

# Feminism and Class Analysis

by Angela Miles

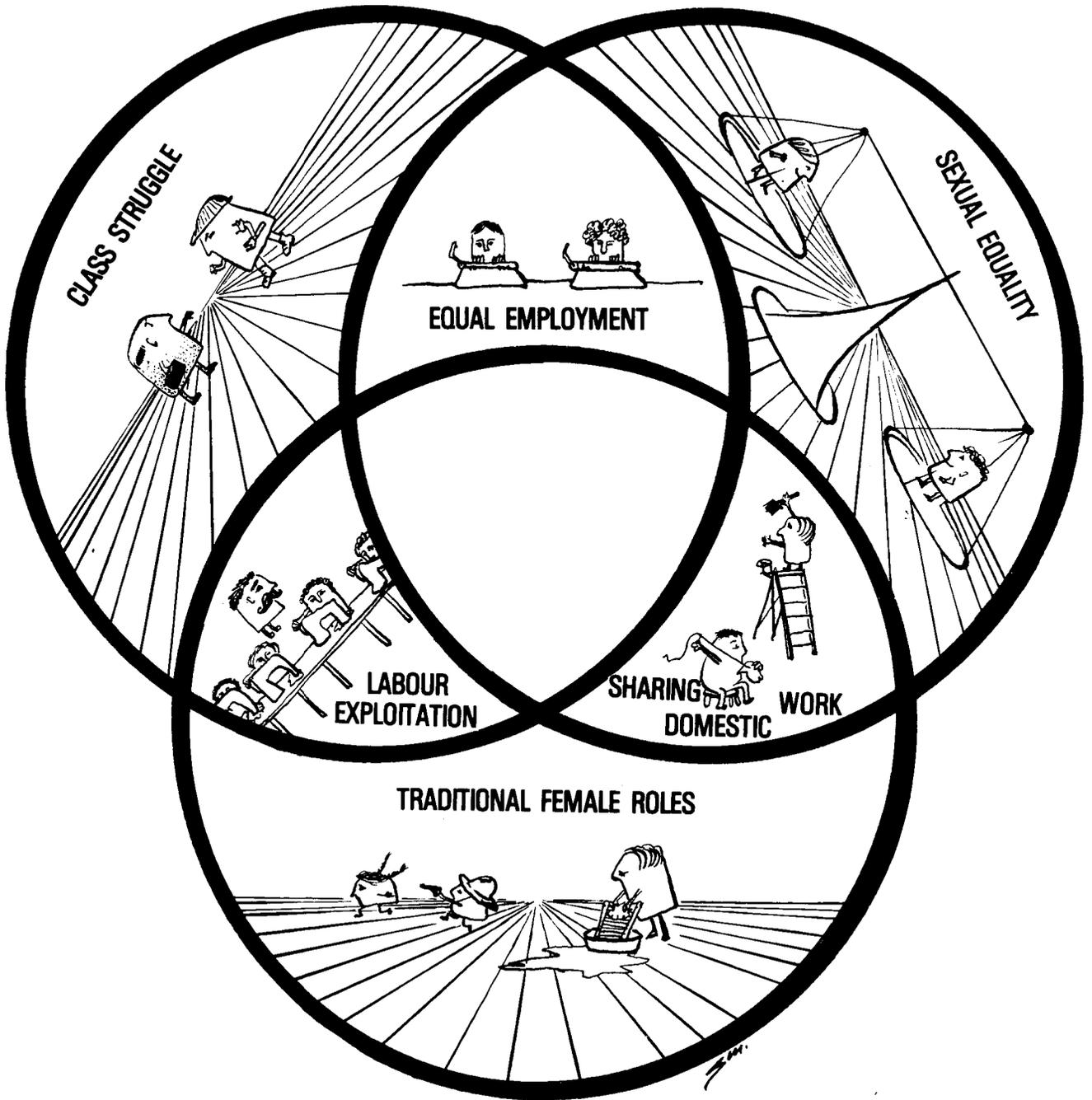
Feminists have known and have argued for a long time now that one cannot simply reduce sexual oppression to class oppression or sexual struggle to the class struggle; that the two are complex and inter-related but separate axes of oppression. The power that women are building as well as our developing analysis is convincing wider and wider numbers of serious radicals of this fact as the following interview of Simone de Beauvoir with Sartre(1) attests:

De Beauvoir - What do you think of the struggle of women for their liberation? How do you think it connects with the class struggle?

Sartre - I see them as two struggles of different aspect and meaning, which do not always mix. So far the class struggle is between men. It is essentially a question of relations between men, relations concerned with power or economics. Rela-

tions between men and women are very different. . . . In other words, there are two main lines of struggle for the oppressed: the class struggle and the struggle between the sexes. . . . The wife of the bourgeois and the worker's wife are not opposed along precise class lines. The class division between bourgeois and workers only reaches women on a very secondary level.(2)

De Beauvoir - In other words you would accept the thesis of some women in the women's liberation movement that a bourgeois woman is bourgeois only by proxy.



