant the story in deference to what she imagined I wanted to hear. At the same time, I hoped that by meeting each woman three times I could build up a relationship of trust so that the chances of validity would increase at each interview. There were instances of this happening, and several women corrected details of their lives when we met for the third time. Two women, for example, adjusted dates at our final meeting to reveal pre-nuptial pregnancies!

Another problem is that of whether it might be hard in certain cases to establish the sort of rapport which is a prerequisite for the empathetic approach. At the outset I was prepared to deal with personality clashes in perhaps a cowardly way: to curtail the interview and replace the woman. In the event, the problem did not arise.

The problem of the 'proper' extent of my own involvement with women also arose. This could have become something of a social embarrassment if I was unclear about how much of myself I was prepared to reveal, and how to handle overtures of friendship. I decided that my sympathies lay with Oakley's feminist approach as described above, and resolved to answer any questions asked of me. Although I had not set out specifically to conduct a piece of feminist research, and I am still not clear what such a piece might look like, I had a personal commitment to and involvement with feminism, and felt it would therefore be inappropriate to formalise meetings with women or to draw back from relations with them.

There are many situations in fieldwork where a feminist might behave differently from those with other perspectives. For example, while textbooks warn the interviewer never to get involved and to verbally deflect personal questions, feminist principles contradict this: feminism is about breaking down barriers between women, not erecting them. Thus many feminists would find it morally and politically unacceptable to follow usual sociological instructions to retain objectivity and detachment at all times. I would argue that rejecting these is not only morally virtuous, it also produces more academically valuable data, since it is the only way in which an emphathetic understanding between respondent and interviewer can develop, and it seems to me that the data thereby become more trustworthy. While stressing the notion of a developing closeness between interviewer and subject, the dangers of thoughtlessly adopting this approach should be pointed out:

> Feminism forces us to locate our own autobiographies and our experience inside the questions we might want to ask, so that we continually do feel with the women we are studying ... that said, feminism should not be taken as a password misleading us into a false notion of 'oneness' with all women purely on the grounds of gender (McRobbie, 1982, p.52).

Thus, while I was ready to answer the many questions which respondents put to me, usually about my family and marital relationships, I was also sensitive to the differences between us, and did not assume that I could understand their lives simply because I am female. At the same time, however, I am convinced both that I could not have elicited the same detail from men, and that a man could not have established such a successful and productive relationship with my female group.

A general problem raised by interviewing women is that interviews may be situations in which women feel particularly ill at ease. It has been pointed out that men are more used to being asked questions about themselves; to having greater interest taken in them; and to taking control of conservations (Spender, 1980). Women are not used to this in daily life, and may find it harder to respond to. Several resarchers have commented on the extreme difficulty women have in believing that a researcher is interested in their 'ordinary' lives (Corbin, 1971), and specific research in the relations between doctors and their patients (Oakley, 1980; Roberts, 1981) has shown the problems which women have in controlling formal interviews. The only way to avoid concentrating on the interview method, given a rejection of quantitative techniques, would have been to rely on participant observation and to conceal the research element in the relationship. This is fraught with ethical problems and I rejected this possibility here, since the problems seemed insurmountable in the case of a feminist doing research with other women. I decided to remain with the interview method, but to try and overcome this problem by meeting women more than once so as to establish their confidence; and in explaining carefully my own interest in their lives. I found very few difficulties here, and the women I met talked freely and openly about their lives. I feel sure that this was aided by the maternal element in the relationship which most of the women had with me: they nearly all had children of roughly my age, and were eager to help me out in my studies in the way that they would hope their own children would be helped if they were in a similar situation.

APPENDIX G TO CHAPTER SIX

The Outlines of Twenty Employment Histories

Mrs Abbott

1952	Left school at 15, with no qualifications.
	Worked in a newsagents for a year, but became very bored.
1953	Worked as a general assistant in a market gardening business, but developed an allergy to the chemicals.
1954	Worked in a furniture shop but became very unhappy living at home.
1955	Began to train as a nurse, but left on marriage.
1956	Had the first of three children and became a full-time housewife.
1963	Worked as a part-time playgroup organiser.
1971	Began to train as a teacher.
1972	Left college on pregnancy.
1973	Had a miscarriage. Worked part-time in general agricultural work.
1976	Had a baby and became a full-time housewife.
1978	Worked as a part-time playgroup organiser.
1981	Began own playgroup.
	Became involved at weekends and holiday time with Intermediate Treatment unqualified social work.

Mrs Baker

1950	Left school at 16 with the School Leaving Certificate. Worked as an office clerk, and learnt how to type at evening classes.
1954	Married and continued with the office job, although a move of house meant that she had to commute.
1955	Got a job in a local shop after commuting proved to be too time-consuming.
1956	Had a child and became a full-time housewife.
1958	Worked part-time as an office clerk.
1959	Moved to London and began a series of temporary office jobs, all of which were part-time.
1963	Became a full-time housewife.
	Worked as a part-time accounting machine operator.
1965	Went to teacher-training college.
1968	Qualified, and took a full-time teaching job in a primary school.
1974	Left as a result of nervous illness and spent some months recovering.
1974	Began a series of part-time teaching jobs as a primary school supply teacher.

Mrs Clark

1950	Left school at 15 without any qualifications and got a job on the production line in a toy factory.
1951	Left as a result of redundancy and worked in an unskilled capacity in a stocking factory.
1955	Left work to have a baby and became a full-time housewife.
1957	Took a part-time job on the production line in a fence factory.
1960	Changed to full-time working at the same job.

Mrs Davis

1944 Left school at 16 with no qualifications and got a job as an apprentice shopgirl in a department store. Also did some part-time modelling work.

1946 Left to get married and have a baby, and became a full-time housewife. Worked regularly in her parents' public house and her parents-in-laws' corner shop, both of which were very close to her home.

1978 Took a part-time job in a station kiosk, in order to have some independent income.

Mrs Ellis

1948 Left school with the School Leaving Certificate and got an apprenticeship as a window dresser, but soon became bored.

1949 Began to work in the hotel which was run by her parents.

1950 Married and emigrated. Began a series of part-time, unskilled jobs, such as shop work, agricultural work and factory work. These were usually seasonal and had to be fitted in to the demands made by her three children.

1957 Returned to England and became a full-time housewife.

1960 Began seasonal agricultural work. Took in lodgers.

1964 Worked as a full-time packer in a fruit factory.

1967 Entered teacher-training college.

1970 Qualified and got a job as a full-time teacher in a primary school.

1974 Changed schools but remained employed as a primary teacher.

Mrs Field

1949 Left school and went straight into training as a nurse.

1951 Left just before qualification, in order to marry. Became a full-time housewife and had three children.

1968 Took a part-time job as a nursing auxiliary.

1975 Was offered, and accepted, a part-time job as a shop assistant in a business owned by friends. Also worked in a part-time, voluntary capacity in an Oxfam shop.

1978 Became full-time in the shop, which was sold to a larger concern, but did not enjoy the new working conditions.

1981 Returned to her former post as a nursing auxiliary, on a full-time basis.

Mrs Gales

1954 Left school at 17 with O-levels but having decided halfway through the sixth form that she wanted to earn money as soon as possible. Worked as a trainee draughtswoman, and qualified.

1961 Left to have the first of three children and became a full-time housewife.

1975 Worked as a part-time tracer in a drawing office but was made redundant.

1975 Became a part-time voluntary worker for the Citizens Advice Bureau, and began a job search which continues.

Mrs Hall

1944 Left school at 16 with typing qualifications. Began a series of full-time office jobs.
1950 Went to private drama school.
1951 Got a job as an actress and worked in repertory theatre.
1956 Had a daughter and became a full-time housewife.
1960 Worked as a full-time actress and as a temporary typist when acting work not available.
1963 Began a series of part-time demonstrating jobs.
1965 Worked as a part-time door-to-door sales representative.
1968 Began a window-cleaning business with her husband, but this was unviable.
1970 Worked full-time as a packer in a fruit factory.
1973 Took a full-time secretarial job.
1974 Worked full-time in a fabric shop, owned and run in partnership with friends. This too was unsuccessful.
1978 Worked full-time as a packer in a fruit factory.
1980 Took a full-time office job, selling advertising space by phone.
1982 Became a part-time assistant to her husband who had become a self-employed astrologer.

Mrs Ingham

1950 Left school at 15 with no qualifications and worked as a kennel maid.
1952 Got a residential job as a kennel maid.
Left this because of inadequate board arrangements, and got a job as an animal trainer.
1953 Left because the employer made sexual advances to her, and got a job as a telephone box cleaner.
1955 Worked full-time in the sorting department of a paper mill.
1958 Left to have the first of three children, and become a full-time housewife.
1959 Began a series of seasonal agricultural jobs.
1965 Began part-time evening education.
1966 Entered teacher-training college.
1969 Qualified and worked as an art teacher in a secondary school.
1971 Left to work in a friend's shop. Helped husband in a small outside-catering business which he ran for five years.
1977 When this closed, became a manageress in an arts and crafts shop, but was made redundant.
1979 Worked in another arts and crafts shop, but left after an argument.
1980 Became a sales representative for another arts and crafts shop but was made redundant.
1981 Worked as a supply teacher.
1982 Got a full-time job as a Craft Centre Supervisor on a scheme run by the Youth Opportunities Programme.

Mrs Jones

1946 Left school at 15 with no qualifications. Took a job as a laboratory assistant and took examinations both there and through night school.
1953 Went to university but failed the examinations at the end of the first year and left.

1954 Worked in a hospital pathology laboratory and took a technical degree in hospital pathology.
1958 Having married, did three jobs as a hospital pathologist, moving house as her husband changed his teaching jobs.
1962 Adopted the first of three children and became a full-time housewife.
1967 Took a part-time job in a pathology laboratory but left on pregnancy.
1970 Had a child and became a full-time housewife. Became involved in various voluntary jobs such as Age Concern, Meals-on-Wheels and the Citizens Advice Bureau.
1982 Took a part-time job as a care assistant, escorting a handicapped child to school each day in a taxi.

