WOMEN AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Exploring Women's Access to Participation

in a

Democratic Society

by

ELIZABETH ANNE HOULE

A thesis submitted to the Department of Geography

in conformity with the requirements for

the degree of Master of Arts

Queen's University

Kingston, Ontario, Canada

February 2000

ABSTRACT

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Jurgen Habermas (1991) identified the public sphere as an arena in which citizens could enter into a critique of the state. Through discourse in the public sphere, citizens in a democracy have the opportunity to participate in the shaping of their society and state through the creation of 'public opinion'. However, not all citizens have equal access to this participation, and it is the restricted access of women to the public sphere, and thus to participation in the formation of public opinion, that I examine in this paper.

In North American society, hegemonic constructions of women's and men's roles have resulted in the gendered and spatial separation of the public and private spheres, underwriting the physical separation of cities and suburbs, and creating what feminists have referred to as the 'public/private dichotomy'. Women's activities are seen to be primarily associated with the private sphere of the family and domestic life, and are located in the suburbs. Men, on the other hand, are associated with the city, and the public spheres of political and economic activity.

Because of hegemonic constructions of women which relegate them to the private sphere of the family, women have had restricted access to activities ranging from waged labour to the attainment of political office. Rigid gender divisions of society and space must be dissolved if women are to achieve equal access to the rights and obligations of citizenship. Women must also be allowed equal partnership in the creation of public opinion, and thus equal participation as citizens in a democratic society.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My first debt of gratitude is to my advisor, Peter Goheen. Thank you for your support, your insightful comments, your good humour and, of course, your patience. Thank you also to Evelyn Peters, for stimulating discussions. Thanks also to the staff of the Queen's Geography Department, especially Sheila MacDonald and Kathy Hoover for their invaluable assistance in helping graduate students like myself sort through the maze of institutational bureaucracy.

I am grateful for the continued support and encouragement from my family and friends. First, to the Whiting clan for taking me into their hearts and homes, and becoming like a second family to me. Special thanks to Pat Whiting, whose unfailing encouragement, support and friendship has been my mainstay. Thanks a million to Julie Wong Hollyer, my 'ultimate' buddy, who's shared my ups and downs and who's always believed in me. And to Lori Roche, for her friendship, her yummy dinners, and for being there whenever I need a distraction or a giggle.

Thanks also to my long-distance buddies and life-long friends, Carmen Binder, Adele McDonald and Anne Marie Ongaro. Your friendships over the years have been a continued source of strength, inspiration and pleasure to me.

Lastly, thank you to my sister Marie Wilkinson, for letting me bounce ideas off of you, thesis-related or otherwise. And thank you to my mother, Rosalie Houle, who is always there for me. I love you, Mom.

DEDICATION

In memory of my father, Leopold Houle.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION   1

The history and transformation of the public sphere; Summary of key points in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*; Limitations of the bourgeois public sphere; Women and the public sphere; Recuperating the public sphere; Overview of the thesis

CHAPTER 2: WOMEN'S MOBILITY AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT   18

INTRODUCTION
Layout of the built environment

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
Physical conditions; Social stresses; Dominant ideologies

CREATION OF THE SUBURBS
The changing North American city

EVOLUTION OF THE SUBURBS
The early 20th century; The post-war years; Late 20th century suburbs

CONSTRAINTS TO FEMALE ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION
Economic participation and democracy; Occupational segregation by gender; The journey to work

PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS TO MOBILITY
Safety; Spaces of representation

CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

> By 'the public sphere' we mean first of all a realm of our social life in which
> something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all
> citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in
> which private individuals assemble to form a public body. They then behave neither
> like business or professional people transacting private affairs, nor like members of a
> constitutional order subject to the legal constraints of a state bureaucracy. Citizens
> behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion - that is, with
> the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express
> and publish their opinions - about matters of general interest. In a large public body
> this kind of communication requires specific means for transmitting information and
> influencing those who receive it. Today newspapers and magazines, radio and TV
> are the media of the public sphere. We speak of the political public sphere in
> contrast, for instance, to the literary one, when public discussion deals with objects
> connected to the activity of the state. Although state activity is so to speak the
> executor, it is not a part of it....Only when the exercise of political control is
> effectively subordinated to the democratic demand that information be accessible to
> the public, does the political public sphere win an institutionalized influence over the
> government through the instrument of law-making bodies (Habermas 1974, 49).

The ideal of democracy encompasses the possibility of government 'by-the-people', that

its institutions and procedures express the actual will of those governed; 'for-the-people', that it

will act effectively in the interests of the people; and 'of-the-people', implying that citizens of

every social background are eligible to participate in the process of governing (Flew 1979, 87-

88). For democracy to be realized, citizens must have access, directly or indirectly, to the

process of governance. Thus, there must exist a realm in which the needs and interests of 'the

people' may be ascertained as well as a mechanism for measuring both the interests and the will

of the people.

An opportunity for formal political participation exists where citizens can communicate

their needs and desires directly through voting, belonging to a political party, campaigning or

holding public office. Here the will of the public can be measured in the polling booth. A

second realm, outside of formal government channels also exists, where individuals or groups of

citizens can communicate indirectly with the members of their governing bodies. It is this realm, the public sphere, to which Jurgen Habermas refers in the opening passage.

The opening quote illustrates some of the key characteristics of Habermas's conception of the public sphere. First, it would provide an arena in which "something approaching public opinion" could be formed. For the members of the public sphere to legitimately exercise influence over the state, they must represent the will of 'the people'. Such is the 'public opinion' to which Habermas refers, and, as he illustrates, there is a strict process which must be undertaken in order to ensure that it is in fact the will of the people.

Critical to Habermas's thesis is the underlying premise that democracy relies on the participation of its constituents in the operation of the state, thus "access [should also be] guaranteed to all citizens". In order to ensure that the discussants in the public sphere represent the will of all the people, access to the public sphere must be guaranteed to all citizens. Public opinion, which can then be incorporated by government in the shaping of public policy, finds its voice within the public sphere through informed discussion and debate, including that found in printed and broadcast media.

Second, "citizens behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion - that is, with the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and publish their opinions - about matters of general interest". Two further elements of the public sphere are revealed here: that discourse should be unrestricted and that it should concern matters of general interest. A truly public sphere therefore exists when citizens are allowed to converse freely about matters which are of concern to everyone. These elements provide a first glimpse of the building blocks that Habermas employs in the construction of a normative ideal of participatory democracy.

In this thesis, I explore limitations of Habermas's model as evidenced in women's restricted access to participation in the public sphere. As my study will show, ideological constructions of women which have resulted in their containment in the private sphere of the

family and domestic life, have restricted their participation as equal citizens in political and economic life, and as equal partners in the creation of public opinion.

I begin with an overview of the central arguments of Habermas's thesis, as he laid it out in his 1962 publication, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*.[1] I then explore how the limits of Habermas's model of the public sphere may be reworked to extend its emancipatory potential for contemporary Western democracies.

The history and transformation of the public sphere

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas detailed what he identified as the bourgeois public sphere, an arena in which private citizens debated issues of general concern to the operation of the state. He followed the bourgeois public sphere from its origins through its evolution and transformation into its contemporary form paying particular attention to Great Britain, though also noting parallel processes in France and Germany. More importantly, he outlined the implications of the public sphere for its role in political participation within a democracy.

Prior to the eighteenth century, citizens had little opportunity or encouragement for joining together in the critique of government that would later mark the bourgeois public sphere. For this sphere to arise, a confluence of social, political, and economic changes would have to occur over the course of several preceding centuries. Of these, changes in finance and trade capitalism would set in motion the antecedents to a new social order. Mercantilism and long distance trade were creating both a new social class, the emerging bourgeoisie, and a new system of communication and financing. The increasing flow of information from shipping interests

---

[1] Habermas's thesis was first published in German in 1962, and was not available to English speaking scholars until its translation 1989.

around the world would also transform great trade cities into centres for the traffic in news (Habermas 1991).

As capitalism was evolving, so too was the state. Traditional city-states were transforming into modern nation states with expanding bureaucracies and escalating financial needs (Habermas 1991, 17). These changes spurred a shift in the manner of governance, creating a sphere of public or state authority whose function and budget was distinct from the existing monarchy. A permanent administrative body, situated between the monarchy and the people, was also evolving to accommodate the new requirements flowing out the changing economic conditions (ibid., 18).

Vital to the growth of the public sphere, and concomitant with the changes in commerce and state administration, was the emergence of a new, self-conscious social class: the bourgeoisie. At its core were the existing elite, from jurists to doctors, pastors, officers and academics, as well as the rapidly expanding entrepreneurial class of merchants, bankers and manufacturers (Habermas 1991, 23). Unlike the mass of common folk, the bourgeoisie were from the onset an educated class. Literacy was imperative in keeping abreast of the traffic in the commercial news that underpinned their existence. Literacy also provided the bourgeoisie with access to newly evolving social and political ideologies. Through reading seventeenth century philosophy and sentimental novels, the bourgeoisie were exposed to the emerging concept of a 'common' humanity, which held that all people were born equal, and that an individual's worth was independent of social standing or birth. Reading also positioned the bourgeoisie in the midst of a growing maelstrom of literary and political criticism.

This new social class, intent on protecting its burgeoning commercial and economic interests, was uniquely motivated to limit government intervention in trade. By the 1670s, coffeehouses, which had long served the merchant class as meeting places for the exchange news and ideas, had become arenas of critical debate. These initial venues of the public sphere were already being identified with political unrest (Habermas 1991, 59), and were home to discourses

which would later be extended into literary debates carried out in the critical press. A truly political public sphere became possible in Great Britain at the turn of the eighteenth century with the elimination of the institution of censorship, allowing the press to evolve into a vehicle for conveying political debates to an even larger public (Habermas 1991, 57).[2]

Thus the bourgeois public sphere was established as a realm of rational, critical debate, providing a forum for criticism of public authority, and a venue for the derivation of a public opinion which could then be used by the state to address the concerns of society (Habermas 1991, 51, 31). The 'authentic' public sphere resided in the domain of private or civil society, which lay outside the auspices of the state. Civil society, in turn, represented a sphere of private autonomy which was characterized by a liberalized market and private laws which originated for it, and often in it. It encompassed activities which were seen as independent of state function, a preserve of the private class of people who constituted the private economic sphere and had at its core the intimate sphere of the family.

Habermas identified a series of defining characteristics of the bourgeois public sphere. First and foremost, debate in the public sphere was to be conducted through the critical use of reason. To be representative of public opinion, discussions were to be thoughtful, informed, rigorous, and public. Following the work of centuries of philosophers, Habermas uncovered what he believed to be the definitive notion of public opinion as it related to the bourgeois public sphere: only opinion "purified through critical discussion in the public sphere" constituted a "true opinion" (Habermas 1991, 95). The importance of publicity, and reasoned, rational debate, was best illustrated for Habermas in Immanuel Kant's meditations on politics and morality. In these works, Kant proposed that politics must be grounded in justice and morality, and that publicity,

---

[2] Faith in the power of critical debate to influence government was not unfounded. Perhaps the first recorded instance of a parliament heeding to what had now been identified as 'public opinion' occurred in 1791, when Pitt, bowing to public pressure, discontinued his preparations for a war against Russia (Habermas 1991, 66).

or the exposure of ideas to critical public reasoning, was the sole means for guaranteeing the confluence of politics and morality (Habermas 1991, 105-106).

To ensure that public discourse was both appropriate and fair, the bourgeois public sphere had to meet three criteria. First, the economic and political status of participants must be disregarded; arguments were to be judged solely on their acuity and inherent truth, not on the status of their interlocutors (Habermas 1991, 36). Second, the range of legitimate topics for the public sphere was restricted to those of 'common concern', thus rising above the particularized interests of individuals. Finally, the public was established, in principle, as inclusive (ibid., 37). Though access was considered universal, two criteria for admission remained: education and property ownership. Education formed the prerequisite for rational-critical debate, as it made access to important issues of the day possible. In addition, only property owners were seen to be in a position to form a public that would protect the existing foundations of the property order (ibid., 84).

The public sphere was therefore initially dominated by the bourgeoisie, since they alone had the education and financial independence that entitled them to participate in its discourse. Their supremacy however would be short-lived. The early bourgeois public sphere relied on two distinguishing features for its effectiveness: a critical press; and the distinct separation between the functions of state and civil society. Through the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, both of these features would change dramatically.

The monopoly of the public sphere by the bourgeoisie began to diminish with the expansion of the press. The early press were both carriers and leaders of public opinion, driven by publishers to be self-consciously political. In the nineteenth century, however, technological changes in the printing process paved the way for mass publishing which, in turn, required greater capital funding and the guarantee of a steady, ongoing readership. Publishers goals shifted accordingly, from providing a political forum to producing a commercially viable commodity (Habermas 1991). The press, once a venue for critique of the state, was

progressively depoliticized as it sought to appeal to mass audiences of increasingly literate, though less educated and critically discerning, readers. Emphasis on the publication of 'hard news', (description), was replaced by presentation of 'soft news' and entertainment, and with this switch, the press lost its critical publicity.