Sartre - Certainly, given that she never has the relation to economic and social life which a man has. She has it only by proxy. A bourgeois woman very seldom has any relations with capital. She is tied sexually to a man who does have these relations.(3)

It is interesting to see Sartre, in response to the feminist challenge, recognize the importance of the women's struggle and accept the fact that it is separate from the class struggle. However, feminists have a long way to go in developing an adequate theory of the relationship of the two--a task which is necessarily central to the theoretical project of radical feminism. The question cannot be ignored. Indeed, it becomes of crucial political importance as soon as the legitimacy of sexual struggle as something more than a liberal deviation from class struggle is recognized. Marxist analysis of capitalism and its reproduction has centred on the unequal wage relation and the general control of production through market exchange relations. These have been largely relations among men in the sphere of society that is specifically male, that is, production, as opposed to what can quite accurately be referred to as the "female sphere" of reproduction.(4) Thus men's existence as wage labour has defined capitalism. The "individual" for the purposes of both bourgeois and socialist analysis has

been the family represented in the person of the male. Class struggle has been between these "individuals." Women have participated heroically and in great numbers in this struggle but our existence and our realm have not defined it.

The now classical marxist analysis was never adequate to allow description or understanding of women's role in production and reproduction, or of women's specific sexual oppression. But it was, in general, adequate for an understanding of the dynamics of the capitalism that Marx was analysing, a capitalism whose main characteristic was the uniquely determinant role of commodity production which shaped the family as a producer of simple labour power and also determined the nature and ground of the struggle against oppression. Today, when the nature of capital is changing and when women are beginning to struggle as individuals, and as a group, it is less and less adequate.

In late capitalism the narrow sphere of commodity production, what is called in marxist literature "the point of production," has lost its commanding role; the mechanism of the market and wage labour can no longer, alone, integrate and reproduce capitalist and patriarchal relations of production and domination. The growing economic role of the state has been widely recognized and commented on by

marxist theorists as a new and important variable. The work of Baran and Sweezy(5) and O'Connor(6) in the United States, Touraine(7) and Habermas(8) in Europe as well as Rick Deaton's(9) application of O'Connor's framework to the Canadian state has provided valuable analysis. The vast flood of specific studies of education, health, psychology and welfare in evidence today attest to the increased importance of state planning. The changing role of industrial unions as an increasingly integrated part of the more controlled process of capitalist reproduction, is another sign of this change which has also received much attention--specifically from Aronowitz(10) in the U.S., Touraine(11) in France, and leftist Italian theorists. (12)

In the first part of this article it is shown that marxist feminist(13) analyses of women and class have been uninfluenced by the changing nature of late capitalism and have therefore retained a narrow and traditional definition of class. In seeking either to fit women into the traditional working class or to posit a women's struggle alongside the unaltered class struggle, they have not used their own important studies of women's historical and current conditions, to begin the redefinition of class that both these demand.

The second part of the article is an examination of marxist analyses of class which are emerging in response

to changes in society but which ignore the political implications of current feminist struggle and the growing importance of personal and private life in capitalism today. It will be shown that these theories, limited and male centred as they are, nevertheless have something to offer radical feminists in our attempt to get beyond the somewhat mechanical treatment of women and class that has prevailed so far, enabling us to advance in our theory as well as our practice the redefinition of revolution and of struggle that our vision implies.

#### Analyses of Women and Class

A good deal of socialist feminist writing has been concerned with the argument that women are part of the working class as it has been traditionally defined. McAfee and Wood in their important article "Bread and Roses"(14) describe as "male chauvinism" the attitude that women are not part of the working class even when they work. Another and more recent expression of this position is found in the new anthology America's Working Women (15) in which, Baxandal, Gordon and Reverby say that their "strategic orientation is to see women as half the working class"(16) even though they report that their own work on the anthology raised as an issue "the definition of social class itself."(17)

In keeping with their desire to assimilate women into the working class,

many socialist women have used Engels to justify a basic strategy of getting women into the paid work force. Engels said that the "first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry." (18) Following Engels, Christina Maria Hill and Virginia Hunter (19) both wrote papers while they were members of the Ontario Waffle suggesting this reintroduction, but adding the revolutionary injunction that these women must also join trade unions. This position, of course, overlooks entirely women's position in the home and our special responsibility for domestic labour--which does not disappear when a second job is added. But it is not only women within the traditional left who take this position. (20)

Juliet Mitchell, for instance, in her article, "Women: The Longest Revolution," (21) defines her task as to somehow "integrate" women's liberation "into" socialist theory. She presumes that this can be done with no changes to the concept of class. (22) She provides an interesting structural analysis of women's situation, isolating four basic structures--production, reproduction, sexuality and socialization--and claiming that sexuality is the only one which has seen significant change (the pill)! She draws this conclusion even though she herself describes the increased female presence in the workforce, the growing importance of socialization and con-

sumption and the fall in the birth rate--that is, changes in all of the areas she defines. Likewise, she ignores the significance of the increasing importance of socialization and consumption and concludes that "The changes in the work force, the size of the family, the structure of education, etc., have undoubtedly diminished the significance of the family" (23) so that though women "are fundamental to the human condition, yet in their economic, social and political roles they are marginal . . . . In advanced industrial society women's work is only marginal to the total economy." (24) Her presumption of the traditional marxist base/superstructure distinction in capitalism leaves her, for all her insights into the specifics of women's sphere and despite her critique of Engels' economism, with no option but to argue for women's entry into the work force: "The main thrust of any emancipation movement must still concentrate on the economic element--the entry of women into full public industry." (25)