Mrs Kemp
1947 Left school with no qualifications and worked as an office junior. Attended night school to gain shorthand and typing qualifications. Gradually achieved promotion within the company, becoming personal assistant to the managing director.
1958 Left to have the first of two children.
1959 Began light assembly homework, and continued with this part-time.
1970 Worked as a general office assistant in an estate agent's office. Still doing homework, and doing the office work to cover staff holidays, gradually extending this to each afternoon. Became very dissatisfied with the irregular hours.
1974 Got a full-time job as a waitress and shop assistant in a bakery.
1976 Left after an argument with the manageress and began homework.
1977 Stopped homework and went back to the estate agent's office on a part-time basis.
1980 Made redundant and took on homework again.
1981 Got a part-time, temporary job with another estate agent. The job only lasted six months.
1982 Took a seasonal waitressing job at the bakery. The job ended in October and she could not find other work immediately.
1983 Took a part-time job as a tea lady in a factory.

Mrs Lane
1946 Left school with no qualifications and became a kitchen assistant in a local hospital but did not enjoy it.
1946 Left to be an ironer and checker in a shirt factory but left after an argument.
1948 Got a temporary post as a resident domestic in a children's home.
1949 Became a resident maid for a private family. Left because the hours were very long.
Worked on the production line in a pickle factory but made redundant very soon after beginning the job.
Became a maid to the hospital matron but left after an argument.
1950 Worked as a resident housekeeper but left to get married.
1951 Got a job at a laundry, sorting out washing. Left to have the first of seven children and became a full-time housewife, doing some temporary and part-time work.
1972 Worked on the production line of a window-frame factory. Made redundant after six months and did not look for another paid job.

1976 Worked as a fruit picker but found it physically exhausting. Did not look for paid work.
1982 Took on more part-time homework.

Mrs Martin

1952 Left school at 15 with no qualifications and got a full-time job as a presser in a shirt factory. Left to get a job with higher wages.
1953 Worked as a packer.
1954 Left to get married and became a full-time housewife. Had two sons.
1968 Got a part-time cleaning job but left in order to work longer hours.
1970 Worked as a full-time, electrical-components assembler in a factory but left because the full-time hours proved to be too exhausting while her children were still at home.
1973 Worked full-time in a toy factory, where the working week was shorter. but made redundant within months.
Became a part-time cleaner.
1975 Retained the cleaning job and worked at the toy factory again on a series of temporary contracts.
1981 Made redundant from the cleaning job and joined the permanent full-time staff of the toy factory.

Mrs Neal

1950 Left school at 15 with no qualifications. Went to work as a presser in a shirt factory.
1956 Left to have a baby and became a full-time housewife.
1960 Became a part-time home help, but found that the arranged working hours were too demanding.
1962 Worked as a part-time shop assistant.
1963 Left to have a baby.
1964 Began to do small amounts of homework for the shirt factory.
1970 Worked part-time on the production line of a window-frame factory but was made redundant.
1971 Returned to work as a part-time home help.
1981 Laid off for three months but taken on again with a reduced number of average working hours, from 20 hours a week to 7, 9 or 11.

Mrs Oates

1945 Left school with no qualifications and got a job as a canteen assistant but did not enjoy the conditions of work.
1947 Became a receptionist in an opticians but left when a friend suggested they got a job together.
Worked again as a canteen assistant but soon found the work unsatisfactory.
1948 Became a clerical assistant in a neighbouring town, to which commuting costs became prohibitively expensive.
Worked as a nursing auxiliary.
1949 Left to go and live with a married sister who need help during her first pregnancy. Worked as a waitress and left the area when the baby was born.

1950 Took a job as a resident hotel waitress but disliked the job intensely.
1951 Left to become a nursing auxiliary.
1952 Moved to Sheerness again, worked as a waitress and married.
1953 Had the first of two children and became a full-time housewife.
1965 Worked full-time in a factory, collating paper, and left because the work was too physically difficult.
1966 Became a full-time clerk in an office and left when her husband became able to return to work after a period of illness.
1967 Became a full-time housewife.
1971 Worked as a part-time shop assistant.
1977 Left when the immediate need for wages was reduced by her daughter leaving private education. Returned to full-time housework. Took a part-time office job and went to evening classes.
1982 Became a company accountant, part-time. Changed to working in the office part-time and at home part-time.

Mrs Page
1951 Left school with no qualifications and got a full-time job as a presser in a shirt factory.
1960 Left to have a baby and became a full-time housewife.
1965 Returned to the same factory job on a part-time basis.
1968 Left to have a baby and became a full-time housewife.
1971 Took a part-time cleaning job.
1973 Went back to the factory job, working more hours than was possible as a cleaner.
1975 Made redundant. After two months' unemployment got a full-time job as an assembler in an electrical components factory. Had to leave when her arrangements for child care were disrupted.
1977 Became a part-time shop assistant.
1981 Left the job after an argument, but moved to another post as a shop assistant on a full-time basis.

Mrs Quin
1950 Left school with no qualifications and became a shop assistant.
1955 Left to have the first of three children and became a full-time housewife.
1978 Began to do homework for about three evenings a week.
1980 Became a part-time cleaner.

Mrs Reed
1945 Left school with typing qualifications and became an office clerk. Left to get married and have the first of nine children.
1972 Took on homework assembling electrical parts.

Mrs Sand
1941 Left school with no qualifications earlier than was usual because evacuation had disrupted her education. Took a resident domestic post in a private home.
1943 Became a trainee nursery nurse and qualified.

1948 Left paid work to marry and became a full-time housewife.
1950 Went with a friend to work as an inspector in an aircraft factory.
1956 Left to have the first of two children and became a full-time housewife.
1964 Took a part-time job as a supervisor in a school playground.
1968 Moved house and changed to doing the same job in a different school.
1969 Left to work as a full-time care assistant in a home for the elderly and was gradually promoted to deputy matron.

Mrs Tate

1947 Left school at 15 with no qualifications and became a resident catering assistant in a hotel. Left on failing catering examinations.
1950 Worked as a waitress for one summer season in a seaside hotel.
1953 Changed to do the same work at a different hotel.
1955 Left to have a baby and became a full-time housewife.
1959 Became a part-time hotel waitress.
1964 Left to become a resident stewardess with her husband as resident steward at a Conservative club.
1966 Moved towns but remained as resident Conservative club staff.
1967 On her husband's illness she was forced to leave the club and invested savings in a night club.
1969 The night club lost money. Left to become a full-time catering worker in a snack bar.
1974 Left to work as a full-time caterer in a London casino, but resigned after an argument.
1976 Began as a full-time cafeteria assistant with the local ferry line. Gradually promoted to chief stewardess.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

B. Abel-Smith (1969), The Poor and the Poorest, Bell, London.

A. Abram (1916), 'Women traders in mediaeval London', Economic Journal, 26.

P. Abrams (1972), 'The sense of the past and the origins of sociology', Past and Present, 55.

J.B. Agassi (1979), Women on the Job, Lexington Books, Toronto.

S. Alexander (1974), 'The nightcleaners' campaign', in S. Allen (ed.), Conditions of Illusion, Feminist Books, Leeds.

S. Alexander (1976), 'Women's work in nineteenth-century London', in J. Mitchell and A. Oakley (eds), The Rights and Wrongs of Women, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

M. Anderson (1971a), Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

M. Anderson (1971b), 'Family, household and the industrial revolution', in M. Anderson (ed.), Sociology of the Family, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

S. Anthony (1932), Women's Place in Industry and Home, Routledge, London.

P. Aries (1962), Centuries of Childhood, Jonathan Cape, London.

H. Austerburry and S. Watson (1981), 'A woman's place: A feminist approach to housing in Britain', Feminist Review, 8.

E.W. Bakke (1933), The Unemployed Man, Nisbet, London.

J.A. Banks (1954), Prosperity and Parenthood, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M.W. Barley (1955), 'Farmhouses and cottages, 1550-1725', Economic History Review, Second series, 7.

M.W. Barley (1963), 'A glossary of names for rooms in houses of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', in I. Foster and L. Alcock (eds), Culture and Environment, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M.W. Barley (1967), 'Rural housing in England' in J. Thirsk (ed.), The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. IV, 1500-1640, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

M. Barrett (1980), Women's Oppression Today, Verso, London.

M. Barrett and M. McIntosh (1980), 'The family wage: Some problems for socialists and feminists', Capital and Class, 11, Summer.

M. Barrett and M. McIntosh (1982), The Anti-Social Family, Verso, London.

M. Barrett Brown (ed.)(1978), Full Employment, Spokesman Books, London.

R.D. Barron and G.M. Norris (1976), 'Sexual divisions and the dual labour market', in D.L. Barker and S. Allen (eds), Dependence and Exploitation in Work and Marriage, Longman, London.

F. Barry Smith (1977), 'Sexuality in Britain, 1800-1900', in M. Vicinus (ed.), A Widening Sphere, Indiana University Press, Indiana.

M.T. Baudouin (1978), 'Women and immigrants: Marginal workers', in C. Crouch and A. Pizzorno (eds), The Resurgence of Class Conflict in Western Europe Since 1968, Macmillan, London.

H.L. Beales and R.S. Lambert (1934), Memoirs of the Unemployed, Gollancz, London.

R. Bearman (1976), Women's Capabilities: Light on the Lives of the Women of Stratford-upon-Avon, Occasional Paper No. 1, Warwickshire Local History Society.

H.S. Becker (1970), 'Personal change in adult life', in H.S. Becker (ed.) Sociological Work, Allen Lane, London. First published 1964.

H.S. Becker (1970), 'The self and adult socialisation', in H.S. Becker (ed.), Sociological Work, Allen Lane, London. First published 1968.

H.S. Becker (1970), Sociological Work, Allen Lane, London.

H.S. Becker (1970), 'The relevance of life histories', in N.K. Denzin (ed.), Sociological Methods, Butterworth, London.

H.S. Becker and J. Carper (1956), 'The elements of identification with an occupation', American Sociological Review, 21, June.

