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By Necessity or by Right: The Language and Experience of Gender at Work

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Résumé de l'article

Cet article examine la contribution que Labour/Le Travail a apporté à l'étude de l'histoire des rapports sociaux entre les sexes au Canada au cours des 25 dernières années. Il indique plusieurs façons dans lesquelles l'industrialisation a donné lieu à la ségrégation des sexes de la même classe et analyse en particulier la contribution du débat sur le patriarcat et le capitalisme, l'approche des stratégies familiales et la nouvelle littérature sur la masculinité. Il suggère la nécessité d'avoir des études plus contextualisées d'une façon générale qui incorporent le conflit et l'interdépendance des sexes et fait valoir l'idée d'une séparation hermeneutique d'identités sexuelles des conceptualisations de politique des classes et de protestation collective.

By Necessity or by Right: The Language and Experience of Gender at Work

Nancy Christie

THIS ASSESSMENT of the way in which the historiography of women's work has re-shaped and altered what might be called the "masculinist" interpretive trajectory of industrialization and the labour protest tradition it engendered, begins with the life-story of Valentine Chartrand. A French Canadian spinner who had emigrated with her family to Lowell, Massachusetts, she spent a life-time working in textile mills. Ordered to leave high school by her father, a builder who suffered through persistent periods of unemployment, Valentine reluctantly relinquished her personal ambitions for the wider interests of the family for whom her pay-packet was a necessity. As Valentine told her interviewer: "My mother was always at home with a big family, twelve children. She never had a chance to work outside; she had all she could do." In describing her work experience, Valentine seldom questioned accepted cultural norms, even though she became a labour activist later in life. For example, she accepted as natural that children in the French Canadian dominated mill all worked at a young age, that there was a gender division of labour (in fact much of her protest revolved either around the issue of higher wages or that she had to do the heavy work of men), and deemed work after marriage to be part and parcel of the rhythm of women's lives. Indeed, although we catch only fleeting glimpses of her weaver husband, it is clear that Valentine was by necessity often the principal breadwinner. Significantly, despite both her skill and long experience, Valentine Chartrand still considered her work "extra money." When widowed early in life, Valentine became a union organizer until she retired at the age of 68, but for the women at Lowell workplace protest did not always take the form of the collective strike. Just as frequently Valentine recounts addressing employers on a one-to-one

level about wage concerns, or, more commonly, frequently changed jobs to better her wages.[1]

What the life-course of this female worker conveys is that the process of industrialization was itself a gendered one; that women workers may have both accepted the gendered division of labour but at other times protested alongside male workers for better wages; and that despite the dominance of laissez-faire individualism that formed the centrepiece of the modern marketplace, Valentine Chartrand's concept of her wages and her work were encapsulated within a strongly familialist context, and framed in reference to her position both as a daughter and wife. While her sense of herself as a worker remained fundamental to her throughout her life, she also placed a strong value on her religious and ethnic ties, and her role as mother. There were important facets of her life-course that governed in turn her attitudes to the workplace and her advocacy of a right to a better wage therein.

Strikingly apparent in Valentine Chartrand's account of work in the textile mills of Lowell is the degree to which the industrial workplace was one defined by a rigid hierarchy of skill, gender, age, and experience. It is the purpose of this article to uncover the ways in which these fissures and divisions within class and organized labour either furthered or truncated the political ideal of class unity in Canada's past. How has the consideration of women's work and the problem of how industrialization reinforced cultural constructions of gender outside the workplace offered by historians over the past 25 years in *Labour/Le Travail (L/LT)* either contributed to or altered the conventional views? Do such "traditional" perspectives reify the male worker and see him as the primary protagonist within a narrative of class formation defined largely through "the prism of the strike" and in turn interpolated into the wider culture and community?[2] How did the shifting discourses of gender shape both the industrial process and how work itself was defined and experienced by men and women? How did this history of the gendered workplace contribute to the elaboration of class politics over the past two centuries? How does placing gender in labour history lead to a reexamination of work identities beyond the nexus of factory culture?[3]

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[1]Mary H. Blewett, *The Last Generation: Work and Life in the Textile Mills of Lowell, Massachusetts, 1910-1960* (Amherst MA 1990), 45-53. On the use of autobiography for uncovering class identities and class consciousness see Mark Traugott, *The French Worker: Autobiographies from the Early Industrial Era* (Berkeley 1993); Alfred Kelly, *The German Worker: Working-Class Autobiographies from the Age of Industrialization* (Berkeley 1987); Mary Jo Maynes, *Taking the Hard Road: Life-Course in French and German Workers' Autobiographies in the Era of Industrialization* (Chapel Hill 1995); and David Vincent, *Bread, Knowledge, and Freedom: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Working-Class Autobiography* (London 1981).

[2]Craig Heron and Bryan Palmer, "Through the Prism of the Strike: Industrial Conflict in Southern Ontario, 1901-14," *Canadian Historical Review*, 58 (December 1977), 423-58.

[3]There is a long list of critics of the teleological narratives of class formation. See for example Joan W. Scott, "On Language, Gender, and Working-Class History," and Bryan D.

Gendering the Workplace

From its inception, contributors to *L/LT* have recognized the gendered complexion of the labour culture about which they wrote, even though, as later critics observed, gender did not form the central category of analysis. Thus, in the first issue of the journal, Bryan Palmer wrote of the 19th century artisanal critique of capitalist social relations: "For this was a male culture, and it was often at women's expense that the artisan articulated his implicit contempt for a genteel aristocracy or a pious bourgeoisie."[4] In a similar vein, Craig Heron gave due attention to the divisions that complicated the creation of broader class solidarities, namely the exclusivist outlook of the skilled tradesmen in the steel industry, in which the rhetorical link between skill and manhood was pivotal in the making of political ideologies by which the authority of craftsmen on the shop-floor was pitted against the incursions of technological change introduced by capitalists.[5] In his assessment of the mobilization of the journeymen master bakers in Halifax, Ian McKay astutely observed the

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Palmer, "Response to Joan Scott," *International Labor and Working Class History*, 31 (Spring 1987); Mari Jo Buhle, "Gender and Labor History," in J. Carroll Moody and Alice Kessler-Harris, eds., *Perspectives on American Labor History: The Problems of Synthesis* (Dekalb IL 1989), 56, 58, 65; Geoff Eley and Keith Nield, "Farewell to the Working Class?" *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 57 (Spring 2000), 1-30; Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley 1995), 1-5; John Rule, *The Labouring Classes in Early Industrial England, 1750-1850* (New York and London 1986), in which he investigates the intersection of class and community as a means to explore both consensus and conflict; Patrick Joyce, ed., *The Historical Meanings of Work* (Cambridge 1987); Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class 1840-1914* (Cambridge 1991); Joyce, *Democratic Subjects: The Self and the Social in Nineteenth Century England* (Cambridge 1994), in which he argues that work-based cultures are not ubiquitous and class is as much a moral and political category as it is a material one, 12-17; Marc W. Steinberg, "'The Labour of the Country is the Wealth of the Country': Class Identity, Consciousness, and the Role of Discourse in the Making of the English Working Class," *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 49 (Spring 1996), 3-7. Steinberg stresses the need to integrate language and material life, and thereby create a "moral economy of labor" which includes class, gender, community and political rights; David Cannadine, *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain* (New York 1999); Kathleen Canning, *Languages of Labor and Gender: Female Factory Work in Germany, 1850-1914* (Ithaca and London 1996), 6, 12; and Ruth Frager, "Labour History and Interlocking Hierarchies of Class, Ethnicity and Gender: A Canadian Perspective," *International Review of Social History*, 44 (August 1999), 217-48.

[4] Bryan D. Palmer, "Most Uncommon Common Men: Craft and Culture in Historical Perspective," *Labour/Le Travail* (henceforth cited as *L/LT*), 1 (1976), 10. For a critique of the tendency to seek a unified cultural experience without naming it a masculinist one see "Introduction", in Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde, eds., *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History* (Toronto 1992), xvii-xviii.

[5] Craig Heron, "The Crisis of the Craftsman: Hamilton's Metalworkers in the Early Twentieth Century," *L/LT*, 6 (Fall 1980), 7-48.

degree to which their vision of working-class respectability and campaigns to defend the status of their trade rested firmly upon excluding the job concerns of those below, women and boy apprentices who were subordinated by gender and by age.[6] While it must be recognized that issues of gender may not have played a part in all aspects of labour protest, as some would like to postulate, and it is unwise to assign too much interpretive weight to one historical category, there have been occasions where the issue of the introduction of women workers or the deployment of a breadwinner ideal built upon gendered notions of paid labour and the unpaid labour of women in the home, formed active ingredients of labour ideology and have been signally ignored.[7]

If Palmer, Heron, and McKay were not unaware of the ideological parameters of the emerging labour movement, fashioned around a distinctive gender ideology of a unified "brotherhood," it was left to the historians of women's work, namely Joan Sangster, Veronica Strong-Boag, Margaret E. McCallum, Graham Lowe, Marta Danylewycz, and Alison Prentice to elaborate a narrative of an increasingly feminized work culture. Like Palmer, Heron, and McKay, these historians understood the 20th century workplace as one distinctly segregated and hierarchical, but where the former emphasized divisions by age and skill within male dominated trades, women's historians demonstrated how capitalism itself created hierarchies ordered by gender. From its earliest issues, therefore, *L/LT* contained two parallel narratives: one built around the evolution of trade union solidarities formed largely around an analysis of skilled labour, and a second, less optimistic, account of the way in which the opposing needs but overlapping gender attitudes of capital and organized labour increasingly marginalized and proletarianized women.