Renate Bridenthal in an article called "The Dialectics of Production and Reproduction in History" (26) quite rightly collapses Mitchell's three categories of sexuality, socialization and reproduction into one category--reproduction--and develops an interesting analysis of its changing relation to production, thus bringing women's sphere clearly into focus. Her in-

terest in women led her to the very ground on which insights into the differences between present day capitalism and the capitalism that Marx analysed can be gained; that is, "the relationship between the mode of reproduction and the mode of production --the social organization of the creation of value."(27) Yet, like Mitchell, her allegiance to the base/superstructure duality and to traditional notions of class have prevented her from drawing out the political implications of her work. She is restricted to merely asserting her faith in the relevance of the traditional concept of class to women and suggesting that "Class analysis must include recognition of sex differences since women have some important experience which differ from those of men."(28)

Margaret Benston in her article, "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation,"(29) makes a breakthrough in analysing women's specific and separate role in capitalism as the production of use values. She quite rightly criticizes Mitchell's view that housework is marginal and also points out that women's entry into the labour force without the socialization of their work in the home means merely double exploitation. However, she, too, limits her insights by a too hasty obeisance to the concept of class:

In arguing that the roots of the secondary status of women are fact economic, it can be shown

that women as a group do indeed have a definite relation to the means of production and that this is different from men. . . . If this special relation of women to production is accepted, the analysis of the situation of women fits naturally into a class analysis of society.(30)

Here she mistakenly presumes that because she has successfully used Marxist analytic categories to describe women's role she has integrated us into a class analysis--not so. And in fact any analysis of women as a separate group from men with a different relationship to the means of production is a challenge to theories of class as universal descriptions of society.

Peggy Morton goes further in "Women's Work is Never Done."(31) She says women not only produce use values but the commodity labour power and this, as well as our function as labour power, is our role in capitalist production. Our position is dual in this way (in the home and in the work force) and our strategy must reflect this. "Our revolutionary potential lies in the fact that most women are both oppressed as women and exploited as workers, and our strategy must reflect this duality." (32) She presumes that it is only waged workers who are the working class and she posits another struggle alongside theirs. In doing this she revives the crucial strategic question of the relationship of the two.

The article "Bread and Roses" referred to earlier, argues that women bring something special to class struggle:

A liberation movement of the "slaves of the slaves" tends to raise broader issues of people's oppression in all its forms, so that it is inherently wider than the economism of most trade union movements. (33)

But again the question of the implications for "class struggle" based in the work place is not tackled. A false solution is seized in the form of a "working class women's movement." But to contain the two struggles in one person merely highlights the personal, theoretical and strategic dilemma of the relationship between the struggles. How do the "slaves of the slaves" make our struggle against the slave and the master? Doesn't our struggle demand a redefinition of the slave and his struggle?

Sheila Rowbotham, in her book Women's Consciousness, Men's World (34) and in other articles, carries on the theme that feminism and women's struggles will change class struggle by bringing new elements to it. She echoes Morton's dual struggle but adds to it the especial significance of women's possible contribution in integrating the two into one struggle:

The importance of women's liberation is precisely that it makes it possible to cut through the separation between home and work,

production and consumption, wage earner and dependent, man and woman, which has always helped make capitalism stable. That is why working class women are such an important group--their class and sex situation makes the connection necessary. (35)

The point she is making here is tremendously important. It speaks of the creation of a whole new ground of struggle which integrates the dichotomies and fragmentations imposed by capitalism and patriarchy--a ground on which the central issue can become the end of alienation itself rather than the question of distribution and ownership which, of necessity, dominated earlier periods of struggle. At this stage, when the goal must be, in the process of creating a fully human society, to create ourselves as fully human, the question of male dominance becomes crucial and a notion of class or "the revolutionary agent" which masks male/female divisions becomes a hindrance. Yet Rowbotham has nothing to say about the implications of her new vision of struggle for the concept of class. She recognizes that "In order to act effectively we have to try to work out the precise relationship between the patriarchal dominance of men over women, and the property relations which come from this, to class exploitation" (36) but she does no more than emphasize the importance of the working class woman who integrates the two oppressions in her person. This personal integration, however, is

no adequate substitute for the theoretical and strategic integration which is lacking.

So we can see that the many insights which their studies, their commitment to their struggle as women, and their practice, raise for socialist feminists have not led them to a critique of class. They have restricted their impact by defining their project, a priori, as one to "fit women into" or "relate women to" the working class as traditionally defined. Some have argued that women's sphere is "super-structural" and that women must enter the paid work force to join the struggle. Others have argued that domestic labour forms part of the "base" and women are in the struggle in their capacity at home. Still others argue that the private and personal realm is "super-structural" but it has to be considered too and can add important elements to the struggle. None, however, question the "base/superstructure" model itself and the notion of class based on it.