H.S. Becker and J. Carper (1957), 'Adjustment of conflicting expectations in the development of identification with an occupation', Social Forces, 36.

V. Beechey (1978), 'Women and production: A critical analysis of some sociological theories of women's work', in A. Kuhn and A. Wolpe (eds), Feminism and Materialism, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

V. Beechey (1983a), Conceptualising Part-Time Work. Paper tabled at SSRC Gender Division Workshop, Oxford University.

V. Beechey (1983b), 'What's so special about women's employment? A review of some recent studies of women's paid work', Feminist Review, 15.

H.S. Bennett (1951), The Pastons and their England, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

S.K. Bennett and G.H. Elder (1979), 'Women's work in the family economy: A study of depression hardship in women's lives', Journal of Family History, 4:2.

M. Benney and E.C. Hughes (1970), 'Of sociology and the interview', in N.K. Denzin (ed.), Sociological Methods, Butterworth, London.

M. Benston (1970), 'The political economy of women's liberation', in L.B. Tanner (ed.), Voices from Women's Liberation, Signet, New York.

D. Bertaux (1981), 'From the life-history approach to the transformation of sociological practice', in D. Bertaux (ed.), Biography and Society, Sage, London.

D. Bertaux (1981), Biography and Society, Sage, London.

D. Bertaux and I. Bertaux-Wiame (1981), 'Life stories in the baker's trade', in D. Bertaux (ed.), Biography and Society, Sage, London.

G. Best (1979), Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-1870, Fontana, London. First published 1971.

W. Beveridge (1942), Social Insurance and Allied Services, Cmnd 6404, HMSO, London.

W. Beveridge (1944), Full Employment in a Free Society, Unwin, London.

Birmingham Feminist History Group (1979), 'Feminism as femininity in the 1950s?' Feminist Review, 3.

C. Black (ed.)(1983), Married Women's Work, Virago, London. First published 1915.

T. Blackstone (1976), 'The education of girls today', in J. Mitchell and A. Oakley (eds), The Rights and Wrongs of Women, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

L. Bland et al. (1978a), 'Relations of reproduction: Approaches through anthropology', in CCCS (eds), Women Take Issue, Hutchinson, London.

L. Bland et al. (1978b), 'Women "inside and outside" the relations of production', in CCCS (eds), Women Take Issue, Hutchinson, London.

R.O. Blood and R.L. Hamblin (1958), 'The effect of the wife's employment on the family power structure', Social Forces, 36:4.

H. Blumer (1962), 'Society as symbolic interaction', in A.M. Rose (ed.), Human Behaviour and Social Processes, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

H. Blumer (1969), 'The methodological position of symbolic interactionism', in H. Blumer (ed.), Symbolic Interactionism, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey.

A. Booth and S. Glynn (1975), 'Unemployment in the interwar period: A multiple problem', Journal of Contemporary History, 10:4.

J. Bornat (1977), 'Home and work: A new context for trade union history', Oral History, 5:2, Autumn.

C. Bose (1982), 'Technology and changes in the division of labour in the American home', in E. Whitelegg et al. (eds), The Changing Experience of Women, Martin Robertson, Oxford.

E. Bott (1957), Family and Social Networks, Tavistock, London.

J. Bowlby (1953), Child Care and the Growth of Love, Pelican, London.

R.M. Bradley (1912), The English Housewife in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, Edward Arnold, London.

P. Branca (1975a), Silent Sisterhood, Croom Helm, London.

P. Branca (1975b), 'A new perspective on women's work: A comparative typology', Journal of Social History, 9.

F. Braudel (1967), Capitalism and Material Life, 1400-1800, Fontana/Collins, London.

H. Braverman (1974), Labour and Monopoly Capital, Monthly Review Press, New York.

G. Braybon (1981), Women Workers in the First World War, Croom Helm, London.

I. Breughel (1983), 'Rejoinder to Corry et al.', in M. Evans and C. Ungerson (eds), Sexual Divisions, Tavistock, London.

I. Breughel (1979), 'Women as a reserve army', Feminist Review, 3.

R. Bridenthal and C. Koonz (eds)(1977), Becoming Visible: Women in European History, Houghton Mifflin, London.

B. Bridge and J. Campling (1978), Employment Problems: The Social Work Involvement, British Association of Social Workers, London.

A. Briggs (1979), The Age of Improvement 1783-1867, Longmans, London.

O.G. Brim (1966), 'Socialization through the life cycle', in O.G. Brim and S. Wheller (eds), Socialization after Childhood, John Wiley, New York.

M. Brion and A. Tinker (1980), Women in Housing, The Housing Centre Trust, London.

V. Brittain (1953), Lady into Woman, Andrew Dakers, London.

R. Broad and S. Fleming (1981), Nella's Last War, Falling Wall Press, Bristol.

E.V. Brodsky (1978), 'Mobility and marriage in pre-industrial England'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge.

P. Brookes (1967), Women at Westminster, 1918-1966, Peter Davies, London.

G.W. Brown and T. Harris (1978), Social Origins of Depression, Tavistock, London.

R. Brown (1982), 'Work histories, career strategies and the class structure', in A. Giddens and G. Mackenzie (eds), Social Class and the Division of Labour, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

M. Bruce (1961), The Coming of the Welfare State, Batsford, London.

E.J. Buckatzsch (1951-2), 'The constancy of local populations and migration in England before 1800', Population Studies, 5.

M. Bulmer (1979), 'Concepts in the analysis of qualitative data', Sociological Review, 27:4.

P. Burke (1980), Sociology and History, George Allen and Unwin, London.

J. Burnett (1969), A History of the Cost of Living, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

J. Burnett (1978), A Social History of Housing, 1815-1970, David and Charles, London.

R.A. Butlin (1979), 'The enclosure of open fields and extinction of common rights in England', in M. Fox and R. Butlin (eds), Change in the Countryside: Essays on Rural England, Institute of British Geographers, London.

E. Cadbury et al. (1906), Women's Work and Wages, Fisher Unwin, London.

A. Calder (1969), The People's War, Panther, London.

L. Carey and R. Mapes (1972), The Sociology of Planning, Batsford, London.

B.A. Carroll (1976), Liberating Women's History, University of Illinois Press, Illinois.

A. Cartwright and M. Jeffreys (1958), 'Married women who work: Their own and their children's health', British Journal of Preventative and Social Medicine, 12.

M. Cavendish (1982), Women on the Line, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M. Chamberlain (1975), Fenwomen, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

J. Chaney (1981), Social Networks and Job Information: The Situation of Women Who Return to Work, EOC/SSRC Joint Panel on Equal Opportunities.

M. Chaytor and J. Lewis (1982),

M. Chaytor (1980), 'Household and kinship: Ryton in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries', History Workshop, 10.

S.G. Checkland and E.O.A. Checkland (1974), The Poor Law Report of 1834, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

K. Chesney (1970), The Victorian Underworld, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

J. Chetwynd and O. Hartnett (1978), The Sex Role System, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

C. Christ (1977), 'Victorian masculinity and the angel in the house', in M. Vicinus (ed.), A Widening Sphere: Changing Roles of Victorian Women, Indiana University Press, Indiana.

L. Christmas (1979), 'The human cost of a job lost', The Guardian, 3 October.

CIS (1976), Women Under Attack, Anti-Report No. 15, CIS, London.

CIS (1981), Women in the 80s, Anti-Report No. 28, CIS, London.

A. Clark (1919), Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

G. Clark (1982), 'Recent developments in working patterns', Employment Gazette, July.

P. Clark and P. Slack (1976), English Towns in Transition, 1500-1700, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

A. Clayre (1974), Work and Play, Harper and Row, New York.

Cmnd 6393 (1976), Public Expenditure to 1978-80, HMSO, London.

K. Coates (1978), The Right to Useful Work, Spokesman Books, London.

K. Coates and R. Silburn (1970), Poverty: The Forgotten Englishmen, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

A.W. Coats (1958), 'Changing attitudes to labour in the mid-eighteenth century', Economic History Review, 2nd series, XI.

R. Cochrane and M. Stopes-Roe (1981), 'Women, marriage, employment and mental health', British Journal of Psychiatry, 139.

C. Cockburn (1983), Brothers, Pluto Press, London.

G.D.H. Cole (1956), The Postwar Condition of Britain, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

L. Comer (1974a), Wedlocked Women, Feminist Books, Leeds.

L. Comer (1974b), 'Functions of the family', in S. Allen et al., Conditions of Illusion, Feminist Books, Leeds.

Community Development Programme (1977), North Shields: Women's Work, Final Report, North Tyneside Community Development, Volume 5.

S. Conran (1975), Superwoman, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

A. Coote (1981), 'The AES: A new starting point', New Socialist, 2.

A. Coote and T. Gill (1974), Women's Rights: A Practical Guide, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

M. Corbin (1971), 'Procedures and problems of interviewing', Appendix 3 in J.M. Pahl and R.E. Pahl, Managers and their Wives, Allen Lane, London.

B. Corry et al. (1983), 'Female unemployment in the UK', in M. Evans and C. Ungerson (eds), Sexual Divisions, Tavistock, London.

M. Coulson et al. (1975), 'The housewife and her labour under capitalism: A critique', New Left Review, 89.

J. Coussins (1976), The Equality Report, NCCL, London.

R.S. Cowan (1974), 'A case study of technological and social change: The washing machine and the working wife', in M. Hartmann and L.W. Banner (eds), Clio's Consciousness Raised, Harper Torchback, New York.

S. Cox and R. Golden (1977), Down the Road, Writers and Readers Publishing Collective, London.

A. Coxon and C. Jones (1975), Social Mobility, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

A. Coyle (1984), Redundant Women, Women's Press, London.

A. Cragg and T. Dawson (1981), Qualitative Research Among Homeworkers Department of Employment, Research Paper No. 21.

D. Cressey (1976), 'Describing the social order of Elizabethan and Stuart England', Literature and History, 3.

C. Critcher (1979), 'Sociology, cultural studies and the post-war working class', in J. Clarke et al. (eds), Working Class Culture, Hutchinson, London.

