

## A DAY RETURN TICKET

### PLAN

#### PART 1

Introduction

Context of Summer School

Is theory useful?

Marxism has long tradition of theory behind it

but there is a history of women's writing

And marxism has established the way we should think

but we can change that...

Recent women's movement writing

early '70's

mid '70's on

- marxist-feminism: tendency for marxism to dominate

Need for day return ticket

Main statements of women's movement

Patriarchy older than capitalism

Therefore need for theory of patriarchy

- one suggestion (Fay Harrison)

Connecting marxism and feminism

- semi-detached houses? (see diagrams overpage which are referred to in both Parts).

#### PART 2

Summary so far

Marxist-Feminisms

Marx and Engels

economic marxism

industrial reserve army (Seechey)

domestic labour debate (various)

political marxism

capital, the state and women (McIntosh)

ideological marxism

psychoanalysis revisited (J. Mitchell)

'everything as discourse' (m/f)

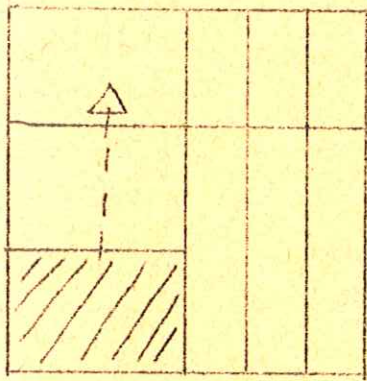
patriarchy as economic exploitation (Delphy)

What we need from a good analysis of patriarchy

A good attempt at marxist-feminist analysis (V. Coddard)

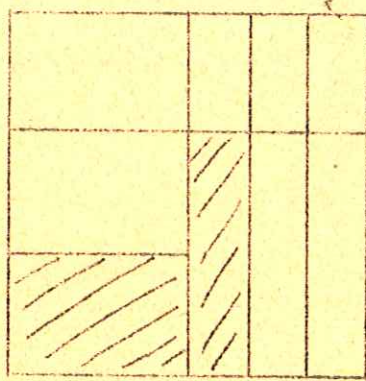
SHIT! Just realised I forgot the diagrams....

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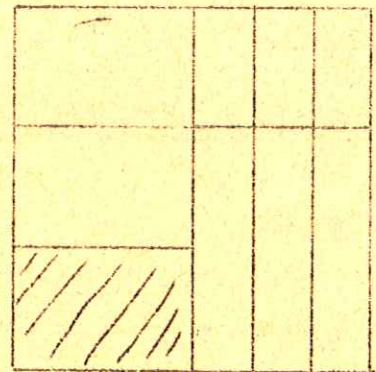
CAP PAT

Marx



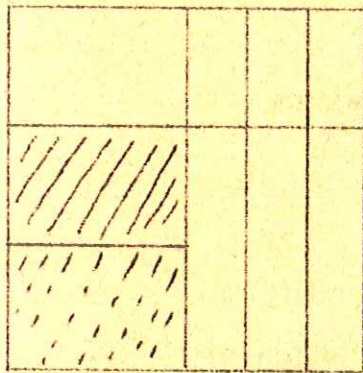
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Engels



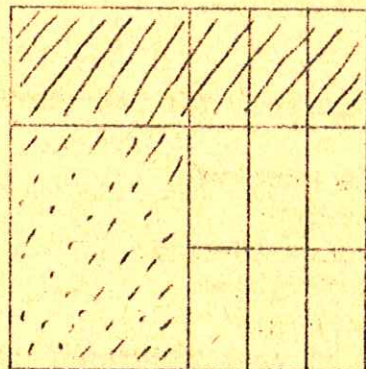
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Beechey



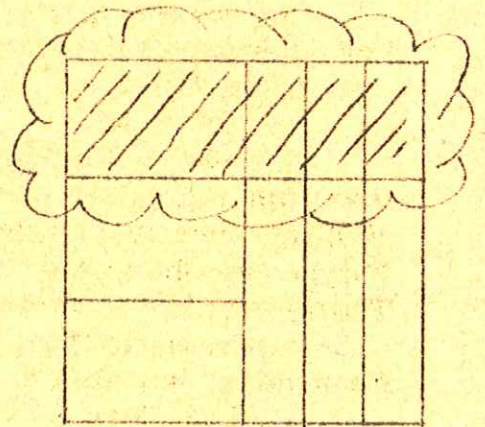
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McIntosh



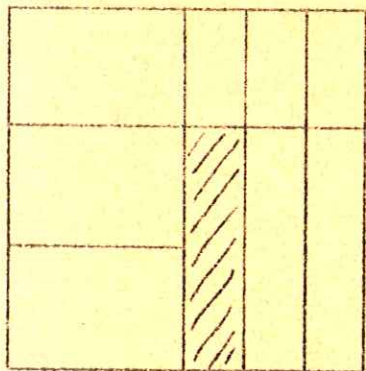
CAP PAT

J. Mitchell



CAP PAT

m/f



CAP PAT

Delphy

KEY

no63. no64.

ideological	ideological
political/ social	control of labour
economic	control of fertility control of sexuality

CAP = ITAL  
PAT = RIARCHY

# FEMINISM & MARXISM : A DAY - RETURN TICKET.

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## PART I.

### Introduction

This was one of the contributions to the Summer School. It was far too long, but tried to cover a new approach to the connections between feminism and marxism. Some people felt that it wasn't practical enough; others that, given the week was an introduction to theory, that it fitted in with that. I would certainly like to be able to do a more historical-political account of the development of especially early Women's Movement ideas -- would anyone like to help? Here I have explicitly tried to make accessible, some of the ideas around the marx-fem theoretical field, because I've been doing some work on it in the last year, and because much of it is written in very dense and boring and inaccessible language. Which perpetuates the split between theory and practice that has been going on too long.

When I first thought of doing this thing, the idea was to do it with at least one other woman, linking it to, say, the politics of fertility/sexuality control, but it finally had to be done at too short notice to set that up. However, I don't think it ought to go in the journal, as has been suggested, until there has been more discussion, and hopefully some of these links made. So people with ideas on this, please suggest them/ write them down.

I'm aware of lots of inadequacies in this account. It's oversimplified, too sketchy, and too wordy. However it's difficult to get the balance right between being clear, being readable, and saying what I'm not saying, and the idea was to give a broad overview rather than a particular analysis. As it is, I've chopped it into two parts: this is the first half. If I get it done in time, and if there's room, I hope Part II will go in the next bulletin. That will also have some titles of other things to read, if you can face it.

Meanwhile, I hope this leads to discussion -- that's the idea.

### FEMINISM AND MARXISM: A DAY - RETURN TICKET

When the theme for the Summer School was originally suggested as Basic Marxism, the organizing committee felt that if this meant economic Marxism then it wouldn't be much fun to have it for a week. However lots of people in Big Flame were wanting some grounding in theory, so we decided to make it Basic Marxism And What's Wrong With It. This meant, for the 5 sessions, spending them like this. First, a morning with the marxist theory of surplus value, presented as a reading group session. Then a morning with Gramsci, the Italian marxist, who criticised economistic thinking and stressed the importance of

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political and ideological levels of analysis. Then on the third morning we looked at the political implications of neo-ecumenistic theory, and of theory of other forms of oppression: this meant looking at the relations between Party and Movement. Then we had a day out! The next morning we looked at feminism and marxism, ~~showing how~~ <sup>arguing that</sup> they had to be recognised as different structures before being brought together. The final morning was spent looking at the relation between marxism and anti-racism, connecting these ideas to the situation in Zimbabwe (with slides). This is a write-up of the session on fem and Mr.