### Marxist Class Analysis

It has been left to marxist theorists in other areas altogether to trace the developing integration of late capitalism and to raise far deeper questions about class than marxist feminists have done. The emphasis placed by Habermas (37) on the crisis of legitimation, the Italian theory of social capital, (38) and Touraine's (39) writing on post-industrial society are

a few examples of the kind of work being done today that shifts emphasis from the fabled "point of production" to the area of reproduction (the family, private life, science, education). (40) Both the Italian theories of social capital and the French theories of the new working class, however, are limited by their lack of attention to the growing importance of women and feminist struggle. (41)

New working class theory, whose main proponent was Serge Mallet, (42) argues that today science, technology and the organization of production, are central to capitalist accumulation in a new way (43) which has resulted in the development of a new type of worker-- the scientific worker:

In order to run the complex technological machinery, the capitalist class must train a new kind of proletariat, one which not only knows how to work the machines in operation at the time when it enters the work force, but one which is trained to learn. Without this kind of worker the capitalist would lose much or all of his investment in automotive equipment. (44)

What is being described here is, of course, a tendency and not a fully realized transformation. However, these theorists argue that this new worker has become the vanguard of class struggle because he influences other sectors of workers in the devel-

opment of new types of class struggle which actually challenge the capitalist system. This group, because it can actually control production and has its material needs met adequately, is free to mount the challenge on a new level. The events of May-June 1968 in France, as well as the more general quietude of industrial workers and the apparent integration of their unions in the processes of capitalist reproduction, were important influences on the development of this theory. It is hardly necessary to say that in most versions of this theory no attention whatever is given to areas of life beyond the "point of production." The concept of a new level of struggle is restricted to the factory and the implications it must have for a reassessment of the relations of "workers" to others are ignored. (45)

Touraine takes what might be seen as a variant of this position. He stresses the new importance of struggle outside the factory, arguing that the social existence of class has become less clear with the development of a universal culture and leisure activities in which levels of participation rather than content vary. Thus, for him, a political definition of class replaces the earlier social definition:

In modern societies, a class movement manifests itself by direct political struggle and by the rejection of alienation: by revolt against a system of inte-

gration and manipulation. What is essential is the greater emphasis on the political and cultural, rather than economic action. This is the great difference from the labour movement, formed in opposition to liberal capitalism. Such movements are scarcely beginning but they always talk about power rather than about salaries, employment, or property. (46)

Touraine selects, not advanced workers, but youth and students as his vanguard (again influenced by events of May-June in France). The oversight of women is especially glaring in a theory in which the recognition of the new determinant position of women's sphere (the sphere of reproduction and private life) is so well developed. In the following quotation we see him follow a description of the tremendous importance of this sphere with a conclusion that therefore youth is a key group:

In a society of mass production and consumption, there cannot be radical separation between work activities and activities outside work. The forces that dominate society do not any longer exercise their influence only within firms; whatever these forces may be, they extend their control to the whole of economic life, to consumption as well as to the organization of space and education. Consumption as well as professional activity defines

one's place in a hierarchized social system. . . . This is why the role of youth, especially students, is so important in cultural demands. They are a group least integrated into the social organization and stratification, the group most attracted by the new forms of knowledge and most involved in the problems of personal life. (47)

To argue that youth is the group most involved in problems of personal life one has to have a well developed blind spot where women are concerned.

The theory of social capital springs partly from a concern to understand the co-optation of trade union activity. The argument is that the present capitalist integration represents the highest level of development of capitalism--its full flowering--the point at which its true nature, as Marx analysed it, emerges fully, and social capital faces the collective worker as antagonist. According to this theory, society itself has become production (what is referred to as the "social factory"); therefore, distinguishing a separate "point of production" becomes politically anachronistic. While the new working class theory stresses the emergence of the scientific worker as a result of automation this theory stresses the resulting "massification" of labour--a process described graphically by Braverman in his book, Labour and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in

the Twentieth Century, although he by no means shares the theoretical position I am discussing here. The idea is that, as skills are reduced and workers lose their pride in their work, they are released from divisions and identity based on their function as labour power and this makes possible their unity as a class, as the expression of a new level of struggle. (48) The argument is that the dichotomy between economic and political demands disappears and the struggle is embodied in demands by workers for higher wages and less work, the class struggle becoming in this period a struggle against work.

Thus, even as a struggle based on workers' specific function of labour power is repudiated and an analysis which suggests that women's sphere is now a crucial area of struggle is developed, the workerist emphasis in strategy is reinforced. The struggle against work is defined as a workers' struggle and Mario Tronti can say: "When the working class politically refuses to become people, it does not close but opens the most direct way to the socialist revolution." (49) This is obviously not a way in which women figure very highly. Yet surely the new level of struggle sought here must involve a new definition of goals and the conscious "recomposition" of the "class" beyond labour, and therefore, the transformation of human relationships and identity--not the least, the rejection of male domina-

tion. Not only is it possible now for struggle to be made elsewhere than the factory but it must be or it will not succeed. The central issue has become alienation and domination itself. The wage struggle and the struggle against work can be important but are not enough alone. For the struggle against existence as labour power (the male function which has defined oppression and the struggle against it until now) is necessarily the struggle against this male domination of definition and of struggle. In our struggle as feminists we are making it clear that the struggle against work and existence as labour power must also be a struggle for a certain kind of existence. We are, at the same time, accepting the challenge of developing, through an assertion of the feminine principle, in our culture, our activity and our theory, the vision that this kind of struggle must be based on.