CSE (1977), On the Political Economy of Women, CSE Pamphlet No. 2, London.

CSE Microelectronics Group (1980), Microelectronics, CSE Books, London.

S. Cunnison (1966), Wages and Work Allocation, Tavistock, London.

M.K. Dale (1933), 'London silkwomen of the fifteenth century', Economic History Review, 4:3, October.

M. Dalla Costs and S. James (1972), The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community, Falling Wall Press, Bristol.

M.J. Daunton (1983), House and Home in the Victorian City, Edward Arnold, London.

L. Davidoff (1976), 'The rationalisation of housework', in D.L. Barker and S. Allen (eds), Dependence and Exploitation in Work and Marriage, Longman, London.

L. Davidoff et al. (1976), 'Landscape with figures: Home and community in English society', in J. Mitchell and A. Oakley (eds), The Rights and Wrongs of Women, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

L. Davidoff (1979), 'The separation of home and work? Landladies and lodgers in nineteenth and twentieth century England', in S. Burman (ed.), Fit Work for Women, Croom Helm, London.

L. Davidoff and C. Hall (1982), 'The architecture of public and private life: English middle-class society in a provincial town, 1780 to 1850', in A. Sutcliffe (ed.), Towards a Pursuit of Urban History, Edward Arnold, London.

L. Davidoff (1983), 'Class and gender in Victorian England', in J. Newton et al. (eds), Sex and Class in Women's History, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

K.M. Davies (1981), 'Continuity and change in literary advice on marriage', in R.B. Outhwaite (ed.), Marriage and Society, Europa Publications, London.

D. Davis (1966), A History of Shopping, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

T. Davis (1982), 'What kind of woman is she?: Women and communist party politics, 1941-1955', in R. Brunt and C. Rowan (eds), Feminism, Culture and Politics, Lawrence and Wishart, London.

R. Deem (1978), Women and Schooling, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

S. Delamont (1978), 'The domestic ideology of women's education', in S. Delamont and L. Duffin (eds), The Nineteenth-Century Woman, Croom Helm, London.

C. Delphy (1977), The Main Enemy, WRRC Publication No. 2, London.

N. Dennis et al. (1956), Coal is Our Life, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London.

N.K. Denzin (1969), 'Symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology: A proposed synthesis', American Sociological Review, 34.

N.K. Denzin (1970a), The Research Act in Sociology, Butterworth, London.

N.K. Denzin (1970b), Sociological Methods, Butterworth, London.

N.K. Denzin (1981), 'The interactionist study of social organisation: A note on method', in D. Bertaux (ed.), Biography and Society, Sage, London.

Department of Employment (1978), Employment Records, Department of Employment Statistics, Watford.

Department of Employment (undated), The Changing Structure of the Labour Force, Project Report by the Unit for Manpower Studies, London.

Department of Health and Social Security (1983), Review of the Household Duties Test, HMSO, London.

K. de Schweinitz (1961), England's Road to Social Security, Barnes, New York. First published 1948.

J. Ditton (1972), 'Absent at work: or how to manage monotony', New Society, 21 December.

M. Douglas (1966), Purity and Danger, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

J.C. Drummond (1939), The Englishman's Food, Jonathan Cape, London.

R. Dubin (1962), 'Industrial workers' worlds: A study of the "central life interests" of industrial workers', in A.M. Rose (ed.), Human Behaviour and Social Processes, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

L. Duffin (1978), 'The conspicuous consumptive: Woman as an invalid', in S. Delamont and L. Duffin (eds), The Ninteenth-Century Woman, Croom Helm, London.

A.J.F. Dulley (1973), 'People and homes in the Medway towns, 1687-1783', in M. Roake and J. Whyman (eds), Essays in Kentish History, Frank Cass, London.

E. Durkheim (1983), The Division of Labour in Society, Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois.

C. Dyhouse (1981), Girls Growing Up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M. Ebury and B. Preston (1976), Domestic Service in Late Victorian and Edwardian England, 1871-1914, Reading Geographical Papers No. 42, University of Reading.

W. Edmond and S. Fleming (1975), All Work and No Pay, Power of Women Collective and the Falling Wall Press, London.

B. Ehrenreich and D. English (1973), Complaints and Disorders, WRPC, London.

B. Ehrenreich and D. English (1979), For Her Own Good, Pluto Press, London.

P. Eisenberg and P.F. Lazarsfeld (1938), 'The psychological effects of unemployment', Psychological Bulletin, 35.

G.H. Elder (1974), Children of the Great Depression, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

P. Elias and B. Main (1982), Women's Working Lives, Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick.

Employment, Department of (1980), The Redundancy Payments Scheme, HMSO, London.

Employment, Department of (various years), Employment Gazette, HMSO, London.

Equal Opportunities Commission (1980), Women and Government Statistics, Research Bulletin No. 4.

Equal Opportunities Commission (1980), The Experience of Caring for Elderly and Handicapped Dependants: Survey Report, EOC, London.

G. Evans Ewart (1966), The Pattern Under the Plough: Aspects of the Folk Life of East Anglia, Faber and Faber, London.

A. Everitt (1966), 'Social mobility in early modern England', Past and Present, 33, 56-73.

A. Everitt (1967), 'Farm labourers', in J. Thirsk (ed.), The Agrarian History of England Wales, Vol. IV, 1500-1640, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

A. Everitt (1969), Change in the Provinces: The Seventeenth Century, Department of English Local History, Occasional Papers No. 1, Leicester University Press.

A. Faraday and K. Plummer (1979), 'Doing life histories', Sociological Review, 27:4.

C. Faulder (1977a), 'Advertising', in J. King and M. Stott (eds), Is This Your Life, Virago, London.

C. Faulder (1977b), 'Women's magazines', in J. King and M. Stott (eds), Is This Your Life, Virago, London.

T. Fee (1976), 'Domestic labour: An analysis of housework and its relation to the production process', Review of Radical Political Economics, 8:1.

M.M. Feree (1976), 'Working-class jobs: Housework and paid work as sources of satisfaction', Social Problems, 23:4, 431-44.

M. Fergusson (1983), Forever Feminine, Heinemann, London.

M. Filbee (1980), A Woman's Place, B.A.S. Printers, London.

F. Field (ed.)(1977), The Conscript Army, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M.A. Ferber and H.M. Lowry (1976), 'Women: The new reserve army of the unemployed', in M. Blakall and B. Reagan (eds), Women and the Workplace, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

J. Finch (1983), Married to the Job, George Allen and Unwin, London.

F.J. Fisher (1948), 'The development of London as a centre of conspicuous consumption in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 4th series, XXX.

J-L. Flandrin (1976), Families in Former Times, Libraire Hachette. English translation published by Cambridge University Press, 1979.

S. Fleming (1973), The Family Allowance Under Attack, Falling Wall Press, Bristol.

N. Fonda (1976), 'Current entitlements and provisions: A critical review', in N. Fonda and P. Moss (eds), Mothers in Employment, Brunel University Management Programme.

A. Forty (1975), The Electric Home, Unit 20, Open University Press, Milton Keynes.

H. Fox and R. Butlin (1979), Change in the Countryside: Essays on Rural England, 1500-1900, Institute of British Geographers, London.

E. Fox-Genovese (1982), 'Placing women's history in history', NLR, 133, May/June.

R. Frankenberg (1966), Communities in Britain, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

R. Frankenberg (1976), 'In the production of their lives ...', in D.L. Barker and S. Allen (eds), Sexual Divisions in Society: Process and Change, Tavistock, London.

A. Fried and R.M. Elman (eds)(1969), Charles Booth's England, Hutchinson, London.

G.E. Fussell and K.R. Fussell (1953), The English Countrywoman: A Farmhouse Social History, AD1500-1900, Andrew Melrose, London.

J.E. Gagen (1954), The New Woman: Her Emergence in English Drama, 1600-1730, Twayne Publishers, New York.

S. Gail (1980), 'The housewife', in E. Malos (ed.), The Politics of Housework, Allison and Busby, London.

J.K. Galbraith (1974), Economics and the Public Purpose, Andre Deutsch, London.

J. Gardiner (1974), 'Women's work in the industrial revolution', in S. Allen (ed.), Conditions of Illusion, Feminist Books, Leeds.

J. Gardiner (1975a), 'Women and unemployment', Red Rag, 10.

J. Gardiner (1975b), 'Women's domestic labour', New Left Review, 89.

E. Garmarnikow (1978), 'Sexual division of labour in the case of nursing', in A. Kuhn and A. Wolpe (eds), Feminism and Materialism, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

E. Garmarnikow et al. (eds), The Public and the Private, Heinemann, London.

R.P. Garrard (1980), 'English probate inventories and their use in studying the significance of the domestic interior, 1570-1700', in A. van der Wonde and A. Schurman (eds), Probate Inventories, A.A.G. Bijdragen 23.

J.A. Garraty (1978), Unemployment in History, Harper and Row, New York.

H. Gavron (1966), The Captive Wife, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

C.H. George (1971), 'The making of the English bourgeoisie, 1500-1750', Science and Society, Winter.

D. George (1931), England in Transition, Routledge, London.

M. George (1973), 'From "goodwife" to "mistresse": The transformation of the female in bourgeois culture', Science and Society, 2.

H.H. Gerth and J. Wright Mills (1974), From Max Weber, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames. First published 1948.

S. Giedion (1948), Mechanization Takes Command, Oxford University Press, New York.

B.B. Gilbert (1970), British Social Policy, 1914-1939, Batsford, London.

C. Gilligan (1982), In A Different Voice, Harvard University Press, London.

D. Gittins (1975), 'Married life and birth control between the wars', Oral History, 3:2.

D. Gittins (1977), 'Women's work and family size between the wars', Oral History, 5:2.

D. Gittins (1982), Fair Sex, Hutchinson, London.

B.G. Glaser and A.L. Strauss (1967), The Discovery of Grounded Theory, Aldine, Chicago.

B.G. Glaser and A.L. Strauss (1967), 'Awareness contexts and social interaction', in J. Marris and B. Meltzer (eds), Symbolic Interaction, Allyn and Bacon, Boston.