As the press evolved, changes were also occurring in the relationship between the state and civil society. Boundaries between the two spheres began to blur as the state became increasingly involved in civil society, and private enterprise began to take over functions previously controlled by the state. As the laissez-faire state gradually gave way to welfare-state democracy, protectionism replaced free trade, and the state became more directly involved in ∙ redistributing income, and in influencing and regulating investments. Conversely, in civil society, private corporations began to take on more functions previously conducted by the state. As oligopolist mergers extended the reach of private enterprises, they also began to more closely resemble rambling government bureaucracies (Habermas 1991).

Where the sectors of civil society absorbed by the state intersected with the public functions adopted by private enterprises, an expanding intermediate sphere was created that was neither exclusively public nor private. The mutual infiltration of these spheres, however, came at the cost of critical publicity. In the late twentieth century, private bureaucracies, special interest associations, political parties and public administration have begun to deal directly with each other. As more and more bureaucratic tasks are transferred to special interest groups, agreements which at one time would have been negotiated through parliamentary debate are now conducted in private chambers outside of parliament, thus circumventing the critical scrutiny that had been the hallmark of the public sphere (Habermas 1991, 197).

Habermas concludes his study by maintaining that the public sphere has been so transformed that it is no longer able to provide an adequate forum for critique of the state. Parliament has degraded from a debating body to one that rubber-stamps resolutions which have been debated and agreed upon in backrooms or by lobbyists. Where the press once served as the

primary vehicle for the transmission of rational-critical debate, today these debates are largely lost as the media pursue a more lucrative focus on entertainment. Public relations and opinion management, whose techniques are put to use in influencing public opinion, including the packaging and selling of political leaders, have replaced critical publicity. With the resulting degradation of the public sphere, Habermas worries that democracy has lost its critical publicity and thus the ability to censor government.

Summary of key points in *The Structural Transformation*

In sum, the bourgeois public sphere was a historically unprecedented medium for the formation of a public opinion critical of the state, allowing citizens an avenue for participation in their own governance. The publicity created in the public sphere was an invitation to discuss 'common concerns' openly, exposing ideas to rational-critical debate, and in this way ideas that held up to the scrutiny of public debate were simultaneously exposed to governing bodies through a critical media.

Eventually, according to Habermas, the public sphere was transformed and weakened as it expanded to include a larger public. The critical press was consequently eroded, and the boundaries between civil society and state blurred. For Habermas, critique of government is increasingly difficult as today's mass media, with its focus on entertainment, has all but replaced critical media, and as private enterprise assumes more public functions, thus obscuring political processes from public view.

Has the idea of a public sphere lost its currency in the present day? Has it become hopelessly compromised and ineffectual? These are questions that plagued Habermas as well as an increasing number of subsequent scholars as his work has become available to English speaking audiences. I begin my evaluation of the contemporary potential of the public sphere by examining the limits of the public sphere as conceptualized by Habermas.

Limitations of the bourgeois public sphere

Habermas's *Structural Transformation* has been critiqued on a number of fronts. Some have questioned the historical aspects of his work claiming, for example, that he idealizes a historical period in northern European society (McLaughlin 1993); that its historical specificity cannot be generalized beyond the British case (Schudson 1992); or that Habermas's focus on the literature and intellectual history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries lacks a comparable analysis of the post-transformational public sphere, thus calling into question the actual extent of its degeneration (Calhoun 1992, 33). In studying the historical accuracy of *The Structural Transformation*, scholars have looked for errors and omissions that may provide insight to the political potential of the current public sphere. They also examine the effectiveness of the public sphere, especially with respect to accessibility, its contemporary forms, and its ability to influence the state. It is through these latter arguments that women's relationship with the public sphere can best be analyzed.

Universal access to the public sphere

One of the key premises upon which Habermas based his conception of the public sphere was the assumption of universal access. As conceived by the bourgeoisie, the public sphere was, in principle, inclusive: "everyone had to *be able* to participate" (Habermas 1991, 36-37, emphasis in original). Thus, for interlocutors in the public sphere though equality of status was not presumed, in theory it was ignored. Yet even Habermas conceded that the universality of the public sphere was never realized, and noted that class, with its associated conditions of literacy, property ownership, and income effectively disqualified the majority of the population from participation (Habermas 1991, 36-37).

Although Habermas acknowledged the limitations imposed by class, he failed to recognize other forms of difference that equally bar entry into public discourse. Less powerful

groups, including those marked by gender, colour, ethnicity, (dis)ability or sexuality, are also marginalized in the public sphere because of their status within society. Members of subordinate groups are often culturally stigmatized or lack the education and communication skills to successfully represent their own concerns among competing publics (Fraser 1992; Fraser 1995a; Landes 1995; Sandercock and Forsyth 1992). For Habermas, however, it was the aspiration to universal access, rather than its attainment, that was more important (Fleming 1995).

Legitimizing discourse in the public sphere: issues of 'common concern'

A second constitutive assumption identified by Habermas is that discussion in the public sphere was to be open to any issue of 'common concern'. The bourgeois public sphere thus took the innovative step of allowing topics previously considered the sole purview of church and state into public discourse (Habermas 1991, 36). Participation in the bourgeois public sphere, however, was premised on the equating of 'human being' with 'man', 'property owner', and 'citizen', and therefore appropriate topics for discussion were those that were recognized as such by its bourgeois male interlocutors. Private issues or topics not considered to be of 'common concern', on the other hand, were deemed inadmissible. Thus Habermas failed to address how restricting discussion to 'common concern' masked the particularity of bourgeois interests under the guise of general interests (Calhoun 1993; Fleming 1995; Fraser 1995a; Landes 1995; McLaughlin 1998; McLaughlin 1993). Only by equating the class interests of the bourgeoisie with 'general interest' was Habermas's homogeneous public sphere able to claim that it spoke for all citizens (McLaughlin 1993, 600).

Single versus multiple public spheres

A related issue is Habermas's conviction that a single public sphere is always preferable to multiple public spheres (Fraser 1995a; 1992). From the moment of its inception, the public

sphere faced multiple competing publics but by focusing on the bourgeois public sphere, Habermas missed the simultaneous existence of multiple, non-bourgeois publics (Eley 1992; Fraser 1995a; Fraser 1992; Landes 1995; Livingstone 1994). Both the old aristocratic rulers from whom they struggled to wrest the reins of power, and the plebeian elements already in close pursuit vied with the bourgeoisie for political supremacy in the public sphere. Though some of these competing publics were easily suppressed, others, like the highly literate, radical, and politically combative British Jacobins, were not (Eley 1992, 303-325).

Yet Habermas addresses neither the existence nor the potential benefits of multiple public spheres. When there is room for only one public sphere, matters of 'common' concern invariably come to represent the interests of the dominant group. Interests of subordinate groups are then subsumed under the generalized 'we' of the public and as such, reflect an artificial consensus. As Nancy Fraser reminds us, the term 'public' implies a plurality of views, some of which may be mutually exclusive. A single public is therefore inadequate to address the needs and interests of a diverse population, especially in a stratified society (Fraser 1995a; 1992).

Members of subaltern groups are better served by creating their own counterpublics, where they can produce counterdiscourses and "formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs" (Fraser 1992, 123). Multiple public spheres allow negotiation of compromises when the needs and interests of one public are in direct conflict with another, as in the case of labour unions and corporations. Radical or oppositional public spheres can therefore facilitate representation of the less powerful and regulate the discourse of the more powerful (Livingstone 1994). In addition, when members of subordinate groups lack the necessary communication skills to speak or be heard in a more 'formal' public sphere, multiple public spheres offer marginalized groups a forum for expressing their concerns.

Women and the public sphere

The limitations imposed by Habermas's definition of the public sphere have had particular resonance for women. From the start, despite its so-called 'universal access', the political public sphere excluded women - rich or poor, educated or illiterate. Even when less privileged men were awarded the franchise and given the right to vote and hold public office, women remained sidelined from formal participation until they gained the franchise in the early twentieth century. Women were similarly restricted from full economic participation, including employment in the media, and hence from the primary venue for participation in the public sphere.

By restricting discussion to topics of 'common concern', the bourgeois public sphere played into existing gendered divisions of space. Issues of 'common concern' fell under the rubric of the public or masculine sphere, while many issues of concern to women, especially those arising from their domestic responsibilities, were consigned to the private sphere. Designated as 'private' issues, they were therefore beyond the purview of the public sphere.

If Habermas's goal is to advance a normative ideal of participatory democracy, then the criteria for deciding which matters are of 'general interest' or 'common concern' are of vital importance. Seyla Benhabib (1992) suggests that how issues are defined as legitimate hinges in part on where the distinction between public and private is made. In moral philosophy, issues of 'justice', 'norms' and 'needs' are considered relevant to the public sphere, whereas their binary opposites, 'the good life', 'values' and 'interests' are generally treated as issues outside the public sphere. Such distinctions, argues Benhabib, have served to confine issues of concern to women to the private sphere because they render much of what typically is considered female activity, such as care for the young, the sick and the elderly, as matters of 'the good life' and therefore outside the realm of discursive analysis. Restricting the family and domestic space to the realm of the private sphere is part of a discourse of domination that legitimizes women's oppression

and exploitation in the private realm, and renders it beyond the scope of public debate (Benhabib 1992, 93).

Feminists therefore challenge the traditional distinctions which relegate women to the private sphere, and attempt to redefine so-called 'private' issues, what Benhabib has described as 'the good life', as public issues of justice (Fraser 1995a; Fraser 1992; Landes 1995; Benhabib 1992). Renegotiation of the boundaries between 'matters of justice' and 'the good life' and between public and private, argues Benhabib, should not be external to debate in the public sphere, but integral to it (1992, 89).

Recuperating the public sphere

Despite the limitations of Habermas's model, the bourgeois public sphere remains an important concept because it recognizes the influence of public opinion on government decision-making. The question, however, is whether Habermas's definition of how public opinion evolves is sufficient. Who are the producers of public opinion? Do all citizens have equal access to participate in the creation of public opinion - that public opinion which reaches the ears of government and can therefore affect government policy, legislation and spending?

For Habermas's concept of the public sphere to be of value in contemporary participatory democracies, it must be opened up beyond the exclusivity that marked the bourgeois public sphere. As Benhabib (1992) has argued, the issues debated in the public sphere must reach beyond those of business and wealthy citizens to encompass those of subaltern publics as well. For this opening up to occur, discourse in the public sphere must not be limited to pre-determined issues of 'common concern', thus silencing the interests of marginalized groups whose interests, by definition, do not necessarily coincide with those of the general public.

Overview of the thesis

In this thesis I investigate women's access to the public sphere and their participation in the formation of public opinion. As part of this process, I look at the circumstances and social conditions associated with being a woman, and how being a woman affects one's access to the public sphere. Using Habermas's model of the public sphere as a point of departure, my goal is to explore the existence of impediments to women's access to the public sphere, and their implications for women's full and equal participation in the rights and obligations of citizenship.

I also incorporate the premise of critical theory, which "frames its research program and conceptual framework with the aims and activities of oppositional social movements of a given age in mind" (Fraser 1995b, 21). While this may be seen to abandon the principle of neutrality in research, scholars increasingly allege that the appearance of neutrality is illusory, that in practice no research is value-free (Lather 1986). In her essay entitled *Research as Praxis*, Patti Lather explores how one can adopt a praxis-oriented approach to research which, like critical theory, attempts to combat dominance by being "openly committed to a more just society" (1986, 258). Lather proposes that,

> [f]or praxis to be possible, not only must theory illuminate the lived experience
> of progressive social groups; it must also be illuminated by their struggles.
> Theory adequate to the task of changing the world must be open-ended,
> nondogmatic, informing, and grounded in the circumstances of everyday life;
> and, moreover, it must be premised on a deep respect for the intellectual and
> political capacities of the dispossessed (Lather 1986; 262).

In addition, theory must be developed as research progresses, rather than attempting to force data to fit into pre-existing frameworks. It is just such an approach that I adopt in this thesis, one that seeks out evidence of social injustice and inequality, in the hope that by exposing instances of injustice to critical review, new paths may be found to correcting them.

I restrict my study to urban and suburban centres in Canada and the United States though where data are relevant, occasionally draw from research conducted in Britain and Europe. As with any research, however, there are problems with generalizing data even within the

limitations I have specified. For example, although I focus my attention on 'women's' access to the public sphere, this access will vary depending on the relative power of each woman.

As Liesbet van Zoonen notes, there is no "monolithic definition of what it is to be a woman or a man" (1994, 87). The experience of gender is tempered by one's economic, social, political, and cultural status. Women's access to social opportunities is therefore mitigated by a host of influences such as their class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, appearance, personality characteristics (for example, assertiveness and speaking ability), and education. Just as individuals can experience multiple, interlocking identities, some of these combine to create multiple, interlocking oppressions. For example:

> Women of color do not experience sexism *in addition to* racism, but sexism *in the context of* racism; thus, they cannot be said to bear an *additional* burden that white women do not bear, but to bear an altogether *different* burden from that borne by white women (Houston 1992, 49; emphasis in original).