Both the theories of the new working class and of social capital hint at the obvious--that the realm outside production is now the key. Traditionally, this has been women's sphere and feminist struggle is a current indication of the potential there, as are the changes in the nature of the forces of production, the new forms of workers' struggle and the changes in private life. The development of scientific labour and the centralization of education and research that new working class theories point to is

partly an appropriation of women's functions. But this is an indication of their new importance--they are no longer simply a direct reflection of the production sphere and now need to be controlled autonomously. A socialization of reproduction tasks, parallel to the early socialization of production in factories, and equally aimed at control, (50) is currently in process. This is a sign of the new importance of women's sphere as a ground for struggle, not its diminishing importance. So, also, is the counter trend of privatization represented by the tremendous increase in consumption in the nuclear family.

These tendencies, besides reflecting the new importance of the traditionally female sphere of reproduction, are also undermining the base/superstructure division that much of marxist theory is based on. The emergence of what Italian marxists and Touraine choose to call a "class" separate from its function as labour indicates the same thing. And taken together all these developments point to the fact that, today, we have, for the first time in history, the material base on which to create ourselves and our world as human. This involves, necessarily, the end of male domination. The elimination of this most basic level of domination is, for the first time, on the historical agenda. A truly new level of struggle is called for in which women play a central role

in the necessary task of repudiating and replacing male definitions of revolution and class through the development of our theory and our cultural and political practice. Unless male radicals are willing to deal with the question of male domination (and to recognize the full implications for male claims to hegemony, of the fact that the sphere of reproduction has become a defining area of struggle) their influence will cease to be progressive. And certainly their analyses will be as badly limited as are the socialist feminist analyses which presume a traditional concept of class. And yet, taken together, these parallel bodies of theory have provided a beginning for the radical task of redefinition which lies ahead. Radical feminists are aware that only a redefinition which seeks to develop a new theoretical synthesis beyond class can hope to resolve the question of the relationship of sex and class.

#### Attempts At Synthesis

Eli Zaretsky, Herbert Marcuse and the Wages for Housework International have attempted to develop syntheses which take revolutionary theory beyond the limitations of the two literatures discussed here, which, respectively, fail to question traditional analyses of class and fail to recognize sexual oppression. All have their strengths and weaknesses.

Zaretsky, in his extremely important

article, "Capitalism, The Family, And Personal Life," Parts I and II, (51) outlines the historical development of a sphere of personal life separate from and subordinate to the sphere of production. He describes the subordination of women that this division has institutionalized and analyses the growing importance of the personal sphere as a ground of struggle. He shows how "the emergence of a sphere of personal life seemingly independent of economic production" is in fact "an historically formed part of the mode of production" (52) which reflects production's need for ever increasing markets and tighter social control of personal life in a period when less and less labour is required in production. Consumerism (waste), the sexual revolution and the growth of services are all understood in this light. And he argues that, therefore, progressive struggle today must seek to integrate the personal and economic spheres that industrial capitalism has separated and must be equally grounded in both spheres.

Zaretsky, however, does not see how the growing importance of personal life reflects a deep change in the industrial relation of reproduction to production which is laying the material basis for the end of the domination of production over reproduction, and of men over women. The increased necessity for direct control in private life shows that this sphere is no longer sufficiently controlled through

the wage relation rooted in production and that the dominance of production, so finely analysed by Marx in the nineteenth century, is no longer complete. It has been undermined in the twentieth century by tremendous developments in the forces of production, which have reduced the centrality of labour power to production (and therefore the material basis of the wage relation and its efficacy in control) and, at the same time, tended more and more to require people's creative involvement in production rather than their mere presence as labour power. This has left the traditionally subordinate female sphere of reproduction potentially autonomous and determining. This potential remains unrealised in patriarchal industrial society in which ruling groups, and men in general, (53) have a vested interest in masking and denying this potential. The response of powerful groups, to the developing freedom of the reproduction sphere from the direct control of production and the wage relation, has been to extend control directly into this sphere to an unprecedented degree --for instance, through the socialization of its functions in the developing services, and the development of powerful ideological control in the form of the sexual revolution and consumerism. These developments reflect the growing potential for human freedom and for women's power, and, at the same time, in their present form, they deny it, involving as they do merely more alienated labour for women, as

consumers, sexual objects and service workers.

Zaretsky fails to see how the current changes in "the mode of production," that he describes, are making the affirmation of reproduction and of women's power, central to progressive struggle today. Therefore, he misunderstands entirely the significance of radical feminist politics, arguing that it represents one side of a duality (the traditional left represents the other) which reproduces the dichotomy in industrial society between the personal and the economic. He sees radical feminism's concern with domination in personal life, reproduction and the family as a one-sided restriction to the personal, and a failure to see its rootedness in production and economics; he does not see that, because of women's special situation in reproduction and the new importance of this sphere, it represents the beginnings of the very integration he seeks. The ground of struggle that radical feminism occupies is the very ground on which a new level of personal/political synthesis can be attempted. Since Zaretsky's analysis does not allow him to see this fact, he is unable to locate the ground on which the integration of the personal and economic that he advocates can be concretely pursued. He can, therefore, offer no strategic political suggestions. His argument, for all its important analytical contributions, remains empty on the strategic level.