E.N. Glenn and R.L. Feldberg (1979), 'Proletarianizing clerical work: Technology and organizational control in the office', in A. Zimbalist (ed.), Case Studies on the Labor Process, Monthly Review Press, New York.

C. Goff (1930), A Woman of the Tudor Age, John Murray, London.

E. Goffman (1959), The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

J. Goldthorpe (1983), 'Women and class: In defence of the conventional view', Sociology, 17:4.

J. Goldthorpe et al. (eds)(1969), The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

J. Gonlianos (ed.)(1973), By a Woman Writt, New English Library, London.

T. Gould and J. Kenyon (1972), Stories from the Dole Queue, Temple Smith, London.

W.R. Gove (1972), 'The relationship between sex roles, marital status and mental illness', Social Forces, 51:1.

W.R. Gove and J. Tudor (1973), 'Adult sex roles and mental illness', A.J.S., 78:4.

H. Graham (1979), 'Prevention and health: Every mother's business: A comment on child health policies in the 1970s', in C. Harris (ed.), The Sociology of the Family, Sociological Review Monograph 28, Bemrose Press, place?.

H. Graham (1983), 'Women and the survey method', in E. Garmarnikow et al. (eds), The Public and the Private, Heinemann, London.

L. Grant (1981), 'Women's work and trade unionism in Liverpool, 1890-1914', in N.W. Labour History Society Bulletin 7.

G. Greer (1971), The Female Eunoch, Granada, London.

J. Gregory (1982), 'Equal pay and sex discrimination: Why women are giving up the fight', Feminist Review, 10, Spring.

P. Griffiths (1974), Homes Fit for Heroes, Shelter, London.

E. Gross (1968), 'Plus ca change ...? The sexual structure of occupations over time', Social Problems, 16:2.

P.E.H. Hair (1982), 'Children in society, 1850-1980', in T. Barker and M. Drake (eds), Population and Society in Britain, Batsford, London.

C. Hakim (1979), 'Occupational segregation', Department of Employment Research Paper No. 9, November, Department of Employment, London.

C. Hakim (1981), 'Job segregation: Trends in the 1970s', Employment Gazette, December.

C. Hakim and R. Dennis (1982), Homeworking in the Wages Council Industries, Department of Employment Research Paper 37, London.

C. Hall (1977), 'Married women at home in Birmingham in the 1920s and 1930s', Oral History, 5:2.

C. Hall (1979), 'The early formation of Victorian domestic ideology', in S. Burman (ed.), Fit Work for Women, Croom Helm, London.

C. Hall (1980), 'The history of the housewife', in E. Malos (ed.), The Politics of Housework, Allison and Busby, London.

W. Haller and M. Haller (1941-2), 'The puritan art of love', Huntington Library Quarterly, 5.

R. Hamilton (1978), The Liberation of Women, George Allen and Unwin, London.

J.L. Hammond (1931), The Village Labourer, 1760-1832, Longman, London.

B. Hanawalt (1976), 'The female felon in fourteenth century England', in S. Mosher Stuard (ed.), Women in Mediaeval Society, University of Pennsylvania Press.

B. Hanawalt (1977), 'Childrearing among the lower classes of late mediaeval England', Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 8:1.

W. Hannington (1973), Unemployed Struggles, 1919-1936, E.P. Publishers. 1st edition 1936.

Hansard (1947), Housewives (Domestic Supplies) Debate, Cols. 2735-2755.

T.K. Hareven (1971), 'The history of the family as an interdisciplinary field', in T.K. Rabb and R.I. Rotberg (eds), The Family in History, Harper, New York.

T.K. Hareven (1977), 'Family time and industrial time: Family and work in a planned corporation town, 1900-1924', in T.K. Hareven (ed.), Family and Kin in Urban Communities, 1700-1930, Franklin Watts, New York.

C.C. Harris (1977), 'Changing conceptions of the relation between family and societal forms in Western Society', in R. Scase (ed.), Industrial Society, Class Cleavage and Control, Allen and Unwin, London.

J. Harris (1972), Unemployment and Politics, Clarendon Press, London.

J.F.C. Harrison (1979), Early Victorian Britain, 1832-1851, Fontana, London.

M. Harrison and O. Royston (1965), How They Lived, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

R. Harrison (1976), 'The demoralizing experience of prolonged unemployment', Department of Employment Gazette, April.

T. Harrison and C. Madge (1940), War Begins at Home, Chatto and Windus, London.

H. Hartmann (1974), 'Capitalism and women's work in the home, 1900-1930', unpublished PhD thesis, Yale University.

H. Hartmann (1976), 'Capitalism, patriarchy and job segregation by sex', in M. Blaxall and B. Reagan (eds), Women and the Workplace, University of Chicago Press.

H. Hartmann (1979), 'The unhappy marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a more progressive union', Capital and Class, 8.

M.A. Havinden (ed.)(1965), Household and Farm Inventories in Oxfordshire, 1550-1590, Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, HMSO, London.

J. Hayes and P. Nutman (1981), Understanding the Unemployed, Tavistock, London.

D.H. Heer (1958), 'Dominance and the working wife, Social Forces, 36:4.

D. Herlihy (1975), 'Life expectancies for women in mediaeval society', in R.T. Morewedge (ed.), The Role of Woman in the Middle Ages, State University of New York Press, New York.

M. Hewitt (1958), Wives and Mothers in Victorian Industry, Rockliff, London.

D.G. Hey (1974), An English Rural Community: Myddle, Under the Tudors and Stuarts, Leicester University Press, Leicester.

C. Hill (1940), The English Revolution, 1640, Lawrence and Wishart, London.

J.E.C. Hill (1963), 'Puritans and the dark corners of the land', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, XIII.

J.M.M. Hill (1977), The Social and Psychological Impact of Unemployment: A Pilot Study, Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London.

M.J. Hill et al. (1973), Men Out of Work, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

R.H. Hilton (1975), The English Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

HMSO (1909), Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission, HMSO, London.

HMSO (1963), Half Our Future, HMSO, London.

E.J. Hobsbawm (1954a), 'The general economic crisis of the European economy in the seventeenth century', Past and Present, 5.

E.J. Hobsbawm (1954b), 'The general economic crisis of the European economy in the seventeenth century, II', Past and Present, 6.

E.J. Hobsbawm (1964), 'Introduction' to K. Marx, Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, Lawrence and Wishart, London.

R. Hoggart (1957), The Uses of Literacy, Pelican, London.

B.A. Holderness (1976), Pre-Industrial England, Economy and Society, 1500-1750, Dent, London.

C. Hole (1940), English Folklore, Batsford, London.

C. Hole (1953), The English Housewife in the Seventeenth Century, Chatto and Windus, London.

J.C. Holley (1978), 'The redivision of labour: Two firms in nineteenth-century south-east Scotland', unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh University.

W. Holtby (1934), Women and a Changing Civilization, Botley Head, London.

P. Horn (1975), The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.

M.V. Hughes (1940), A London Family Between the Wars, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

J. Humphries (1980), 'Class struggle and the persistence of the working-class family', in A. Amsden (ed.), The Economics of Women and Work, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

J. Humphries (1981), 'Protective legislation, the capitalist state and working-class men: The case of the 1842 Mines Regulation Act', Feminist Review, 7, Spring.

J. Humphries (1983), 'The "emancipation" of women in the 1970s and 1980s: From the latent to the floating', Capital and Class, 20, Summer.

A. Hunt (1968), A Survey of Women's Employment, Government Social Survey, HMSO, London.

K. Hunt (1981), 'Women and the SDF: Some notes on Lancashire', in N.W. Labour History Society Bulletin 7, Women and the Labour Movement.

P. Hunt (1980), Gender and Class Consciousness, Macmillan, London.

J. Hurstfield (1978), The Part-Time Trap, Low Pay Unit, London.

U. Huws (1980), Your Job in the 80s, Pluto, London.

B.L. Hutchins (1915), Women in Modern Industry, G. Bell, London.

H.H. Hyman (1979), 'The effects of unemployment: A neglected problem in modern social research', in R.K. Merton et al. (eds), Qualitative and Quantitative Social Research, Free Press, New York.

International Women's Co-operative Guild (1934), Annual Report, London.

M. Jahoda (1979), 'The impact of unemployment in the 1930s and the 1970s', Bulletin of the British Psychological Society, 32.

M. Jahoda, P. Lazarfeld and H. Zeisel (1972), Marienthal, Tavistock, London. First published in 1933.

C. Jenkins and B. Sherman (1979), The Collapse of Work, Eyre Methuen, London.

P. Jephcott et al. (1962), Married Women Working, Allen and Unwin, London.

A. John (1984), By the Sweat of Their Brow, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

E.L. Jones (1968), 'The agricultural origins of industry', Past and Present, 40.

M. Jones (1972), Life on the Dole, Davis Poynter, London.

J.A. Kahl (1959), 'Some social concomitants of industrialization and urbanization', Human Organization, 18.

H.R. Kahn (1964), Repercussions of Redundancy, Allen and Unwin, London.

R. Kahn and C. Cannell (1957), The Dynamics of Interviewing, John Wiley, New York.

S.V. Kasl, S. Gore and S. Cobb (1975), 'The experience of losing a job: Reported changes in health, symptoms and illness behaviour', Psychosomatic Medicine, 37:2.

P. Kellner (1981), 'Maggie's missing million', New Statesman, 27 March.

A. Kelly (1978), 'Feminism and research', Women Studies International Quarterly, I.

J. Kenrick (1981), 'Politics and the construction of women as second-class workers', in F. Wilkinson (ed.), The Dynamics of Labour Market Segmentation, Academic Press, London.

V. Klein (1964), 'Industrialisation and the changing role of women', Current Sociology, 12.

V. Klein (1965), Britain's Married Women Workers, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

P. Kloos (1969), 'Role conflicts in social fieldwork', Current Anthropology, 10:5.

J. Knox (1558, ed. 1878), The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women, English Scholar's Library of Old and Modern Works, Southgate, London.