In this study, where data allow, I therefore try to address how women of varying backgrounds may be differentially affected by a given phenomenon.

In each chapter, I also make use of historical data in an attempt to trace the roots of existing attitudes and social conditions that operate to oppress women. By understanding how contemporary cultural assumptions that inhibit women's political, economic and social mobility evolved, feminists may gain insight into which underlying ideologies must be exposed and challenged in order to foster a more egalitarian society.

Finally, I rely on the assumption that where social injustice exists, it can be contested. The first step in combating injustice is in its exposure. Members of excluded groups must move from private dissatisfaction and anger to a reinterpretation of their experience as one that is shared with others (Costain, Braunstein and Berggren 1997). From the recognition of shared oppression, they may then begin to articulate their frustrations and transform them into a movement for social change. Such was the case for North American women in the 1950s and 1960s, when the publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963 gave voice to

their feelings of limited career and life options. By expressing women's frustration, and telling them it was justified, Friedan provided the impetus for their mobilization (Costain et al. 1997).

Women have faced limited access to the public sphere because of their historical association with the privatized world of the home and domestic life. In Chapter 2, I discuss how Western ideology and culture laid the foundation for separation of public and private life, assigning men to the public realm of economic activity and politics, and women the primary responsibility for maintaining the intimate sphere of the home. As North American cities evolved, the separation of residential suburbs from the economic core of the city reflected the cultural understanding that women's primary activity revolved around taking care of the immediate, day-to-day needs of the family, and hence women did not require extensive spatial mobility. Men, on the other hand, had greater spatial mobility and, because of their disassociation from domestic responsibilities, could travel further afield without incurring unreasonable opportunity costs in terms of time spent traveling to their the places of commerce or employment.

My focus in Chapter 2, therefore, is how the spatial configuration of the North American city reflects the public/private dichotomy, and how the ideology that women's primary role is in the private sphere of the home, combined with the spatial separation of city and suburb has long served to impede women's access to life outside the intimate sphere, and by extension, access to the public sphere itself. The shape of North American conurbations makes it difficult for women to simultaneously raise families, tend to household needs and work for pay. Lack of mixed land-use, and concomitant informal monitoring, creates sites which are perceived as dangerous by women, thus restricting their spatial mobility, especially at certain times of the day. In addition, women rarely see their accomplishments recognized in public monuments and commemorative space, reinforcing the perception that women have contributed little to public life. The combined

effect of all of these factors serves to restrict women's access to participation in the public sphere.

In Chapter 3, I explore the concepts of citizenship and democracy, and how women's ideological and cultural association with the private sphere has inhibited their equal access to the rights and obligations of citizenship. Research reveals that women and men do not exercise the rights and obligations associated with citizenship equally, including access to political office. In part, these inequities can be traced by to the ideology of liberal democracy which, from the time of Rousseau, held that women did not have the temperament to participate in the political sphere. As a result, women historically faced tremendous obstacles to raising their voices in political debate or protest. In addition, women were further sidelined by social conventions which defined many of women's concerns as 'private', and therefore outside the realm of the political. By redefining 'the political', however, women have subsequently been able to bring their oppression in the private sphere of the home and in the private sphere of the economy to public attention.

For the bourgeoisie the public sphere was a democratic opening up of government which allowed their concerns and interests to be represented on the public agenda, and was made possible through the mediated public sphere of the press. The bourgeoisie carried with them the influence and import of a powerful emerging class, and when they spoke, their opinions mattered. Women, however, have not shared equally in the invitation to speak in the mediated public sphere. In a culture where they were associated with the private sphere of the family, their interests and concerns were deemed irrelevant to public discourse, and their aptitude for political participation negligible. In Chapter 4, I therefore look at women's relationship with the media: their access to it, their representation in it, and how the gender stereotypes which precluded their initial participation, linger to undermine their inclusion it.

CHAPTER TWO:

WOMEN'S MOBILITY AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

> Space is not a scientific object removed from ideology or politics; it has always
> been political and strategic. If space has an air of neutrality and indifference
> with regard to its contents and thus seems 'purely' formal, the epitome of rational
> abstraction, it is precisely because it has already been occupied and used, and
> has already been the focus of past processes whose traces are not always evident
> in the landscape. Space has been shaped and molded from historical and natural
> elements, but this has been a political process (Lefebvre 1976, 31).

If we were to walk through a city or suburb we would see the imprint of human decisions

upon almost every aspect of the landscape. Which areas are used for commerce or industry,

recreation, leisure or housing, even the kinds buildings and landscaping employed, are all the

outcomes of human choice. These decisions may be part of an overall urban plan designed to

mediate among the competing residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational demands of a

community, or may be based on the risks a private developer is willing to take - or not, as in the

case of an empty lot. But whether it is a planning officer, a developer, or any other individual

who decides what will occupy a given tract of land, each brings with them their own ideology,

their own personal and political beliefs, professional training and sensibilities.

Spatial arrangements are thus socially constructed, informed by social attitudes at a

particular point in time (Spain 1992, 6). They are also political, shaped by the ideologies and

politics of the people who design and build our cities and suburbs. As Lefebvre (1976) reminds

us, if we have any doubt that there is a politics of space, we need look no further than the

critiques of the built environment leveled by the left and the right to find proof of its existence.

The design of the urban environment, even when seemingly haphazard or capricious,

therefore reflects the dominant values of a given society. Because of the longevity of the built

environment, once social values have been embedded in the physical structures and design of urban communities, they continue to influence social relations within it. As Salem argues, "the built environment becomes an extension of the particular set of values operative at the time of its creation and continues to exert an independent influence on the activities that go on within it. It therefore functions as an instrument of social power and a force for the maintenance of the status quo" (Salem 1986, 158). Inequalities that exist within social relations may, inadvertently or by design, be built into the spatial elements of the environment, generating or perpetuating inequalities among classes, minorities and between women and men (Rutherford and Wekerle 1988, 117).

Though spatial relations are inseparable from social relations, researchers often separate them in order to determine the direction of causality: whether spatial arrangements dictate social behaviour or spatial differentiation results from a given pattern of social processes (Spain 1992, 6). Efforts to uncouple the two provide at best an awkward tool, useful for research purposes only. In practice, social relations and spatial relations are inextricably linked:

> [S]pace and social relations are so intricately linked that the two concepts should be considered complementary instead of mutually exclusive. Although it is necessary to break into the interactive system at some point to test hypotheses....it is fruitless to try to isolate space from social processes in order to say that one 'causes' the other. A more constructive approach is to acknowledge their interdependence, acknowledge how one tries to separate the two for analytic purposes, and then reintegrate the two (Spain 1992, 6).

Women's access to political power, and the paucity of their political involvement, likewise cannot be examined in isolation from the built environment. In this chapter, I therefore examine the complementarity between spatial and social relations, and how spatial arrangements differentially affect women and men. Though women's limited political participation is not determined by the environment, obstacles nonetheless arise from the configuration of cities and suburbs which hinder women's mobility and consequently their access to the political public sphere.

One of the chief aspects of the urban environment to negatively impact women's mobility is the physical and psychological division between city and suburbs[1]. Born out of the combined forces of rapid industrialization and urban growth in the nineteenth century, North American suburbs evolved to provide a low density, primarily residential alternative to the crowded, congested industrial city. Unlike the city, with its complement of business, industry, commerce, recreation and housing, residential suburbs had few supporting services and virtually no industry. Although successful in escaping the congestion of cities, suburbs brought with them a new set of problems. While suburbs had been envisioned as a haven for the family, their low density precluded the economic feasibility of mass transportation. Eventually, as growing numbers of the middle class swelled their ranks, these suburban 'havens' were to become a trap for many of their female occupants.

I therefore begin this chapter by examining the evolution of the suburbs, and the means by which prevailing social values became embedded in the built environment.[2] The creation of the suburbs was made feasible by the separation of productive and reproductive labour. As industrialization and mass production began to replace home-based artisanal shops in the nineteenth century, women and girls became associated with the reproduction of the family, while men and boys dominated the waged labour force outside the home. Rapid industrialization and astronomical population growth also placed enormous stress on the social and material resources of these early metropoles, and prompted radical responses among the urban elite. Thus, prevailing ideologies which defined male and female roles supplied the necessary logic for the physical separation of work and home, and the growing bourgeois flight to the suburbs.

---

[1] Although US suburbs primarily house white, middle class families, they nonetheless represent a sizable proportion of the American population, and therefore bear examination in detail. In addition, the same patriarchal assumptions that dictate the division of labour in the home and allowed for the creation of the suburbs, predominate American households irrespective of class or ethnicity.

[2] In my discussion of the experiences of nineteenth century women, I rely on the interpretations of twentieth century writers. These views are therefore tempered by twentieth century understandings of women's roles and capabilities.

The urban/suburban divide is significant to the study of women's political participation because of the impediments it imposes on women's physical movement through urban space. The effects on women of the physical separation from activities such as paid employment, shopping, social, community and recreational opportunities, was either overlooked or disregarded as suburbs evolved. Obstacles to women's physical mobility can hinder economic and political opportunities because they affect women's access to money through waged labour; and to power, and the institutions which foster personal power, such as education and waged labour. Therefore I also look at the time and mobility constraints that the separation of city and suburb poses on women, and how women, whose primary role has been defined as the caring for the household and family, experience these constraints differently than men.

Psychological factors can also affect women's mobility. First I look at fear of violence which, even more than the actual experience of violence, can contribute greatly to women's willingness to participate in activities outside the home, especially at night. Another psychological barrier to political participation may lie in the lack of representation of women in public space. Few public monuments or historical sites exist which commemorate the lives and accomplishments of women. How this affects women's sense of social significance is a question I raise in the last section of this chapter.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY CITY

Physical conditions

At the turn of the nineteenth century, though the United States laid claim to a population of five million,[3] only six cities had more than 10,000 people each (Bender 1975, 3). Urban population growth was relatively stable until about 1830, when it began a rapid, steady ascent.

---

[3] Bender does not specify whether these numbers include aboriginal peoples.

By 1860, New York City had topped the one million mark (ibid., 8).[4] Canada, by contrast, did not begin to feel the full impact of urban growth until around 1880, when a cycle of rapid urban industrialization would prompt accelerated urban concentration for the next thirty years (Mackenzie 1988, 17).

Although the time of onset had varied, rapid urbanization had incredible impact in both Canada and the United States. Mushrooming nineteenth century cities were dynamic and exciting places, where enterprising individuals found unparalleled opportunities for success and personal advancement. But cities were also becoming dangerous, and grueling hardship, especially for the labouring classes, often ensued as rapid population growth strained existing infrastructures. Competition for urban space and resources resulted in overcrowded streets, markets and housing, heightened demand for utilities and other urban services, and placed intense stress on urban social order.

By mid century, many American cities had become a teeming mass of humanity. People from all walks of life - rich and poor, genteel and uncouth - literally rubbed elbows on the crowded city streets. Journalists combed the city daily, chilling their readers with tales of the legions of beggars and vagabonds, thieves, pickpockets and prostitutes who made their way through the city streets. In the ubiquitous penny presses, both women and men were cautioned against walking the streets, especially at night (Ryan 1990, 68). Even in daylight, women were subjected to insults or the "lecherous gaze" of "voyeurs, corner loungers and hoodlums" whenever they traveled in the city (Costello 1885, cited in Ryan 1990, 69).

---

[4] Other examples of this astronomical urban growth include New Orleans, a comparatively quiet 27,000 in 1820, which mushroomed to 216,000 by 1880; San Francisco, an 'instant' city in 1849, which grew to 234,000 within thirty years (Ryan 1990, 14); and Chicago, though only 30,000 in 1850, exceeded one million people in 1890, a mere forty years later (Fishman 1987, 138). Save for a small decrease during the Depression a hundred years later, this rapid increase has begun to slow down only in the late twentieth century (Monkkonen 1988, 70). Americans began to fear that "instead of improving 'nature's nation,' such progress might obliterate nature and result in overcivilization" (Bender 1975, 8).

Overcrowding also presented assaults on health and the senses. Municipal sanitation was stretched to its limits, in many cases unable to keep up with the exploding population growth. Open sewers of nineteenth century New York coursed through the middle of the city's narrow streets, congealing "into a fetid mire around the street pumps and docks where servants, slaves and municipal scavengers dumped refuse and slops every night" (Stansell 1987, 10). In the streets of nineteenth century London,

> [h]orse-drawn transport meant that dung mingled with mud and often rain to
> create a liquid manure that spread filth on pavements and even clothing. The
> noise of traffic created a fearful din. The smells from tanneries, slaughter
> houses, glue factories and other industries were often unbearable (Wilson 1992,
> 29).