Marcuse, on the other hand, writes of the special importance of women in the current general struggle for liberation. In his article "Marxism and Feminism" (54) he argues that the transformation to true socialism involves "the negation of the exploiting and repressive values of patriarchal civilisation. What is at stake is the negation of the values enforced and reproduced in society by male domination . . . the liberation and ascent of specifically feminine characteristics on a social scale." (55)

He argues that the "objective conditions for such an antithesis and subversion of values are maturing" and lists the relevant "emerging conditions" (56) as: the alleviation of heavy physical labour, the reduction of labour time, the production of pleasant and cheap clothing, the liberalization of sexual morality, birth control and general education. However, his analysis is also limited, because, despite his recognition of the political importance of the feminine principle and of women in the struggle for liberation, he has failed to locate the developing material basis for this in the transformation of the traditional relation between the industrial spheres of reproduction and production which, like Zaretsky, he overlooks.

Although Marcuse's recognition of the importance of the feminine principle

and his "emerging conditions" all imply this transformation of the production/reproduction relation, he does not see the implication himself. He is therefore restricted to locating the "weakening of the social basis of male dominance" in the "increasing participation of women in the industrial work process." (57) This widely recognized trend is, in fact, merely symptomatic of the more basic power shift between production and reproduction and, in citing it as the most basic change in the role of women, Marcuse is seeing women's entry into production, rather than changes in reproduction itself, as the key to feminism's increasing importance and the developing power of women. In doing this he is reinforcing the tendency, shared by virtually all analysts of the women's movement, to presume the continuing centrality of production in the narrow sense. He thus limits his exploration of the strategic importance of the notion of the feminine principle. For his analysis does not show how, specifically in this historical period, it has become possible to seek to heal alienated industrial dichotomies through the integration of production into reproduction rather than the reverse, that is, to build the "feminist socialist" struggle he advocates. Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James are the main theorists of the Wages for Housework International. (58) They draw attention to women's role in reproduction as a ground for struggle;

they argue convincingly that the identity of all women is rooted in this sphere, that unity among women can best be built on their shared and exclusive responsibility for reproductive labour, and that, therefore, a struggle for wages for housework is the key feminist(59) strategy.

Dalla Costa and James took the early feminist analysis of housework, and the relation of reproduction to production, to a new level of economic sophistication. In doing so they made an important contribution to the emerging theory which was laying the groundwork for a radical feminist politics based on an assertion of the claims of human reproduction and the subordinated values of the feminine principle. However, theirs remains a thought-provoking analysis, rather than the last word, for the truly radical implications of rooting women's struggle in reproduction are not explored. Instead of seeing that the possibility for women to make this struggle at this time lies in the increasing importance of reproduction and the consequent loss of male workers' hegemony in progressive struggle, they base their position on the argument that "women are workers too." (60)

The tremendous power that a struggle for wages for housework could have in challenging the controlling notion of identity through work, and the control function of the wage relation, is

never realised because the Wages for Housework campaign redefines women's role in reproduction as labour in its narrowest sense, rather than challenging labour itself. The Wages for Housework analysis extends the theories of social capital discussed earlier in this paper to women. However, instead of using this extension to challenge that school's workerist biases, Wages for Housework is content to achieve worker status for women. In late capitalism, in the interests of control, the changed relation of reproduction to production has become the integration of reproduction into production, and the emergence of a unified production process which takes in the whole of society (the social factory). (61) Wages for Housework responds to this change, not by asserting the claims and values of reproduction against production, but by reducing reproduction to an adjunct of production and defining it as a specific form of labour. The argument of the theorists of social capital that, in this period of late capitalist integration, economic struggle becomes political struggle and the distinction between the two is lost, is accepted lock, stock and barrel and the tremendous potential for feminists to pose qualitative alternative values, through the assertion of a feminine principle, is lost. Women are instead fitted into a pre-existing male-defined struggle and the experiential, qualitative, cultural and spiritual

components of feminism are negated in an economic reductionism.

All three analyses represent attempts to develop a theoretical synthesis on a new level which can comprehend feminism and class struggle without reducing either one to the other. They are all limited, as they must be in this early period of feminist development, and yet, in their weaknesses as much as their strengths, they are indicative of directions which can be explored. The varied weaknesses of all three stem from a common failure to see the full significance of the changing relation of reproduction to production in this period. Zaretsky sees the growing importance of reproduction and personal life, but not the central position this gives a feminist defined politics. Marcuse sees the centrality of a feminist defined politics, but not its roots in the growing importance of reproduction. Wages for Housework emphasizes the importance of making women's role in reproduction visible, but has not used this to challenge the values of production and has neither asserted any notion of the feminine principle nor stressed the re-organization of life around our reproduction as human beings rather than as labour power for production.