R. Knudsen (1968), 'Extent of women's participation in economic production today', in OECD Regional Trade Union Seminar Report, Employment of Women.

M.L. Kohn (1969), Class and Conformity, Dorsey Press, Illinois.

M. Komarovsky (1940), The Unemployed Man and His Family, Octagon Press, New York. Reprinted in 1971.

K. Kumar (1983), 'The social and cultural setting', in B. Ford (ed.), The New Pelican Guide to English Literature: The Present, Pelican, London.

L. Kuper (1953), 'Blueprint for living together', in L. Kuper (ed.), Living in Towns, Cresset Press, London.

Labour Women (Conference Report)(1927), Report of the Eighth National Conference of Labour Women, 11 and 12 May.

H. Land (1972), 'Large families in London', in E. Butterworth and D. Weir (eds), Social Problems of Modern Britain, Fontana, London.

H. Land (1975a), 'The introduction of family allowances: An act of historic justice?' in C. Hall et al. (eds), Change, Choice and Conflict in Social Policy, Heinemann, London.

H. Land (1975), 'The myth of the male breadwinner', New Society, 9 October.

H. Land (1976), 'Women: Supporters or supported?' in S. Allen and D.L. Barker (eds), Sexual Division and Society: Process and Change, Tavistock, London.

H. Land (1978), 'Sex-role stereotyping in the social security and income tax systems', in J. Chetwynde and O. Hartnett (eds), The Sex Role System, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

H. Land (1980), 'The family wage', Feminist Review, 6.

H. Land (1981), Parity Begins at Home, EOC/SSRC Joint Panel on Equal Opportunities.

T. Laquer (1976), 'The cultural origins of popular literacy in England, 1500-1850', Oxford Review of Education, 2:3.

C. Lasch (1977), Haven in a Heartless World, Basic Books, New York.

B. Laslett (1973), 'The family as a public and private institution: An historical perspective', Journal of Marriage and the Family, 24:3.

B. Laslett and R. Rapoport (1975), 'Collaborative interviewing and interactive research', Journal of Marriage and the Family, November.

P. Laslett (1971), The World We Have Lost, Methuen, London.

P. Laslett (1977), Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

S. Lewenhak (1977), Women and Trade Unions, Ernest Benn, London.

S. Lewenhak (1980), Women and Work, Fontana, London.

J. Lewis (1980), The Politics of Motherhood: Child and Maternal Welfare in England, 1900-1939, Croom Helm, London.

J. Lewis (1983), 'Dealing with dependency: State practices and social realities, 1870-1945', in J. Lewis (ed.), Women's Welfare, Women's Rights, Croom Helm, London.

Liberal Women's Unemployment Enquiry Group (1934), Unemployment, The Liberal Party, London.

J. Liddington (1977), 'Working class women in the North West, II', Oral History, 5:2, Autumn.

W. Linford Rees (1981), 'Medical aspects of unemployment', British Medical Journal, 283, 19-26 December.

A. Linton (1982), Not Expecting Miracles, Centreprise Trust, London.

C. Llewellyn (1981), 'Occupational mobility and the use of the comparative method', in H. Roberts (ed.), Doing Feminist Research, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M. Llewelyn Davies (1978), Maternity, Virago, London. First published 1915.

A.K. Lloyd (1952), 'The present social situation', in The Education of Girls, Department of Education, King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

J. Lofland (1971), Analysing Social Settings, Wadsworth, California.

J. Long Laws (1976), 'Work aspiration of women: False leads and new starts', in M. Blaxall and B. Reagan (eds), Women and the Workplace, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

N. Longmate (1971), How We Lived Then, Hutchinson, London.

M. Luxton (1980), More Than a Labour of Love, The Women's Press, Ontario.

K. McAfee and M. Wood (1970), 'Bread and roses', in L.B. Tanner (ed.), Voices From Women's Liberation, Signet, New York.

T. McBride (1976), The Domestic Revolution: The Modernization of Household Service in England and France, 1820-1920, Croom Helm, London.

T. McBride (1977), 'The long road home: Women's work and industrialisation', in R. Bridenthal and C. Koonz (eds), Becoming Visible: Women in European History, Houghton Miffin, Boston.

G.J. McCall and J.L. Simmons (1966), Identities and Interactions, Free Press, New York.

J. McCrindle and S. Rowbotham (eds)(1977), Dutiful Daughters, Allen Lane/Penguin, London and Harmondsworth.

R. McDonough and R. Harrison (1978), 'Patriarchy and relations of production', in A. Kuhn and A. Wolpe (eds), Feminism and Materialism, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M. McDougall (1977), 'Working class women during the industrial revolution, 1780-1914', in R. Bridenthal and C. Koonz (eds), Becoming Visible, Houghton Mifflin, Boston.

L. McDowell (1983a), 'City and home: Urban housing and the sexual division of space', in M. Evans and C. Ungerson (eds), Sexual Divisions, Tavistock, London.

L. McDowell (1983b), 'Towards an understanding of the gender division of urban space', Society and Space, 1.

A. McIntosh (1980), 'Women at work: A survey of employers', Employment Gazette, November.

M. McIntosh (1979), 'The welfare state and the needs of the dependent family', in S. Burman (ed.), Fit Work for Women, Croom Helm, London.

N. McKendrick (1961), 'Josiah Wedgewood and factory discipline', Historical Journal, 4.

N. McKendrick (1974), 'Home demand and economic growth: A new view of the role of women and children in the industrial revolution', in N. McKendrick (ed.), Historical Perspectives, Europa, London.

F. McNally (1979), Women for Hire, Macmillan, London.

J. McNamara and S. Wemple (1977), 'Sanctity and power: The dual pursuit of mediaeval women', in R. Bridenthal and C. Koorz (eds), Becoming Visible: Women in European History, Houghton Miffin, Boston.

J. MacNichol (1980), The Movement for Family Allowances, Heinemann, London.

A. McRobbie (1982), 'Politics of feminist research', Feminist Review, 12.

R. Machin (1977), 'The great rebuilding: A reassessment', Past and Present, 77.

L. Mackie and P. Pattullo (1977), Women at Work, Tavistock, London.

A. Mallier and M. Rosser (1979), 'The changing role of women in the British economy', National Westminster Bank Quarterly Review, November.

P. Manley and D. Sawbridge (1980), 'Women at work', Lloyds Bank Review, 135, January.

Manpower Services Commission (1982), Manpower Services Review 1981, HMSO, London.

G. Markham (1615), Countrey Contentments, reprinted in London in 1973 by Theatrum Orbis Terrarum Ltd, Amsterdam.

P. Marks (1976), 'Feminity in the classroom: An account of changing attitudes', in J. Mitchell and A. Oakley (eds), The Rights and Wrongs of Women, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

D. Marsden (1969), Mothers Alone, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

D. Marsden and E. Duff (1975), Workless, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

D.C. Marsh (1958), Changing Social Structure of England and Wales, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

J.D. Marshall (1968), The Old Poor Law, 1795-1834, Macmillan, London.

G. Marshall (1984), 'On the sociology of women's unemployment: Its neglect and significance', Sociological Review, May, 32:2.

T.H. Marshall (1965), Social Policy, Hutchinson, London.

J. Martin and C. Roberts (1984), Women and Employment, OPCS, HMSO, London.

R. Martin (1982), Unemployment and Women. Paper presented to SSRC Unemployment Research Conference, 23-24 April, London.

R. Martin (1983), Women and Unemployment: Activities and Social Contact. Paper tabled at SSRC Labour Markets Workshop, 7-9 December, Oxford.

A. Marwick (1982), British Society Since 1945, Pelican, London.

K. Marx (1912), Capital, William Glaisher. First edition 1886.

N.-C. Mathieu (1977), 'Ignored by some, denied by others', in WRRC (eds), Notes Towards a Sociological Definition of Sex Categories, London.

M. Meacher (1974), Scrounging on the Welfare, Arrow Books, London.

K. Middlemas (1980), 'Unemployment: The past and future of a political problem', Political Quarterly, 51.

C. Middleton (1974), 'Sexual inequality and stratificatin theory', in F. Parkin (ed.), The Social Analysis of Class Structure, Tavistock, London.

C. Middleton (1979), 'The sexual division of labour in feudal England', New Left Review, 113:4.

L. Middleton (ed.)(1977), Women in the Labour Movement: The British Experience, Croom Helm, London.

R. Milkman (1976), 'Women's work and the economic crisis: Some lessons of the great depression', Review of Radical Political Economy, 8:1.

Ministry of Labour (1929), First Report of the National Advisory Council for Juvenile Employment, HMSO, London.

Ministry of Labour (1968), Gazette, May.

R. Minns (1980), Bombers and Mash, Virago, London.

J. Mitchell (1971), Women's Estate, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

J.M. Mogey (1956), Family and Neighbourhood, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

J.S. Moore (ed.)(1976), The Goods and Chattels of Our Forefathers, 1539-1804, Phillimore, London.

J. Morgall (1981), 'Typing our way to freedom', Feminist Review, Autumn, 9.

D. Morgan (1981), 'Men, masculinity and the process of sociological enquiry', in H. Roberts (ed.), Doing Feminist Research, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

S. Moylan and B. Davies (1980), 'The disadvantages of the unemployed', Employment Gazette, August.

A. Munro (1863), Our Unemployed Females and What May Best Be Done For Them, Paper read to Manchester Statistical Society.

A. Murcott (1983), 'It's a pleasure to cook for him: Food, mealtimes and gender in some South Wales households', in E. Gamarnikow et al. (eds), The Public and the Private, Heinemann, London.

A. Myrdal and V. Klein (1956), Women's Two Roles, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

T. Nairn (1972), 'The English working class', in R. Blackburn (ed.), Ideology and Society, Fontana/Collins, London.

J. Newsom (1936), Out of the Pit, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

J. Newson and E. Newson (1963), Patterns of Infant Care in an Urban Community, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

D. Noakes (1975), The Town Beehive: A Young Girl's Lot, Brighton 1910-1934, Queenspark Books 3, London.

D. Noakes (1980), Faded Rainbow, Queenspark Books 8, London.

G.M. Norris (1978), 'Unemployment, subemployment and personal characteristics' (A), The Sociological Review, 26:1.

