

# **The Newfoundland Migrant Wife:**

## **A Power versus Powerless Theory of Adjustment**

**by Anne Martin Matthews**

Although this paper is ostensibly about women and migration, at a more fundamental level it is concerned with theory, with methods and with data. The paper challenges conventional theoretical assumptions regarding migration. questions certain methodological issues concerning the study of women and migration and re-examines my own data on migrant women. Its purpose is to determine what, beyond the veneer of conventional theories and procedures, we can actually learn about the ways in which women experience the migration situation. In essence this paper begins to answer Dorothy Smith's query as to how sociology might look if it began from the point of view of women's traditional place. (Smith, 1974)(1)

### Theoretical Orientations

To speak in theoretical terms about the study of migration is difficult, for much of the literature specifically on geographical mobility focuses only on the presentation of variables. Rarely is the migration process considered in terms of a cumulative theory, and most research is demographic. (For an extensive discussion of various orientations to the study of migration see Martin, 1974: 1-46).

Information on "sex differentials" abounds in the migration literature. For example, there is ample evidence that females predominate among short journey migrants (Lee, 1969) while men are more migratory over long distances and when the conditions at the destination are insecure or difficult. (Bogue, 1959) Females generally migrate at an earlier age than do males. (Sorokin and Zimmerman, 1929) Also, while migration to cities has usually meant the selection of a greater proportion of females than males, certain industrial cities notably attract more males than females. (*Ibid.*) All of these findings have been asserted countless times. The only other evidence of concern for women in migration research is in the material on mobility and mental health where we find evidence that migrant women experience "mental illness" much more often than men. (Malzberg and Lee, 1956; Sanua, 1970) In light of the research of Chesler (1972) and Smith (1975), however, we can only be dubious of such findings.

Aside from these studies of sex differentials, women are seldom evident in migration studies. As Lofland (1975: 145) writes concerning urban research:

Despite, or perhaps in part because of, their omnipresence, women remain, by and large, merely part of the scene. They are continually perceived, but rarely perceivers. They are part of the furniture of the setting through which the plot moves. Essential to the set but largely irrelevant to the action. They are simply, there.

Where women are considered in migration literature, they are perceived rather than perceivers; objects rather than subjects; and analyzed in terms of women and migration or women in migration, rather than in terms of how women "see" migration.(2)

Assumptions commonly made in migration research prohibited investigators from focusing on the role of women. One such assumption is that the unit of analysis for married persons is the family. Despite Bernard's (1972) evidence that the same marriage may constitute different realities for each spouse, sociologists (including migration researchers) tend to assume that generalizations can be applied to both males and females, irrespective of their different locations and positions. As well, migration researchers fall victim to other fallacious assumptions such as the beliefs

that migration for the good of the male's job is good for the family as a whole and that job satisfaction is the same as overall satisfaction with the move. As Dienstag (1972: 110) states, "The equation--better salary, better male job equal happier us--is the work of male logic."

Prior to the feminist movement of the 1970's and its obvious impact on the study of women's role in migration, only passing reference was made to the fact that the social lives of women are affected by migration far more than those of men.(3) In complete contrast to the women-as-"there" and women-as-object approach of previous studies, Stella Jones (1973), in a pioneering article, focused on geographical mobility as seen by the wife and mother. She found that the majority of migrant women perceived themselves as the key person in the migration process, in establishing the home and making the move successful. Despite the volumes written on migration, here we find a group of women, traditionally only "there" as earlier research had told us, now claiming to be critical factors in the migration process.

Other investigators provide further evidence of female/male differences in responses to migration. Weissman and Paykel (1972) found that a move necessitated by a job change was usually initiated by the husband who viewed it quite differently from his wife. While

the husband would feel like an instigator, the wife would often perceive herself as a helpless victim. As one migrant wife stated:

What was really happening . . . is that many women who are forced to move because of their husband's careers suddenly feel worthless. . . . You don't count. You are the penniless powerless half of the couple. Without control over your fate. Utterly diminished. Psychologically wiped out.