In her pathbreaking analysis of the Bell Telephone Strike of 1907, Joan Sangster demonstrated how the demands for cheap labour together with prevailing cultural attitudes about the "natural" functions of women within the home, combined to impell business to shift away from the employment of male adolescents to a policy of hiring exclusively women as telephone operators. Although Sangster chose to analyse a strike by women in order to argue against the historiographic convention that women were passive workers, her article served as a benchmark for

[6]Ian McKay, "Capital and Labour in the Halifax Baking and Confectionary Industry During the Last Half of the Nineteenth Century," *L/LT*, 3 (1978), 86-91.
[7]For example, although he notes references in the nine hour movement to the "responsibilities of Fathers and Citizens," John Battye ignored the gendered complexion of this language. See "The Nine Hours Pioneers: The Genesis of the Canadian Labour Movement," *L/LT*, 4 (Fall 1979), 29. Although there was a vociferous campaign by the Imperial Munitions Board to hire large numbers of women during World War I, Myer Siemiatycki makes no mention of this as a crucial factor informing wartime labour protest. See Myer Siemiatycki, "Munitions and Labour Militancy: The 1916 Hamilton Machinists' Strike," *L/LT*, 3 (1978), 131-41. Even if women workers were not present in particular industries, the fear of women workers in related industries was potent. See Nancy Christie, *Engendering the State: Family, Work, and Welfare in Canada* (Toronto 2000), 80-9.

future analysis. In her treatment of why the strike failed, Sangster provided a nuanced and complex explanation of variables beyond mere economics, to account for the marginalization of women workers even within industries where women formed the majority. Not only did employers believe that women could be paid less because they were intermittent workers, but capital also successfully built a system of welfare paternalism because the workforce was female. Even those sympathetic to the 1907 strike, such as the medical experts who testified before the tribunal called into being by the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, promoted better work conditions through gendered arguments, namely that women's maternal nature required protection, an outlook that in turn fit with that of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which sought means to exclude women as members. Not only was Sangster alert to the cross-class attitudes towards the gender division of work, but she posited an interconnection between discursive and materialist derived conceptualizations of gender. She suggestively linked gender to class mobilizations by showing how the very feminization of the workplace propelled organized labour to articulate arguments about the family wage that were so critical to forging working-class unity. It is not insignificant, therefore, that the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC), in the very year of the Bell Telephone Strike, where women were so active, developed arguments for the exclusion of women that in turn fed into a broader elaboration of a breadwinner ideal, a foundation of the potent campaigns for a living wage. And it was to this ideal, as Sangster makes clear, that so many of the single female workers at Bell themselves subscribed.[8]

Thus, the modernizing of the industrial process involved a proletarianization of women, and an increasingly rigid hierarchy within workplaces along gender lines, a process that Graham S. Lowe, Marta Danylewycz, and Alison Prentice have shown occurred even in ostensibly white-collar occupational enclaves. However, what these historians would describe as new forms of job segregation, Veronica Strong-Boag characterized as gendered continuities, raising the spectre that though capitalism may reaffirm patriarchal relations in new contexts, patriarchy or gender subordination had long functioned in other social environments before the advent of industrialization. Strong-Boag's evidence reveals that while during the 1920s, single women, especially in the 16-24 age group, flooded into the workforce, they

[8]Joan Sangster, "The 1907 Bell Telephone Strike: Organizing Women Workers," *L/LT*, 3 (1978), 111, 118-19, 121, and 129. Sangster, in positing a connection between feminization and the persistence of paternalistic business practices, has ably revised the view of H.C. Pentland who believed paternalism was operative only in small-scale industrial enterprises. See H.C. Pentland, "The Canadian Industrial Relations System: Some Formative Factors," *L/LT*, 4 (Fall 1979), 9-24. Here attention to gender would have greatly enhanced his analysis, in so far as he focusses upon the Master and Servant Act, whose basis was founded upon the relationships prevailing in the pre-modern household, but which in the Canadian context meant a form of largely feminized domestic service.

largely entered jobs already culturally prescribed as female.[9] The predominant form of women's work remained domestic service, and in contrast to male workers who were moving into larger industries during what Craig Heron has termed our second industrial revolution,[10] women workers remained confined to smaller work units and unskilled occupations.[11] According to this analysis, it was the very character of women's work, rather than their "natural" passivity, that precluded collective organization. Change was occurring in the modern workplace, as Lowe, Danylewycz, and Prentice contend, but its effects were felt only by single women.[12] If, as Strong-Boag concluded, "sexist discrimination remained an integral feature of economic organization" its impact was determined largely by a woman's marital status.[13] For the most part, the lives of married women were largely unchanged by industrialization, for their work was intermittent, confined to the home for both paid and unpaid labour, and it consigned them to the realm of unskilled work. Historians such as Craig Heron would describe the periodization of industrial transformation and technological change, in terms of changes within factory organizations, but Strong-Boag shows that for the lives of girls and women, their work experiences were for the most part little affected by these new labour processes.

As Strong-Boag and Margaret E. McCallum have demonstrated, however, the increasing visibility of women in the workplace, even if they were largely single women who intended to turn to marriage as an escape from low pay and dead-end jobs, challenged skilled labourers as much as changes within the labour process that led to deskilling through new technologies. Though the National Council of Women advocated minimum wages for women in 1913, it was the TLC that was the main driving force behind inviting the state in to uphold male wages, which it believed were being eroded by the supposed competition of female workers. In reality, female workers took jobs that men would not have been competing for, but the incidence of an expanding unskilled female workforce became a powerful touchstone in propping up the broader legislative campaign for a living wage for all workers. Organized labour believed that because this policy applied to women workers who were not full legal subjects, its application would uphold male wage

[9]Veronica Strong-Boag, "The Girl of the New Day: Canadian Working Women in the 1920s," *L/LT*, 4 (Fall 1979), 132.

[10]Craig Heron, "The Second Industrial Revolution in Canada, 1890-1930," in Craig Heron and Robert Storey, eds., *On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada* (Montréal and Kingston 1986), 52-3.

[11]Strong-Boag, "The Girl of the New Day," 137-8.

[12]Graham S. Lowe, "Class, Job, and Gender in the Canadian Office," *L/LT*, 10 (Fall 1982), 11-37; and Marta Danylewycz and Alison Prentice, "Teachers' Work: Changing Patters and Perceptions in the Emerging School Systems of Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Central Canada," *L/LT*, 17 (Spring 1986), 59-80.

[13]Strong-Boag, "The Girl of the New Day," 163.

levels. Equally organized employers reacted in tandem. Businessmen endorsed gendered legislation because it obviated the principle of a living wage for all adults, relegating women to the same legal status as children in the workplace. While McCallum concluded that this accord between businessmen and organized labour rested upon a shared view of women's work — and to a certain extent this is true — their objectives may have overlapped but sprang from quite different perspectives regarding wage contracts.[14] Like Strong-Boag, McCallum shows how industrialization itself was increasingly characterized by gender inequalities.

McCallum's article is similarly suggestive in showing the degree to which the feminization of work was a central engine behind labour mobilization, which in this period was built increasingly around the notion of the male breadwinner as the exclusive provider for his dependents. If during the first industrial revolution labour protest focussed upon the intrinsic link between masculinity and artisanal skill, the second industrial revolution produced a shift within the political rhetoric of labour towards a firmer equation between male citizenship rights and the ideal of a single male breadwinner. The work of Sangster, Strong-Boag, and McCallum has carefully elucidated the way in which the presence of women in the workplace and the consequent reaction of both capitalists and male workers created a gendered division of labour. We need many more case studies, however, which are in turn linked to the political agenda of organized labour, to ask whether male workers were simply excluding women to protect their skill,[15] and when their critique of capitalism shifted to an argument for higher wages founded upon the sole breadwinner ideal.[16] As both Anna Clark and Sonya Rose have argued in the British context, during the early phases of industrialization notions of respectable manhood

[14]Margaret E. McCallum, "Keeping Women in their Place: The Minimum Wage in Canada, 1910-1925," *L/LT*, 17 (Spring 1986), 36-7.

[15]Craig Heron, "Factory Workers," in Paul Craven, ed., *Labouring Lives: Work and Workers in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto 1995), 516-20.

[16]The periodization for the institutionalization of the breadwinner ideal is contested. For Britain see Wally Seccombe, "Patriarchy Stabilized: The construction of the male breadwinner norm in nineteenth-century Britain," *Social History*, 11 (January 1986), 65; H. Land, "The Family Wage," *Feminist Review*, 6 (Fall 1979), 55-77; and Robert B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850* (London and New York 1998), 5, 147. In a revision of the concept of gender conflict, Carol E. Morgan has demonstrated how both working-class men and women endorsed the concept of the sole breadwinner. See "The Domestic Image and Factory Culture: The Cotton District in Mid-Nineteenth-Century England," *International Labor and Working Class History*, 49 (Spring 1996), 26-46. On the need to examine working-class male domesticity see Lynn Abrams, "'There was nobody like my Daddy': Fathers, the Family and the Marginalisation of Men in Modern Scotland," *Scottish Historical Review*, 78, 2 (October 1999), 219-42. On the way the interests of the state, middle-class reformers, organized labour and business intersected to promote the breadwinner ideal in Canada see Nancy Christie, *Engendering the State*. For New Zealand see Melanie Nolan, *Breadwinning: New Zealand Women and the State* (Christchurch 2000).

were just as often defined in opposition to male youth and unmarried men, as against women. But as they go on to argue, once male workplace rights became directly connected to their status as household heads (which depended in turn upon new notions of working-class domesticity), once fluid gender relationships became more rigid.[17] These changing notions of masculinity and their links with changes within working-class families must also be considered in the Canadian context. When and how, for example, did concepts of masculinity, which may have adhered around work, family, and church, much like those of women, begin to cohere around the primacy of work?[18] Under what conditions and at what point did class politics crystallize overtly around gender faultlines?

[17]Sonya O. Rose, "Respectable Men, Disorderly Others: The Language of Gender and the Lancashire Weavers' Strike of 1878 in Britain," *Gender and History*, 5 (Autumn 1993), 384-9; Anna Clark, "The Rhetoric of Chartist Domesticity: Gender, Language and Class in the 1830s and 1840s," *Journal of British Studies*, 31 (1992), 62-88; and Gay L. Gullickson, *Spinners and Weavers of Auffray: Rural industry and the sexual division of labor in a French village, 1750-1850* (Cambridge 1986), 199. The strength of Gullickson's work is that she examines the notion of gender conflict in terms of broader community patterns of work. In Canada, considerations of gender at work must also be seen in terms of the broader structure of work, much of which was in extractive and heavy industry, and thus largely male. By contrast, in England, the process of industrialization was itself gendered because of the dominance of textile industries, which drew in large number of women. There was a similar pattern in the United States. See for example Mary Blewett, "Deference and Defiance: Labor Politics and the Meanings of Masculinity in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century New England Textile Industry," *Gender and History*, 5 (Fall 1993), 398-415. In the early 19th century the central fissure in the shoemaking industry was between home and factory workers. On this point see Mary Blewett, *Men, Women and Work: Class, Gender, and Protest in the New England Shoe Industry, 1780-1910* (Urbana and Chicago 1988). Laura L. Frader, "Engendering Work and Wages: The French Labor Movement and the Family Wage," in Laura L. Frader and Sonya O. Rose, eds., *Gender and Class in Modern Europe* (Ithaca and London 1996), 146, has argued that unlike British workers, the French did not as uniformly use their role as breadwinners to define their right to higher wages. This in turn paved the way for family allowances in France. On this question see Susan Pedersen, *Family, Dependence, and the Origins of the Welfare State: Britain and France 1914-1945* (Cambridge 1993). Generally speaking the trend in working-class historiography is to view gender conflict as much more episodic than historians previously assumed and points to the need for specific contextualization which takes into consideration greater emphasis upon different workplace environments. In addition, capitalism itself must not be viewed as monolithic. On this point see Chris Middleton, "Women's labour and the transition to pre-industrial capitalism," in Lindsey Charles and Lorna Duffin, eds., *Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England* (London 1995), 181-206.