All this illustrates two things. One is that in Big Flame many people have a healthy suspicion of theory; but when we do go for it, we go first for the 'heavy stuff'; and treat it as though it's something to be learnt rather than mullied over and criticised. But, as the Summer School showed, there's lots of other theory which isn't nearly so heavy, and which certainly does need critical reading. The second thing, connected, is that some theory is very new and undeveloped, and we can not just learn from it, but actually help to make it. In the fields of feminism and anti-racism particularly, there is a great need for good political theory, connected to practice- a sort of creative theory.

It's also true that in the recent Women's Movement, there has been a suspicion of theory. This is partly because of a dislike of being theorised at by men, and partly a belief in 'experience'. More recently some feminists have been questioning what is meant by 'experience', and wondering whether it's a deceptively simple category- depends where you're standing as to what you see. I think we need good theory as feminists, for two reasons; a) we need a clearer understanding of the logic of our oppression to help our fight against it, and b) we need a shape in our heads to place next to and against the clearer shape we already have of marxism. Otherwise we are in danger of losing its shape in bringing the two things together.

So. How does this relate to feminism and marxism? It's certainly true that marxism has a very well established tradition behind it, far more so than feminism or anti-racism. When we did a History of marxist thought earlier in the week, it was funny, because it showed exactly this point so clearly. Marxists don't all agree, of course, but their arguments are so well documented and there are such well-established schools of thought. Reams of paper, hours of arguing, years of debate, thousands of pounds of research money, party money, lie behind this tradition- as well of course as suffering in prisons, exile - and revolutionary activity. But women have had very little of <sup>the</sup> former. True there is a long tradition of feminist writing, but it is much less dense or systematic than that of marxism. And for good reason. Women have not had the time, the money, the freedom, the confidence, the research institutes, behind them. Only very recently has anything approaching a tradition of writing been possible. Which isn't to say that thinking and writing hasn't gone on- much of it has got forgotten, lost, precisely not established. The recent attempts to rediscover this work has been met with

mixed responses; it's good to uncover our history, it's also infuriating that all that work has been done before, and had to be repeated. For the record then, a brief run-through of some of the women whose writing we knew about: Mary Wellstcraft, Eleanor Marx, Olive Schreiner, Alexandra Kollontai, Rosa Luxemburg, Stella Browne, the Pankhursts and other suffragette writing, Dora Russell. There are also many women who contributed together to campaigns or movements or party debates. After the Second World War, there's Simone de Beauvoir, and Betty Friedan, and then we start getting into the early Women's Movement writings, Eva Figes, Kate Millett and so on - of which, more below. *I've probably missed women out who should go in.*

So it's not just that marxism is a lot better established than feminism in terms of theory. It's that the way you're supposed to make theory, analyse your situation has tended to be defined mainly in marxist terms. Of course marxism is useful, but not always, and we need the freedom to choose when it is, and when it isn't. So it's important that we don't worry, in trying to explain and formulate our own oppression, about things like rigour. Rigour is a word often used in marxist debate, and it means being able to clarify and define every word precisely, stick to logic, and provide a definite, hard, firmed-up analysis. That's all very well when you have a century and a half of theorising behind you, but when you're trying to pull things together at an early stage, it's important not to try to be too rigorous, not to rush to provide a well-polished theory too quickly. Because we are having to think not just about the content of our oppression as women, but even the words to think it in, the very way of thinking about it. So we must be careful to go slowly, not to miss the subtleties; it's exactly in the vagueness and uneasiness that these subtleties lie. I'm suggesting here that in the attempt to connect feminism and marxism, feminists have got swept up into marxism, and even when challenging marxism, have tended to do it in the same terms. I'll look at how this has happened below. But in the meantime stress that we must feel clear about the shape of our oppression before we connect it to the oppression of workers by capital. *follow straight on*

Before we leave marxism (we'll be back) let's note two things. Firstly that this long tradition of work has established a certain method, that of 'historical materialism', as a set of tools to use for analysing things. It has also established, with some degree of agreement, a way of visualising the levels at which society is said to operate - broadly, these are: economic (like the ground floor of a house); political/social (the next floor up); and ideological (the top floor). So the idea is that the whole thing is based on the economic, but other levels in society (like education, the law, the political structure, the family, and sets of ideas like religion, 'common sense') have a certain amount of independence from the base; you don't 'read off' the one entirely from the other. Of course, this is a huge generalisation and debate on things like this is the stuff of marxist argument.

And all this is very useful, as a way of looking at how capital operates

and how it structures society in certain ways. But we're saying here that it is not much good for explaining how and why women are oppressed by men. This is not what it was designed for, so it's not surprising that <sup>is not so</sup> useful here. But many marxist-feminists, and most marxists, have tried to say that it can-- sometimes even that women's oppression can only be explained by marxism. Well--we'll see more about this in a minute.

So let's go back now to pick up the threads of the development of feminist theorising. We left the story at the point where the recent Women's Movement starts to grow-- the mid- to late- '60's. This recent history of feminist thinking falls into two main parts. The first is dominant until about 1973/4, and it represents the establishment by women of their existence and experience in many areas of life. This theme carries on, of course, throughout the '70's, alongside other things. The emphasis is on 'experience', for the reasons we talked about earlier, and for the very important reason that women were establishing their presence, after centuries of being overlooked, and years of being ignored by the Left. This of course was crucial, and it contains within it the seeds of all later theory (much of it still undeveloped); some of it was also developed in connection with the explanation of women's oppression. As Lynne pointed out at the Summer School, events like the anti-Miss World demonstrations were pointing to the ideological level which women are oppressed. But little of this writing set out to construct a theory of women's oppression. And this strand in feminist writing has until recently, remained untheoretical in its aim. There were in this early period, some more theoretical things written. There was Juliet Mitchell, for instance, there was Kate Millett, there was Shulamith Firestone. But the predominant emphasis was un- (possibly anti-) theory. Quite a lot of it was also interested in the level of ideas (like Eva Figes' 'Patriarchal Attitudes', for instance). So the second (very rough) stage I'm suggesting here, which developed in the early '70's, represents a shift both into theory, and away from the ideological level.

This happens of course with the growth of Socialist Feminism, and represents a feeling among some women that mere of a total explanation of women's oppression was needed, and that it must be more materialist. So what fits the bill very clearly here is marxism. Much of the development of feminist theory (though not all of course, see especially radical feminist theory) is in association with marxism. This is not just because of the above reasons, but also because many women were marxists, and wanted to find a way of bringing together the understanding that marxism had given them, with the experience of being a woman. So around this time there are the first systematic attempts to construct marxist-feminist theory.\*

I'm going to suggest that in doing this, marxism tended to dominate. This was probably for two reasons. One is, as I've shown, the greater state of development of marxism as a set of ideas. The other is, I think, the tendency, in looking for a materialist analysis of women's oppression, to assume that this meant a marxist economic analysis - and according to the ideas we looked at above, that meant

\*some of this was 'academic' theory, some less so. I'm here trying to bring down to earth some of the more academic attempts.

seeing economics as the base (of the house) and feminism as slotted in at one of the other floors. The idea of 'materialism' maybe being seen differently for feminism doesn't seem to have arisen.