(Dienstag, 1972: 110)

In addition, the wife who remains at home does not as such have "credentials" which she can bring along to help integrate her into the new social milieu in the way that her employed husband does. As Seidenberg (1972;12) writes:

. . . Unlike his, her credentials were specious. . . . She now had little personal identity. All the parties that she had given, all of the successful affairs that she had arranged were in no one's memory. These were all things that people had to experience and could not be told about. This was now lost.

The woman also has to bear the burden of the whole family's adjustment and there is strong evidence that the woman often feels and is made to feel that there is something wrong within herself when she is unhappy with a moving situation. Weissman and Paykel (1972: 24) observe that:

. . . women did not associate their depressive symptoms with

moving, since it is such an accepted part of American life that it is almost taken for granted. These women instead internalized the stresses and blamed themselves for their problems.

Even that celebrated spokeswoman of societal mores, Ann Landers, suggests that the woman who is unhappy with migration is somehow sick. In response to a woman describing herself as a "Gypsy" who always packs the dishes "with tears streaming down my face" and affirms that "making new friends isn't easy," a pitiless Ms. Landers responds:

I say you should go where the grapes grow. If your husband's job requires you to move--then do it without complaining. . . . The trouble is you, dear, and you take yourself wherever you go. Get some counselling and find out why you are so bitter and hostile.(4)

From the foregoing, we have evidence suggesting that wives and husbands have differing "definitions of the situation" of migration. It is critical to keep in mind, however, that much of the preceding material is a recent development within the study of migration. At the time that I was conducting my own migration research in the fall and winter of 1972-73, very little of this research was available and the migrant wife was still only "there." Dorothy Smith (1974:8)

well captures the essence of my dilemma at that time when she writes:

As graduate students learning to become sociologists, we learn to think sociology as it is taught and to practice it as it is practiced. . . . We learn to discard our experienced world as a source of reliable information; . . . to confine and focus our insights within the conceptual framework and relevances which are given in the discipline. . . . When we write a thesis or a paper, we learn that the first thing is to latch it on to the discipline at some point.

This emphasis within sociology on "latching on to the discipline," practicing the discipline as it is practiced and insisting on the "verification of theory as the chief mandate for excellent research" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 2) rendered it almost impossible for me to consider how women might differently approach the whole problem of migration and adjustment to it. Though Sorokin (1959: 522-523) had suggested that "geographic mobility has positive and negative corollaries depending on what meaning the mover ascribes to the relocation," the idea that men and women might have different perspectives on displacement was not considered either in the general literature or in my own research.

#### Methodological Issues

I began my research(5)with no expecta-

tion of finding a different adjustment pattern for males and females. Such a pattern was not one which the migration literature had led me to anticipate, nor one, quite frankly, that I had ever considered examining. However, continually as married couples were asked, "If you knew then what you know now, would you move all over again?" husbands answered in the affirmative, while women, in the presence of their husbands, placed conditions on their replies or answered evasively. Of the seven (out of 90) respondents who emphatically regretted the move, (6) five were women. Their responses reflected concern about children growing up in "tough" neighbourhoods, marriage problems and the like. Moreover, when the husband was not present at the time of the interview, wives were generally more inclined to either express open dissatisfaction or at least to say that they had come to be satisfied only with time. For example:

My first impression of Hamilton was that it was filled with untidy women with squalling children. My first year here all I could think was that I hate this terrible, terrible place.

I was homesick most of the first two years here, but once I was home again, and saw my parents and family, I was much more calm about it. It sort of satisfied you for a while, anyway.

Most prevalent, however, was the pat-

tern where the move had proved satisfactory to the extent that it had given the family economic security but at the price of emotional depression and general unhappiness for the married woman.

My husband will never leave the steel mills. I guess the security of the job is everything now. As long as he got security, he don't care what the work that he does is like. Look, here we are all these years, we got no friends, and we still got nothing. . . . I often wonder what it would be like if we hadn't moved.