[18]For very different views of working-class masculinity over time see Pat Ayers, "The Making of Men: Masculinities in Interwar Liverpool," in Margaret Walsh, ed., *Working Out Gender: Perspectives from Labour History* (Aldershot 1999), 66-83; and Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (Oxford 1998), 162. McKibbin concludes that by the 1950s: "The culture of the English working man was profoundly work-centred."

McCallum's focus is bounded by the more narrow economic imperatives that flowed from the conflict of business and labour; it is clear that the notion that women "by nature" did not have dependents and could not be breadwinners was a position that had much greater cultural purchase, and one shared both across classes and across the gender divide. As McCallum makes clear, working-class women were not themselves at the forefront for policies that might raise their wages, presumably because they, like the textile worker Valentine Chartrand, saw themselves as secondary wage-earners.[19] It is working women's relative impervi-ousness to mobilization around the wage politics of the workplace that forms a sec-ond trajectory of analysis in *L/LT*. How did working-class women and women on the left of the political spectrum address the tension between women's individual right to paid work for equal pay with men and the aspirations of a movement culture that was at the same time embracing a newer conception of the family wage calibrated on the earnings of a single male breadwinner?

In their respective treatments of the "woman question" among Canadian so-cialists and communists, both Linda Kealey and Joan Sangster have proffered the argument that these movements generally failed to challenge "capitalist patriar-chy."[20] Although these radical political movements evinced a commitment to the right of women to economic independence through work, this position remained secondary to what they deemed the more important ideal of a family wage, for the latter they believed contributed better to the achievement of a unified work-ing-class politics of resistance. In a corrective to the historiographic focus upon

[19]McCallum, "Keeping Women in their Place," 33, 37-8. There is a racialist complexion to arguments favouring minimum wage legislation that I have not developed in this analysis. McCallum (38-9) observes that the support of socialists like J.S. Woodsworth and Helena Gutteridge for the legislation derived partially from their fears of low-wage competition from immigrants.

[20]Linda Kealey, "Canadian Socialism and the Woman Question, 1900-1914," *L/LT*, 13 (Spring 1984), 78. See also Linda Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour and the Left in Canada, 1890-1920* (Toronto 1998). For similar explorations of the attitudes of women on the left in other contexts see for example Jane Lewis, "The Working-Class Wife and Mother and State Intervention, 1870-1918," 102-6, in Jane Lewis, ed., *Labour and Love: Women's Experience of Home and Family 1850-1940* (Oxford 1986); Susan Pedersen, "The Failure of Feminism in the Making of the British Welfare State," *Radical History Review*, 43 (1989), 88-9; Pamela Graves, *Labour Women: Women in British Working-Class Politics, 1918-1939* (Cambridge 1994); Jane Lewis, "Models of Equality for women: the case of state support for children in twentieth-century Britain," 74-5, 79, 86, and Pat Thane, "Visions of gender in the making of the British welfare state: The case of women in the British Labour Party and social policy, 1906-1945," 96-102, and 141, in Gisela Bock and Pat Thane, eds., *Maternity and Gender Politics: Women and the Rise of the European Welfare States, 1880s-1950s* (London and New York 1991); and Gwendolyn Mink, *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917-1942* (Ithaca and London 1995).

middle-class reform, Kealey has examined the way in which socialist women formulated a critique of capitalism between 1900 and 1914, concluding that Helena Gutteridge remained an exceptional figure in so far as she fostered the notion of work for all women and was largely alone in criticizing the family wage concept for its tendency to marginalize the rights of women both within the home and the labour force. While Gutteridge skilfully linked socialist principles, feminism, and a commitment to the labour movement, the majority of radical women supported protective legislation for working women which continued to exalt the primary role of women as wives and mothers. In this way, they tended to reinforce the reformist agenda of middle-class female reformers, though, as Kealey makes clear, the sensibilities of working-class women emanated from very different economic familial strategies.[21]

In the end, as Kealey suggests, socialist women remained caught between the opposing imperatives of familialism and the concept of the individual wage, a dichotomy, which according to Joan Sangster, continued to constrain both socialists and communists well into the Great Depression. Although the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation [CCF] and the communists took up the issue of women's equality, they too foundered on the issue of equal pay for women because of the hold exerted by the breadwinner ideal even within groups representing unskilled labouring families that could never live up to this ideal. Here cultural and political aims overrode the reality of working-class material conditions. Thus, although there was support for unionizing wage-earning women, for the most part this applied only to single women and, as Sangster demonstrates, housewives were relegated to roles as wives supporting their husbands' goals in labour struggles.[22] Like Strong-Boag and Kealey, Sangster has uncovered long-standing divisions between women based on marital status, thus showing how conflicts among women intersected with gender conflicts over questions of family and work roles.[23] However, like Kealey, Sangster does make clear that working-class women found empowerment in their role as mothers and housewives, and effectively used what might be

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[21]Kealey, "Canadian Socialism and the Woman Question," 83, and 98-9.

[22]Joan Sangster, "The Communist Party and the Woman Question 1922-1929," *L/LT*, 15 (Spring 1985), 32, and 37-9. For the persistence of these attitudes to women within the political left see Dan Azoulay, "Winning Women for Socialism, the Ontario CCF and Women 1947-1961," *L/LT*, 36 (Fall 1995), 59-90.

[23]Linda Kealey, "'No Special Protection — No Sympathy': Women's Activism in the Canadian Labour Revolt of 1919," in Deian R. Hopkin and Gregory S Kealey, eds., *Class, Community and the Labour Movement: Wales and Canada, 1850-1930* (Wales 1989), 136-43. Kealey emphasizes the shared ideals of working- and middle-class women regarding maternalism and the breadwinner model as against the cross-class culture of men. For an extensive treatment of the importance of marital status as it relates to both men and women see Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, eds., *Mapping the Margins?: Families and Social Discipline in Canada, 1700-1970* (Montréal and Kingston 2003).

castigated as a conservative position for radical ends. Thus while the Communist Party of Canada endorsed a maternalist ethos, it also advocated birth-control.[24]

Sangster has effectively suggested that while the political left may have recognized the crucial role that women could play in developing a broader critique of capitalism, its commitment to a wage for men as heads of families blinded them to the reality that this very domestic ideology was a primary site of women's oppression. But as Margaret Hobbs makes clear, women's groups continued to be split over the question of individualist, equalitarian rights for women and their supposed biological differences, which rendered work for women a necessity and not a right.[25] In their analysis of the "radical agrarian feminist" Agnes MacPhail,[26] who endorsed the right for both women and men to work as a means to personal fulfilment, Margaret Hobbs and Terry Crowley show how "the equal rights tradition proved more resilient than one might assume."[27] Even during the Great Depression, when the high rates of male unemployment revivified the discourse that prescribed that women (and most notably married women) should work only out of necessity and should relinquish their jobs for the preeminent right to work of men, the legacy of the equalitarian argument survived. Although it is true that equal rights claims were not wholly eliminated from public discourse during the 1930s, because of the overriding concern with the demasculinization of the workforce, to have any public currency they had to be embedded in the language of necessity. As Hobbs concludes, however, the view that women worked only when necessary did not represent a retreat from feminist principles. Indeed, after the 1940s, equalitarian arguments resurfaced with greater impact, largely, one suspects, because of the weakening hold of familialist economic strategies and a greater emphasis upon individual rights within the broader political and economic culture of postwar Canada.[28]

Household and Workplace: Resolving Dichotomies

However much Kealey and Sangster conceptualized working-class women's commitment to maternalism as a source of radicalism, their emphasis had been on the

[24]Sangster, "The Communist Party and the Woman Question," 40.

[25]Margaret Hobbs, "Equality and Difference: Feminism and the Defence of Women Workers during the Great Depression," *L/LT*, 32 (Fall 1993), 201-23.

[26]Terry Crowley, "Agnes Macphail and Canadian Working Women," *L/LT*, 28 (Fall 1991), 130-41.

[27]Hobbs, "Equality and Difference," 202.

[28]For the persistence of familialist ideologies until after World War II, see Michael Gauvreau, "The Emergence of Personalist Feminism: Catholicism and the Marriage-Preparation Movement in Quebec, 1940-1966," and Nancy Christie, "Sacred Sex: The United Church and the Privatization of the Family in Post-War Canada," in Nancy Christie, ed., *Households of Faith: Family, Gender and Community in Canada, 1760-1969* (Montréal and Kingston 2002), 319-47, and 348-76.

equation between left-wing political action and women's paid employment as the primary means for achieving equal citizenship rights with men. In this view, capitalism had created the economic divisions of labour between men and women that in turn induced labouring men to erect barriers against the competition of women to their wages and skill. Hence the emancipation of women lay in overriding the inequalities created by capitalism through seeking equal employment rights with men. As early as 1980, Wayne Roberts argued for a less self-contained approach to the industrial world by calling for analyses of the private world of working-class family life and the wider community culture that connected lower middle-class, skilled and unskilled workers together.[29]

The most innovative work that drew together the previously separate worlds of unpaid and paid labour, however, was that by Bettina Bradbury, who radically transformed our reading of gender divisions within the workplace by expanding a conception of work to include the unpaid labour of women within the home and by focussing upon the proto-industrial family. As Bradbury maintained, "to understand the family economy of the working class in this period of early industrial capitalism, it is necessary to go beyond a simple consideration of the sufficiency of wages, to put aside the equation of work with wages labour, and to examine other ways in which survival could be ensured or enhanced."[30] Further, she interrogated previous assumptions that the sexual division of labour was created only within the

[29]Wayne Roberts, "Toronto Metal Workers and the Second Industrial Revolution, 1889-1914," *L/LT*, 6 (Fall 1980), 55-56. The cultural approach to working-class history was not in and of itself novel, but Roberts and his successors were moving away from a unified concept of the working-classes. Roberts was also one of the first to examine the spatial pattern of working-class housing within particular neighbourhoods that still calls for more study to assess the contours of community. For the progenitor of this approach see Bryan D. Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914* (Montréal 1979). Although the focus of much labour history remained on workplace conflict and movement cultures, historians continued to call for explorations of working-class cultural life. See Gregory S. Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History in Canada: Prospects in the 1980s," *L/LT*, 7 (Spring 1981), 67-94. For later analyses that demonstrate the way that economic class relations are amplified and reinforced in leisure and religion see Peter DeLottinville, "Joe Beef of Montreal: Working-Class Culture and the Tavern, 1869-1889," *L/LT*, 8-9 (Fall/Spring 1981-82), 9-40; Lynne Marks, "The Knights of Labour and the Salvation Army: Religion and Working-Class Culture in Ontario, 1882-1890," *L/LT*, 28 (Fall 1991), 89-127; and Bonnie Huskins, "From *haute cuisine* to Ox Roasts: Public Feasting and the Negotiation of Class in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Saint John and Halifax," *L/LT*, 37 (Spring 1996), 9-36. For a recent assesment of the historiography of working-class cultural life, see Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, "Modalities of Social Authority: Suggesting an Interface for Social and Religious History," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* (forthcoming).
[30]Bettina Bradbury, "Pigs, Cows, and Boarders: Non-Wage Forms of Survival Among Montreal Families, 1861-91," *L/LT*, 14 (Autumn 1984), 12.