So we'll do a quick guided tour of some of these attempts at marxist-feminist theory. The theme is that there was a tendency to start off from marxism and include women in to that, somehow fitting women in to the existing analysis of capital. This has led to some interesting, but one-sided, analysis. It's also meant the denial, or reducing in importance, of what's particular about women's oppression - that is, things that are different in the oppression of women compared to that of the working class under capital. There have been one or two attempts to look at women as distinct from capital, but here again I'm suggesting that the method and concepts used are these Marx and others developed for looking at capital, and so even this has problems. We'll take the theme of the week at the summer school and show how women ~~is~~ have been 'slotted in' at economic, political, and ideological levels of marxism; then an analysis that sets up a distinct structure of oppression for women, but in marxist terms; and then look at successful attempts to connect feminism and marxism, while doing justice to both. *(This bit is in Part II.)*

What I think we need is a 'day return ticket' from marxism to look at how the logic of women's oppression operates. It's a different logic from that of capital. We must be open-minded and not feel bound to use marxism at all costs in this. When we have worked this out, we should return to class, and look at how women and men are affected by their positions in both patriarchy and class. This means that at some times patriarchy and class will operate in the same direction (eg. by sticking women in shitty, badly paid jobs) but not always - there are conflicts (eg. by employing women in preference to men as a cheap source of labour). In other words, I'm saying that the oppression of women under patriarchy is different from the oppression of workers by capital; feminism is distinct from socialism.

But I'm not saying that class and sex don't work in a very interconnected way in the real world, nor that we can afford to ignore class in the fight against sexism - we can't. They're very interconnected. But they aren't the same thing - and the relationship between them may be one of conflict as well as agreement.

So, before we look at how attempts were made to connect feminism and marxism, let's look at some of the main aspects of women's oppression that the Women's Movement brought out. This will be in the form of statements, in order to sum up some of the main 'findings' of feminism. I'm suggesting that marxism itself is not able to explain these statements and that specifically feminist theory is needed to do so.

Some main statements:

Women are confined at home with small children while men go out to work.

Isolation is oppression.

When women go out to work, they tend to have two jobs- in the home and outside  
 Women are brought up to feel inferior as people, to lack confidence in their  
 abilities to do things.

Women are judged not so much on what they can do, and more on what they look like  
 their ability to attract men.

Getting a man, marriage and babies - this is the pivot of women's lives, and  
 ensures their economic security.

Women do not control their bodies

-in the health service generally

-especially in relation to pregnancy: questions of contraception and abortion

This means that women can get trapped into spending their lives doing things they  
 didn't choose - eg. bringing up children

Women do the house work, most men don't

Women's work in the home is de-valued and seen as trivial by men

-also women's lives in general

Women are heavily conditioned by ideologies of romance, domesticity, mother-  
 hood, 'good' sexuality

Women are beaten by the men they live with

Women are subjected to violence; sexual (rape) and non-sexual, by men

Men are brought up to be masculine, to have the 'right' to wield power over women  
 and to subordinate the lives of women to their own lives

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This doesn't mean, of course, that these statements don't have implications for  
 capitalism, nor that there are not equally statements that can be made where  
 both marxism and feminism are needed to explain them, eg.:

Women reproduce male labour-power (both everyday, and generationally)

Women get stuck in shit housing

or indeed statements that require race as well as sex and class for an explan-  
 ation, eg.:

Black women get the worst jobs of all

Sexist and racist immigration laws operate most strongly against women

However I've chosen to concentrate on the first set of statements deliberately,  
 because they aren't easily covered by a marxist analysis, and yet they're all  
 findings of the Women's Movement.

It's also true to say that women's oppression has lasted much longer than  
 capitalism. Patriarchy seems to have existed throughout most of history, and  
 seems to exist in all known current social structures- this is not cheap point-  
 scoring, but reinforces the point that we need an analysis of it different from  
 that of capital. What we need, in fact, is a way of looking at, for women, the  
 relations of biological reproduction. It's not 'natural' that women's precreative  
 functions should lead to oppression, but it happens because of the social



relations that are built on the desire to control that function.

There aren't yet many attempts at a total way of explaining women's oppression, but I'll mention one which is I think a very useful start. It's from Ray Harrison, who's written an article with another woman in 'Feminism and Materialism' (Edited by Annette Kuhn and Anne-Marie Welpé, and not I'm afraid very readable.) Ray picks out what she thinks are the main elements of women's oppression:

control of our fertility  
control of our sexuality  
control of our labour

And from the work of both her and other women it's clear that this control is based on:

- violence
- economics
- ideology

The family is the central place where this control takes place, but it's not the only one. Marriage can probably be seen as the pivot (like the labour contract for workers under capital) where control over the three above areas is contracted to one man, and it structures the main 'categories' for women (Single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, etc.).

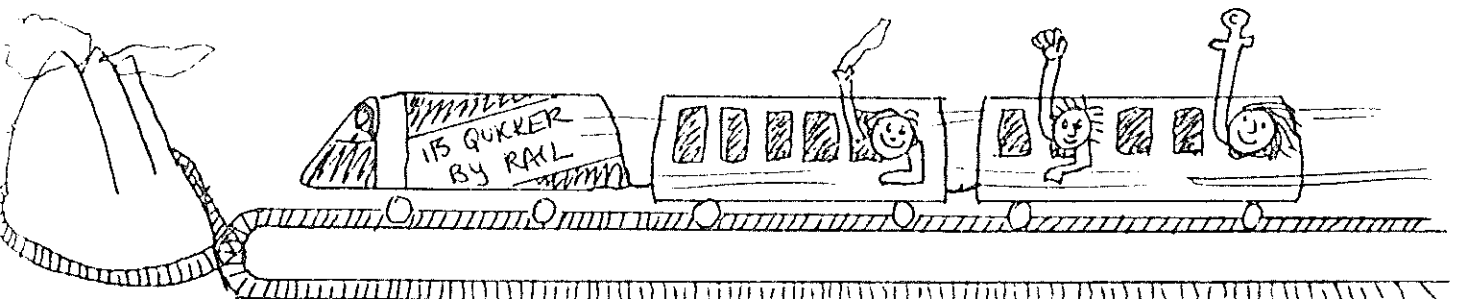
It's now clear that marxism on it's own can't explain these things. Terms like 'mode of production', 'surplus value', the state, relations of production, are all useful to analyse capital, and may touch on these areas, but they don't have central explanatory power for women's oppression. So we need, mentally, another house with various floors to explain patriarchy. Mica Nava has suggested the image of a semi-detached house (sorry about the petty-bourgeois connotations- someone at the summer school suggested it could be in a very run-down area). The idea is that marxism is one house, say no 63., and feminism is the adjoining one, say no 64. We've already seen how marxism has probably three floors, economic, political/social and ideological. Well, the picture is less clear for feminism, but we do know we have an ideological floor, so we've got an attic. How the rest looks has still to be worked out- we don't know which of the sorts of controls are central, though several feminists suspect it is fertility/sexuality, with labour coming second. And the idea is that the houses are joined together, and share the same drainage system, overlook the same garden (well all right then, back yard), have a few doors knocked through at the various levels and so on. To continue the analogy, no 64 has been standing much longer than no 63 (which was rebuilt about 200 years ago); but no 64's been kept in very good condition by the owners... and so on. Pictures might help.