These unanticipated findings emerged in the course of the research, but my conceptualization of migration as a group-oriented process prohibited the exploration of these differential male-female patterns of adjustment and satisfaction. Rather than examining migrants as individuals, husbands and wives were interviewed as a unit, with one spouse answering "for both of them." Few questions even took into account the possibility that spouses might have differing responses to the questions. In spite of such obstacles, differing patterns of response between spouses clearly emerged. Given the magnitude of these obstacles, we might reasonably assume that in those cases the discrepancies between husband and wife were particularly strong and that they probably also were present to a lesser degree in cases where they did not emerge openly.

In light of these findings and the recent literature highlighting the differing attitudes of men and women in migration, it is useful to re-examine the data for evidence which might shed further light on such differences. In this re-analysis I am particularly interested in determining whether my data support Jones' (1973) claim that female satisfaction with migration processes is closely related to their involvement in the decision-making and planning stages of the move. The framework of re-analysis may be described as a "power versus powerlessness" theory of migration.

#### Re-analysis of the Data: Power versus Powerlessness

The whole issue of the definition and operationalization of power has been the subject of multitudinous sociological works. (Cf. Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Salifios-Rothschild, 1969; Millet, 1970; Gillespie, 1972) In my research, women and men are defined as having power to the extent that they have control over their fate in various life situations. Power relationships between the sexes are related both to social worth and to individual contributions and resources in the marriage. For a couple the balance of power is an issue open to negotiation between the partners, within limits imposed by the present socio-economic system.

While no studies of migration deal specifically with the issue of the balance of power in the relationship of

migrant couples, a number of them do make oblique reference to it and as such are relevant to the analysis here. Jones' (1973) research findings recall our earlier reference to the unhappy wife as one who often feels herself a helpless victim involved in a move instigated by her husband. Jones clearly found that participation at the planning stage of the move is a measure of the extent to which the female migrant feels she has control over her fate. This also becomes a critical consideration in the analysis of other dimensions of the move. While Jones concentrates on the majority of cases in which the move was a joint decision, the situation of the 42 percent of the sample where the husband and wife did not discuss the decision is one I find even more intriguing. How a wife perceives her non-involvement in the decision to move has major ramifications for how she will perceive the move itself.

In my own research there were 24 couples who were married at the time of the move from the area of origin. Of these 24 couples, 12 or 50 percent stated that "husband and wife wanted equally to move." In seven of these 12 cases, however, the husband answered this question for both spouses and could well have been giving his own definition of the situation when it simply was not correct. In ten of the 24 cases, or 41.6 percent, the husband wanted the move more than the wife and in only two cases did the wife want to

move more than the husband. In these latter two cases the wife had friends of her own in Hamilton. The words of many respondents reveal a general tendency for the female to feel almost powerless in the decision to move.

My husband was much more aggressive about it. I decided I'd better come.

My wife didn't want to leave, really, but she eventually goes along with my ideas.

My wife wasn't too fussy at first but eventually became used to the idea.

My husband phoned and said he had a job here so I had to go.

My wife wouldn't come until I could prove I had enough money. Then I sent home for her.

My husband was going back and forth here for so long that he eventually got things together and he didn't want to come home no more. He just phoned me and said he wasn't coming home and what was I going to do about it. So I had to come up.

While participation in the decision-making process is clearly critical to the discussion, there are as well other dimensions to the issue of power in the relations of migrant couples. When Jones cited the wife as the key person in the move, this was evidence of the wife's power at least in matters per-

taining to such traditional female concerns as house and neighbourhood. In my own research, analysis of the actual strategy of the move reveals that for many migrant women, this power or control over their move is severely diminished. In 15 (63 percent) of the 24 households, the husbands moved to the receiving area before the rest of their families.(7)

The strategy of the move, moreover, bears strong relationship to the power structure of the actual decision to move. In the ten cases where the husband most desired the move, eight or 80 percent took the role of instigator in terms of the actual move, arriving in Hamilton before their wives and selecting job and residence. In the other two cases, the families moved together, but even this may not necessarily be construed as indicative of greater egalitarianism. As one husband stated emphatically to me, "As I said to the wife, 'When we go, we're going together.'"