G.M. Norris (1978), 'Unemployment, subemployment and personal characteristics' (B), The Sociological Review, 26:2.

W. Notestein (1955), 'The English woman, 1580-1650', in J.H. Plumb (ed.), Studies in Social History, Longman, London.

A. Oakley (1974a), The Sociology of Housework, Pitman, London.

A. Oakley (1974b), Housewife, Allen Lane, London.

A. Oakley (1981a), Subject Women, Martin Robertson, Oxford.

A. Oakley (1981b), 'Interviewing women', in H. Roberts (ed.), Doing Feminist Research, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (1982), New Earnings Survey, HMSO, London.

P. Oliver (1981), 'A lighthouse on the mantelpiece', in P. Oliver (ed.), Dunroamin, Barrie and Jenkins, London.

L. Oren (1974), 'The welfare of women in labouring families, England 1860-1950', in M.S. Hartman and L. Banner (eds), Clio's Consciousness Raised, Harper, New York.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1968), Employment of Women: Regional Trade Union Seminar, OECD, Paris.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1981), 'The 1974-75 recession and the employment of women', in A. Amsden (ed.), The Economics of Women and Work, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

M. Overton (1980), 'English probate inventories and the measurement of agricultural change', in A. van der Woude and A. Schurmann (eds), Probate Inventories, A.A.G. Bijdragen 23.

J. Oxborrow (1982), 'Unemployment', in T. Barker and M. Drake (eds), Population and Society in Britain 1850-1980, Batsford, London.

J.M. Pahl and R.E. Pahl (1971), Managers and Their Wives, Allen Lane, London.

R.E. Pahl (1984), Divisions of Labour, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

R.E. Pahl and J. Dennett (1981), Industry and Employment on the Isle of Sheppey, HWS Research Project Paper, University of Kent.

S. Parker (1975), 'The effects of redundancy', in G. Esland et al., People and Work, Open University Press, Milton Keynes.

F. Parkin (1972), Class, Inequality and the Political Order, Paladin, London.

F. Parkin (1979), Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique, Tavistock, London.

Parliamentary Debates (1930), House of Commons Official Report, Hansard, London.

J. Patten (1979), 'Changing occupational structures in the East Anglian countryside, 1500-1700', in H. Fox and R. Butlin (eds), Change in the Countryside: Essays on Rural England,1500-1900, Institute of British Geographers, London.

N. Pember Reeves (1979), Round About a Pound a Week, Virago, London. First published 1913.

N. Penney (ed.)(1920), The Household Account Book of Sarah Fell of Swarthmore, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

PEP (1952), Social Security and Unemployment in Lancashire, Vol. XIX, No. 349, December.

A. Phillips and B. Taylor (1980), 'Sex and skill: Notes towards a feminist economics', Feminist Review, 6.

M. Phillips and W.S. Tomkinson (1926), English Women in Life and Letters, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Pilgrim Trust (1938), Men Without Work, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

I. Pinchbeck (1981), Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850, Virago, London. First published 1930.

I. Pinchbeck and M. Hewitt (1973), Children in English Society, Volume II, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

E. Pizzey (1974), Scream Quietly or the Neighbours Will Hear, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

J. Platt (1971), Social Research in Bethnal Green, Macmillan, London.

E.H. Pleck (1976), 'Two worlds in one: Work and the family', Journal of Social History, 10.

K. Plummer (1975), Sexual Stigma: An Interactionist Account, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

K. Plummer (1983), Documents of Life, Allen and Unwin, London.

S. Pollard (1963), 'Factory discipline in the industrial revolution', Economic History Review, 16.

A. Pollert (1981), Girls, Wives, Factory Lives, Macmillan, London.

J. Popay (1981), 'Unemployment: A threat to public health', in L. Burghes and R. Lister (eds), Unemployment: Who Pays the Price, Child Poverty Action Group, London.

M. Porter (1979), 'Experience and consciousness: Women at home; men at work'. UnpRblished PhD thesis, University of Manchester.

M. Porter (1982), 'Standing on the edge: Working-class housewives and the world of work', in J. West (ed.), Work, Women and the Labour Market, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M. Porter (1983), Home, Work and Class Consciousness, Manchester University Press.

C.L. Powell (1917), English Domestic Relations, 1487-1653, Columbia Press, New York.

M. Powell (1968), Below Stairs, Peter Davies, London.

E. Power (1922), Mediaeval English Nunneries, 1275-1535, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

E. Power (1924), Mediaeval People, Methuen, London.

E. Power (1926), 'The position of women', in C.G. Crump and E.F. Jacob (eds), The Legacy of the Middle Ages, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

L. Pruette (1934), Women Workers Through the Depression, Macmillan, New York.

K. Purcell (1979), 'Militancy and acquiescence amongst women workers', in S. Burman (ed.), Fit Work for Women, Croom Helm, London.

K. Purcell and D. Bennett (1979), Manual Workers and the Sexual Division of Labour, Final report to the SSRC of project no. HR4049.

L. Radloff (1975), 'Sex differences in depression', Sex Roles, 1:3.

M. Ramelson (1967), Petticoat Rebellion, Laurence and Wishart, London.

A. Ravetz (1965), 'Modern technology and an ancient occupation: Housework in present-day society', Technology and Culture, 7:2.

M. Reich, D.M. Gordon and R.C. Edwards (1980), 'A theory of labour market segmentation', in A. Amsden (ed.), The Economics of Women and Work, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

I. Reid and E. Wormald (1982), Sex Differences in Britain, Grant McIntyre, London.

E. Richards (1974), 'Women in the British economy since 1700: An interpretation', History, LIX.

J.M. Richards (1973), The Castles on the Ground, John Murray, London. First published 1946.

D. Riley (1979), 'War in the nursery', Feminist Review, 2.

D. Riley (1983), War in the Nursery, Virago, London.

E. Roberts (1975), Learning and living: Socialisation outside school', Oral History, 3:2, pps?

E. Roberts (1977), 'Working class women in the North West, I', Oral History, 5:2.

E. Roberts (1982), 'Working wives and their families', in T. Barker and M. Drake (eds), Population and Society in Britain, Batsford, London.

H. Roberts (1981), Doing Feminist Research, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M. Roberts (1979), 'Sickles and scythes: Women's work and men's work at harvest time', History Workshop, 7.

M. Roberts (1981), 'Private kitchens: Public cooking', in Matrix Book Group (eds), Making Space: Women and the Built Environment, Pluto, London.

R. Roberts (1973), The Classic Slum, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

J. Robertson and J. Briggs (1979), 'Part-time working in Great Britain', Employment Gazette, July.

S. Rothwell (1980), 'United Kingdom', in A.M. Yohalem (ed.), Women Returning to Work: Policies and Progress in Five Countries, Frances Pinter, London.

S. Rowbotham (1973), Hidden from History, Pluto, London.

S. Rowbotham (1973b), Woman's Consciousness, Man's World, Pelican, London.

J. Rubery and F. Wilkinson (1971), 'Outwork and segmented labour markets', in F. Wilkinson (ed.), The Dynamics of Labour Market Segmentation, Academic Press, London.

J. Ryder and H. Silver (1970), Modern English Society, History and Structure, 1850-1970, Methuen, London.

J. Sarsby (1983), Romantic Love and Society, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth.

L. Scharf (1980), To Work and to Wed, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut.

G. Schochet (1969), 'Patriarchalism, politics and mass attitudes in Stuart England', The Historical Journal, 12.

O. Schreiner (1912), Women and Labour, T. Fisher Unwin, London.

A. Schuurman (1980), 'Probate inventories: Research issues, problems and results', in A. van der Woude and A. Schuurman (eds), Probate Inventories, A.A.G. Bijdragen 23.

J.W. Scott and L.A. Tilly (1975), 'Women's work and the family in nineteenth-century Europe', in A. Amsden (ed.), The Economics of Women and Work, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

A. Scott-James (1943), 'Why women don't have babies', in T. Hopkinson (ed.), Picture Post, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

G. Scott Thompson (1937), Life in a Noble Household, 1641-1700, Jonathan Cape, London.

J. Seabrook (1982), Unemployment, Quartet, London.

G. Seargeant (1981), 'Tough choice that jobless women face', Sunday Times, 14 June.

W. Seccombe (1974), 'The housewife and her labour under capitalism', New Left Review, 83.

A. Sedley (1980), Part-Time Workers Need Full-Time Rights, NCCL Rights for Women Unit, London.

S. Sharpe (1976), Just Like a Girl: How Girls Learn to be Women, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

J. Shaw (1976), 'Finishing school: Some implications of sex-segregated education', in O.B. Barker and S. Allen (eds), Sexual Divisions and Society, Tavistock, London.

S. Shaw (1979), 'The attitude of the TUC towards unemployment in the inter-war period', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Kent.

S. Sheridan Walker (1976), 'Widow and ward: The feudal law of child custody in mediaeval England', in S. Mosher Stuard (ed.), Women in Mediaeval Society, University of Pennsylvania Press.

T. Shibutani (1962), 'Reference groups and social control', in A.M. Rose (ed.), Human Behaviour and Social Process, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

E. Shorter (1976a), 'Women's work: What difference did capitalism make?' Theory and Society, 3.

E. Shorter (1976b), The Making of the Modern Family, Collins, London.

A. Sinfield (1970), 'Poor and out of work in Shields', in P. Townsend (ed.), The Concept of Poverty, Heinemann, London.

A. Sinfield (1981), What Unemployment Means, Martin Robertson, Oxford.

J.F. Sleeman (1973), The Welfare State: Its Aims and Costs, Allen and Unwin, London.

C. Smart (1981), 'Law and the control of women's sexuality: The case of the 1950s', in B. Hutter and G. Williams (eds), Controlling Women, Croom Helm, London.

J.H. Smith (1961), 'Managers and married women workers', British Journal of Sociology, 12.

K.D.M. Snell (1981), 'Agricultural seasonal unemployment, the standard of living and women's work in the South and East, 1690-1860', Economic History Review, August.