ideological	ideological		
political / social	control of sexuality	control of fertility	control of labour
economic			
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Basically what I'm saying here is that hitherto many marxist-feminist analyses have tended to slot women in at one of the 'floors' of capital, or only admit differences in marxist terms. I've been arguing for the establishment of women's oppression as distinct from that of workers by capital, before the attempt to connect the two things together. And because we as women find it so hard to go outside the terms of capital (especially in a mixed organisation), I'm advocating a DAY RETURN TICKET into feminism from marxism. We'll be back, but we need the space to 'think' our oppression separate from capitalist oppression.

This doesn't mean the advocacy of separatism, nor even saying that in practice you can ignore class. It's all connected up, though sometimes in contradictory ways. But in order to see the shape that is distinctive to our oppression, and then have a chance of holding it up against that of marxism, we need much more clarity about our oppression. What forms does it take? What causes it? Where do we start, continue and finish in overthrowing it? Theory on its own is useless, and many of the answers are being worked out in practice. But I think practice can learn from theory, and here I'm trying to make some of the theory more accessible. This is where I'm going to stop, and hope that in the next bulletin, if there's room, I can finish off- by doing a quick tour of some of the marxist-feminist analyses that have been put forward, and finishing with one that I think connects patriarchy and capital together really well.

Love from Violet Petter. (W.L.)



Well, I missed the last Discussion Bulletin by a few hours - so either this will be serialised, only a month later, or it'll all get put together, if you have the stamina to read it.

The story so far: Marxism has been developing for ever a century, and

ignoring Feminism. She, however, has been, against considerable odds, growing on her own. Bursting forth at various times, but especially in the late '60's, she has been exploring her own oppression. Coming to the attention of Marxism, and declaring her right to exist autonomously, she is needed. Quite keen to make the connection anyway, Feminism (or part of her) tries to construct Marxist-Feminism. But dangers lie in store. Can Marxism cope with an equal relationship, or will Feminism, as so often in the past, be beat to the will of Marxism? Will she end up locked away in his notorious villa, no 63 Acacia Gardens? Will she be kept on the ground floor, in the infamous Economic Suite? Will she be tied up on the middle floor, along with his other Political and Social Relations? Or, worst of all, will she be relegated to the Ideological Attic, where she can lead a fairly free existence, but at the cost of being taken seriously, and not being able to jump from the window? Or will her sisters in the adjoining house, no 64, be able to knock a door or two through the party (goodit?) wall, and allow her to live with them, in her own house, with her own ground floor and front door, and in friendship with her neighbours? Will they later be able to cooperate on repairing the reef together, unblocking the drains, and fending off the threatened nuclear base up the road? Will they be able to welcome to the neighbourhood, and live next to, a third house, that of Anti-Racism? Will the same battles have to be fought again? New read on:

(You are advised to skim through the previous half of this story if the above baffles you.)

We get to the point before of saying that women's oppression, though connected, was different from that of workers by capital, and therefore feminists needed a day-return ticket away from marxism in order to get the shape of our oppression clear before returning to link it to marxism. This did not deny the interconnections of class and sex in practice. We outlined women's oppression as physical, economic and ideological control by men over women's sexuality, fertility and labour. We'll now look at some marxism-feminisms, suggesting that they tend to subordinate women's oppression to the analysis of capital, or challenge marxism in its own terms.

In the mid-70's, many women turned to the founding fathers to seek enlightenment on their analysis of women. We'll look at Marx first, then at Engels. Marx did not really deal adequately with the question of women's oppression at all. He began with apparently good intentions - in the 'German Ideology' (one of his early works), he suggests that both production and precreation are important for society, but it appears later that this refers only to pre-industrial societies. From the development of capital onwards, he consistently ignores relations of biological reproduction even when it seems ludicrous to do so:

'The third circumstance which, from the very outset, enters into historical development, is that men who daily remake

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their own life, begin to make other men, to prepropagate their own kind; the relation between men and women, parents and children, the family." (GI, 1970, pp 49-50)

He subsequently relegates relations of procreation to the realm of 'the natural', a mystification very common to theorists, marxist or otherwise. eg:

The maintenance and reproduction of the working class is, and must ever be, a necessary condition to the reproduction of capital. But the capitalist may safely leave its fulfillment to the labourer's instincts of self-preservation and of propagation. (Capital vol 1, 1970, p 572)

So women's oppression is 'naturalized'. This also means that Marx sees women as relating unproblematically to class in the way that men do. But we know that the position of women is based first on their relation to reproduction, and only second on their relation to production. Marx suffers for this mistake, for he predicts that the rise of capital will 'liberate' women from the home.

However terrible and disgusting the dissolution, under the capitalist system, of the old familial ties may appear, nevertheless modern industry, by assigning as it does, an important part in the process of production, outside the domestic sphere, to women, to young persons, and children of both sexes, creates a new economic foundation for a higher form of the family and of relations between the sexes. (Capital, 1970, p490)

But Marx didn't bargain with patriarchy as a force of its own, operating through the state and the unions (see below) to keep women 'in their place', in the home first and foremost.

Engels, on the other hand, did spend a considerable amount of energy on the position of women in his 'Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State'. This was one of the main texts with which marxist-feminism has engaged itself. Rather than get into a detailed examination of the whole thing, I will here summarise the bones of the argument and look at the implications for women.

Engels sees different types of marriage going with different stages of production through history. With early farming communities goes pairing marriage, with a 'natural division of labour' (sic), when the woman owns domestic tools, the man owns production tools. Then his tools allow him to produce a surplus, and from then on the relationship becomes oppressive. He wants (but why? He doesn't say; he seems to assume it's 'natural') to pass his property on to his sons. He therefore demands monogamy and sexual fidelity from the woman. The sexual division of labour carries on, and so Engels says that the rise of class society coincided with the rise of women's oppression. It is this equation of class and sex that is his downfall, however, as it was for Marx: he predicted that <sup>capitalism</sup> would, by employing women outside the home, liberate them. And he might well have been right if he'd only had to reckon with capitalism. But as Ray Harrison, and also Sally Alexander point out, patriarchy was not destroyed by capitalism, but saved by a combination of the state and the male union movement in the 19th century. Capital, it seems, did prefer women

as a cheap source of labour power, over men - which threatened male employment, and disrupted 'the family'. A combination of male union pressure and state intervention (in the long-term interests of capital), led to protective legislation - that is, the limitation of the hours that women and children could work - and the demand for the 'family wage' - i.e. payment of the male labourer to cover the upkeep of wife and children. Thus male supremacy as labourer and breadwinner was re-established.