Poor sanitation and overcrowding, especially in working class neighbourhoods, would come to be associated with disease and moral contagion in the nineteenth century. Some diseases, such as yellow fever, typhus, typhoid and consumption, found a perfect breeding ground in the densely packed, poorly ventilated tenement districts. It was cholera however, which at times fanned out across cities in epidemic proportions, attacking the wealthy and the wretched alike, that provoked the greatest fear among the privileged classes (Stansell 1987; Wilson 1992, 38).

The stress of urbanization was not confined to the material world, but placed traditional social systems under considerable strain as well. Victorians had come to accept the miasma theory, that disease could be contracted simply by breathing in the noxious odours of sewage, to explain the spread of disease. From this, middle-class Victorians extrapolated that moral contagion was similarly transmitted through exposure to the poor and labouring classes.

Social stresses

The middle class associated the social disorder of the city, evidenced in its dangerous

streets, rampant prostitution and licentiousness,[5] and in the poverty and disease of its tenement

districts, with the decay of the city's working classes. As Stansell (1987) notes, many members

of New York's labouring classes had migrated to the city from European or American rural

societies. In small rural villages and farms, social order could be maintained through detailed

personal knowledge of the people one encountered on a daily basis (Ryan 1990, 60). Cities,

however, were marked by the interactions of strangers and thus, Ryan argues, eluded these

traditional means of social ordering.

Urban life eroded traditional modes of familial and patriarchal control as well (Stansell

1987). Families had traditionally controlled the distribution of land on farms, the allocation of

wages and work in craft shops, and the disposition of dowries and marriage portions. In the city,

where agricultural land tenure was not an issue and the craft and artisanal trades were rapidly

disappearing by mid-century, parents and children were forced to find waged employment

outside of family enterprises. Working class fathers had little to pass on to their sons, and

therefore lost an important source of leverage over them. As the economic basis for patriarchal

control began to erode, parents began to lose the ability to limit their children's mobility or how

they spent their money. Swarms of children spent much of their days on the streets, away from

parental discipline, making their livelihoods from a host of legitimate, as well as illegitimate,

pursuits in the informal economy of the city streets (Stansell 1987, 203).

The loosening of patriarchal control had specific implications for girls and young

women. No longer subject to the close parental surveillance which had existed in farmhouses

---

[5] In 1818, the New York city watch estimated 1,200 women were involved in prostitution, by 1856 the police chief put this figure at 5,000 (Stansell 1988; 173). Given these 'official' counts, it seems unlikely that an estimate furnished in 1870 by a nineteenth century social commentator - - who counted 3,000 concert saloons employing 17,000 women, all of whom, he insisted, prostitutes (Ellington 1869, in Ryan 1990, 90) -- is realistic but it may reflect the moral panic surrounding the public display of female sexuality.

and craft shops, girls and young women became part of the intricate web of the streets. Young working class women could augment their meager earnings, or substitute them entirely, with the profits of prostitution. Thus by the 1850s, the hordes of young street urchins, scavengers and pickpockets, as well as the 'unruly daughters' who resorted to streetwalking and loose morals, had become, for the middle class, a powerful symbol of urban disorder (Stansell 1987).

In addition, nineteenth century American cities suffered from the loss of another social tradition: patricianship. In Europe, the elite classes had traditionally assumed responsibility for helping the poor. In the rapidly growing North American cities, however, this responsibility was being abandoned by the emerging urban elite. By the 1820s, emphasis was beginning to shift from patrician sponsorship of the underclass to the prevention of poverty. Public opinion ultimately shifted as well, and the poor were held increasingly responsible for their own lot in life (Ryan 1990). Declining aid from the wealthy had a sobering outcome, however, as escalating numbers of outdoor poor swelled congested city streets.

Nineteenth century cities strained under the pressures on their infrastructure. Noise and congestion, crime, disease and moral decay rendered the benefits of urban life increasingly dubious. Urban social order was also reeling from the impact of the collapse of a succession of social systems and traditions. Traditional patriarchal control of the family was no longer enforceable with the loss of control over children's livelihoods; traditional methods of monitoring community behaviour were rendered obsolete by the sheer magnitude of the urban population; and traditional responsibility of the economic elite for aiding the poor and helpless was dissolving. Thus nineteenth century urbanites were ready for a new social order, one that would address the conflicting needs of their disparate populaces. The hammering out of this new order would take place in streets and neighbourhoods, in parlours and the press, and would be grounded in the prevailing ideologies of the time. A key influence would be found in the

relationship between women and men and assumptions about their appropriate roles within society.

Dominant ideologies

Social 'order' is never static, rather it is an amalgam of the competing interests and ideologies of individuals and social groups, perpetually jockeying for self-expression. Dominant ideologies do emerge, however, often drawing adherents from across class and cultural lines. The patriarchal structuring of social relationships, which some feminists argue has spanned cultures and continents throughout history, is one of these.

A term borrowed from anthropology meaning 'rule of the fathers', patriarchy is broadly used to refer to all systems of male dominance (Wilson 1991, 9), and often, more specifically, to the institutionalized dominance of women by men (Magill 1995, 923).[6] Perhaps the scope of patriarchy was best expressed by Kate Millet, who argued:

> Our society is a patriarchy...the military, industry, technology, universities, sciences, political offices, finances - in short, every avenue of power within society, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands (cited in Women and Geography Study Group 1984, 26-27).

With these words, Millet captured a sense of how male power and influence cut across almost every sector of society, and most often comprised its leadership. While many of the institutions Millet identified in 1971 have since opened their doors to increasing numbers of women, in the nineteenth century women had substantially less access to these avenues of power.

---

[6] The concept of patriarchy is not unproblematic, but subject to dispute among feminists as to its meaning, its genesis, even its validity as a theoretical construct. For example, liberal feminists believe male domination is rooted in the irrational belief that men are superior to women; traditional Marxist feminists believe male dominance is an ideology by which capitalism rules and divides; and radical feminists hold that it is grounded in men's universal control over women's bodies, especially their sexual and reproductive capacities (Jagger 1983, 147). The universalist claims of patriarchy are challenged for being ahistorical and essentialist (ibid., 117), and for ignoring its diverse expression across geography (Ferguson 1993, 37). I will use the term here to examine manifestations of male dominance in western industrialized societies, especially Canada and the United States, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Yet the problem with patriarchy is not simply that female participation in certain activities is discouraged or, in some cases, barred. One of the most pernicious legacies of patriarchy has been its ability to limit the aspirations of women. As Michelle Rosaldo observed:

> '[S]ome women, certainly, are strong. But at the same time that women happily and successfully pursue their ends, and manage quite significantly to constrain men in the process, it seems to me quite clear that women's goals themselves are shaped by social systems which deny them ready access to the social privilege, authority, and esteem enjoyed by the majority of men' (cited in Jagger 1983, 117).

Similarly, Gillian Rose notes that "[t]he figure of Woman offers a subject position to women, and one which is extraordinarily difficult to escape from entirely, even though many of the oppressions women face in masculinist society occur because women are expected to fulfil the role of Woman" (Rose 1993, 11). Thus, despite the limitations imposed by patriarchy, its ubiquitous messages temper women's sense of their own possibilities.

Patriarchy was a predominant influence on the social mosaic of the nineteenth century city, and expressly apparent in women's unequal participation in public society. As production became industrialized and moved outside of the home, women's economic dependence on men intensified. Women had limited access to waged labour, especially the professions, and less than five percent of married women worked outside the home in 1890 (Hayden 1981, 13). Politically and legally, nineteenth century women were second class citizens: they could neither vote nor hold public office; and for much of the century any property they possessed reverted to their husband's ownership once they were married (Walby 1994).

Gender stratification

Scholars in a number of disciplines, ranging from anthropology and sociology to psychology and economics, have endeavoured to trace the origins of the gender stratification which characterizes patriarchal societies. Their search has tended to lead them to one of two sources: the family; or the economy (Spain 1992, 21-27). Family centred, or supply-side,

explanations examine how the socialization of girls and boys reproduces lower status for girls and ultimately results in different life options for women and men. Yet, while family centred explanations can contribute an understanding of how gender stratification is perpetuated, they fall short of explaining its historical origins.

Economic or demand-side explanations, on the other hand, set out to locate the source(s) of gender stratification by looking first at women's contribution to economic subsistence. Huber (1990) borrows from Fried's 1975 theory which proposed that sex stratification is based on whose tasks yield the most power and prestige within society. Fried suggested that two factors are key in determining this: first, producers in the family will have more power and prestige than consumers; second, more power and prestige will go to those who control the distribution of valued goods beyond the family.

Huber argues that in pre-industrial societies men derive more power and prestige than women because lactating women cannot tolerate long absences from home. Men therefore have greater physical mobility and opportunities to create surpluses through hunting, cultivation or warfare. With the coming of industrialization however new technology which allowed the feeding of bottled milk to infants freed women from the time and space constraints imposed on them by breast-feeding. Women could be away from children longer and, over time, entered the workforce in ever-increasing numbers. As suggested by Fried's first principle (that producers have more power and prestige than consumers), women were increasingly in a position to acquire power and prestige.

Subsistence theories of gender stratification provide plausible explanations of how women came to be in a position of less value than men, but they do not explain why, when women presumably have greater access to productive activities today, they still remain largely absent from positions of power and privilege. Perhaps a clue to persistent absence of women from power can be found by combining family centred and economic explanations: gender divisions set in motion and reinforced by thousands of years of subsistence living may continue

to be reproduced today through socialization processes which retain key similarities to those of the past.

In the nineteenth century, one of the most prominent manifestations of patriarchy lay in the cultural and ideological assignment of women and men to separate spheres of responsibility. Also known as the public/private dichotomy, women were associated with the intimate sphere of the family, while men enjoyed free rein in the public realm of economics and political life. In what follows, I look at how the public/private dichotomy served as an overarching ideological structure to underwrite the containment of women; and how this ideology, in its multiple forms, has often bound women to the home and prevented them from exercising economic and political power.

Patriarchal underpinnings of the nineteenth century

The nineteenth century is rife with examples of the differential power between women and men. Most obvious is the initial enfranchisement of (propertied, white) men from which women were excluded. In addition, men enjoyed countless freedoms unavailable to women, ranging from relatively unfettered mobility through the streets of the city to access to the waged labour force and political office.

Feminist research provides a lens through which the restriction of women from similar freedoms and privileges can be examined. Beginning in the mid-1970s, two key theoretical positions fueled much of the feminist historical research. First, Ortner argued that women's activities are universally assigned lower value then men's because:

> women are 'a symbol' of all 'that every culture defines as being a lower order of existence than itself. That is, women and domestic life symbolize nature. Humankind attempts to transcend mere natural existence so that nature is always seen as a lower order than culture....Women's biology and bodies place them closer to nature than men, and because their child-rearing and domestic tasks, dealing with unsocialized infants and with raw materials, bring them in closer contact with nature' (cited in Pateman 1987, 110).

In describing this process, Ortner supplied a theory for the persistent association of women with nature, and natural processes, and men with culture, and more intellectually sophisticated undertakings.

The second argument, proposed by anthropologist Michelle Rosaldo in 1974, purported the universal separation of women and men into separate spheres - the domestic or private sphere of the home for women, and public sphere of society for men. Because it was 'universal', Rosaldo argued, the psychological and spatial separation of the sexes, also known as the public/private dichotomy, cut across all societies, throughout recorded history.[7]

The philosophical conventions underlying the notion of separate male and female spheres was examined by Genevieve Lloyd in *Man of Reason* (1993). The idea that men and women 'belong' in separate spheres, argues Lloyd, has had a long history in Western thought. Hannah Arendt documents evidence of this separation from as far back as classical Greece where male 'citizens' voted and had access to 'public life', while females managed the private sphere of the home. Several thousand years later, philosophers such as Rousseau and Kant laid the philosophical groundwork upon which nineteenth and twentieth century beliefs in the 'natural' division of women and men into separate spheres rests.

Prior to the eighteenth century, conventional thought held that women's minds were simply an inferior derivation of the male powers of reason. Rousseau challenged this premise in the mid-eighteenth century, arguing that women and men had different but complementary mental powers, among them women's incapacity for the type of broad mental generalizations that men were capable of. Kant endorsed the view that women and men had "different but equal"

---

[7] Rosaldo's proposed universality of the public/private dichotomy soon came under attack, and was eventually rejected by Rosaldo herself. Some argued, for example, that research on the public/private dichotomy focuses on white, middle class women (Kerber 1988), and never held strictly true for African American women or working class women, who always were involved in paid (or slave) labour force (Reverby and Helly 1992; McDowell 1993). The historical and contemporary existence of the public/private dichotomy in specific societies, such as North America, is more widely accepted although the extent of its influence is subject to debate (see arguments later in this chapter).

capacities, also asserting that "'laborious learning' destroys merits proper to the female sex" (Lloyd 1993, 75). Philosophical consensus therefore dictated that the task of rational, intellectual reasoning should, rightfully, be undertaken by men.