economic relations of capitalism by elucidating the gendered patterns of labour within the family prior to the arrival of a mature industrial capitalism. Moreover, by showing how working-class families in Montréal, Canada's most industrialized city, used various strategies beyond simply wage labour to sustain the household economy, such as gardening and taking in boarders, Bradbury suggested that industrialization was not a holistic and all-encompassing process, but that traditional family economies persisted alongside industrialization and these practices were not simply absorbed into or eviscerated by this juggernaut. Indeed, by focussing upon the family economy, Bradbury revised earlier trajectories of industrialization which placed undue emphasis upon paid labour, and that concluded that the separation of the home and workplace was irrevocably established by the 1850s.[31] By suggesting that "wage dependence became almost total by the end of the century," Bradbury has paved the way for new understandings, beyond the mere presence of women in the workplace, of the reasons why the breadwinner ideal surfaced within organized labour at this time.[32] Also, her work reaffirms the view that the working-class family had evolved its own visions of domesticity which were created by economic realities beyond the mere cultural emulation of the middle-classes.[33]

[31]For this periodization see Craig Heron, "Factory Workers," in Paul Craven, ed., *Labouring Lives*. Bradbury has also added a gender dimension as a factor within industrialization that has been left out of previous conceptions of inequality based solely upon class. See A. Gordon Darroch, "Early Industrialization and Inequality in Toronto, 1861-1899," *L/LT*, 11 (Spring 1983), 31-61.

[32]Her timeline for the development of wage dependence also reaffirms the work of historians who have studied changes in policies regarding child labour. See for example John Bullen, "Hidden Workers: Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth Century Urban Ontario," *L/LT*, 18 (1986), 163-88; and Lorna F. Hurl, "Restricting Child Factory Labour in Late Nineteenth Century Ontario," *L/LT*, 21 (Spring 1988), 87-121. In her footnotes, Hurl discusses how various working-class newspapers, including the *Palladium of Labor,* began to assert views of working-class domesticity in the 1880s, which coincides with Bradbury's timeline. Despite Bradbury's later admonitions to historians of labour, there has thus far not been a monograph that has explored in detail the development over time of the breadwinner ideal or of working-class notions of domesticity. See Bettina Bradbury, "Women's History and Working-Class History," *L/LT*, 19 (Spring 1987), 23-44.

[33]Despite Bradbury's paradigm, historians continue to see domesticity as a largely middle-class development that trickled down to the working-class. See for example Christina Burr, "Defending 'The Art Preservative': Class and Gender Relations in the Printing Trades Unions," *L/LT*, 31 (Spring 1993), 47-73, fn.60, where she notes women participated in the "breadwinner ideology" because of the influence of "bourgeois family ideals." See also Cynthia R. Comacchio, "Beneath the 'Sentimental Veil': Families and Family History in Canada," *L/LT*, 33 (Spring 1994), 299. For a recent critique of this perspective see Christie, *Engendering the State*. For arguments that emphasize the way in which domesticity is a unique creation of the middle-class see Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (Chicago 1987); Mary P. Ryan, *The Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865*

   Above all, the critical analysis that Bradbury has brought to the study of working-class families has created a historical space for those women who by virtue of either their father's or husband's occupation considered themselves members of the working-class, but who did not enter the world of paid employment outside the home. Thus, for women, conceptions of class may function differently than for men and are not simply bounded by production in the workplace. By redirecting historical scholarship away from women in paid labour or union/radical activists, Bradbury has called on historians to focus on the lived experience of the majority of working-class women and, in this way, has exhorted historians to discard the "naturalized" theoretical dichotomies between paid and unpaid labour for women. This means taking the working-class household economy as the primary site for gender analysis in order to understand the broader marginalization of the majority of women within labour historiography.[34] More than previous women's historians,

(Cambridge 1981); and Barbara Leslie Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelicalism and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century America* (Middletown CT 1981). The trickle-down effect of middle-class domestic values has been broadly challenged. See for example Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860* (Urbana and Chicago 1987), 78; Sonya O. Rose, "Gender at Work: Sex, Class and Industrial Capitalism," *History Workshop Journal*, 21 (Spring 1986), 124; Ellen Ross, *Love and Toil: Motherhood in Outcast London, 1870-1918* (Oxford and New York 1993); Judith G. Coffin, *The Politics of Women's Work, 1750-1915* (Princeton 1996), 12; K.D.M. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England, 1660-1900* (Cambridge, 1985); and Nancy Christie, "'On the Threshold of Manhood': Working-Class Religion and Domesticity in Victorian Britain and Canada," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* (forthcoming).

[34]There is an extensive historiography on women's work and the family economy. For those who emphasize the continuities in family structure with industrialization see for example Tamara K. Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community* (Cambridge 1982); Michael Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth-Century Lancashire* (Cambridge 1971); Sonya O. Rose, *Limited Livelihoods: Gender and Class in Nineteenth-Century England* (Berkeley 1992); Bridget Hill, *Women, Work and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford 1989); Bob Rushway, *Rite, Custom, Ceremony and Community in England, 1700-1880* (London 1982); Wally Seccombe, *Weathering the Storm: Working-Class Families from the Industrial Revolution to the Fertility Decline* (London and New York 1993); Nancy Grey Osterud, *Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in Nineteenth-Century New York* (Ithaca and London 1991); Marjorie Cohen, *Women's Work, Markets and Economic Development in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto 1988); Catherine Hall, *White, Male and Middle-Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (London 1992), 44; Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages and Ideology of Labor* (New York 1990); and Joanna Bourke, *Husbandry to Housewifery: Women, Economic Change and Housework in Ireland, 1890-1914* (Oxford 1993). For a critique of separate spheres from two different perspectives see Janet Guildford and Suzanne Morton, eds., *Separate Spheres: Women's Worlds in the 19th Century Maritimes* (Fredericton 1994); Nancy Christie, "Introduction: Family, Community, and the Rise of Liberal Society," in Nancy Christie, ed., *Households of Faith: Family, Gender, and Community in Canada, 1760-1969* (Montréal and Kingston 2002), 3-33.

Bradbury has forcefully challenged the emulation of paid labour as the touchstone of class experience and indeed the masculinist labour paradigm itself.

In an equally seminal article, Gail Cuthbert Brandt shows the important role that families played first of all in placing members in the workplace, but more significantly, she posited explanations that did not rely upon essentialist notions of women's passivity as to why women were not more active in labour unions. By using the life-course as a conceptual framework, Brandt shows how girls entered the cotton mills in Québec around fourteen years of age, and upon marriage they left work only to return after their childbearing years and when their children were older. While not dismissing the impact of the cultural conception of women's work as secondary, a designation that allowed employers to pay women less, Brandt also highlights the intermittent nature of women's work patterns that were dictated by family needs, be it the parental or conjugal family. She also demonstrates the interconnectedness of women's labour to family economic strategies, challenging the often oversimplified view of the link between earning wages and personal autonomy.[35] Significantly, her analysis illustrates the persistence of the family wage concept until the 1940s.[36] Rather than drawing distinctions by gender alone, between the familialism of women and the individualism of the male breadwinner, Brandt shows the seamlessness of the idealization of the male breadwinner that was in turn suspended upon the experience of familial economic interdependency.[37]

[35]There is a considerable historiographical debate as to whether paid work led to greater individualism and independence for women. For arguments that emphasize women's independence see for example Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860* (New York 1979); Edward Shorter, "Illegitimacy, Sexual Revolution, and Social Change in Modern Europe," in Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb, eds., *Marriage and the Family* (Princeton 1980); Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem* (Toronto 1994); and H. Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America* (Baltimore 1993). For historians who emphasize the persistence of familialism over individualism see Louise Tilly and Joan Scott, *Women, Work and the Family* (New York 1978); J. Nolan, *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885-1920* (Lexington 1989); Timonty W. Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish: Households, Migration and the Rural Economy of Ireland* (Princeton 1997); and Nancy Christie, "Introduction: Interrogating the Western Family Form," in Christie and Gauvreau, *Mapping the Margins?* Pamela Sharpe has emphasized the gender division between familialism and individualism in Pamela Sharpe, ed., *Women, Gender and Labour Migration: Historical Global Perspectives* (London and New York 2001), 8-9.
[36]For a similar argument see Neil Sutherland, "'We Always Had Things to Do': The Paid and Unpaid Work of Anglophone Children Between the 1920s and the 1960s," *L/LT*, 25 (Spring 1990), 105-41.
[37]Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "'Weaving It Together': Life Cycle and the Industrial Experience of Female Cotton Weavers in Quebec, 1910-1950," *L/LT*, 7 (Spring 1981), 113-25. See also Bruno Ramirez, "French Canadian Immigrants in the New England Cotton Industry: A Socio-Economic Profile," *L/LT*, 11 (Spring 1983), 125-42. Brandt's periodization fits that of Dominique Jean, who in her article "Le recul du travail des enfants au Quebec entre 1960

Building upon the foundational work of both Bradbury and Brandt, Yukari Takai has further developed the historiographical trajectory emphasizing the degree to which industrial wage-earning was a continuation of traditional familial strategies. In her analysis of the life-course of wage earning among single French Canadian immigrant women in the Lowell, Massachusetts textile mills, Takai emphasizes the degree to which women's lives were constrained not by capitalism itself but by the system of familial obligation. Like Bradbury and Brandt, Takai cautions historians against too easily concluding that the liberal individualism of the market economy directly altered the mind-set of workers once they entered the industrial workplace. As Takai makes clear, though one might be paid individual wages by the late 19th century, whereas previously children's wages were paid to the head of the family, women workers did not perceive work in individualistic terms. Rather, the family economy determined their entry into the workforce; they continued to live at home; and their wages were given over to their parents. In families where widows headed households, the primary wage was contributed by children. It was in these families in particular where the lack of marital choice was peculiarly gender specific, as daughters of widows often remained unmarried and continued to work. Because of the longevity of work in the factory they more often moved into skilled positions, despite the persistence of gendered conceptions of labour.[38]

Similarly influenced by the positioning of the household as a primary site of working-class identity, Magda Fahrni, through an investigation of the relationship between mistresses and their female domestic servants, has shown how class boundaries were created within the home and not simply by the labour processes of industrialization and, further, that women were active in upholding those class relations. While on the one hand Fahrni demonstrates how working-class and middle-class notions of respectability were not rigidly defined within the parameters of household service, she has also argued that the more harmonious class relations that were encompassed by paternalism were radically altered by industrialization. She thus concludes that by the late 19th century in "a society where dominant conceptions of respectability largely excluded poor women, immigrant women, and often single women," servants were especially marginalized.[39] Much of Fahrni's evidence for this conclusion rest upon sources such as court records, which tend to overdetermine "deviance," and thus her conclusions about industrialization as a modernizing and marginalizing force must be read alongside other findings, such

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et 1960: une explication des conflits entre les famille pauvres et l'État providence," *L/LT*, 24 (Fall 1989), 91-129, shows the demise of child labour following World War II.