Of the twelve cases where the husband and wife reportedly desired equally to move, six families migrated together; in the remainder, the husband moved first, found work and a place to live, and then sent for the wife and children. What is significant about these findings is that all six cases where the husband moved first were the same six (of the seven) cases where the husband answered for both spouses to the effect that the decision to move was a

joint one. Given this "coincidence" and the non-equalitarian nature of these moves, one can certainly wonder about the equalitarian nature of these decisions to move.

Nevertheless, the wives who would appear to suffer the most from a sense of powerlessness and loss of control over their fate would be those eight women whose husbands both desired the move more than they and moved before them. In these cases, the wives moved from a place they had not wanted to leave, to a place they had not wanted to go, to a home they had never seen. (8)

Another area of interest when assessing power is the nature of the interaction between husband and wife. Gillespie (1971), for example, suggests that the migrant husband holds more power over his wife than the non-migrant husband, partially because of the wife's increased isolation and also because of her increased dependence on her husband for a variety of services previously provided by members of her extended family. To the contrary, Holter (1972) and Jansen (1970) suggest that increased sharing and equalitarianism occur between migrant husbands and wives. Holter (1972: 154) maintains that families with looser social ties, such as migrant families:

. . . cannot count on stand-ins in traditional roles, and husband and wife are forced to give up a

traditional arrangement and to share more than the families with closeknit networks. Mobility combined with urbanization, which is likely to produce socially isolated families, may thus develop more equalitarian relations between spouses.

Jansen also observes that the social isolation resulting from migration can "force" the husband to stay at home more often, to share household duties and to reveal more about his job since much of the daily discussion will centre around this topic.

In contrast, the comments made by Dienstag (1972) in reference to her own relocation and the general observations of my own respondents presented no evidence of a greater sharing of work loads of the spouses as a result of migration. Even should this be the case, Goode (1963) suggests that the greater flexibility of the sexual division of labour is not necessarily an indication of egalitarianism in the relationship.

Even when the husband performs the household chores, his participation means that he gains power--the household becoming a further domain for the exercise of prerogatives for making decisions. (Goode, 1963: 70)

A consideration of kinship ties as a source of power for the migrant wife(9) also enables us to assess her sense of power versus powerlessness in the migra-

tion experience. As implied above by Gillespie, Holter and Jansen, the presence of kin in the receiving area is critical to the migrant wife in determining the nature of her relationship with her spouse. Tallman's (1969) work on migrant women further suggests that this is particularly true for working class wives. As findings of Rainwater *et al.* (1962) and Komarovsky (1967) suggest, among the working class social and psychological support emanates not from marriage partners but from same-sex friends and kin who form long-standing, tight-knit social networks. It is not surprising then that the presence of kin and friends in the new home community is important. It not only provides a meaningful social network but gives the wife a sense of continuity and a group of people to legitimate her identity.

In my earlier study I was struck by the high proportion of the respondents who had kin and friendship ties in their new community. When re-analyzing this finding, however, I discovered that for over half the migrant wives these contacts were their husband's friends and relatives (see Table I). While simply having "someone" in the receiving area is presumably of help to the recently arrived wife, the presence of husband's kin and friends would not be as important as her own kin in either maintaining a migrant woman's identity or providing her with a power base.

From the earlier discussion we observed that the women most likely to suffer greatest powerlessness would be those whose husbands wanted to move and who came on ahead, acquired a job and accommodation and then sent for their wives. Of interest here is how these women in particular fared with respect to having relatives or friends of their own in the receiving area. On this dimension as well, such women would score very low on a powerlessness continuum. Of the eight women in this category, only in two cases did the wife as well as the husband have friends or kin in Hamilton before the move.<sup>(10)</sup> In four cases only the husband had relatives or friends already in Hamilton and in the remaining two of the cases neither spouse had contacts. In these two latter cases, the husband would still presumably be in a more powerful position than the wife as he was the one who alone, and without the wife's consultation, selected a job and a place for the family to live.