The main problems with Engels' analysis are therefore that it assumed class and sex oppression went together, and that it couldn't therefore see how patriarchy might reassert itself independently of, or against, capital. And while Engels went much further than Marx and most other Marxists, his analysis concentrates almost exclusively on the sexual division of labour rather than the control of women's sexuality and fertility.

So, in terms of our 'houses', Marx doesn't even make it over to the RHS of the page, to no 64. Engels tries, but connects it all up too quickly to private property; the ground floor of no 63. Still, he gets good marks (see) for trying, especially at the end of the 19th century. I think I'll do a lot of diagrams on a page at the end, so have a look for Marx'n'Engels there.

Next, marxist-feminists attempted to take on the economic 'heavies' of the marxist field, and show how marxist economic theory was inadequate without a consideration of the economic activity of women in the home.

I'm going to look at these m-f's in the same order as we studied marxism at the summer school; that is, from the economic base, through the political/social level, to the ideological level, then going across to look at patriarchy as a (fairly)autonomous structure. This accords roughly with the way they developed, but not absolutely; Juliet Mitchell and Christine Delphy came earlier than you'd expect. However, it's still a useful way to look at the ideas. It's certainly true that in the development of marxist-feminist theory, there was a need, it was felt, to take on economic marxism. While this was of course a genuine attempt by women (and one or two men) to give a marxist economic analysis, it also smacks a little of the 'battle for recognition' - i.e. you'd only get taken seriously by marxists if you took on these terms. Or, as Birmingham CCOS women put it in 'Women Take Issue' (1978): there were 'economistic tendencies in marxist and socialist analyses which shaped both women's and men's criteria for 'a materialist analysis of women's oppression...In this case we would argue that this tendency was manifested in a refusal to recognise women's oppression unless it could be grounded in their exploitation by capital.' (p 38)

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First, then, we have the engagement with economic levels of Marxism. There are two main strands here. One is to do with women at work, the other to do with women at home. It's as though first women's presence was established in the site of production, then a marxist analysis was attempted of women's traditional work in the home.

First, women in waged work. Here we look at Veronica Beechey and her analysis of women as part of the labour process.

Her main argument is that capital draws on the existing sexual division of labour (men at work, women in the home) in order to place women in the labour process. This means women's prime role being seen as her responsibility for the family and home; and capital using this to employ women as a preferred source of a) cheap and b) reserve labour. That is, a) it's assumed that part of the costs of the reproduction of her labour power is born by the family (we mentioned the family wage earlier) and so she can be employed at below the male wage. And b) it's assumed that if laid off she can 'disappear' back into the family without claiming welfare benefits reappearing in the unemployment statistics. So women are a preferred source of industrial reserve army, which also covers other groups, eg. blacks, the disabled, the old, the young, etc.

Now this is a very interesting and useful extension of labour process and economic theory to cover women. But that's its emphasis. It starts and finishes firmly within marxist categories. Beechey does almost admit that patriarchy might be a separate issue. She says:

"The existence of the sexual division of labour which consigns women to the family and the patriarchal ideology embedded in it must be presupposed in order that female labour can constitute these advantages to capital. This suggests that it is the sexual division of labour and the family... whose existence must be assumed if the specificity of the position of female wage labour in the capitalist mode of production is to be understood." (1978, p192)

But that's as far as she goes. Otherwise she regards women purely from the point of view of capital. Which is useful, but not the whole story.

This means: she only looks at the sexual division of labour, not at the control of sexuality and fertility. Nor does she look at why, from women's point of view, they might only be free to enter the labour market on certain terms and not others. And in the end, she sees everything, including patriarchal relations, being firmly determined by the economic level of capital. Thus she says we must see

"...the forms of the family and of the sexual division of labour within it, being determined in the last instance by changes in the mode of production." (1978, p194)

So in terms of our diagram, she places women firmly on the ground floor of capital, usefully extending marxist economic analysis, but not admitting the potential autonomy of patriarchy (the house next door).

3  
Another attempt by feminists in the mid-'70's to get to grips with economic marxism took the form of what is now known as the 'domestic labour debate'. This looked at women at home, rather than in the workplace outside the home.

In doing so, it seemed to open up the possibility of a greater challenge to the economic emphasis of capital. But in fact this was not the case. The whole debate centred round the problem of extending the marxist economic analysis to include domestic labour; and the main question that the whole thing was about was whether or not surplus value was extracted from housework, and thus whether the housewife was, like the male wage earner, exploited by capital. [For the record, some said that the housewife only produced use-value, and therefore could not have surplus value extracted from her work (Ceulsen, Magas & Wainwright, 1974&5, plus Political Economy of Women Group - of the CSE, 1975, plus Adamsen and others (in Revolutionary Communist), 1976. Some said housework, by reproducing the labour power of the worker who produced surplus value, contributed to the extraction of surplus value (Harrison, CSE bulletin 1974; Wally Secombe 1974 and Jean Gardiner, 1975&6). Some said it directly produced surplus value itself (Dalla Costa & James 1972 in 'The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community' - and they argued for wages for housework) - that the family was a 'social factory'.]

I don't want here to get into the rights and wrongs of it all. But I do want to comment on the way the debate was set up. Thus the whole thing revolved around extending marxist concepts to fit housework in - to gain recognition, if you like, by male marxists, of the drudgery - the existence - of housework. This is useful, and very understandable - remember the poster showing two men sitting at the kitchen table saying how housework isn't serious work, and the woman washing up? It was important to make the point that housework is work, that it's never-ending, and that it's oppressive for women. This point was in fact taken to some extent - there was thereafter much more emphasis on how women's work in the home reproduces male labour power - ie, sends them back the next day in a fit state for work, and produces the next generation ('The mighty hunter is restored'). However, that's not really the point... all this meant concentrating, from the point of view of women's oppression, only on her labour, and not even on the specific nature of her labour, but only on certain aspects of it. eg, Wally Secombe says he's looking at:

"the substantive component of domestic labour, subtracting out the timeless household and child guardian aspects of the housewife's role. This latter aspect is not measurable in terms of labour time or value." (1975)

So labour theory could only look at certain things, not at others. And made all the same assumptions about 'timelessness' etc. that women have been subjected to for years.

The point I'm making is that this 'recognition struggle' by feminists towards marxists only scratched the surface of the analysis of women's oppression,

\* This is the only contribution to the 'domestic labour debate' that went beyond the question of labour - looking also, for instance, at women's sexuality. So while it must be mentioned in this context, it deserves wider appraisal too.

It dealt only with the the sexual division of labour, from the point of view of capital, and economics, and entirely omitted the the control of women's sexuality and fertility, and ideological control of women.

And it made many feminists feel, understandably, that women's work wasn't 'coming up to scratch' in comparison with male waged labour. The real fault lies, in fact, with the terms of the discussion- the concepts are inadequate to deal with the complexity of women's oppression. To quote Judy Keiner:

"Just tacking on the problem of women to existing theories of social reproduction, which are not gender-specific, all too readily confirms the marginality of women, or finds that they are just like men, only less so." (Feminist Review no3)

So we'd have to change marxist concepts - so that, for instance, you don't have to have surplus value extracted from you in order to have your oppression recognised...