[38]Yukari Takai, "Shared Earnings, Unequal Responsibilities: Single French-Canadian Wage-Earning Women in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1900-1920," *L/LT*, 47 (Spring 2001), 115-32.

[39]Magda Fahrni, "'Ruffled' Mistresses and 'Discontented' Maids: Respectability and the Case of Domestic Service, 1880-1914," *L/LT*, 39 (Spring 1997), 69-97, and 96.

as those of Takai, which emphasize substantial areas of continuity and tradition in the way work and family roles framed the experience of single women. What Fahrni's evidence indicates, however, is the degree to which domestic service was an important vehicle for middle-class consciousness, and it is in this context that the protests of mistresses must be read.[40] As Fahrni has made clear, the household was a primary site where inequality was both experienced and negotiated. Following on this, it is evident that the "deviant" behaviour of young, female servants that Fahrni outlines suggests that working-class resistance was conditioned by the form of one's workplace relations and that the form of female protest and resistance to forms of exploitation may have been as a result more individualistic. While collectivist forms of protest have been given a great deal more attention by historians, this "personalizing of class" is also crucial.[41] When the majority of women continued to work in domestic service well into the 20th century, it is of the utmost importance to consider these gendered avenues of protest beyond "the prism of the strike."[42]

[40]It should be noted, however, that much of Fahrni's evidence is taken from the homes of the upper bourgeoisie, such as the Molsons. Just as the new historiography pertaining to working-class identity now considers the multiplicity of experience, so too should historians consider gradations within the middle classes. On this new historiographical trajectory see F.M.L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain* (Cambridge, Mass. 1998); Geoffrey Crossick and Heinze-Gerhard Haupt, *Shopkeepers and Master Artisans in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London and New York 1984); and Jonathon Barry and Christopher Brooks, eds., *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (London 1994). Generally speaking, these authors critique the teleological approach that Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall have taken in *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle-Classes, 1780-1850* (Chicago 1987). For an insightful dissection of the tendency to mistake representation for reality see Dror Wahrman, "National Society, Communal Culture: An Argument about the Recent Historiography of Eighteenth-Century Britain," *Social History*, 17 (January 1992), 67-71.
[41]K.D.M. Snell, "Deferential bitterness: The social outlook of the rural proletariat in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England and Wales," in W.L. Bush, ed., *Social Orders and Social Classes: Studies in Social Stratification in Europe Since 1500* (London 1992), 176.
[42]The literature on domestic service is growing and revolves mostly around the timing of when patriarchal family relations changed to more contractual relations. The latter are, in turn, interpreted as the demarcation of more conflictual class relations. See for example Elizabeth Langland, *Nobody's Angels: Middle Class Women and Domestic Ideology in Victorian Culture* (Ithaca and London 1995); Leonore Davidoff, "Mastered for Life: Servant and Wife in Victorian and Edwardian England," in Pat Thane and Anthony Sutcliffe, eds., *Essays in Social History, Vol. 2* (Oxford 1986); Patty Seleski, "Women, Work and Cultural Change in Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth-Century London," in Tim Harris, ed., *Popular Culture in England c.1500-1800* (New York 1995); A. Kussmaul, *Servants in Husbandry in Early Modern England* (Cambridge 1981); K.D.M. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor*, 321; E. Higgs, *Domestic Servants and Households in Rochdale, 1851-1871* (New York 1986); F.E. Dudden, *Serving Women: Household Service in Nineteenth-Century America* (Middletown, CT 1983); Deborah Valenze, *The First Industrial Woman* (New York and Ox-

As more women (and especially those who were married) have entered the workforce in ever greater numbers since the late 1950s, unpaid labour for women has become even more hidden and subject to a pejorative public discourse.[43] When combined with a feminist-activism that equates paid work with social and political equality for women, this has created a presentism and a gendered blindness, making the recovery of other forms of empowerment by women in the past particularly difficult. Such a conceptual difficulty is aggravated by the fact that as union activism becomes more unified and occupies a wider political space, the printed sources such organizations generate likewise privilege paid labour; politicized class mobilization can exist only through the wage nexus. For the most part homework has thus been relegated to the realm of the pre-industrial, and despite historians such as Brandt, Bradbury, and Takai who allude to the persistence of hidden work in the home, historians of 20th-century labour have for the most part seen housewives as the "other" and as constituting the ultimate obstacle to a form of class solidarity that is non-gendered. Nancy M. Forestall and Marilyn Porter have recovered women's self-perceptions of their family and work roles through an analysis of oral history evidence.[44] In carrying the household-workplace model into the 20th century, Nancy Forestall argues that the majority of the women interviewed in her study wished to leave work to be married, and indeed were glad of it. Yet these women continued to supplement the earnings of their husbands by taking up part-time unskilled labour such as sewing and cleaning which, on the surface, tended to preserve the gender division between workplaces and the home. Paid labour was undertaken within the household space and it was engaged in on the assumption of the primacy of male breadwinner support.

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ford, 1995); and Carol Lasser, "'The World's Dread Laugh': Singlehood and Service in Ninteenth-Century Boston," in Herbert G. Gutman and Donald H. Bell, eds., *The New England Working-Class and the New Labor History* (Urbana and Chicago 1987). The older view conceived of domestic service as a means of binding the classes together. See for example J.J. Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England* (London 1956). For a critique of this perspective see Cissie Fairchilds, *Domestic Enemies: Servants and their Masters in Old Regime France* (Baltimore and London 1984); Sarah C. Maza, *Servants and Masters in Eighteenth Century France: The Uses of Loyalty* (Princeton 1983); and Tim Meldrum, *Domestic Service and Gender 1660-1750: Life and Work in the London Household* (London 2000).

[43]Anne Forrest, "The Industrial Relations Significance of Unpaid Work," *L/LT*, 42 (Fall 1998), 199-225.

[44]Marilyn Porter, "'She was Skipper of the Shore-Crew': Notes on the History of the Sexual Division of Labour in Newfoundland," *L/LT*, 15 (Spring 1985), 105-23; and Nancy M. Forestall, "Times Were Hard: The Pattern of Women's Paid Labour in St. John's Between the Two World Wars," *L/LT*, 24 (Fall 1989), 147-66. We still await in Canada a cross-country project that systematically establishes an oral history bank accessible to future historians on the model of that of Paul Thompson for the Edwardian working classes.

While some feminist historians might conclude that these women were merely passive and lacked political consciousness, the work of Marilyn Porter reaches divergent conclusions. In her study of the fishing economy of Newfoundland, where gender divisions were at their most extreme, and where male authority in the family was clearly dominant, women ironically experienced little marital violence. How, Porter asked, did this come about? In part, Porter relies upon the older argument that women did indirectly contribute to the economy of the household and thereby preserved a modicum of power, but more tellingly she has attributed the strong belief of Newfoundland women that they were independent and that the gender status within the family was egalitarian to a rigid sex segregation within the economy, cultural life, and the family. Gender control was a function of single-sex sociability and women used separate spheres to express their autonomy. Thus, Porter concludes, the women of outport Newfoundland "have used their vital roles in initial settlement and in the fish producing economy not to destroy the sexual division of labour but to establish its boundaries in such a way as to confirm their control over at least their own spheres."[45]

Patriarchy and Capitalism

In accounting for what they call the double inferiorization of women in Montréal between the wars, Marie Lavigne and Jennifer Stoddart wrote in 1977: "La division sexuelle du travail confie aux hommes le soin de gagner un salaire tandis que les femmes sont destinées au travail domestiques non-salaire. Quand les femmes doivent assumer un travail rémunéré, leur spécialisation obligatoire dans le travail domestique justifie une inégalite systématique part rapport aux travailleurs."[46] Where Lavigne and Stoddart emphasize the way in which women's unequal status vis-à-vis men was formed within social relations outside of economic structures, Margaret E. McCallum, in her analysis of sex segregation within the Ganong Brothers confectionary factory, places greater emphasis upon the wage system itself as the determining factor in creating continuities in the gender division of labour.[47] Michele Martin, however, in her analysis of job segregation within Bell Telephone, concludes that female subordination within the workplace was an ex-

[45]Porter, "'She was Skipper of the Shore-Crew,'" 122. Porter has revised the traditional view that the blurring of economic roles contributed to women's independence. For this view see Barbara J. Cooper, "Farm Women: Some Contemporary Themes," *L/LT*, 24 (Fall 1989), 167-80.

[46]Marie Lavigne et Jennifer Stoddart, "Les Travailleuses Montréalaises entre les deux guerres," *L/LT*, 2 (1977), 170-83. For a similar argument which focusses upon patriarchy see Gillian Creese, "The Politics of dependence: Women, work and unemployment in the Vancouver labour movement before World War II," in Gregory S. Kealey, eds., *Class, Gender and Region: Essays in Canadian Historical Sociology* (St. John's 1988), 122.

[47]Margaret E. McCallum, "'Separate Spheres': The Organization of Work in a Confectionary Factory: Ganong Bros., St. Stephen, New Brunswick," *L/LT*, 24 (Autumn 1989), 69-90.

tension of structures of female subordination which had been previously institu-
tionalized within the family. As she observes, it was this prior subordination of
women that allowed and indeed created the expansion of capitalist economic rela-
tions and not vice versa.[48]

A similar debate ensued internationally over whether patriarchy or capitalism
created unequal gender relations. Much of this interpretive contrast remains
blocked in an unproductive analytic impasse, in so far as defenders of both posi-
tions accuse each other of essentialism. While it has been valuable to criticize the
dual systems approach for not interpreting economic systems as sex-blind, it did
nevertheless underscore the fact that patriarchy and its attendant gender relations
(which were both conflictual and interdependent) were present prior to capitalism.
And while it was important to place gender at the centre of class analysis if one
wished to situate family and work within an integrated analytic framework, it is
also true as Leon Fink has maintained, that those who advocate the combined treat-
ment of gender and class have often been vague as to how this should be done. For
heuristic reasons it may be the case that sometimes these two variables must be kept
separate.[49]