Women's intellectual predilections, Rousseau argued, were derived from their closeness to nature. For Rousseau, this resulted in what he called the 'disorder of women': women possessed 'undisciplined passion', and this alone provided reason enough to justify women's exclusion from citizenship. Rousseau argued that while women were abundantly endowed with concern for family, the prerequisites for good *private* citizenship, such feelings were inconsistent and potentially in conflict with the prerequisites for good *public* citizenship: loyalty to the state. For instance, a woman's virtuous (but undisciplined) passion would lead her to want to prevent her sons from going to war, yet this lies in direct conflict with the needs of the state for military personnel. The separateness of women and men must therefore be acknowledged, and this was accomplished by assigning them different social responsibilities: for women, caretaker of the private realm of the family; for men, the public realm of the outside world (see Lloyd 1993, 74-85).

Thus the identification of women with 'nature' and men with 'culture' became one of the hallmarks of nineteenth century thought and provided the basis for dividing women and men into separate spheres. This, in turn, informed the dominant nineteenth century ideology that men were best suited to govern society and women to govern the household.

As North American urbanites faced the physical and social stresses of urban growth their responses were tempered by these ideological influences. Appeals to women's 'nature' as being best suited for raising families was used as the basis for their exclusion from the paid labour force, especially professional work, as well as from formal political life in the nineteenth century. Ultimately, this separation of male and female roles in society could then be translated into the gendered division of space.

Effect of dominant ideologies on nineteenth century cities

The attempts to establish order amid the maelstrom of social change were experienced in a distinctly different manner among the wealthy and labouring classes.[8] Nineteenth century bourgeoisie attempted to adapt to the social upheaval by vigorously (re)defining social values and expectations, and ultimately, by physically separating the classes. The middle classes sought to shape society in their own image by inculcating the lower classes with their values by 'preaching' to their domestic staff and through reform movements and evangelicalism (Stansell 1987; Ryan 1990; Fishman 1987; Roberts 1991). The middle classes also instituted massive educational campaigns, consisting of a barrage of sermons, advice books, novels, ladies' magazines and other prescriptive literature designed to define female roles and reinforce the boundaries between male and female spheres (Stansell 1987, 175).

How well these crusades succeeded, however, remains unclear. While didactic and complaint literature expounding the virtues of female domesticity abounded in the nineteenth century, some historians question the extent to which women and men accepted or complied with the models they advocated (see especially Vickery 1993 and Kerber 1988). Kerber, for example, argues that the preponderance of such literature may have arisen as a backlash from the American Revolution, when women had been allowed greater access to politics and women's social and political submission could not be taken for granted. The nineteenth century proliferation of prescriptive literature may therefore have been part of a sustained effort to reestablish a social standard which had been dislodged by the Revolution, an attempt to re-contain women in the private sphere of the home (Kerber 1988).

The nineteenth century was also marked by numerous campaigns calling for greater female access to the public sphere, implying, to subsequent historians of that era, that women had had little such access. Vickery proposes, rather, that this may have simply been a rhetorical

---

[8] Race and ethnicity undoubtedly also played a major role in the response to social changes but it is beyond the scope of this study. Here I look specifically at class differences.

ploy incorporated by nineteenth century feminists: by overstating women's confinement to the private realm in order to strengthen their polemic, feminists may have clouded the many nuanced ways that women could indeed access the public sphere (Vickery 1993).[9]

The working class, in turn, did their best to adapt to, and survive the upheavals of the nineteenth century city. The bourgeois desire to relegate women to the domestic sphere never really had application in working class women's lives. Working class women participated in waged labour wherever they could, whether taking in piecework sewing, domestic labour or factory work (Stansell 1987). As patriarchal control loosened and women gained greater freedom and mobility, they too began to contribute to the chaos and crush of the streets. Amid the seeming social dissolution, the working classes nonetheless developed their own means for monitoring and socially sanctioning each other's behaviour[10].

Evangelicism

The attempt to entrench male and female roles into separate domestic and public realms of responsibility was not the only response to the social and physical stresses of nineteenth century urban life. Another ideological impetus for the creation of suburbs may have come from the influence of the Evangelical movement on the upper middle class. Robert Fishman (1987) poses the argument that the contemporary suburb was the collective creation of the eighteenth century London bourgeois elite. Unprecedented growth in the wealth and size of London's upper

---

[9] The nineteenth century was in fact a time of growing freedom and opportunity for women. The anonymity of the city allowed women greater freedom of movement, especially in the lower classes, and industrialism provided opportunities for waged labour to numerous working class women. There were also increasing opportunities for social excursions. As the century progressed, women of all classes began to participate a more 'public' social life: from ferry and carriage rides, theater, dance halls, to promenading or 'walking out' on the boulevards and in public parks, to visiting department stores, with their specialized tea rooms for ladies only (Stansell 1987; Ryan 1990). Urban life thus undermined patriarchal authority (Wilson 1992, 91).

[10] See, for example, Stansell's description of social control strategies in New York working class neighbourhoods (Stansell 1987, 57-60).

middle class combined with the increasing chaos and congestion of the city to drive the merchant and banking classes to regular weekend retreats in their country manors outside the city. Eventually these manors would shift from weekend retreats to commuter homes, but before this would occur, there would be a redefinition of the bourgeois family (Fishman 1987).

In the mid to late eighteenth century, the increasing wealth of the British upper middle class meant that marriages no longer had to be based on economic expediency. The way was thus cleared for unions based on romantic love, and families became the focus of mutual intimacy and childrearing. At the same time as their financial position was shifting, upper middle class Londoners were also beginning to embrace the growing Evangelical movement. Evangelicism held that the path to salvation was founded in the influence of a Christian family, and that the chief enemy of the family lay in the numerous temptations of city life. Of particular relevance to lives of women, was the fanatical opposition of Evangelicals to any role for women outside the Christian home (Fishman 1987, 19-35).

During the 1850s and 1860s, Fishman argues, the United States demonstrated the same cultural preferences which had led to English suburbanization: the Victorian emphasis on domesticity; stress on the primacy of the family and the emotional bonds within it; the need for privacy and isolation of the family; the need to separate the domestic sphere from the work sphere; growing uneasiness at the close contact between the classes; the search for class segregated neighbourhoods; and the explosive growth of cities (Fishman 1987, 105). Together with the patriarchal belief in the 'natural' separation of male and female roles, women's 'natural' proclivity for domestic life and men's for waged labour and public life, the Evangelical emphasis on the spiritual dangers of the city may well have provided the final incentive for the second key response to the challenges posed by the nineteenth century city: the suburban flight of the bourgeois elite.

CREATION OF THE SUBURBS

The changing North American city

Like their European predecessors, early North American cities were organic. Except for waterfront warehousing and red light districts, land use was an ad hoc mixture of residential, commercial and industrial properties, where people of different social classes and ethnicity, worked and lived side-by-side (Muller 1990; Kasinitz 1995). Even as they became more densely populated, these 'walking cities' remained so compact that less than three percent of the population walked more than a mile to work (Jackson 1985, 14).[11]

Over the course of the nineteenth century, however, North American cities began to change. Mixed land use eventually gave way to the more specialized functions, resulting in the creation of financial, mercantile, retail and residential subdistricts. By the 1890s retail and financial institutions formed the mainstay of the downtown core (Muller 1990, 275).

As city centres became increasingly dedicated to business functions, residential neighbourhoods found themselves edged out of the urban core. By the second half of the century, residential diversity was also giving way to ethnic homogeneity as immigrant groups began to concentrate into ethnic neighbourhoods (Muller 1990, 281). Cities were not only experiencing a reconfiguration based upon function and ethnicity, however. Beginning in 1815, and picking up momentum as cities grew in size and complexity, the bourgeois elite were relocating their home to the suburbs, and by 1860 residential suburbs had appeared outside the largest American cities (Binford 1985).

In *The First Suburbs*, Binford offers a glimpse at the timing and pace of American suburbanization. Although he maintains that suburbs preceded mass transportation, he examines the concurrent evolution of suburbs and transportation, following the trail from foot to coach,

---

[11] To get an idea of how congested a walking city could get, imagine London, England, in 1819. With over 800,000 people, London was the largest city on earth, yet the edge of the city was only three miles from its centre (Jackson 1985, 14).

rail, omnibus, streetcar and finally trains. Binford (1985, 1) proposes that suburbs began as undifferentiated zones outside the city, consisting of estates, scattered farms, wasteland, artisanal hamlets, dumps, and the like. Residential suburbs eventually began to evolve out of the slow, deliberate community building of the suburbanites themselves, and were designed to suit their needs and goals.

Initial suburban residents belonged to the merchant and banking classes; those who walked to town in pleasant weather but could afford to travel by private coach when necessary. By the 1840s, a rise in transitional commuters - young, affluent suburbanites in their twenties and thirties - further expanded suburban populations. However, suburbs only really begin to take hold with the coming of commuter railroads as competitive fares and land speculation along railway lines brought suburban living within reach of the middle class (Binford 1985, 98).

While the geographical expansion of the city and the subsequent creation of the suburbs can be easily taken for granted today by North Americans, in the nineteenth century suburbanization was not the only option available. While early American architecture and city form reflected its European roots - a hodgepodge of Spanish, French and British influences - eventually, as British immigrants began to outnumber all others, this gave way to a primarily British urban form, one that included residential suburbs (Muller 1990, 271). This observation is borne out by Fishman (1987), who observes that while Britain and the United States both adopted suburbanization, continental Europe and Latin America retained the traditional urban form in which the wealthy did not flee the city, but remained at its core. For Fishman, this also provides conclusive evidence of the influence of Evangelicism on North American urban form. To illustrate his point, Fishman cites the example of Paris, where the family was arguably as important to Parisians as it was to Londoners. Unlike the English, the French, who were not caught up in the puritanical Evangelical movement, saw no conflict between a healthy family life and enjoyment of the many diversions the city had to offer. Hence, while Londoners fled to the

safety of the suburbs, the Parisian elite were satisfied to remain at the city centre (Fishman 1987, 110).

Whether the intent of the middle class flight to the suburbs was to entrench male and female roles, to insulate women and children from the dangers and temptations of the city, to protect the Christian family, to separate the wealthy from the stench, disease, and crime of the city, or some combination of each, the suburb would become the definitive urban form of the twentieth century North America.

Suburbs challenged - the material feminists

The impetus towards suburbanization was not without its detractors. Between the 1870s and the 1930s, American material feminists[12] struggled to promote female equality by transforming households, neighbourhoods and cities into spaces which would accommodate women's participation in public life (Hayden 1981). The quest for women's equality led material feminists to fight for female suffrage as well as equal access to higher education, jobs and trade unions, but they believed that ultimately "women must create feminist homes with socialized housework and child care before they could become truly equal members of society" (Hayden 1981, 3).

Material feminists believed that the design of existing cities and homes isolated women and made their domestic work invisible. To overcome these spatial limitations, they envisioned new forms of neighbourhood organizations such as women's cooperatives, and new building types that included kitchenless houses, day care centres, public kitchens and community dining clubs. With these innovations and others, material feminists sought to take advantage of dense

---

[12] Though Hayden does not define material feminists, I believe she refers here to feminists who focused their efforts on making changes in the physical environment to facilitate women's emancipation.

urban populations to share the burden of domestic labour, freeing women to pursue more activities outside the home.

While the goals of material feminists enjoyed a broad appeal, they were ultimately undermined by what they viewed as the worst possible living arrangement for women: the single family dwelling. Material feminists were unable to overcome the powerful federal government endorsement of the single family home in its 1931 Hoover Commission Report on *Home Building and Home Ownership*, and eventually ceased their campaigns (Hayden 1981, 8).

Thus, while the degree to which nineteenth century women and men embraced the assignment of gendered spheres is debatable, that the majority of the dominant classes did, seems indisputable. The very fact that women had restricted access to waged labour, educational institutions, political life, and were even restricted in their socio-spatial mobility provides evidence that there existed, at least to some extent, a *de facto* separation of male and female spheres. This resulted in the sustained, if not universal, spatial containment of women. Invoking women's 'natural' proclivities - for motherhood and domestic life, and against their ability to 'reason' - provided a powerful argument for the exclusion of women from formal education, waged work, and politics. It also reinforced systemic (white) male power within social, economic and political institutions.

EVOLUTION OF THE SUBURBS

The early twentieth century

Despite the ambitions of material feminists, the tide was turning towards suburbanization. What had begun with the flight of the wealthiest classes in the nineteenth century was expanded to the middle classes and would flourish in the twentieth. Thus, by 1970,

fifty million low-technology, single family dwellings would house seventy-five percent of American families (Hayden 1981, 10).

A number of factors influenced the sustained growth of North American suburbs. In the early twentieth century, suburbs represented a safe haven from the hectic, noisy, overcrowded cities, and mass transportation and affordable housing costs were putting the suburban ideal within reach of increasing numbers of middle class North Americans. With the onset of the 1930s however, the Depression threatened the continued viability of the suburbs as more and more struggling homeowners hovered on the brink of foreclosure. In the United States, the federal government responded with the *Hoover Commission Report on Home Building and Home Development* in 1931, which advocated single family housing and led to the Roosevelt administration's Home Owners Loan Corporation in 1933 (Hayden 1981, 8). Over a million dollars was poured into refinancing short term mortgages, creating long term mortgages which allowed thousands of homeowners to remain solvent and many more to buy into the suburban dream (Fishman 1987, 175).