But feminists didn't stay on the level of the economic in coming to grips with marxism. They also dealt at the level of marxist political analysis. (middle part)  
One example I will take here is that of Mary McIntosh who has done a lot of thinking around the question of women and the state.

She says that the state does two things:

firstly, it makes sure that labour power is reproduced. Sometimes by providing state services, but, (especially in a time of recession) by putting this responsibility 'back' onto the family.  
secondly, it makes sure that women remain in the reserve army of labour, and don't challenge men as prime workers, by i) making certain conditions of employment accepted by law (eg. recent proposed changes in maternity leave) ii) keeping married women in a state of 'semi-proletarianisation' - so that they can be paid wages below the value of their labour power (ie. expecting the husband to make up the difference). This means that they can be encouraged or repelled from the labour market according to capital's needs. (putting out propaganda about how children need full-time mothers is one way the state has done this.)

This analysis is also useful, and shows how the state intervenes to keep women 'in their place'. But the problem with it is that, just like Beechey, she starts with capital and ends with women- in other words, she's looking at how capital and its needs affect women, not the other way round. So she says the state helps capital to use the family, and women within it, for its needs. So she's 'fitting women in' to an analysis of capital in just the way Beechey does. She doesn't think women's oppression is separate in any sense from capital, or could ever get back on capital.

"Capitalist society is one where men dominate women; yet it is not this but class domination that is fundamental to the society."

And once again, with Beechey, and Engels, she only looks at women as workers - ie. the sexual division of labour. She doesn't look at the control of women's sexuality/fertility, or at the ideological control of women.



So Mary McIntosh, in terms of our diagrams, stays pretty much within the ground and middle floors of the first house — that is, the economic and political levels of marxism. She doesn't establish a sense of patriarchy existing, or having a potentially autonomous existence.

To be fair, I did hear her taking part in a couple of discussions at the Communist University of London (she's in the CP), and it sounded as though she has shifted quite a bit since writing the above ideas. But she's known for the analysis I've outlined, and the most recent version of it, which I've used here, was published only 2 years ago.

Finally (within the marxist framework, anyway) we get on to analyses of women's oppression at the level of ideology. That is, at the level of ideas and attitudes. I've already said (in part I of this saga) that the early Women's Movement concentrated a lot of its energies on pointing out the ways women are oppressed ideologically, through sexist ideas and attitudes. This is a crucial area of women's oppression, probably more so than for race or capital, for instance, because of the way we as women are brought up to think of ourselves in certain ways, to identify as women, with a whole set of ideas about what that means. However, there is a danger here when we're talking about marxist-feminism. This is because, if we're not careful, the whole of women's oppression gets 'slotted in' at the level of ideology, and thus fits neatly into what is seen as a not very central area of marxism. It also suggests that if only a few ideas would change, then everything would be hunky-dory. Whereas we know that women's oppression is highly material, not just ideological. What's un-material about being knocked about, or living in terrible housing, or not having enough money to spend on our kids or ourselves? So while the ideological level is clearly very important we mustn't suggest that it's the whole story. Patriarchy is material too, very.

We start with a brief look at Juliet Mitchell, and particularly her work on 'Psychoanalysis and Feminism' (1975). Her idea is that Freud may have been wrong to give such a biological emphasis to the male genitals (penis envy and so on), but did at least work out a way of talking about female sexuality, and we can take his concepts out of the psychological level, <sup>she says,</sup> and see them as describing the ideological oppression of women. So she advocated using Freud in this way. Here she is clearly stressing the importance of ideology as oppressive to women. Her analysis is interesting for this reason, though she does run the risk of doing what I suggested above — that is, by concentrating on the ideological level, getting 'slotted in' to the attic of marxist analysis. In fact she seems to actually advocate this herself. But here she's also interesting, because she also says that there are particular material places in society that are the terrain of women — the family being the main one. So she also seems to suggest

that there might be a potentially autonomous structure that oppresses women: patriarchy. However whether she finally ends up saying there is, is unclear; you could equally say that she slots herself in at the level of marxist ideology. In this respect her work is ambiguous.

There is another group of theorists who have contributed something to the analysis of ideology as oppressing women. They have started a journal called 'm/f', and they are connected to another one called 'Ideology and Consciousness'. Both are expensive and very difficult to understand; I don't recommend them. However they have done a lot of work on the way women are represented in the media, for instance in 'Cosmopolitan' magazine, and the way in which there are progressive as well as reactionary elements in that representation. For instance, women are encouraged to be independent, and to make their own sexual demands on men, as well as being encouraged to spend pounds on make-up and make as much money as possible. So I'm mentioning these people because some of their ideas are interesting, and they do at least recognise the importance of attitudes and ideas in oppressing women. However, the price of this is that they think everything is ideological, (or a 'discourse' as they put it). They don't accept that there is a real world out there, but say that we only experience it through the categories we think in. They even say at one point that women don't exist in reality, but only as a category! (Well, blew me...) So of course they don't recognise any other levels of any of these houses except the attic. They say that that's all there is. But in fact they tend to get slotted in to other analyses at the level of the attic. I wouldn't worry about them. They are infuriating (and almost impossible) to read.

There are also other feminists who are trying to connect marxism and feminism together. Many of them have done this by concentrating precisely on the ideological ways women are oppressed, and accepting a marxist analysis for the rest of the story. I think that many of the contributions to the CCCS book 'Women Take Issue' slide into this. After very good explanations about women's oppression, many of them, when there's a conflict with marxism, slip women's oppression 'up' to the ideological level; start talking about 'ideologies of sexuality', for instance, rather than sexuality itself. For those of you who are into Althusser, I think it is due very much to his influence. Recently, some of us at CCCS have been trying to work out what a theory of patriarchy with its own material level, might look like, before connecting it up with marxism. The idea is that the violence, power, economic sanctions, used against women are just as material, real, as the exploitation of workers by capital.

So where have we got to? We've seen how marxist-feminists have tried to relate the analysis of women's oppression to that of workers under capitalism. We've seen how Marx and Engels didn't provide the answers (the 'E more than M'). Also how the economic base was tackled (women as reserve workers, and domestic labour); the political level (the state and women), and the ideological level (oppressive sets of ideas). In all cases we are saying that women tended to get glotted in to the analysis of capital. And when they were looked at specifically, what was emphasised was the sexual division of labour, and sometimes ideology, rather than the control of women's sexuality and fertility, over which there was a huge silence - and yet which is probably central to the question of women's oppression. The idea of patriarchy being potentially distinct from capital, the 'connected to it, was not seriously considered.

There was once theorist who did see women's oppression as distinct from capital, and she is the last one I shall look at - apart from the next-to-perfect analysis at the end! Her name is Christine Delphy, and she's French. In Britain, her main exponent, and co-worker, is Diana Leonard (Barker). Delphy's best-known thing is 'The Main Enemy', written in France in 1970, and published in Britain in 1977.