In summary, six of the wives in my sample were almost totally powerless in terms of my definition. They had no influence on the decision to move or on the process of migration and they also had no kin or friends of their own in their new community. Eight others moved without the "auspices" of kinship although they did have varying degrees of participation in the move.

TABLE I  
Presence of Own Relatives or Friends In Hamilton  
At Time of Migration

	Married Males*	Married Females*	Total
Relatives/Friends of own present	17	11	28
No Relatives/Friends of own present	8	14	22
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>50**</b>

\* When a married respondent moves she/he may "know" someone in the receiving area who are their spouse's relatives or friends. However, this table presents data on those persons whom the respondents defined as their own friends.

\*\* This total differs from that contained in the discussion on page 157. This is because that information pertained to couples married at the time of leaving the area-of-origin. However, some migrants married between the time they departed from the area-of-origin and eventually arrived in Hamilton.

It is interesting to observe the extent of satisfaction with the move expressed by these women. Two of these "powerless" women were the only ones in the entire sample who stated that they did not like living in Hamilton. Two of the other powerless wives stated that they liked living in Hamilton but with these qualifications:

I didn't like it at all at first,

but I'm getting used to it now [three years after the move]. I used to be so lonely, but now I'm getting to know people.

Yes, Hamilton's okay, but I get awful homesick around Christmas. If the boys were married I'd love to go home for Christmas.

Earlier, I noted that five female respondents emphatically regretted the move. Of these, two were among the six women I have described as almost totally powerless in their own perception of the migration situation. In their words:

It was the worst mistake I ever made. All I do is worry about the children.

I shouldn't have come, that's where I made my big mistake. I know I was happy before I came here, and everything has gone wrong since. My husband used to make \$49.00 a week when we lived in Newfoundland, and that just wasn't enough to keep the family going on. Now he makes \$160 a week here. But he started to drink, and go out every night to the hotels and bars, and everything started to go wrong. We've been here six years and we've been separated six times. I never even heard of anyone getting divorced until I came here. Everyone does it here.

One significant finding that emerged out of this re-analysis was that the other three women who emphatically regretted the move were all single at the time of their move. Since one would presume that they would have some power over their future at this point, I was curious to ascertain why they had moved to Hamilton and in what ways the move had failed to fulfil their expectations.

My re-analysis yielded the results presented in Table II.

The most frequent motivation to move among single females was "Personal and Family Reasons." Significantly, two-thirds of these stated that they moved for the expressed purpose of "getting married." In every one of these six cases, the fiancés of these women had moved to Hamilton, found a job and a place for them to live and then "sent home" for them to come up and get married. Although we might assume that these women had more control over the decision of whether or not to move than married women with several children, some of them seem to have been just as powerless. In fact, these six respondents included the remaining three women who vehemently regretted the move.

If I had my time over, I would have stayed in Newfoundland. I hate up here. There's nothing here for me. People don't know how to be friendly. They don't have any respect for people here like in my home town. I will never stay in this God-forsaken bloody hole.

Well, Fred was up here and I was alone down there. . . . But I get so homesick. Hamilton will never be home to me. I know I should have stayed home where I would have been happy.