[48]Michele Martin, "Feminization of the Labour Process in the Communication Industry:
The Case of the Telephone Operators, 1876-1904," *L/LT*, 22 (Fall 1988), 139-62, and 143.
[49]Leon Fink, "Culture's Last Stand?: Gender and the Search for Synthesis in American La-
bor History," *Labor History*, 34 (Spring-Summer 1993), 182-3. For the dualist perspective,
see Mari Jo Buhle, "Gender and Labor History," in J. Carroll Moody and Alice
Kessler-Harris, eds., *Perspectives on American Labor History: The Problems of Synthesis*
(Dekalb, IL 1989), 63-5. For a critique of the dualism school, see Ava Baron, "Gender and
Labor History: Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future," in Ava Baron, ed., *Work En-
gendered: Toward a New History of American Labor* (Ithaca and London 1991), 18-19; and
Eileen Boris and Cynthia R. Daniels, "Introduction," in Boris and Daniels, *Homework: His-
torical and Contemporary Perspectives on Paid Labor at Home* (Urbana and Chicago,
1989), 2-5. In Britain the dualist school has had more purchase and there the debate revolves
around the question of a Golden Age for egalitarian gender relations that preceded the indus-
trial revolution. For a recent synthesis of this debate see Katrina Honeyman, *Women, Gen-
der and Industrialisation in England, 1700-1870* (London 2000); Judy Lown, "'Not so
much a Factory, more a form of Patriarchy': Gender and Class during Industrialization," in
Eva Gamarinkikow, et al, eds., *Gender, Class and Work* (London 1983), 29-30; Leonore
Davidoff and Catherine Hall, "The Hidden Investment: women and the enterprise," in
Pamela Sharpe, ed., *Adapting to Capitalism: Working Women in the English Economy,
1700-1850* (London 1996), 150; and Laura L. Frader and Sonya O. Rose, *Gender and Class
in Modern Europe* (Ithaca and London, 1996), 3-19. Sonya O. Rose has been a critic of the
dual systems approach, see her "Gender at Work: Sex, Class and Industrial Capitalism,"
123-4. In English historiography there is much greater emphasis upon the division of labour
prior to industrial capitalism. See for example Pat Hudson and W.R. Lee, "Women's Work
and the Family Economy in Historical Perspective," in Pat Hudson and W.R. Lee, *Women's
Work and the Family Economy in Historical Perspective* (Manchester and New York 1990);
and Deborah Valenze, *The First Industrial Woman*, 3-4. Valenze cites gender divisions of

The discussion has been no less vociferous and no less inconclusive within Canadian historiography. Thus, Robert McIntosh has observed in his study of female needleworkers that "[c]apitalist social relations adapted, used and exploited — but never subsumed — patriarchal attitudes and practices." In this way he sees capitalism and patriarchy as distinct but overlapping.[50] For his part, Jacques Ferland has asserted that there existed "a persistent process of interaction between patriarchy and capitalism with a much greater emphasis on the role of men ... in maintaining women's inferiority in the labour market." In delineating the reasons why women participated in strikes, however, Ferland seems to emphasize the differing technological and spatial organizations erected by capitalism rather than the ideological system of patriarchy to explain the gendered structure of labour militancy. Thus he concludes that in those cotton mills where there was less spatial segregation by sex and less dominant craft unionism, there was less gender conflict and more mutuality of class interests. The interests of male employers did not necessarily coincide with those of male employees. Women's protest, he argues, was much like that of

work prior to industrialization, however, she sees the rigidity of gender relations as the creation specifically of factory culture (11). For a similar argument see Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley 1995), 2. British historians have had fewer fissures between feminist and gender perspectives. For a call in Canada to downplay such dichtomies see Joan Sangster, "Feminism and the Making of Canadian Working-Class History: Exploring the Past, Present and Future," *L/LT*, 46 (Fall 2000), 127-65, and 152. For the most part, historians who study gender in other contexts privilege gender as an ideological system that can be disentangled from capitalist relations. See for example Mariana Valverde, "The Making of a Gendered Working Class," *L/LT*, 22 (Fall 1988), 247-57. See also Christie, *Engendering the State*; Leonore Davidoff, *Worlds Between: Historical Essays on Gender and Class* (New York 1995), 230-4, and 241; and Ann S. Orloff, "Gender and Social Rights of Citizenship: The Comparative Analyses of State Policies and Gender Relations," *American Sociological Review*, 58 (June 1993), 304-8. The concept of patriarchy has been revivified but carefully historicized by family historians. See for example Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill and London, 1988); Julie Hardwick, *The Practice of Patriarchy: Gender and the Politics of Household Authority in Early Modern France* (University Park, PA 1998); Christine Adams, *A Taste for Comfort and Status: A Bourgeois Family in Eighteenth-Century France* (University Park, PA 2000); Carol E. Harrison, *The Bourgeois Citizen in Nineteenth-Century France: Gender, Sociability and the Uses of Emulation* (Oxford 1999), 10; Christie, "Introduction: Family, Community, and the Rise of Liberal Society," 3-33; and Martha May, "Bread and roses: American workingmen, labor unions and the family wage," in Ruth Milkman, *Women, Work and Protest: A Century of U.S. Women's Labor History* (London and New York 1985), 14-15.

[50]Robert McIntosh, "Sweated Labour: Female Needleworkers in Industrializing Canada," *L/LT*, 32 (Fall 1993), 105-38, and 106.

other unskilled and semi-skilled workers.[51] Within capitalist relations, depending on the particular complexion of the workplace, gender conflict does not necessarily ensue, and therefore there is no ironclad or monolithic argument to be made that posits that capitalism and gender always reinforce one another. While historians like Shirley Tillotson have rightly criticized Ferland for underconceptualizing the way in which male workers came to define skill in specifically gendered ways, others like Christina Burr have sought to decentre the very notion of class by demonstrating that "capitalist organization" in and of itself sought to preserve the gender domination of men over women and that the interests of businessmen for the cheap labour of women were reinforced by the gender exclusions at the core of campaigns for unionization among skilled workers.[52] Capitalism, in this scenario, is ineluctably defined by patriarchy and will by necessity create gender conflict.[53] While it is true that such case studies of skilled trades are important in elucidating the way in which the sexual division of labour came about, are they representative? Were printers, as Patrick Duffy has recently shown, peculiarly attached to the promotion of patriarchy above class interests because of the degree to which they connected their high status to their skill? How did the gendered perceptions of work and skill elaborated within the printing trade compare with that within male-dominated workplaces such as steel making? More importantly, the studies of Burr and Tillotson must be read alongside the findings of Ferland in order to concretely situate the way the interplay of technology, skill levels, and the labour process itself functioned to produce particular conflictual relationships.

While the conclusions of Burr do not radically dissent from those of feminist historians such as Joan Sangster and Veronica Strong-Boag, Burr has conceptualized her work as a critique of the dual systems approach even though her argument that within the industrial workplace "gender interests prevailed over those of class" seems to create dichotomies where she had hoped to foster an historiographical integration of patriarchal gender relations and those of capitalism. While it is necessary to be mindful of a multiplicity of variables to explain historical processes, and to be attentive to the various environments in which gender hierarchies are created and entrenched, Burr has totalized the experience of men, even those whose economic interests were diametrically opposed, namely employers and employees. One of the problems with a unitary patriarchal-capitalist approach, then, is that it conflates outcomes — namely the marginalization of women workers — with the processes, in which workers were attempting to forge political strategies to oppose capitalist domination. Where British historians have simply concluded that indus-

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[51]Jacques Ferland, "In Search of the Unbound Prometheia: A Comparative View of Women's Activism in Two Quebec Industries, 1869-1908," *L/LT*, 24 (Fall 1989), 12, 13, 29, and 42.

[52]Shirley Tillotson, "'We may all soon be first-class men': Gender and skill in Canada's early twentieth-century urban telegraph industry," *L/LT*, 27 (Spring 1991), 97-125.

[53]Burr, "Defending 'The Art Preservative'," 51-4.

trialization was itself a gendered process, historians in Canada have attempted to privilege either gender or class, and by doing so have reified gender and have substituted a teleology of gender conflict for the very approaches to class of which they have been so dismissive. If one wishes to assert the existence of multiple identities that gender historians and historians of discourse analysis have advocated, it is necessary likewise to apply these theoretical constructions not simply to deconstructing essentialist notions of class, but to likewise destabilize overly-monolithic concepts of gender. Most importantly of all, as Ellen Scheinberg has postulated, it is absolutely crucial to disentangle the interests of male employers and those of male employees. In a nuanced article that goes beyond both the dualist and unitary approaches, Scheinberg has used the case study of textile workers during World War II, an era when female labour was in high demand, to show how under particular historical circumstances capitalists were willing "to abandon, at least temporarily, the gender-based work structure when economic conditions rendered it a less profitable option" and how as a result class conflict overrode the gender interests of employers and employees.[54]

Although it could be argued that the wartime economy was an aberrant one and thus does not represent the "normal" intersection of gender and class, Scheinberg's work foreshadows more recent analyses of gender at work that focus not simply upon the way in which either male employers or male employees built ideological and organizational structures that excluded women, but investigate more specifically the way in which gender identities shaped the very meanings that working men and women placed upon work and family. The focus of Kathleen Canning's investigation of gender in German factories scrutinizes how women themselves "intepreted, subverted or internalized" prevailing gender discourses both in the family and at work. In so doing, Canning places the cultural and material experience of everyday life within the context of overlapping and competing discourses between social reformers, industrialists, feminists, social democrats, and union men.[55] In a similar vein, Joan Sangster seeks to open up previously teleological narratives of class formation by studying the interface of both resistance and accommodation to capitalism in her subtle investigation of the way in which the employers at Westclox in Peterborough were able to use gendered attitudes to women's work to further their paternalist employment policies and how the women themselves understood, negotiated, and sometimes rejected the values of deference

[54]Ellen Scheinberg, "The Tale of Tessie the Textile Worker: Female Textile Workers in Cornwall During World War II," *L/LT*, 33 (Spring 1994), 153-86, and 180.

[55]Kathleen Canning, *Languages of Labor and Gender: Female Factory Work in Germany, 1850-1914* (Ithaca and London 1996), 7, and 12-13. Canning stresses the need to examine everyday experience for it is here that abstract discursive practices were encountered, reinterpreted and accommodated. On the way in which welfare capitalism was alternately used to suppress the growing power of unions see Sanford J. Jacoby, *Modern Manors: Welfare Capitalism Since the New Deal* (Princeton 1997).

and loyalty. Paternalism, as Sangster observes, was "entwined with and aided by gender hierarchy found in the family, wider community and the workplace." And although Sangster conceives of family and workplace as interlocking hierarchies of dominance, she does not see them as necessarily unified structures, for she demonstrates they must be interpreted from the perspective by which ordinary workers ascribe meaning to them.[56] More significantly, Sangster explicitly frames her investigation of workplace cooperation and conflict within the context of the broader community of Peterborough, and it is the context of community ties that will be most valuable in the future for explaining levels of conflict and resistance rather than limiting one's focus merely to the nexus of capital and labour. For it is through this larger interpretive framework that considerations of family, ethnic relations, and the role of religion can be highlighted and explored.[57]

It is this historiographic trajectory, of combining gender discourse with the gendered outlook of workers themselves, that forms the basis of Susanne Klausen's analysis of the women who worked in the plywood plant in Port Alberni during World War II. Although Klausen intended to attribute the persistence of the sexual division of labour to gendered structures inherent in capitalism itself, which saw women merely as a reserve army of labour during the war, her assessment of the actual experiences and outlooks of the women that worked there shows that most women did not question such gendered perceptions of the workplace despite new work experiences. They preferred the single-sex environment which this created, and indeed often turned down promotions that would have given them higher pay and job status but which would have placed them within a distinctly male work environment. Indeed, it was the very sexual division of labour that formed the basis of the radicalism of these women workers, even though this translated into protests more individualistic than the more collective male-dominanted vehicle of the strike.[58] Indeed the interpretive framework constructed by both Sangster and Klausen accords with that of Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, who has recently offered a nuanced explanation as to why the sexual division of labour persisted: "The resulting picture of women in labor politics, is not, then, one of domineering men who built class solidarity on the reification of sexual hierarchy, but rather one of worthy women and men who, for the most part, collaborated to this end because it reaffirmed powerful notions of working-class family, masculinity, and womanhood."[59]

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[56]Joan Sangster, "The Softball Solution: Female Workers, Male Managers and the Operation of Paternalism at Westclox, 1923-60," *L/LT*, 32 (Autumn 1993), 167-99.