Delphy did aim to provide a 'materialist' analysis of women's oppression - and by this, she meant looking at how women were exploited economically in marriage. She said that, at marriage, women entered a 'domestic mode of production' in which housework and child-rearing were the productive activities. Women's work here was unpaid, and expected to be given for love or duty to the husband. Women were thus exploited by patriarchy economically, and constituted a sort of serf-class 'Sex-class' is the term used by Delphy, and she sees it as a separate form of class from that arising from capital. All women are in the exploited sex-class, she says, no matter what the (capitalist) class their husbands are in. And all men benefit from the exploitation of women in this way.

There are several things to say about this analysis. First, most of it is based <sup>on</sup> research she did on French peasant families, and it fits this case particularly well. Second, she concentrates only on the economic aspects of women's oppression, like those we have already looked at. She does grant <sup>patriarchy</sup> some autonomy, and is very detailed and clear <sup>women's labour</sup> in analysis, but she does totally ignore the control of women's sexuality and fertility, and the ideological level at which women are oppressed. So her analysis in this sense is partial. But it's interesting in terms of what she is trying to do. Third, she does see patriarchy as distinct from capital, and feminism as separate from marxism, but in marxist terms. Thus she uses concepts like 'mode of production', 'class' and 'materialism' and applies them in a rather crude way to the domestic rather than the industrial mode of production. This helps to explain why she misses out the things we mentioned above, the things which are specific to women's oppression. What we need is a theory that

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explains how patriarchy works, what it's based on, how it 'ticks'. We don't need marxist concepts transferred willy-nilly - it distorts the picture. We need a clear look at what causes men to oppress women. Then we can afford to say - OK - how does this relate to class and marxism? But if we do it too soon, the 'shape' of patriarchy gets lost and absorbed into the 'shape' of capital. And this is what we have seen. I'm not arguing for no return to class; nor am I arguing for a separatist politics. But I am arguing for a much clearer understanding of women's oppression, how it all fits together, before we connect it all up with class. That's a 'day-return ticket'!

So, after all this, what do we need from a good theory of women's oppression?

Some ideas:

- a) an acknowledgement that procreation (or biological reproduction) is of equal importance to survival as is the production of material goods.
- b) awareness that the biological process of procreation is not, as conventionally thought, responsible for the oppression of women.
- c) that we need therefore to look at the social relations of procreation - how societies get round to allowing for the production of the next generation.
- d) this means looking at our gender roles as socially constructed, not biologically 'given'. They are thus learnt in childhood, not 'instinctual'.
- e) it means looking at the social and political relations which account for the oppression of women.
  - the social relations centred in family and kinship structures
  - the political relations based on physical violence and economic sanctions, by men over women.
- f) this structure to be seen as having its own ideological level - patriarchal ideology is an important way of controlling women. There are ideologies of sexuality (eg, heterosexuality the 'natural thing'), of domesticity (eg. 'a woman's place is in the home'), of motherhood (eg. 'a woman only fulfils herself when she bears, rears, and mops up after, a child'), of romance (eg. 'Mr Right will come along and sweep you off your feet' and 'love will be for ever').

This would mean being clear about patterns of child-rearing, behaviour within the family, and outside it, rape, beating of women, economic exploitation and poverty of women, the state as a patriarchal force, not merely a capitalist force, and how ideologies are constructed, and 'lived out' by girls and women.

The whole thing needs to be a) specific and b) historical. And we need to see not only how women have been controlled, but how they have struggled against that control, and how they have negotiated compromises within families.

And then we need to connect the whole thing to class and capital - but making sure we make a balanced judgement about which, if either, - patriarchy or capital - is primary in a particular situation.

And now for an outline of a really good analysis of women, that takes account of both patriarchy and capital in its total picture.

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This is a summary of a very good piece of work done by a woman investigating domestic industry in Naples. She's Victoria Geddard, and she's written notes on this work in a journal of anthropology, Critique of Anthropology. It's in the double issue on women produced in 1977. It's not easy to get hold of; if people want more than this summary, I could get it photocopied in the bulletin.

She starts from the position that you can't explain what's going on in domestic industry from the point of view of economics alone. She says:

"Thus it is hoped that the research will show that the proliferation of home-work in Naples cannot be explained in terms of single causes, but that it is due to the interconnection of a set of causes of a different nature: the economic structure of Naples, the conditions of the working class, the form of political domination that has governed Naples for the past twenty years, the role of the family in society, the division of labour within the family, and the ideology of male dominance."

So she divides the article into three parts. First, she looks at the economic reasons why domestic industry exists in Naples. Then she looks at women as a labour force, showing how the patriarchal structures they are controlled by, mean that they can only work directly for capital in particular ways. Lastly, she looks at the patriarchal ideologies which define what women should and shouldn't do, and how this also affects the availability of women for waged work.

It's clear she's looking at women as employed by capital. But she takes that as only one side of the picture and shows how patriarchy has first claim on the women, and how it in turn has effects on capital. Women are wives and mothers first, and workers second. The analysis is not perfect, but it's very good! We'll take each part in turn.

First, she looks at the economic context. This involves the decentralisation of production, which "range(s) from modern factories with high technological level to medium-size factories, to artisan workshops, to individual home workers." So the more decentralized the workplace, the lower the investment in capital (machinery), and the more use there is of labour. But labour employed in smaller units and more isolated. Firms will decentralise their production in order to (surprise, surprise) maximise profits, usually by lowering costs. You get hold of cheap labour (eg. women at home) and you employ them at home, so you don't have to pay overheads. Wonderful. This works especially well in a situation where you have a large number of unemployed people, glad of any work, and when the distribution of income is very unequal, so that, in order to aspire to the levels of living of the pace-setters (via telly etc), families are keen to "raise their income by increasing the total hours of productive work of the family unit." Decentralisation, which produces domestic industry, varies from area to area depending on the particular histories of these areas. So Victoria Geddard interviewed many women in the oldest part of Naples, where there's a long tradition of domestic and artisan work, especially in the textile and clothing industries.

The next section looks at women as a labour force, and particularly how they are controlled by patriarchy. She begins by describing the industrial structure

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of Naples. The working class has "extensive unemployment, under-employment (part-time jobs), precarious jobs, 'self-appointed' jobs, illegal activity, etc), low pay, and with the exception of a few branches of industry (notably the metal and mechanical industry), a low level of political and trade union organisation. The industrial structure of Naples is characterised by a very few nuclei of heavy industry (Alfa Sud, Italisider, and a few others) and a proliferation of small factories and workshops."