M. Snell (1979), 'The equal pay and sex discrimination acts: Their impact in the workplace', Feminist Review, 1.

Social Trends (various years), HMSO, London.

D. Spender (1980), Man Made Language, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M. Stacey (1960), Tradition and Change: A Study of Banbury, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

L. Stanley and S. Wise (1983), Breaking Out: Feminist Consciousness and Feminist Research, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

P. Stanworth and A. Giddens (1974), Elites and Power in British Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

D.M. Stenton (1957), The English Woman in History, George Allen and Unwin, London. Reprinted in 1977 by Schocken Books, New York.

F.M. Stenton (1942), 'The historical bearing of place-name studies: The place of women in Anglo-Saxon society', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 4th series, vol. XXV.

J. Stern (1983), 'Who becomes unemployed', Employment Gazette, 91:1, January.

J. Stevenson and C. Cook (1979), The Slump, Quartet, London.

A. Stewart et al. (1980), Social Stratification and Occupations, Macmillan, London.

C.M. Stewart (1961), 'Future trends in the employment of married women', British Journal of Sociology, 12.

L. Stone (1966), 'Social mobility in England, 1500-1700', Past and Present, 33.

L. Stone (1977), The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

R. Strachey (ed.)(1936), Our Freedom and its Results: By Five Women, Hogarth, London.

S. Stryker (1967a), 'Role-taking accuracy and adjustment', in J. Manis and B. Meltzer (eds), Symbolic Interaction, Allyn and Bacon, Boston.

S. Stryker (1967b), 'Symbolic interaction as an approach to family research', in J. Manis and B. Meltzer (eds), Symbolic Interaction, Allyn and Bacon, Boston.

A. Summers (1979), 'A home from home - women's philanthropic work in the nineteenth century', in S. Burman et al. (eds), Fit Work for Women, Croom Helm, London.

M. Swenarton (1981), Homes Fit for Heroes, Heinemann, London.

J. Symons (1975), The Thirties: A Dream Revolved, Faber and Faber, London. First published 1960.

J. Szczepanski (1981), 'The use of auto-biographies in historical social psychology', in D. Bertaux (ed.), Biography and Society, Sage, London.

A.J. Tawney and R.H. Tawney (1934-5), 'An occupational census of the seventeenth century', Economic History Review, 5.

R.H. Tawney and E. Power (eds)(1924), Tudor Economic Documents, Vol. I, Longman, London.

S. Taylor (1977), 'The effect of marriage on job possibilities for women and the ideology of the theme', Oral History, 5:2.

K.V. Thomas (1958), 'Women and the civil war sects', Past and Present, 13.

K.V. Thomas (1959), 'The double standard', Journal of the History of Ideas, 20:2.

K.V. Thomas (1964), 'Work and leisure in pre-industrial society', Past and Present, 29.

W. Thomas and F. Znaniecki (1958), The Polish Peasant in Europe and America, Borer Publications, New York. First published 1918-1920.

D. Thompson (1975), 'Courtship and marriage in Preston between the wars', Oral History, 3:2.

E.P. Thompson (1967), 'Time, work-discipline and industrial capitalism', Past and Present, 38.

E.P. Thompson (1970), The Making of the English Working Class, Penguin, Harmondsworth. First published 1963.

P. Thompson (1981), 'Life histories and the analysis of social change', in D. Bertaux (ed.), Biography and Society, Sage, London.

R. Thompson (1974), Women in Stuart England and America, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

D. Thorns (1976), The Quest for Community, Allen and Unwin, London.

A. Thornton (1973), 'From the autobiography of Mrs Alice Thornton, 1627-1707', in J. Goulianos (ed.), By a Woman Writt, New English Library, London.

L.A. Tilly and J.W. Scott (1978), Women, Work and Family, Hold, Rinehart and Winston, New York.

S. Toland (1980), 'Changes in living standards since the 1950s', Social Trends, 10.

P. Townsend (1957), The Family Life of Old People, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

P. Townsend (ed.)(1970), The Concept of Poverty, Heinemann, London.

P. Townsend and N. Davidson (1982), Inequalities in Health, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

Trades Union Congress (1983), Women in the Labour Market, TUC, London.

E.S. Turner (1961), The Phoney War, Michael Joseph, London.

R. Turner (1962), 'Role-taking: Process versus conformity', in A.M. Rose (ed.), Human Behaviour and Social Processes, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

C. Ungerson (1971), Moving Home, Bell, London.

C. Ungerson (1983), 'Women and caring: Skills, tasks and taboos', in E. Gamarnikow et al. (eds), The Public and the Private, Heinemann, London.

J. Urry and J. Wakeford (eds)(1973), Power in Britain, Heinemann, London.

J. Vanek (1973), 'Keeping busy: Time spent in housework, US, 1920-1970'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Michigan.

R.J. Vann (1977), 'Towards a new life-style: Women in pre-industrial capitalism', in R. Bridenthal and C. Koorz (eds), Becoming Visible: Women in European History, Houghton and Miffin, Boston.

M. Vicinus (1977), 'Introduction: New trends in the study of the Victorian woman', in M. Vicinus (ed.), A Widening Sphere, Indiana University Press, Indiana.

T. Vigne (1975), 'Parents and children, 1890-1918: Distance and dependence', Oral History, 3:2.

J. Wajcman (1979), 'Fakenham Enterprises: The Rise and Fall of a Women's Co-operative'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge.

J. Walkowitz (1977), 'The making of an outcast group', in M. Vicinus (ed.), A Widening Sphere, Indiana University Press, Indiana.

S. Wallby (1981), Women and Unemployment, Lancaster Regionalism Group, Working Paper No. 5, University of Lancaster, Lancaster.

S. Wallby (1983a), 'Approaches to the study of gender relations in unemployment and employment', Paper tabled at SSRC Labour Markets Workshop, 7-9 December, London.

S. Wallby (1983b), 'Patriarchal structures: The case of unemployment', in E. Gamarnikow et al., Gender, Class and Work, Heinemann, London.

S. Wallby (1983c), 'Women's unemployment: Patriarchy and capitalism', in M. Sawyer and K. Schott (eds), Socialist Economic Review, Merlin, place?

B. Webb (ed.)(1901), The Case for the Factory Acts, Grant Richards, London.

J. Webb (1857), 'Some passages in the life and character of a lady resident in Herefordshire and Worcestershire during the civil war of the seventeenth century', Archaeologia, 37.

S. Webb and B. Webb (1920), The History of Trade Unionism, 1666-1920, published by the authors.

M. Weber (1948), 'Religious rejections of the world and their directions', in H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds), From Max Weber, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

M. Weber (1978a), 'Protestant asceticism and the spirit of capitalism', in W.G. Runciman (ed.), Weber: Selections in Translation, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

M. Weber (1978b), 'The origins of industrial capitalism in Europe', in W.G. Runciman (ed.), Weber: Selections in Translation, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

D. Wedderburn (1964), White Collar Redundancy, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

D. Wedderburn (1965), Redundancy and the Railwayman, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

A. Weir and M. McIntosh (1982), 'Towards a wages strategy for women', Feminist Review, 10.

D. Werneke (1978), 'The economic showdown and women's employment opportunities', International Labour Review, 117:1.

J. West (1977), 'The factory slaves', New Society, 24 February, 39:751.

J. West (1978), 'Women, sex and class', in A. Kuhn and A. Wolpe (eds), Feminism and Materialism, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

J. Westergaard and H. Resler (1975), Class in a Capitalist Society, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

R. Wild and A.B. Hill (1970), Women in the Factory, Institute of Personnel Management, London.

P. Willmott (1963), The Evolution of a Community, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

P. Willmott and M. Young (1960), Family and Class in a London Suburb, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

E. Wilson (1977), Women and the Welfare State, Tavistock, London.

E. Wilson (1980), Only Halfway to Paradise: Women in Post-War Britain, 1945-1968, Tavistock, London.

J. Wirz (1975), Social Aspects of Planning in New Towns, Saxon House, Farnborough, Hants.

Women's Co-operative Guild (1938), Annual Report, London.

Women's Freedom League (1931), Bulletin, London.

Women's Leader (February 1930 to January 1931), London.

J.B. Wood (1975), How Little Unemployment?, Institute of Economic Affairs, London.

S. Wood (1980), 'Reactions to redundancy'. Unpublished PhD thesis, Manchester University.

S. Wood (1981), 'Redundancy and female employment', Sociological Review, 29:4.

V. Woolf (1929), A Room of One's Own, Hogarth, London.

P. Worsley (1973), 'The distribution of power in industrial society', in J. Urry and J. Wakeford (eds), Power in Britain, Heinemann, London.

L.B. Wright (1935), Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England, University of Carolina Press, Ithaca and New York.

K.E. Wrightson (1973), 'The puritan reformation of manners with special reference to the counties of Lancashire and Essex, 1640-1660'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge.

K.E. Wrightson (1981), 'Alehouses, order and reformation in rural England, 1590-1660', in E. Yeo and S. Yeo (eds), Popular Culture and Class Conflict, 1590-1914, Harvester, Brighton.

K.E. Wrightson (1982), English Society, 1580-1680, Hutchinson, London.

E.A. Wrigley (1965), 'A simple model of London's importance in changing English society and economy, 1650-1750', Past and Present, 37.

E.A. Wrigley (1966), 'Family limitation in pre-industrial England', Economic History Review, 19.

S.M. Wyntjes (1977), 'Women in the Reformation era', in R. Bridenthal and C. Koonz (eds), Becoming Visible: Women in European History, Houghton Mifflin, Boston.

A.F. Young (1958), 'Unemployment among women over 40', Personnel Management, 40:344.

M. Young (1974), Poverty Report 1974, Temple Smith, London.

M. Young (1975), Poverty Report 1975, Temple Smith, London.

M. Young and P. Willmott (1957), Family and Kinship in East London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames.

S. Yudkin and A. Holme (1963), Working Mothers and their Children, Michael Joseph, London.

F. Zweig (1952), Women's Life and Labour, Gollancz, London.