The vision of the replacement of "the modern world in which production is the aim of man and wealth the aim of production" by a new society in which "man

(sic) is the aim of production" (62) has long informed radical struggle, but the developing feminist struggle and the growing potential power of women testifies to the fact that the struggle for a free and fully human existence for all is no longer an abstract value but has, today for the first time, become a concrete issue on the historical agenda. Thus any theory which succeeds in synthesizing analyses of sex and class oppression will necessarily involve a fuller and more concrete exposition of the notion of human freedom than has ever before been possible. The argument presented here suggests that that can best be pursued in a further analysis of the current changes in the nature of the female sphere of reproduction, and its relation to production, as well as a fuller study of the subordinated female role, characteristics and values which this sphere embodies. Radical feminists are affirming these values in a political practice which is built on a sustained attempt to integrate the industrial dichotomies of the personal and political, theory and practice, means and ends, male and female. Our attempt in theory and practice to create a new form of politics and a new vision of human liberation can benefit from all the literatures discussed above but must not accept the limitations of any one. For the central synthesizing project demands development beyond all previous "universal" political perspectives to a new level of universality which

transcends rather than negates traditional class analysis.

NOTES

1. Translated by John Howe and Rosamund Mulvey from an article in L'Arc 61 (1975) and reprinted in New Left Review 97 (May/June 1976).
2. This relatively obvious fact was widely recognized in earlier periods which spoke of "man's world" and meant man literally. In these aristocratic and feudal societies social status was based on ascribed positions which were clearly male positions, and women were generally excluded from ranking. However the ideologies and analyses with claims universal to that came with the development of capitalist production, an industrial class society, "manhood" suffrage and nationalist sentiments, began to obscure this fact. Whereas earlier ideologies had specifically excluded women, these ignored women, meaning by "individual," men as they represented the family and subsumed women's personhood into their own. The confusion was compounded by a liberal and democratic politics which claimed to end the exclusion, not by recognizing the specificity of women's situation, but by insisting that "man" is a truly generic term and that analysis of man's world was also analysis of woman's world. It has taken the development of a radical and autonomous women's politics in the twentieth century, and the power this brings us, for women to rediscover the existence of a woman's role and reality which cannot be subsumed in existing "universal" analyses such as that of class, and whose analysis requires the development of new tools, a fact which, once it is named, begins again, to appear rather self-evident.
3. Later in the interview de Beauvoir says "In other words you recognize the specificity of women's struggle" and Sartre replies "Absolutely, I do not believe that it stems from class struggle." And still later in reply to the question "Would you maintain the old distinction between the primary and secondary contradictions, and would you regard women's struggle as secondary?" Sartre says "No, I regard women's struggle as primary."
4. By reproduction here I mean not just the bearing of children and the reproduction of the labour force but the reproduction of capitalism and patriarchy themselves--such areas as socialization, education, health care and the organization of leisure, private life and consumption. It is precisely this area which is becoming increasingly important in a period when the unequal and sexually exclusive wage relation is no longer sufficient in itself to reproduce the relations of capitalism by assuring capital accumulation in the hands of a few.
5. Monopoly Capital (Monthly Review Press, 1967).
6. The Fiscal Crisis of the State (St. Martin's Press, 1973).
7. The Post-Industrial Society (Random House, 1971).
8. Legitimation Crisis (Beacon Press, 1975).
9. "The Fiscal Crisis and the Public Employee" Our Generation, Vol. 8 (No. 4) (Fall 1972).
10. False Promises (McGraw Hill, 1973).
11. Touraine op cit.
12. This Italian theory is central to the analyses of the articles in Zerowork (Dec. 1975).
13. I use the terms marxist feminist, socialist feminist interchangeably in this article.
14. This article has been widely reprinted in anthologies and in pamphlet form. Here the page references refer to From Feminism to Liberation, Edith Hochino Altbach (ed.) (Schenkman, 1971).
15. America's Working Women: A Documentary History 1600 to the Present (Vintage, 1976). It is an imaginative and exciting collection of documents and is a fine example of the important work many socialist and marxist feminists are doing in developing our knowledge of women's history and present situation. This is absolutely essential work and is a tremendous contribution to our struggle, not the least in that it is precisely this research, along with our practice, that is raising the awkward question of women and class. In arguing that socialist feminists have not resolved this question I do not want to overlook their important contributions.
16. Ibid., p. xix.
17. Ibid., p. xxii.
18. "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State," Marx-Engels Selected Works (1962), p. 233.
19. Christina Maria Hill, "Women in the Canadian Economy," in Robert Laxer (ed.), Canada Ltd: The Political Economy of Dependency (Toronto, 1973); Hunter's unpublished paper is entitled "Women and Socialism" and was written in October, 1973.
20. In the following discussion I refer only to the writing of socialist feminists who are committed to an autonomous women's movement.
21. This article has also been reprinted widely. The page references here refer to Altbach, op. cit.
22. "The liberation of woman remains normative and ideal, an adjunct to socialist theory, not structurally integrated into it." Altbach, p. 98.
23. Ibid., p. 114.
24. Ibid., p. 93.
25. Ibid., p. 121.
26. Radical America, Vol. 10, No. 2, (March/April 1976).
27. Ibid., p. 5.
28. Ibid., p. 9.
29. Widely reprinted. Page numbers refer to Altbach, op. cit.
30. Ibid., p. 199.
31. Widely reprinted. Page numbers refer to Altbach op. cit.
32. Ibid., p. 224.
33. Op. cit., p. 34-35.
34. (Penguin, 1974).
35. "The Carrot, The Stick and the Movement," Radical America, Vol. 17, Nos. 4 and 5, (Oct. 1973), p. 79.
36. Women's Consciousness, Men's World, op. cit., p. 117.
37. Op. cit.
38. Periodicals such as Telos and Radical America have published some of this theory. For instance "Social Capital" by Mario Tronti in Telos 17, (Fall 1973) and a group of articles in Radical America, Vol. 6, No. 1, (May/June 1972).
39. Op. cit.
40. This quotation from Touraine is an example of the kind of argument that is made:  
The most widespread characteristic of the programmed society is that economic decisions and struggles no longer possess either the autonomy