[57]For a similar approach see Joy Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men, and Change in Two Industrial Towns, 1880-1950* (Toronto 1990).

[58]Susanne Klausen, "The Plywood Girls: Women and Gender Ideology at the Port Alberni Plywood Plant, 1942-1991," *L/LT*, 41 (Spring 1998), 201, 211-12, 215-18, and 228.

[59]Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, *Labors Appropriate to their Sex: Gender, Labor, and Politics in Urban Chile, 1900-1930* (Durham and London 2001), 241.

In many respects Sangster's analysis moves distinctly into the realm of gender history, but one that measures the structured discourses within various institutional loci, namely the family, the workplace, and the union, against the sense of self-identity that ordinary workers had created for themselves as a means to survive. One trajectory of this new gender perspective has been influenced by discourse analysis in so far as it interprets class and gender as unstable categories constantly redefined and renegotiated, and thus framed within historically specific linguistic structures. From this perspective, historians have demonstrated the ways in which the discursive has constrained and confined behaviour. Through their examination of a warplant newspaper, Helen Smith and Pamela Wakewich demonstrate that the new work patterns for young women during wartime remained enmeshed in a "mechanism of ideological continuity." Robert A. Campbell delineates the ways in which the language underlying the debate on beer parlours in Vancouver created to create a discourse that marginalized groups on the basis of class, gender, sexuality, and race.[60]

Those who have taken as their focus the deconstruction of masculinity have been particularly innovative, not the least because in alerting historians to hierarchies within male culture, namely divisions and conflicts by virtue of age, skill, and socio-economic status, they have shown how the behaviour of men is not "reducible to the patriarchal desires of working men."[61] In investigating a wide range of interpretations of the link between masculinity and work, these historians have been able to further expand our grasp of the ways in which sub-divisions within gender intersected with class. More specifically, these gender analyses have been adept at showing not how gender divided class, but the way in which gender itself was utilized to serve and uphold the class interests of working men. Where Christina Burr may have seen gender conflict as destructive of class unity, by disaggregating different meanings of masculinity both within the working- and middle-classes, the new gender historians have shown how gender was implicit in underwriting policies and agendas, and thus have ironically reintroduced the notion of class to a historiographic terrain now characterized by subtle subdivisions of age and skill. As Deborah Stiles has noted in her discussion of the life of a 19th-century tanner, class was crucial to the formation of gender identity.[62]

[60]Helen Smith and Pamela Wakewich, "'Beauty and Helldrivers': Representing Women's Work and Identities in a Warplant Newspaper," *L/LT*, 44 (Fall 1999), 80; and Robert A. Campbell, "Managing the Marginal: Regulating and Negotiating Decency in Vancouver's Beer Parlours, 1925-1954," *L/LT*, 44 (Fall 1999), 109-11.

[61]Todd McCallum, "'Not a Sex Question?': The One Big Union and the Politics of Radical Manhood," *L/LT*, 42 (Fall 1998), 53.

[62]Deborah Stiles, "Martin Butler, Masculinity and the North American Sole Leather Tanning Industry, 1871-1889," *L/LT*, 42 (Autumn 1998), 85-114.

If this new gendered interpretation of class is much less holistic and universalist than previous incarnations, now that it has been reconceptualized as a category with internal gradations which are themselves defined and created by other cultural practices and identities — namely ethnicity, race, religion, community, and family — it is, as Todd McCallum has suggested, no less politicized or engaged. For as his dissection of the political discourse of the One Big Union has shown, it was the very gendered aspect of its concept of work citizenship that gave the movement its political potency. When read beside the findings of Rusty Bitterman, Joy Parr, and Jack Little, who have revealed through their analyses of work during early industrialization that occupational identities for men were extremely fluid, constantly shifting between farmer and industrial worker, such perspectives enrich our appreciation of how gender and class mesh. In the case of Daniel Spencer Gilman, studied by Little, it was common for male work patterns, especially among the unmarried, to be regularly interrupted, and for their family roles to be ones characterized by dependency upon established household heads.[63]

From this perspective, the work experience and family roles of single men and women in the 19th century appear similar. This fact alone challenges the persistent tendency within labour historiography to view the variable nature of women's work as aberrant. But also, the work of Bitterman and Little points to the need for historians of class to carefully historicize when and under what circumstances concepts of socio-economic gradation became reinterpreted into more distinct work identities and when occupational identities become talismanic for class politics. In other words, if working for wages was seen "as an empowering experience" for both men and women and thus formed the foundation of "class and gender solidarity" — as Robert A. Ventresca has found for the Italian Canadian workers he interviewed, and Julie Guard has revealed in her study of female labour activists in postwar Canada[64] — the central questions that must be asked of both gender and

[63]Joy Parr, "Hired Men: Ontario Agricultural Wage Labour in Historical Perspective," *L/LT*, 15 (Spring 1985), 91-103; Rusty Bitterman, "Farm Households and Wage Labour in the Northeastern Maritimes in the Early Nineteenth Century," *L/LT*, 31 (Spring 1993), 13-45; and Jack Little, "A Canadian in Lowell: Labour, Manhood and Independence in the Early Industrial Era, 1840-1849," *L/LT*, 48 (Fall 2001), 197-263. On the variability of male work in the United States see Bruce Laurie, "'We are not afraid to work': Master mechanics and the market revolution in the antebellum north," in Barton J. Bledstein and Robert D. Johnston, eds., *The Middling Sorts: Explorations in the History of the American Middle Class* (New York 2001), 53. On the importance of age as a crucial defining aspect of masculine status see Ava Baron, "Acquiring Manly Competence: The Demise of Apprenticeship and the Remasculinization of Printers' Work," in Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen, eds., *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America* (Chicago 1990), 152-63.

[64]Robert A. Ventresca, "'Cowering Women, Combative Men?': Femininity, Masculinity, and Ethnicity on Strike in Two Southern Ontario Towns, 1964-1966," *L/LT*, 39 (Spring 1997), 125-58, 133, and 141. Since the people the author studies are from the same ethnic

class is how historically specific were they and how did particular hegemonic views of work take root in particular spaces and time? While today the paid work of women, even of married women, may no longer be interpreted as exceptional, and women have now achieved a more activist voice in unions, thus effectively placing on their agendas questions of equal pay for equal work, historians of labour must be cautious to avoid mythologizing female militancy. There is a need to be open to those voices that may not fit comfortably within contemporary paradigms of work,

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group and are all workers in factories, gender is the only active variable at work here. In a similar vein, in Carolyn Podruchny, "Unfair Masters and Rascally Servants?: Labour Relations Among Bourgeois Clerks and Voyageurs in the Montreal Fur Trade, 1780-1821," *L/LT*, 43 (Spring 1999), 43-70, the workforce is all male and so class is the primary variable in her analysis, and as a result she does not mention masculinity. While historians of gender have argued that ideals of gender are present even when women are not, a lack of gender analysis here does not mar her argument, and indeed questions the universality of gender as a conceptual tool. Julie Guard, "Fair Play or Fair Pay?: Gender Relations, Class Consciousness, and Union Solidarity in the Canadian UE," *L/LT*, 37 (Spring 1996), 149-77, takes on historians who have seen gender and class consciousness as incompatable. See for example Ruth Frager, *Sweatshop Strife: Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Jewish Labour Movement of Toronto, 1900-1939* (Toronto 1992). To give Frager her due, she is aware that the gender conflict she describes was resolved into more consensual relations in the postwar years, thus anticipating Guard's position, 213-15. For a discussion of the changing cultural contexts of ideologies of family and work in the postwar period see Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, "Introduction: Recasting Canada's Postwar Decade," in Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, eds., *Canada's Postwar Interregnum: Reconstruction or Restoration* (Montréal and Kingston forthcoming, 2003). On the blurring of gender boundaries in the 1940s see Gillian Creese, "Power and Pay: the Union and Equal Pay at B.C. Electric/Hydro," *L/LT*, 32 (Fall 1993), 225-45. For important articles on the changes within feminism in postwar Canada see Meg Luxton, "Feminism as a Class Act: Working-Class Feminism and the Women's Movement in Canada," *L/LT*, 48 (Fall 2001), 63-88. For an analysis of liberal-feminist discourse in the postwar era see Joan Sangster, "Women Workers, Employment Policy and the State: The Establishment of the Ontario Women's Bureau, 1963-1970," *L/LT*, 34 (Fall 1995), 119-45. Sangster has shown how the constraints of the state also provided a window for radicalism among women. On how the state reinforced established gender and class hierarchies see the important articles by Ruth Roach Pierson, "Gender and the Unemployment Insurance Debates in Canada, 1934-40," *L/LT*, 25 (Spring 1990), 77-103; and Ann Porter, "Women and Income Security in the Post-War Period: The Case of Unemployment Insurance, 1945-1962," *L/LT*, 31 (Spring 1993), 111-44. New monographs on gender and class argue that gender fissures did not undermine class formation over the long term. See for example Carol E. Morgan, *Women Workers and Gender Identities, 1835-1913: The Cotton and Metal Industries in England* (London and New York 2001), 3-13. In part this new historiography, while recognizing the "multiplicity of social voices" raised by discourse theory, has emphasized the actual experience of workers and has thus concluded that gender conflicts were more sporadic than previously assumed and not necessarily endemic to workplace politics.

such as those Italian men and women who did not feel comfortable with going on strike, whom Ventresca mentions, but whose experience he does not fully incorporate into his analysis because it calls into question his conclusion that ethnicity and gender reinforced class interests. Historians may be more comfortable when they read studies of the familial determinants that informed the work choices of women in the early phases of industrialization, but the blurring of boundaries that historians like Bettina Bradbury, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, and Yukari Takai reveal among family, community, and the workplace must form the basis of theoretical approaches for the 20th century as well, even though the paid work of women was becoming increasingly normative. Guard's analysis of a particular workplace is excellent in utilizing gender as the primary conceptual framework, and for showing how gender was a catalyst in the creation of class. Historians of the gendered aspects of work in postwar Canada, however, will need to also place their findings in the context of changing family relations and ask how changing patterns of consumption stimulated the creation of the dual breadwinning household. They need to ask in turn how the increasingly dominant pattern of married women in paid work altered gender relations within the home. How did the normative character of women's work further marginalize and hide labour, both paid and unpaid, which was engaged in within the home? Here, too, the issue of how automation, by erasing distinctions between heavy and light work, altered traditional notions of the gendered division of labour must be more fully addressed. Indeed, the way in which technological change was itself a catalyst for creating the division of labour by sex is itself an understudied topic within Canadian labour history, as Jacques Ferland's work suggests.