For years aspiring American homeowners were assisted by government initiatives. Federal Housing Administration (FHA) mortgage insurance escalated throughout the 1930s and 1940s. In addition, from 1916 onwards, federal aid for highway construction virtually doubled each year, reaching $4 billion annually by the 1960s (Rothblatt and Garr 1986, 31). Highway building opened up vast tracts of inexpensive land for housing development, and later for the decentralization of business and industry, while simultaneously providing transportation routes to central city jobs.

The post-war years

After the Second World War, Veterans' Administration loan guarantees were combined with FHA mortgage insurance to create artificially low interest rates. Large developers such as

Levitt and Sons, attracted by the prospect of the huge customer base that loan guarantees and long term mortgages implied, took advantage of the reduced land costs, and the economies of scale offered by the mass production of houses. Americans were now able purchase a new family sized suburban home for less than the cost of renting a central city apartment (Rothblatt and Garr 1986, 32). And they did.

Suburbs were growing at a phenomenal rate. While the central city population grew by a steady ten million between 1950 and 1970, an average of 1.2 million housing units, mostly single family dwellings, were being constructed annually in the United States. During the same period, the mean real family income doubled, increasing the ability for American families to purchase a home, and consequently driving the suburban population up by an astonishing eighty-five million (Fishman 1987, 182). In the 1970s, a further twenty million housing units were built, doubling the construction rate of the previous twenty years (ibid., 192). In Canada, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation loans and mortgages, combined with relatively low land costs, provided similar opportunities to prospective Canadian home buyers (Strong-Boag 1991).

Suburbs and the cult of domesticity

With the rapid post-war suburbanization, came another phenomenon: the expansion of domestic culture. During the war, the absence of a large portion of the adult male population had given women greater physical and economic freedom and mobility. Women stepped into jobs previously held by men, thereby interrupting the existing social order. When the men returned from war, women, were encouraged to return to the home. As with their post-Revolutionary sisters before them, prodigious efforts were made to re-entrench male and female roles into their respective spheres.

Women were uprooted from their wartime jobs and attempts were made to coerce, cajole, or otherwise persuade them to become full-time homemakers again. 'Experts' on the

family abounded, inundating the media with countless arguments why society was better off with women at home (Strong-Boag 1991). Among these so-called experts were Dr. Benjamin Spock, who instructed women on how to raise children; Ashley Montague, who championed women's maternal values; and functional sociologists, led by Talcott Parsons, who drew from Freud's 'anatomy is destiny' psychiatry and (reprising Rousseau) argued that women and men had different, but compatible, and equally important roles in society.

In Canada, the writings of 'home-grown' authorities like popular gynaecologist Dr. Marian Hilliard frequently appeared in the pages of Chatelaine magazine, instructing women that it was their role to provide a cheerful home base to bolster their husband's confidence. Women had little incentive to pursue work outside the home: communities lacked support, such as child care; and 'working women' were blamed for a host of society's 'ills', including juvenile delinquency and homosexuality (Strong-Boag 1991, 474-482).

Society thus appointed women as the guardians of the family. In addition, the 'cult of domesticity' placed enormous pressure on women to perform their household duties skillfully and efficiently. A host of consumer durables, such as washers, dryers, refrigerators and stoves, were designed and marketed to make women's roles easier, and the era became marked by consumerism. Veronica Strong-Boag posits that the consumption and suburbanization of the 1950s also served an additional purpose: it demonstrated capitalism's triumph over communism. With the Korean War in Asia, and under the ever-present threat of the Cold War: "[s]table families, full time mothers, and the benefits they produced in sound citizenship were to provide the first defence against the 'Red Menace'" (Strong-Boag 1991, 474). Suburban women could thus be seen as doing their civic duty by providing a nurturing home-base for their family's health and welfare, while simultaneously reinforcing capitalist ideology.

Life in the suburbs was not easy. Householders made substantial economic, social and cultural sacrifices to live in the early post-war suburbs. Many were mortgaged to the hilt, usually buying up to or just beyond their means and while there may have been some consolation

that many of them were poor together, homeowners initially had little spare cash to socialize or buy much beyond the bare necessities (Clark 1966). In addition, most new suburbs in the late 1940s and early 1950s lacked many of the amenities migrating urban dwellers had been accustomed to.

Even the best suburbs suffered from insufficient public transportation and schools, and medical facilities and libraries were never adequate (Clark 1966). Roads were often unpaved, sidewalks non-existent, and the newest suburbs often lacked telephones. Young mothers were often virtually housebound in any but the best weather, as it became impossible to negotiate strollers and carriages through the muddy, rutted streets. Housewives were often isolated, having left family and friends behind in the city when they moved out to the suburbs. Their husbands, who left early to commute to the city and often came home late, were seldom interested in going back into town to visit friends and relatives in the evenings (Clark 1966, 141).

Women therefore had an ambivalent relationship with the suburbs. Michelson's study of urban and suburban couples in the early 1970s revealed that while suburban men were most satisfied with their residential locations, suburban women were the least satisfied (Fava 1980, 135). Like suburban men, women felt that the suburbs were a safer, more desirable place to raise children than the central city, but suburban life could be isolating and boring for married women (England 1993a). And while some women were very satisfied with suburban living (Strong-Boag 1991), or felt 'rescued' from the tedium of paid work and the controlled environment of their parents' homes (England 1993a, 33), others felt they were "slowly going out of their minds" (Strong-Boag 1991, 503).

Late twentieth century suburbs

In the 1960s and 1970s however, the suburbs were beginning to register a change. Inadequate schools and inner city crime were still drawing middle income American families out

of the central city, but suburbs were also beginning to age, and with them, their original populations.[13] Suburbs were becoming more heterogeneous. There were fewer married couples, more young people, elderly and singles, including single mothers, as well as working wives and mothers (Cichocki 1980; Fava 1980; Saegert 1980; Knack 1986). Along with changing age groups, income levels were seeing more variance as well. By the 1970s a broad spectrum of income groups could be found in Canadian suburbs, ranging from welfare recipients and families living in public housing, to middle and upper income groups (Cichocki 1980).

In the United States, as suburbs aged they began facing problems traditionally associated with central cities. By the early 1980s, homelessness, substandard housing, and decaying commercial strips were beginning to plague American suburbs, and twenty-six percent of all poor families were now living in the suburbs[14] (Knack 1986, 7). But even as age and income levels were beginning to reconstitute American suburbs, racial distinctions continued to prevail. Although there were no comparable racial divisions in Canadian suburbs,[15] US suburbs remained the bastion of the American white middle class. Though now home to forty-seven percent of white Americans, only twenty-two percent of African Americans lived in the suburbs, and usually these were in their inner rings (Knack 1986, 8). Suburbs in turn were beginning to adapt to their changing demography, adding more multi-family housing, including apartments, entertainment spots and, eventually, jobs (Varady 1990, 23).

---

[13] Knack refers to the phenomenon of aging of suburban populations as 'Peter Pan' suburbs -- because nobody actually took into consideration that suburbanites would eventually grow old (1986).

[14] Only fourteen percent of the American poor lived in inner city ghettos, the remainder were dispersed throughout the central city (Knack 1986, 9).

[15] Post-war Canadian suburbs attracted all classes, were less homogeneous than American suburbs and, unlike their US counterparts, Canadian suburbanites were not attempting to flee urban dangers (Strong-Boag 1991, 473). Initial suburbs were comprised of middle income WASPs, ambitious working class and immigrants, though later suburbs "often had distinct class and ethnic character" (ibid., 486).

Cities and suburbs reconfigured: urban decentralization

When Ebenezer Howard first proposed garden cities in 1898, he envisioned small cities of around 30,000 which would contain dispersed industry, and where neighbourhoods of 5,000 people would be focused around a community centre and school. A series of garden cities were to ring existing cities, providing a counter-magnet to the urban core, attracting people to decentralize and thus dilute the squalor and overcrowding of urban life (Greed 1994, 93). The garden cities of Howard's imaginings, however, never matched the reality of North American suburbs. Though suburbs did lower urban densities and provide more trees and green space, they quickly outgrew Howard's ideal population of 30,000. By 1970, American suburban populations had reached 74 million, already outnumbering the central cities' 61 million (Fava 1980, 133). Ten years later the gap between them had more than doubled, as the suburban population reached 105 million, and the central cities trailed at 74 million (Knack 1986, 6).

Howard had proposed that garden cities would also allow for the decentralization of industry, and again, although in North America this did not evolve exactly as he envisioned, suburbs nonetheless were attracting business and industry. Beginning as early as the 1960s, and gathering momentum in the 1970s, Canadian and American business and industry were joining the exodus to the suburbs (Rothblatt and Garr 1986; Fishman 1987; Dyck 1989; Gad 1985; Nelson 1986; Relph 1991). Between 1950 and 1970, three quarters of all new manufacturing and retail jobs generated in the United States were found in the suburbs, and in the less than ten years between 1958 and 1967, 338,000 manufacturing, trade and service jobs in the central city ceased to exist, while over 443,000 appeared in the suburbs (Fishman 1987, 182-190).

A number of factors have contributed to the dispersion of business and industry to the suburbs. Rothblatt and Garr (1986) argue that assembly line manufacturing necessitated horizontal expansion of factories. Lower land costs, combined with high speed interstates, which accommodated the more expedient and flexible trucking industry over trains, made suburbs a logical locational option for manufacturers. Technology also paved the way for the

decentralization of 'back office' functions - those highly automated corporate internal services that require little face to face contact with either corporate or external personnel, and which employ a high proportion of 'computer' clerical workers (Nelson 1986). Advances in microprocessing and telecommunications in the late 1960s made it feasible to relocate these functions outside the urban core.

Nelson further argues that as 'white flight' to the suburbs drained the supply of relatively educated, skilled, docile female clerical workers out of the urban core, leaving a less educated, less literate labour market of immigrants and minorities in the central city, corporate back offices followed their desired labour markets into the suburbs. This contention is challenged by Kim England (1993), whose later interviews with managers of suburban back offices did not corroborate Nelson's findings[16], and, as will be seen shortly, by Gunther Gad, who identified a number of factors, other than the search for captive female labour markets, that may have contributed to the decentralization of Toronto back offices.

Several Canadian scholars have studied the effect of government initiatives on central city decentralization. In the Vancouver lower mainland, Isabel Dyck discovered that primary and secondary industrial activity in Vancouver began decentralizing into the suburbs as early as the 1960s. Later, the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) 'Livable Region Plan' was conceived to induce further decentralization of business by developing regional town centres, and leaving mainly professional and managerial jobs in the downtown core. Relph (1991) and Gad (1986) found similar processes at work in the Greater Toronto area in metro Toronto's 1976 'Official Plan', which proposed the creation of outlying office districts to relieve congestion in the downtown financial district.

Like Vancouver, Toronto retains a vibrant downtown core, with continued growth in both the downtown office district and suburban office complexes. However, Toronto differs

---

[16] Only three of the ten personnel managers England interviewed said demand for spatially entrapped women had factored into their relocation decisions. Several commented that as many as eighty percent of their staff had moved to the new offices with them (England 1993, 228-229).

from American cities experiencing both downtown and suburban office growth, in the magnitude of its suburban developments. While low to medium height office complexes continue to exist in Toronto suburbs, substantial office sub-centres can also be found at the extremities of subway and light rapid transit lines. These major suburban office developments, which Relph tracked in six Toronto suburbs in the 1980s, combine retail, offices, apartments, condominiums, and town halls in a deliberate attempt to duplicate the vibrancy of their urban downtown counterparts (Gad 1986; Relph 1991).

If Toronto is any indication, the decentralization of Canadian businesses may be following a different path than their US counterparts. Gad found that, in Toronto, decentralization began with the growth of many small businesses and consumer services geared to the needs of their suburban markets, and was followed by the relocation of the sales and head offices of manufacturing companies, engineering, architectural and consulting firms. By the mid-1980s only three large corporations, all in the insurance industry, had begun a partial decentralization, primarily of its female clerical staff.

Gad predicted there would be a dramatic increase in corporate decentralization as other large employers followed suit and began to move all or part of their operations to the suburbs. As to whether or not large corporations were attracted to the suburbs principally to take advantage of a captive female labour pool, Gad is equivocal. He argues that decreasing demand for clerical workers, prompted by office automation; huge rent differentials between central city financial districts and suburban office complexes beginning in the 1980s; or caps on the expansion of transportation networks to the urban downtown core, introduced in the 1976 'Official Plan', may all have contributed to the decentralization of business and the creation of a new, polycentric urban form (Gad 1985, 347).

While the motives for decentralization remain complex and unclear, by 1970 suburban jobs nonetheless outnumbered American central city jobs (Fishman 1987), and seventy-two percent of the suburban labour force was employed in the suburbs (Fava 1980, 133).