Most of the home-workers were women, and in most cases their income was essential to the family income. I'll quote:

"In industrial society the dominant role of women is that of housewife and mother, and her role in the economically productive sphere is determined by that dominant role. In fact, a woman's role in production is subject to her ability to adjust it to this other role. Home-work is probably the 'ideal' means of mediating the two roles in a situation where both roles are required (ie. where the family head's income is insufficient to cover the reproduction of himself and his family). It is especially helpful to consider the factory alternative and the domestic industry alternative in relation to one another. Most home-workers expressed a preference for factory work: the rate of pay was higher, the conditions of work were better - paid holidays, sickness, pension schemes. Many thought it was 'more fun' to work in a social situation rather than on one's own, and felt that they could do better work, without distractions. All the women who expressed this preference explained that they didn't work in a factory because they had to fulfil household duties. An examination of individual careers shows that women leave factory work at marriage or after the first pregnancy, and rarely return to factory work afterwards. On leaving the factory, the women usually continue to do the same work at home, often for the same factory. The factory workers interviewed were either single (the majority) or childless, or were in a situation in which their mother or husband's mother were able to take charge of the children and in some cases of the house as well. When asked what social changes and improvements they considered most important, the vast majority of women said nurseries, kindergartens and pre-schools. This view was generally supported by the men of the family as well. ... (Talamo & De Marce's) data show that younger women choose the income-earning alternative which gives them greater freedom and greater economic independence, since as home-workers they are likely to work under their mother's supervision, as well as being expected to help with the housework, and their wages are much lower. However, as they approach the age of marriage and child-bearing (the prime age of marriage for women is between the ages of 21 and 25, followed by the 17-20 age-group), they choose the solution which allows them better to cope with their responsibilities at home.

I found that a considerable number of women gave up factory work after the engagement or their marriage even though it was no yet necessary for them to do so. This was due to their fiances and husbands demanding that they leave the factory, because they were worried about the 'bad influence' of other workers, and work at home with sisters or other kinswomen (his or hers). In some cases fathers forbade their daughters to work outside the home unless they worked with a kinsman or a person known and respected by the family. The (male) preoccupations with the chastity of women thus narrow down the objective possibilities of a woman who wants to work. When women do work in factories, they often work side by side with their mother, father or elder sister. The presence of an adult kinswoman/man is sufficient guarantee that the girl will be protected from bad influences and that her chastity and reputation will remain intact.

The next section is on the ways in which patriarchal ideology oppresses women. Again I will quote because it is all put so concisely in the article itself.

"It is clear then that the woman's role as wife and mother is carefully protected and nurtured by her parents and later by her fiance and husband. A Neapolitan working-class woman is objectively in a situation where her role as producer is irremediably distorted by the requirements of her role as wife/mother, just as her role as wife/mother is distorted by the requirement of earning an income. Further the ideology of female purity, and the corollary of male jealousy and 'protection', define the sphere of production (in the sense of production of commodities and production in a social situation) as dangerous and conducive to corruption and as being incompatible with a woman's role as fiancée, wife and mother. There is a clear division of the female population as perceived by men: there are these women who are located within a context of relations of kinship and marriage, whose social place is clearly defined, and who act in accordance with this place. These women are wives, mothers, daughters, fiancées, and behave as such. Then there are these other women who either do not behave in accordance with their place and thereby lose respect, or are not perceived within the context of social relations, where these relations are not known or not made manifest, or where they are not relevant. Such is the case of the prostitute, the woman living on her own, the outsider. These women are considered to be unvirtuous and in some respects abnormal, in that they do not conform to the model of a 'real woman'. This classification is largely shared by women. Both men and women agree that a woman's place is in the home and that ideally she should be first and foremost mother and wife. Some even go to the extent of saying that a woman is only a woman if and when she bears children. This means that marriage and childbirth are central concerns and are the aims of all girls and their families. A second implication is that whenever a woman is in a situation which falls outside the definition of a good woman in terms of her kinship and marriage relationship she is in potential danger and may fall within the category of the anonymous and unvirtuous woman.

The ideal division of labour between the breadwinner and the female housekeeper is patently contradicted by the real life situation of those who hold the ideal. This contradiction in no way seems to undermine the ideal; instead reality is explained in terms of special, abnormal circumstances, and wherever possible, especially when the woman's work is unskilled, her work is dismissed as very secondary, as a leisure activity carried out in between household tasks. In other words, it is defined as 'men-work' and so the 'breadwinner' saves face."

Victoria Geddard then goes on to look at the effect of her working conditions on the consciousness of the woman herself, showing how her isolation means a very home-centred view of the world, which further weakens her ability to see how she is being exploited, both in the family and in the production sphere. A sort of circular situation is created where the economy is fragmented, the people working in it have a partial view of what's going on, and the whole thing gets reproduced.

So the conclusion is that union activity on its own would achieve little here. She finishes: "The only way to break the circle is firstly by providing stable

alternatives for the female and male work-force, and by providing those social services which, if run efficiently, can contribute to unloading some of the responsibilities which at present are vested in the family. Secondly, by changing the conception of male and female, and what constitutes legitimate male and female activity, within the context of a greater class consciousness on the part of these weaker sectors of the working class."

This analysis is by no means perfect. It reflects the interest in women as workers that we noted before, combined with an interest in patriarchy as ideology rather than a material force in its own right. But it's on the way there. It does

at least look at the determinations on women as wives & mothers which be seen as coming before the determinations on women by production. She confines herself rather to the sexual division of labour, but she does consider the life-pattern of the woman as determined by marriage. It would, for a less work-oriented study, be useful to look at the incidence of violence in the home towards women, the control of the money earned, and any other sanctions used against women. However here we do have a very good outline of the ideological ways in which women are controlled. So - it's a partial analysis. But it's one of the best I've come across.

Another very good, but rather hard-to-read account of how patriarchy and capital can interconnect, is to be found in 'Women Take Issue', by CCCS women. The Chapter on "Women 'inside and outside' the relations of production" is what I'm thinking of. However it is rather theoretical, and not easy reading. A reading group might usefully tackle it, however - what about our new education scheme?

Well, to finish, in a state of near-collapse, may I say sorry for going on so long. I tried to cut it, but couldn't summarise things more than I have. As it is I have ever-summarised some of the arguments, and am very aware of it. The idea has been to give an overview of where feminist and marxist theory is going, and point to where I think it should be going; obviously people may well disagree with me on this. Much of the work was done by the (mixed) group looking at 'Family-School-Work' at the CCCS in Birmingham, but not all. I hope that these people who wanted this written up have got what they wanted out of it; it's harder to say things on paper than orally (the' a bit less nerve-racking), so I hope it hasn't bored the pants off you. O well, I hope it's a start. Please tell me what you think, and especially connections with practice... Theory on its own is no good, but practice depends on knowing the causes of oppression, and some theory can help with that.

More things to look at: (WHAAATTT!)

FEMINISM AND MATERIALISM (eds) A. Kuhn & A-M Welpo. Routledge. £4. Pretty dull reading, definitely academic-type. But if you can face that, good stuff by Ray Harrison, and the Beechey and McIntosh articles I mentioned before.

WOMEN TAKE ISSUE by Women's Studies Group, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Birmingham University. Hutchinson. £3.25. A mixture; some very heavy theory (esp. chs 3,6,8). Also some interviews with housewives (4) and schoolgirls (5) which are easier to read. Ch 3, the' an effort to get through, is worth it; it's a very good statement of what marxist-feminist theory should look like.

Reproduction and Patriarchy; article by Maureen Mackintosh on the relations of reproduction. In Capital and Class (journal) no 2. Definitely academic.

Domestic Industry in Naples; article by Victoria Geddard as reported above. In Critique of Anthropology (journal) nos 9/10 (Women's Issue) 1977. The most readable so far, but hard to get hold of.

Various articles in Feminist Review, which is a newish journal, began rather unreadable but seems to be getting better.

That's all. Violet Petter. WL.  
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