It is only through an attention to historicism that we can avoid what Steven Maynard has called the "lurking essentialist or fixed understanding of gender" and of class.[65] What this calls for in turn is a broad synthesis of the changing gender meanings ascribed to work and an overview that measures and contextualizes work identities through a long period of time, thereby overcoming the tendency to view the particular relations among labour, capital, and gender as either timeless or representative of the whole. Due attention, however, must be also given to the fact that gender is only one element in the way in which men and women perceived both their work and the way in which work related to other social identities.[66] The study of changing conceptualizations of work must by necessity examine public discourses within a range of institutions, including the state, labour unions, business,

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[65]Steven Maynard, "Queer Musings on Masculinity and History," *L/LT*, 42 (Fall 1998), 185.
[66]Alice Kessler-Harris, "Gender Ideology in Historical Reconstruction: A Case Study from the 1930s," *Gender and History*, 1 (Spring 1989), 35-6. Although her argument is flawed, Kessler-Harris does point to the need to carefully historicize gender. For a perceptive critique of this article see Margaret Hobbs, "Rethinking Antifeminism in the 1930s: Gender Crisis as Workplace Justice? A Response to Alice Kessler-Harris," *Gender and History*, 5 (Spring 1993), 4-15.

and voluntary associations. It would have to address a sweeping array of social re-
lations, with due attention to the conflictual and consensual contacts with or con-
ceptions of various classes and social groups. Indeed, the way in which people
perceive social inequality is not always through class and gender, and it is not al-
ways circumscribed by these distinct categories, which may blur into or intersect
with others. The concept of class, however, must not be eviscerated from the histor-
ical record for the distribution of wealth is a powerful means by which power is ex-
erted in society.[67]

   The ideal vantage point for explaining and contextualizing gender and class
conflicts must thus be broadened. Many of the articles appearing heretofore in *L/LT*
valorize workplace politics, yet to broadly contextualize this important sphere we
need more intensive studies of the totality of working-class life, for only through
the prism of family can one adequately trace the interplay between self-identities
and collectivist action.[68] Only if we can understand the way that gender relations
are played out within institutions outside the labour process itself (which includes
paid and unpaid labour inside and outside the domestic sphere), can we adequately
examine the way in which these valuations of social relations which gender informs
are either further elaborated, negotiated or constrained within the realm of work
and the politics that emerge from it.[69] In this way, we can better isolate and weigh
the various discourses and material conditions that change the more inert continui-
ties of gender and class and move them towards collective mobilizations and con-
flicts.[70] Such a broad synthesis will locate gender and class within wider
community and social/cultural relations, revealing a more integrated range of his-
torical experience, never simply reducible either to gender or class. By taking a lon-
ger chronology and wider spatial perspective than most labour studies have
undertaken, we can incorporate both the views of Christina Burr and Julie Guard,
and explain why at certain moments gender appears to be destabilizing for class
unity and at others becomes the impetus for class mobilization. It also involves pos-
iting conceptual boundaries that will frame aspects of class identity, which have

[67]On putting class back in but in a revised form that sees class as one narrative among many
see Peter Bailey, *Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City* (Cambridge 1998),
5; and Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (Oxford and New York
1998), 527, who emphasizes the preservation of "self-enclosed cultures" by class even
within the supposedly democratic culture of post-war Britain. See also Neville Kirk, "Set-
ting the Standard: Dorothy Thompson, the Discipline of History and the Study of Chartism,"
in Owen Ashton, Robert Fyson, and Stephen Roberts, eds., *The Duty of Discontent: Essays
for Dorothy Thompson* (London 1995), 3-4.
[68]For an argument that situates family as the fundamental institution of social regulation see
Christie "Introduction," in Christie and Gauvreau, eds., *Mapping the Margins*.
[69]On this point see Pamela Sharpe, *Adapting to Capitalism: Working Women in the English
Economy, 1700-1850* (London 1996), 151.
[70]Laura L. Frader, "Bringing Political Economy Back In: Gender, Culture, Race, and Class
in Labor History," *Social Science History*, 22 (Spring 1998), 10-12.

been shown by new historical research to overlap or intersect with other social identities, be they family, religion, politics, or race, and class consciousness or labour politics, which by virtue of their own imperatives must be constructed upon the language of unity and inclusion. Class conflicts will not simply then be interpolated into culture outside the workplace, culture will not be seen as merely epiphenomenal of economic relations, and in turn other social solidarities, be they characterized by race, religion, or neighbourhood, can also be interpreted in terms of how they undermined or contributed to class organization and politics. By thus theoretically separating class identity from a concept of class consciousness, one can better analyze the various ways in which they intersect, and thus read the relationship in ways that transcend a troubling analytic tendency toward unidirectionality.

To date labour historians have largely imbricated gender into class identity, for they have begun with the notion of class, however defined, as their primary conceptual framework. Gender has, despite the postmodern tendency towards defining a multiplicity of identities, been cast as a sub-set of occupational or workplace identities and for this reason is still set within a masculinist framework.[71] I would postulate that from a hermeneutic perspective, gender and class (and race) are foundational ways in which people constitute their self-identities, and that they must be then historicized and analyzed with reference to other social identities such as religion, ethnicity, politics, and national consciousness, thus circumventing the criticism that the concept of a multiplicity of identities is too agnostic.[72] So to follow the observation of the British historian Keith Snell, the politics of religious congregations will be conflictual along class lines only if there is a prior dynamic of class conflict that already exists in a particular community.[73] To be sure, that one was a committed Christian would restrict the range of an individual's political choices.[74] Yet, the fact that a Catholic machinist may work alongside a Baptist may

[71]Alice Kessler-Harris, "Treating the Male as 'other': Redefining the Parameters of Labor History," *Labor History*, 34 (Spring-Summer 1993), 192-3.

[72]On this point see Linda Gordon, "The New Feminist Scholarship on the Welfare State," in Linda Gordon, ed., *Women, the State and Welfare* (Madison 1990), 27. There is a need to introduce the notion of power back in by a new consideration of patriarchy. On the need for a new historicized concept of patriarchy see Theodore Koditschek, "The Gendering of the British Working Class," *Gender and History*, 9 (1997), 351; and Christie, "Family, Community and the Rise of Liberal Society."

[73]K.D.M. Snell and Paul Sell, *Rival Jerusalems: The Geography of Victorian Religion* (Cambridge 2000), 361. For an argument that class identity is derived from one's occupation and not from stratification within the church, see Nancy Christie, "'On the threshold of manhood': Working-Class Religion and Domesticity in Victorian Britain and Canada," in Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, eds., *Intersections of Religious and Social History, Histoire Sociale/Social History*, (special issue, forthcoming).

[74]On religion as an alternative to working-class politics see S.J.D. Green, "Religion and the Rise of the Common Man: Mutual Improvement Societies, Religious Associations and Popular Education in Three Industrial Towns in the West Riding of Yorkshire, c.1850-1900," in

not fissure their mutual commitment to the concept of a living wage, but it could well mean that for such individuals there was more or less continuity between workplace and leisure, between one's public behaviour and the private, insofar as the respective realms of sociability might be quite distinct.[75] It is into these complexities of the "moral economy of labor" that gender analysis must delve.[76]

Such a trajectory would in turn entail much closer analysis of inter-class relationships and a rigorous study of the middle classes beyond merely those who owned the means of production.[77] And while the question of the ways in which industrialization and unionization were both gendered processes has received a great deal of historical investigation in Canada, gendered attitudes to work and gendered work patterns in the pre-industrial era are all too little understood. It is only through the formation of an historical narrative that brings these two eras into analytic conjuncture that historians can adequately resolve the debate as to how gender divisions were either created or reinforced by industrial capitalism.

Outside of capitalism and organized labour, the experiences of workers themselves must be seen as pivotal if we are to anchor concepts of both gender and class. As important as public ideologies and hegemonies both within the workplace and within labour politics are for understanding the gendered division of labour, gender functions differently within various economic, social, and cultural contexts.[78] If, as historians have shown, interpretations of gender and class were variable, then this must logically lead to an investigation of how these cultural perspectives were appropriated by people whose experience was forged within considerably different material realities. The way inequality was confronted and negotiated by individuals occurred in the workplace, but its implications were experienced first and foremost

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Derek Fraser, ed., *Cities, Class and Communication: Essays in Honour of Asa Briggs* (New York 1990), 26.

[75] Such an analytical approach has been recently advocated by Geoff Eley and Keith Nield, "Farewell to the Working Class?" *International Labour and Working-Class History*, 57 (Spring 2000), 1-30.

[76] For this concept see Marc W. Steinberg, "'The Labour of the Country Is the Wealth of the Country': Class Identity, Consciousness, and the Role of Discourse in the Making of the English Working Class," *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 49 (Spring 1996), 9.

[77] On the need for more inter-class analysis see Bryan D. Palmer, review of Andrew C. Holman, *A Sense of their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns* (Montréal and Kingston 2000), in *Journal of Social History* (Spring 2002), 715-17.

[78] For example, the discourse on gender within Protestant and Catholic churches stressed interdependence, which was at variance with concepts of the economic roles of men and women prescribed by organized labor. Government legislation, with a view to preserving a limited state, in turn, believed in promoting a work ethic among both men and women. For the need to situate gender concepts within particular institutional frameworks see Christie, "Family, Community, and the Rise of Liberal Society"; and Christie, *Engendering the State*.

within the household economy. The weight that individuals ascribed to their roles both within and without the workplace must be fully explored, for only in this way can we resolve the conundrum of Valerie Chartrand. Though she actively fought alongside male workers for better working conditions and wages, and thus for all intents and purposes perceived her rights in much the same way as men, implicitly challenging gendered understandings of the status which accrued to breadwinners, when situating her work within the context of her familial role as wife and mother, Chartrand regarded paid labour not as a right but as a necessity. In thus privileging the primacy of her unpaid work as mother and wife, she positioned herself as the secondary breadwinner. It is these overlapping conceptualizations of work as both necessity and right that were shared in differing degrees by women and by men that may provide one way to understand how gender became embedded within the interconnected but separate realms of individual class identity, collective workplace activism, and labour politics.