Decentralization may therefore be inadvertently strengthening the link between workplace and residence, breaking down the public/private dichotomy that nineteenth century suburbs so effectively wedged between women and men. Before this claim can be made, however, the economic and social implications of decentralization must first be considered. In practice, it is the high-powered upper management jobs and associated high level legal, accounting and advertising services that are remaining in the central city core, while less powerful and influential jobs are dispersed to the suburbs. Thus, while decentralization may be increasing women's ability to participate in the labour market, perhaps equally likely is the possibility that it creates a dramatic spatial segregation by rank, pay and gender (Gad 1986, 345). The question thus remains whether, even with decentralization, women's participation is on an equal economic footing with men. This question is crucial, because economic participation may be one of the key ingredients to equal citizenship.

CONSTRAINTS TO FEMALE ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Economic participation and democracy

Carole Pateman (1970; 1989) has found the link between economic participation and participation in the democratic welfare state important for several reasons. First, when workers participate in the labour market, they are seen to be making a public contribution. They are also in a position to be levied by the state, and this in turn is seen to entitle them to the benefits of the welfare state (Pateman 1989, 192). If an individual is unemployed, however, they are no longer perceived to be making a contribution and therefore lose their status as an equal citizen (ibid., 184).

Empirical research also suggests that there is a correlation between a low sense of political efficacy, low participation rates and low socio-economic status (SES) (Pateman 1970, 48). People are more likely to participate in politics if they have a greater sense of political

efficacy, this, in turn, can be fostered in the workplace. The link between employment and political efficacy appears to lie in the ability to participate in decision-making at one's workplace. The greater the control and initiative one is able to exercise over one's job, that is, the greater one's sense of efficacy in the workplace, the greater one's sense of political efficacy is outside of it.

A sense of political efficacy can also be acquired by participating in activities in cooperation with others, so-called public activities that are intimately related to the wider society and its economic needs. These may be community activities, especially those in which individuals become involved in the collective affairs of others (Pateman 1970, 55). However, although this kind of public participation may be found in leisure activities, such as voluntary organizations and politics, these public-oriented leisure activities most often draw individuals from upper SES groups. For members of lower SES groups, a sense of public participation is more likely to be achieved in the workplace. However, those in the lowest status jobs, especially in non-supervisory positions, garner little sense of political efficacy from the workplace and demonstrate lower participation rates.

If a key factor to both the perception of citizenship and a sense of personal political efficacy lies in economic participation, one way to foster equal access to citizenship would be to ensure that women's economic power is equal to men's. Levels of female poverty and women's status in the paid labour force indicate that this currently is not the case. Sixty percent of Canada's poor are women, a figure which has remained constant since 1975 (Novac 1995, 55), and fifty-eight percent of single mothers live in poverty (ibid., 56). In addition, throughout western industrialized nations, women earn only a portion of what men earn (Little 1994). This ratio is lowest in the United States where a women earn, on average, two thirds of what men earn (Johnston-Anumonwo 1988, 139).

Occupational segregation by gender

One reason for the discrepancy between male and female wages is the existence of a gendered occupational segregation which gives men access to a wider variety of jobs, especially those in the primary or core labour market. These are the most lucrative employment opportunities, consisting of well-paying jobs with good working conditions, employment stability and mobility, and include union, professional, managerial and some less skilled white collar jobs. Women, on the other hand, are disproportionately concentrated in secondary labour market jobs characterized by low wages, poor working conditions and fringe benefits, as well as high labour turnover (Hanson and Pratt 1988; Rutherford and Wekerle 1988; Wekerle and Rutherford 1988). In general, these are the boring, dead-end blue and white collar sector jobs that most often employ women, ethnic minorities and migrant workers (Little 1994).

Occupational segregation by gender occurs both horizontally, limiting the types of jobs and industries available to women, and vertically, with women over-represented in the lower levels of the labour market (Little 1994, 105). In the United States, for example,

> 80 per cent of women's jobs are located in only 20 of the 420 occupations listed by the Department of Labor. More than half of employed women work in occupations that are 75 per cent female, and over 20 per cent work in occupations that are 95 per cent female....The segregation is very stable; in Britain, for example, 84 per cent of women worked in occupations dominated by women in 1971, the same percentage as in 1951, and in 1902 the figure was 88 per cent (Pateman 1989, 191).

These female-dominated occupations include nursing, elementary school teaching and clerical work (Hanson and Pratt 1990, 377).

Occupational segregation has been a persistent theme in the Canadian labour market as well. In 1980, sixty-two percent of women were employed in three occupational categories: clerical, sales, and service, the same categories women have dominated since 1901 (from the 1984 Royal Commission, cited in Wekerle and Rutherford 1988, 142). In 1996 this number had dropped to fifty-one percent, yet women still represent eighty percent of medical, clerical and health care workers, and sixty-five percent of teachers (Statistics Canada 1996, B39). Canadian

women also dominate the service industry, especially in the lowest paying jobs: fifty-seven

percent of service sector jobs are held by women (ibid., B39), where a large number are

employed in retail, food and accommodation, and public administration and finance (Wekerle

and Rutherford 1988). The more profitable jobs in the primary industries such as fishing,

mining, construction and transportation, on the other hand, remain male-dominated with women

representing a mere twenty-one percent of employees (Statistics Canada 1996, B39).

Supply and demand side explanations

Research into employment inequities between women and men has tended to focus on

either labour supply-side explanations which look at the traits of individual workers, or demand-

side explanations which explore structural factors such as the characteristics of employers or the

workplace. A demand-side explanation can be found in Nelson's study of the relocation of

corporate 'back office' operations to the suburbs which, she argued, occurs in order to take

advantage of a preferred female labour supply (see Nelson 1986).

On the labour supply-side, some researchers maintain that women may not seek the same

level of educational or vocational training as men because women anticipate that their domestic

roles will be primary (Johnston-Anumonwo 1988). These explanations posit that because

women assume their labour force involvement will be discontinuous, they avoid occupations that

require considerable investment in education, on-the-job training, or which will impose wage

penalties for time spent outside the labour force. Hanson and Pratt's study of the Worcester

labour force challenges this hypothesis, however, since the majority of incumbents in the female-

dominated jobs they investigated had higher levels of educational training than the men who held

jobs in the better compensated male-dominated industries (1990; 1988; 1986). Neither are these

explanations supported by Canadian research, where studies indicate that women and men have

similar education levels: forty percent of men and thirty-eight percent of women have a post-

secondary certificate or degree, and an additional nine percent of both men and women have at

least some post-secondary education (Statistics Canada 1996, B11). Hanson and Pratt therefore argue that supply-side explanations provide only a partial account for occupational segregation and must be examined in conjunction with labour demand and recruitment processes in order to explain gendered segregation in the workforce.

Labour supply-side explanations nonetheless remain pertinent to the investigation of constraints to mobility. Because women still retain primary responsibility for maintaining the household (Hanson and Pratt 1993), the dispersion of work, home, and commercial sites poses a challenge to women's mobility. The effect of this spatial separation on women's ability to fully participate in the waged labour force has been the subject of numerous studies. For example, feminist researchers are keenly interested in whether time constraints arising from women's household responsibilities make women more sensitive to the work-trip distances, causing them to seek work closer to home (Hanson and Pratt 1988; 1990). How well the design of the built environment supports daily life therefore becomes part of a larger issue of how well it encourages, or undermines, equality between women and men.

Environmental fit

Greta Salem uses the concept of environmental fit to describe the extent to which an environment is able to accommodate "the needs, goals, and patterns of social behavior of the residents 'without undue limitations and constraints, especially those which generate social and psychological stress'" (from Poponoe, cited in Salem 1986, 152). In North America, a society in which it is assumed men are the primary sources of family income and women, whether they work outside the home or not, hold primary responsibility for household and child care, the urban/suburban split is much more able to accommodate the lifestyles of suburban men than suburban women.

A study by Epstein in the 1970s found that suburban women at every socio-economic level, including professionals, suffer employment constraints. Female doctors, lawyers, and accountants, even geographers, who worked full-time most likely lived in the central city, while those living in suburbs worked part-time or not at all, unless the suburbs had 'genuine' business or commercial centres (cited in Fava 1980, 136). Studies such as this raise questions as to how the dispersion of work and home affects women's opportunities for employment,[17] and what factors in the social, economic and spatial structure of society sideline women from full economic participation.

Structuation theory and the constraints of everyday life

One way to approach these questions is to apply the precepts of time geography to sociologist Anthony Giddens' structuation theory, in order to trace how constraints occurring in daily life restrict human behaviour. According to Giddens, social life consists of both the structure or social context in which human behaviour occurs, as well as the human agents who operate within it. The social structure provides a framework for behaviour within a social system, shaping that behaviour by acting to promote some behaviours and to constrain others. Nonetheless, humans also have free will, or agency, and are not defined by their social systems but can react, even in unconventional ways, as individuals within that social structure. Human agents therefore simultaneously, and constantly, reshape their social structure as it, in turn, shapes their lives (Spain 1992; Wolch and Dear 1988; Rose 1993).

Limitations to women's economic mobility can therefore be examined beginning with the most elemental constraints imposed by daily life. In this way, the seemingly trivial or mundane irritations caused by restrictions to mobility that occur during the course of everyday life can be seen to perpetuate women's social position and reinforce the structures that restrict

---

[17] It also suggests that if business continues to decentralize, opportunities for women will continue to expand.

women's temporo-spatial mobility. The cumulative effect of these restrictions can be the creation of deficiencies within the environment that ultimately limit a woman's potential or marketability, and result in a self-reinforcing process that perpetuates women's inequality (cf. Wolch and Dear 1988). Investigations into women's daily lives therefore become significant in tracing the origins of their limited physical, and therefore economic, mobility.

Here, time geography can provide an approach to the study of women's daily lives. Initially conceptualized by Torsten Hagerstrand to document the temporo-spatial structuring of social life, time geography can be employed to document the routine paths taken by individuals and, of specific importance in the study of women's mobility, the constraints they face as they fulfill everyday tasks (Rose 1993). For women, 'capability' and 'coupling' constraints can particularly complicate their day-to-day mobility. Capability constraints create physical limits to movement, and include the inability to be in two places at once, the need to eat and sleep, and the type of transportation available. Coupling constraints acknowledge that people are obligated to come together at certain times and in certain locations to attend, for example, school or work (ibid., 22). The effects of these constraints are especially apparent when women enter the waged labour force.

Dual roles and domestic responsibilities

Throughout the twentieth century, women's labour force participation rate has been steadily increasing. In 1890, less than five percent of married women worked outside the home in the United States (Hayden 1981, 13). By 1950 the number of dual income households had risen to 19.6 percent, but almost sixty percent of American families still consisted of a full-time homemaker wife and a full-time wage-earning husband. By 1980 more than half of the adult women under age sixty-five were in the waged labour force (Markusen 1981, 24); by 1990, less than twenty-five percent of women were full-time housewives and nearly thirty-three percent of families were dual income (England 1993a, 28). In Canada, 59.3 percent of women with

families are currently in the waged labour force and 30.4 percent of these women have children under age sixteen. In addition, forty percent of families are dual income; 14.3 percent of women with families are the sole income earners; and only 14.6 percent of women are full-time homemakers with full-time wage-earning husbands (Statistics Canada 1996, B2/B18).

Despite women's rising participation in waged labour, there has been little change in the household division of labour (Hanson and Pratt 1990; Pickup 1988; Pratt 1990; Saegert 1980). Though younger couples appear to be more egalitarian with respect to the sharing of household tasks, especially child care (England 1993a), women still retain primary responsibility for most of the day-to-day operation of the household, such as managing cooking, cleaning, child care, laundry and shopping (Hanson and Pratt 1990). For women with children, Isabel Dyck adds to this list the 'unseen work of mothering': driving children to and from activities, preparing costumes, or helping with badges, and so on (Dyck 1989). Men, on the other hand, are responsible for tasks that occur less frequently, such as yard care, car care and household repairs (Hanson and Pratt 1990, 390).[18]

Working women must therefore coordinate multiple daily activities, adding paid work to already existing household responsibilities, as well as frequently combining shopping and delivering children to school and daycare with their journeys-to-work. As Greta Salem suggests, it is easy to underestimate the extra burden this places on women's schedules:

> Time is a frequently overlooked resource required for the attainment of other
> social values. Individuals who must allocate more time than others to achieve the
> same ends are clearly disadvantaged. The dispersion of facilities, combined with
> the allocation of roles within the family unit, impose burdensome demands on the
> time of working women. Although many of these women have full-time jobs,
> they retain their domestic obligations as well as their belief that their primary
> commitment must be to the home (Salem 1986, 155).

---

[18] Dolores Hayden suggests that men often avoid their share of household work by feigning incompetence, especially when it comes to cooking (Hayden 1980, 174).

The time and energy women expend in performing household tasks, caring for children, and traveling between activities, all contribute to the diminishing amount of time and energy available for outside activities.