A final factor of relevance in any dis-

Table II  
Unmarried Migrants Motivations for Moving to  
Hamilton

Motivations for Moving	Single Female*	Single Male	Total
Work related (e.g. financial, dislike of job)	6	12	18
Personal and Family Reasons	9	2	11
Travel and Adventure	5	2	7
World War	-	1	1
Style of Life	1	2	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>40</b>

\* Also includes one widowed respondent who moved alone.

cussion of power versus powerlessness is the economic sources of power for husband and wife. (11) In the marital struggle for power Gillespie notes:  
 Not surprisingly the wife's participation in the work force is an important variable. Women who work have more power vis-a-vis their husbands than do non-working wives. (Gillespie, 1972: 135)

One particularly striking feature of this research was the complete de-

emphasis of the work role by both single and married female migrants. This is best explained in terms of the attitude toward women's labour force participation among members of this traditional, family-oriented migrant group. Only seven (12.3 percent) of the 57 wives worked for wages outside the home. Of these only one, a hairdresser, was employed full-time, while the others had such part-time jobs as variety store and supermarket clerks, cleaning staff and typists. (12) In fact, the majority of the respondents

disapproved of women working. "You'd be a poor person before your wife would go out to work in Newfoundland." One woman, who works only part of the year, explained:

My husband wouldn't allow me to work down home. But he got used to me working up here because all women work. But now that I've been off all winter, he doesn't want me to go back this summer. It's really not the way--for women to work in Newfie.

Such attitudes toward women and work are hardly indicative of the greater egalitarianism in marriage of migrants, as earlier suggested by Jansen and Holter. They reflect instead the fundamental powerlessness of those migrant women, as non-employed "personal dependents, defined as persons who are economically, socially and/or legally tied to another person who has authority over them." (Eichler, 1973: 52)

### Summary

In summary then, the analysis of the data suggests the viability of a theory of power versus powerlessness to account for differing perceptions of migration between husband and wife. Clearly such a theory would require greater substantiation than I have been able to provide here. But the analysis of my data indicates that it has utility. Furthermore, such a theory enables us to focus on migration as seen through the eyes of women. As Hochschild (1975: 296) states "powerful and

powerless people live in different emotional as well as social and physical worlds." The theory of power versus powerlessness does not suggest any assumption on my part that powerful women would be quite happy with relocation. (13) It does contend that the greater the power of a wife in the decision to migrate and in the strategy of the move, the more she is likely to be able to cope with the inevitable social disruption created by the move. (14)

### NOTES

1. A slightly different version of this paper is published under the title: "The Case of the Migrant Wife: Looking at the World from the Underdog Perspective" in the Occasional Papers of the McMaster Sociology of Women Programme, vol. 1, no. 1 edited by Marylee Stephenson, McMaster University Press, Spring, 1977.
2. The sociological treatment of women as object rather than subject was suggested to me in a talk on a "Sociology for Women" given by Dorothy Smith at McMaster University, April 7, 1976. This was reiterated by Margrit Eichler in her reference to sociology's focus on women "in" and women "and" research, in a session on Women's Studies at the annual meetings of the Canadian Association of Sociology and Anthropology, in Quebec, P.Q., on May 28, 1976.
3. One early observer of this phenomenon was Herbert J. Gans, who refers to the plight of migrant women as the "female Malaise." (1967: 226)
4. My thanks to Margaret Denton, Dept. of Sociology, McMaster University, for providing me with this clipping.
5. The research reported in this study was carried out on 60 families of migrants from Newfoundland to the city of Hamilton, Ontario. In all, 90 migrant Newfoundlanders were contacted: 46 women and 44 men. Since the object of the study was not to determine adaptation to the move, but rather the degree to which the migrants had established a community (at both the formal and informal levels) in Hamilton, there was no necessity to limit contact only to those migrants who had recently arrived in Hamilton. Thus, the mean average duration of residence in Hamilton of this group was 18 years, a critical factor to consider in any discussion of their attitudes toward migration.
6. A larger number, of course, expressed dissatisfaction with the move, and would do things differently if given the opportunity again. These seven respondents, however, would definitely never have moved had they been able to foresee its consequences.
7. In eight of the remaining nine families, both spouses and children moved together. In one family the wife came before her husband, acquired a job, found accommodation and then phoned her husband.
8. Of course, in the situation of migration it is important to realize that the husband has the ultimate decision-making powers. As Gillespie notes, "The husband has the right to decide where the family will live. If she refuses, he can charge her with desertion." (1972: 130) However, Gillespie makes the caveat that legality is not necessarily a basis for decision-making; it merely reflects the position of society as to how the power is to be distributed when such distributions are contested in the courts. (Ibid.: 147f) Nevertheless, knowing that one has such legal rights with regard to these issues certainly should enhance one's perception of powerlessness in reference to them.