or the central importance they had in an earlier society which was defined by the effort to accumulate and anticipate profits from directly productive work. . . . This does not mean that post-industrial society, having reached a certain level of productivity and, hence, of wealth, can abandon concern with production and become a consumer and leisure society. Such an interpretation is belied by the most obvious facts. The type of society we live in is more "driven" by economic growth than any other. The individualized features of private life, as well as local societies and their ways of life, have been profoundly affected--even destroyed--by ever-growing geographic and social mobility, by the massive diffusion of information and propaganda and by broader political participation than ever before. Precisely these factors make it impossible for exclusively economic mechanisms to be maintained any longer at the centre of social organization and activity. Growth results from a whole complex of social factors, not just from the accumulation of capital. Nowadays, it depends more directly than ever before on knowledge, and hence on the capacity of society to call forth creativity. All the domains of social life--education, consumption, information, etc.--are more and more integrated into what used to be called factors of production." Op. cit. p. 415.

41. The new working class theory has been much the more influential in North America through the writing of such people as Andre Gorz and Stanley Aronowitz.
42. La Nouvelle Classe Ouvriere (Seuil, 1969).
43. "Integration becomes a necessity for the capitalist, a necessity which is inscribed in the relations of production themselves. Profit is no longer the result of surplus labour squeezed out of the workers; nor is it the result of speed-ups, stretch-outs and the like. Rather what is necessary is a qualitative increase of productivity which comes from efficient organization of work." (Dick Howard, "New Working Class Theories," Radical America, Vol. 3, No. 2, (March/April 1969), p. 6.
44. Ibid., p. 6.
45. Ibid., p. 15. For instance, "despite his Marcusean critique of capitalist society," Gorz argues that a revolutionary strategy must begin with the work situation.
46. Op. cit., p. 74.
47. Op. cit., p. 56.
48. "From the plant to the university, society becomes an immense assembly line, where the seeming variety of jobs disguises the actual generalization of the same abstract labour. This is neither the emergence of a 'new working class' nor the massification of a classless 'middle class' but a widening of the material articulation of the working class proper. . . . From the workers' viewpoint, interchangeability, mobility, and massification turn into positive factors. They undermine all divisions by productive role and sector. They provide the material basis for the political re-composition of the entire working class. By destroying the individual worker's pride in his or her skills, they liberate workers as a class from an identification with their role as producers. With the political demand

of 'more money less work,' the increasing alienation of labor becomes a progressive disengagement of the political struggles of the working class from its economic existence as mere labour power. . . . In the heat of the struggle, the true separation between labour power and working class reaches its most threatening revolutionary peak. It is quite precisely the separation of the working class from itself, from itself as wage labor, and hence from capital. It is the separation of its political strength from its existence as an economic category." "Theses on the Mass Worker and Capital," Guido Baldi, Radical America, Vol. 6, No. 1, May/June 1972, p. 20-21. The emphasis is in the original and the quotation cited is from Tronti.

49. Mario Tronti, "Social Capital," Telos 17 (Fall 1973), p. 116.
50. For a discussion of the control functions of the factory, see Stephen Marglin, "What Do Bosses Do? The Origins and Function of Hierarchy in Capitalist Production" (Howard University, 1971).
51. Socialist Revolution, Vol. 3, Nos. 1 & 2, (Jan/April and May/June 1973).
52. Ibid., p. 85.
53. The resistance referred to here is the sum total of more or less unconscious individual male reactions to the pressures of their endangered identity and the growing power of women.
54. Women's Studies, Vol. 2, (1974), pp. 279-288.
55. Ibid., p. 280-281.
56. Ibid., p. 283.
57. Ibid., p. 284.
58. The works most relevant to this discussion are: Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community
58. The works most relevant to this discussion are: Mariarosa Dalla Costa, Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community (Falling Wall Press, 1973), Selma James, "Sex, Race and Working Class Struggle," in Race Today (Jan. 1974).
59. However, in more recent publications, Wages for Housework groups have ceased to refer to themselves as feminists or as part of the women's movement, writing instead, of the Wages for Housework Movement.
60. Suzie Fleming, "Family Allowance: the Women's Money," All Work and No Pay (Falling Wall Press, 1975).
61. The development of consumerism and social services can be understood as one part of this process.
62. Karl Marx, "Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations," cited in Zaretsky, op. cit., p. 111.