9. At the annual meetings of the Canadian Association of Sociology and Anthropology in Quebec, P.Q., on May 28th, 1976, in a session on Women's Studies, Linda Moffat suggested that the extended family might as well be perceived as a source of power for women in traditional societies and certain sectors of modern society. While I was aware of findings to this effect in the general literature, the context in which her comments were made, and the ensuing discussion provided the catalyst for much of my discussion here.

10. Even those women who do have kin and friends in the receiving area may still be dependant on their husbands in maintaining interaction with their networks. As Schwarzweller et al. observe, the working class migrant wife in the urban area may be especially disadvantaged in this way. They relate the wife's situational isolation from kin and its cushioning mechanisms to the husband's decision making powers as follows:

In a typical . . . migrant family, it is the husband, not the wife, who makes the decision to visit, . . . and it is the husband, not the wife, who drives the car and decides where to go on a Sunday afternoon. (Schwarzweller et al., 1971: 180)

Although I do not have specific data on this in my own research, the comments made by the respondents conveyed an impression of the wife having some control over the maintenance of ties with kin and friends. To the extent that these impressions are accurate, at least some of the women may have more power in this sphere than Schwarzweller et al. suggest.

11. Smith (1973) observes that any economic circumstances which remove a woman from the relation of direct dependence upon an individual man, directly weaken the basis of the relation. Eichler (1973) further argues that power relationships between spouses are fundamentally different for employed women with statuses independent of their husbands as compared with non-employed women whose status is derived from their husbands.

12. Only three of the families said that the wife worked for a specific economic purpose. "He figure its the only way we'll ever be able to afford a house." In the other four cases the wives stated that they preferred to work as it got them out of the house and "gives me pin money." They also implied that it relieved the tedium of a household where the children were grown. This view lends support to Mitchell's contention that,

. . . Women's work is seen so often, not in economic terms at all, but in psychological; what she needs ("It's good for her to get out a bit"), what she can manage, and so on. (Mitchell, 1971: 139)

The literature also suggests that working promotes adaptation to the new environment in that it would balance power relationships between spouses (Smith, 1973; Gillespie, 1972), and take the wife out of the isolation of the home. In this case, however, the one full-time employed respondent, who came to Hamilton to be married, was one of the most outspoken respondents in terms of her regret of the move and her conviction that she would never stay.

13. William H. Whyte (1962) does suggest this in his presentation of wives who "revel" in the process of moving and who appear to align themselves with the corporation in pressuring husbands to move at the bidding of their employers.

14. For my own purposes, the power versus powerlessness approach to migration is of maximum utility in its striking compatibility with my symbolic interactionist-phenomenological orientation. From this perspective, one may conceptualize migration as inherently an example of what Berger and Luckmann term the "disconfirmation of subjective and objective reality." (1967: 152) Such a view naturally extends to yet another: that identity, too, is thrown into jeopardy by the moving process. (ibid.: 173-174) The same kin (significant others) whom we found to be crucial for the balance of power in the relationship between migrant spouses, also play a critical role in the maintenance of subjective reality, and for the "ongoing confirmation of that crucial element of reality we call identity." (ibid.) The assumption, that the process of migration is inherently an example of what Berger and Luckmann term "the disconfirmation of subjective and objective reality" (ibid.), and following from this, of identity transformation if the basis of my doctoral dissertation, Social Change and the Social Re-Construction of Reality: Adjustment of the Migrant Wife, now in progress. To what extent the powerlessness of the migrant woman relates to the critical processes of reality re-construction and maintenance awaits further investigation, but the possibilities are fascinating.

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