The journey to work

One way in which feminist scholars have attempted to quantify the effects of the urban/suburban split and the domestic division of labour on women's occupational segregation, is by examining the time (or distance) women are willing to travel to work. These 'journey-to-work' studies are prompted in part by statistical evidence that men's salaries increase proportionately with the distance traveled to work (Rutherford and Wekerle 1988), which suggests that restricted physical mobility may directly affect employment opportunities and salary expectations.

Studies of women's journeys-to-work however have yielded inconclusive and sometimes contradictory results. Some researchers have found that women's journey-to-work is 'significantly' less than men's. For example, Cichocki found women averaged a nine mile journey-to-work while men's work trips averaged thirteen miles (1980); Hanson and Pratt's study indicated that women spent 16.5 minutes compared to men's 20.5 minutes traveling to work (1988; 1990); and Johnston-Anumonwo found that women traveled 5.5 miles to men's 7.8 miles (1992). Rutherford and Wekerle looked at five studies conducted between 1977 and 1983, all of which showed men travel further and spend more time getting to work than women (Wekerle and Rutherford 1988), yet when they conducted their own research in Scarborough, Ontario, they found that while women worked closer to home than men, they spent more time getting there (Rutherford and Wekerle 1988).

To determine the relevance of these findings, we must first establish what constitutes a 'significant' difference in work-trip distance. While the four mile difference in Cichocki's study

and the 2.3 mile difference in Johnston-Anumonwo study may be statistically significant, how much do these differences translate to in terms of time? Would they be the equivalent to Hanson and Pratt's four minute difference in male/female work-trip length? If so, while four minutes twice a day may be statistically significant on a sixteen or twenty minute work trip, it is really only a modest difference when used to gauge the constraints on women's time.

Domestic responsibility hypothesis

Johnston-Anumonwo looked at women's journeys-to-work from another perspective, trying to establish whether domestic responsibilities or the presence or absence of children had a greater affect on work-trip distances. In her examination of Baltimore travel patterns, she found that marital status had a much greater impact on women's work-trip distance than the presence or absence of children, suggesting that the gender division of household labour continues to favour men, and that the additional responsibilities women undertake in managing a household affect their availability for paid employment outside the home (Johnston-Anumonwo 1992).

Similar studies, however, have had mixed results. When England reviewed a number of studies of women's work-trip distances undertaken between 1977 and 1992, she found one study indicating that married women have *shorter* work-trip lengths than single women, and another three in which they had *longer* work-trip lengths than single women. England also looked at the effect of children on work-trip distances, finding two studies that showed women with children had *shorter* journeys-to-work than women with no children, and a further three studies in which women with children had *longer* work-trip lengths than women without children (England 1993b). In her own interviews with suburban Columbus, Ohio women in 1987 and 1988, England found that married women traveled slightly longer to work than single women.

From these conflicting data, as well as from her own results, England concluded that the journey-to-work is part of a much larger time/space budgeting problem. How far women were willing to travel to work, and whether or not they were willing to move closer to paid employment, was tied into a "*pre-existing and evolving web of localized relations*" (England

1993b, 237; emphasis in original) which may include the availability of good child care and/or school systems, competitive mortgage rates, and their partner's journey-to-work. It seems likely then, that as conscious agents women base employment decisions on a combination of competing needs, of which work-trip distance is only one.

Transportation options

Early studies suggested that women are also constrained in their employment choices because their greater reliance on public transportation restricts access to jobs (Cichocki 1980). Whether this continues to hold true today, however, is questionable. A 1983 Toronto Transit Commission study found that while women from the suburb of Scarborough were more likely than men to rely on public transportation to travel to work, these 'transit captives' nonetheless accounted for only nineteen percent of the female working population[19] (Rutherford and Wekerle 1988, 121). The other eighty-one percent of women working outside of the home either traveled by private automobile (67.5 percent) or had access to private transportation but for reasons of convenience or cost chose to travel by public transportation (14.5 percent). The study suggests that the majority of women have access to private transportation and may indicate a rise in female automobile ownership from earlier studies. Nevertheless, women who cannot drive, who cannot afford to own a car, or who otherwise may not have access to private transportation, may be penalized in the range of jobs to which they have access.

Of the studies which examined the percentage of women in the wage workforce who were 'transit captives', that is, who relied on public transportation to travel to work, all looked solely at women currently employed in the waged labour force (Hanson and Pratt 1990, 1988; Rutherford and Wekerle 1988; Johnston-Anumonwo 1992). If Rutherford and Wekerle's figures

---

[19] The same study found 4.2 percent of men were transit captives, making the ratio of female to male transit captives 4.5:1 and sixty-seven percent of transit captives women (Rutherford and Wekerle 1988, 121).

are representative of average transit use in North America, then less than twenty percent of female employees are transit captives. If we treat this figure as representative, however, we may run into several problems. First, there is no indication that these figures hold true throughout Canada, let alone across the United States. Further studies would therefore have to be undertaken to determine if this pattern persists across North America. Second, and equally important, this study and others only examine currently employed women. There is no indication what percentage of women who are not participating in the waged labour force remain unemployed because they do not have access to paid employment, or find the time required to travel to work, especially if they have to rely on public transportation, prohibitive.

Marginal gains

Rutherford and Wekerle found a further complication in interpreting the significance of journey-to-work studies: although male workers show a marked increase in salary with distance traveled to work, women show only a marginal increase[20]. They suggest that this probably reflects the fact that most women are in female-dominated industries, and rates of pay in these industries vary little over the metropolitan Toronto area. Nonetheless such a finding challenges the 'dual role' hypothesis, that women have shorter journeys-to-work to accommodate their combined domestic and waged work roles. It suggests instead a 'rational' explanation: women do not travel as far to work as men because they are not compensated for additional travel (Rutherford and Wekerle 1988).

---

[20] Studies indicate that incomes increase incrementally as people travel further to work. In Rutherford and Wekerle's study, for example, women who traveled twenty miles to work average $2,000 more per year than women who traveled only one mile. Men, on the other hand, averaged $6,500 per more year for an equivalent increase in work-trip distance (Rutherford and Wekerle 1988, 124).

Job search and recruitment

Hanson and Pratt (1988; 1990) also investigated how women and men acquire waged employment. In their study of Worcester, Massachusetts, they found that both employers and employees rely heavily on word-of-mouth to fill most job vacancies; usually only professional, managerial or skilled positions were advertised. Because no studies of women's job networking were available, Hanson and Pratt extrapolated from studies conducted with men, which indicated individuals' job search networks tend to be of the same sex. Whereas women most often find paid employment through family, friends and neighbours, men's job networks also include work acquaintances. Hanson and Pratt contend that because women are more geographically constrained than men, their employment networks are also geographically constrained. As a result, women learn about jobs from other women who are employed in occupationally segregated jobs close to where they live, and so the cycle of occupational segregation continues.

While journey-to-work studies have been unable to establish the extent to which women's domestic and child care responsibilities contribute to occupational segregation, they have raised several key issues. First, women evaluate jobs differently, and have different priorities when choosing a job, than men. For example, women interviewed by Hanson and Pratt indicated that they would rank work hours which were compatible with their children's schedules second only to good pay when considering paid employment (1990, 395). Job benefits figured third most important to women in the paid labour force (it was second in priority for men, after pay), followed by a host of scheduling requirements, including proximity to home, actual job hours, and how well these hours fit into their partner's work schedule. Balancing domestic responsibilities with waged labour schedules therefore figured prominently in women's choice of employment outside the home.

A second issue which influences women's decisions to pursue paid employment may arise directly from their status in the secondary labour market. Markusen (1981) proposed that given the low wages, the limited range of jobs available to women, and the lack of control over

working conditions in factory and service sectors jobs, some women may choose to remain outside the waged labour force. As homemakers, these women may experience a greater variety in tasks, and achieve greater levels of expertise than they would working in a de-skilled job in the lower ranks of the labour market. When the option is available, some women may therefore find remaining outside the paid labour force preferable to obtaining an unattractive, poorly paying job within it (Markusen 1981).

Women may also choose to accommodate dual roles by engaging in shift work (Little 1994; Pratt 1990). Such was the case in twenty-nine percent of the dual income earners Hanson and Pratt questioned, who worked non-overlapping shifts (Pratt 1990, 600). This is not necessarily an attractive option for women, however, since in the vast majority of couples, it was women who worked the night shifts, adding to their levels of stress and having implications for the type of employment they would engage in.

Whether or not women's journeys-to-work are affected by the domestic division of labour or child care, and whether or not women work outside the home, they nonetheless carry a greater share of domestic responsibility than men. In addition, women remain over-represented in the secondary labour market, thus adding to the unlikelihood that they will become politically active, for as Pateman argues:

> Women are segregated into certain occupational categories ('women's work') and they are concentrated into non-supervisory and low-skilled and low-status jobs. It is precisely workers in such jobs that empirical research has shown to be the least likely to participate (Pateman 1989, 222).

Furthermore, if economic participation is one of the *de facto* prerequisites to full citizenship, and equal access to the paid labour force is one way of achieving economic equality between the sexes, the work of women who choose to raise their children full time continues to be at best ignored, at worse, denigrated.

PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS TO MOBILITY

Safety

> The *prospect* (as distinct from the reality) of crime introduces an element of uncertainty into everyday life such that social relations seem precarious, their quality unpredictable, and their utility questionable (Smith 1984, 361; emphasis in original).

Women also create self-imposed barriers to mobility in response to the real or perceived dangers of the city. For women, especially at night, the city is transformed into a maze of dangerous spaces, and this perception can profoundly affect their use of space (Pain 1991; Pawson 1993; Valentine 1989). Although women are not alone in their fear - fear of crime is one of the top issues affecting the quality of life in the United States[21] - women's fear is different from men's. Both men and women fear theft or robbery, but to this women add the fear of male violence, in particular, of sexual violence.[22] For women, even those who have not experienced violence, fear of assault can have a major impact on their lifestyles.

The prevalence of women's fear of violence and the potential effects on their spatial mobility are staggering. Fifty percent of Canadian women report that they do not feel safe walking alone in their own neighbourhood after dark (Whitzman 1995, 91); a Seattle study found seven times as many women as men do not go out alone at night; and fifty percent of inner city women in a British crime survey reported that not only did they fear going out alone on foot at night, they actively avoid it (Pain 1991, 420).

---

[21] Information was obtained from a 1989 Gallup poll (Nasar and Fisher 1993, 187).

[22] Valentine (1989), Pain (1991), and Pawson (1993) all maintain that the fear of sexual violence adds a marked, qualitative difference to women's fear. I question how many women consciously name their fear as that of sexual assault, as opposed to a generalized fear of male violence. My fear, and I expect that of many women, arises from the knowledge that I would be ill-equipped to fight off most male attackers, so when I feel I am in a vulnerable position, my fear is of any (unspecified) 'attack'. In this section, unless otherwise specified, I therefore include fear of both physical and sexual assault when referring to women's fear of violence.

Though difficult to quantify, these fears are not unfounded. We can only speculate as to the actual number of sexual assaults against women as the vast majority of cases are likely not reported. A 1980 study in Britain, for example, estimated as few as ten percent of rapes are reported to police, and found four times as many sexual assaults were reported to the Rape Crisis Centre than to the police (Pain 1991, 419). More recently, Statistics Canada reported in 1993 that fifty percent of Canadian women have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence[23] since age sixteen, but only fourteen percent of these incidents were reported to the police (Whitzman 1995, 91).

Gill Valentine suggests that fear of sexual violence is learned from an early age, often beginning in the home, where "girls are socialised into a restricted use of public space through observing both their parents' differential fears for them and the control of the spatial range of their activities in relation to boys" (Valentine 1989, 386). For adults and young adults, the media becomes a major source of information about violence against women. However, because media in general disproportionately focus on violent crimes against individuals, the news tends to give the illusion that violent assaults are more prevalent than they actually are. The media are also more likely to report attacks by unknown assailants, especially when they occur in isolated public spaces, despite the fact that assaults against women are most often committed by someone they know (Valentine 1989; Pain 1991). Hence, women's fear of attack becomes synonymous with a fear of public spaces (Valentine 1989).

Rachel Pain proposes that women also learn about the potential for sexual violence through their own experience of sexual harassment, which she defines as "unwanted intrusive acts perpetrated by men against women, including staring, touching, and comments or actions of a sexual nature" (Pain 1991, 421). While the relationship between sexual harassment and fear of sexual violence may appear to be overstated, as Pain contends:

> [a]lthough sexual violence mainly takes place in private space, the common
> occurrence of sexual harassment in *public* space acts to remind women of sexual

---

[23] Note: Whitzman does not specify what constitutes physical or sexual violence.

danger. In other words, sexual harassment evokes fear of more severe sexual attack through routinely creating a state of insecurity and unease among women (Pain 1991, 421; emphasis in original).

Most women will have some experience of sexual harassment in their lifetime. Unlike men, women frequently find their personal space invaded by what ranges from the seemingly benign, such as whistles or comments, to actual physical assault by unknown men in public spaces (Valentine 1989, 386). The number of women affected by such harassment is significant. An Edinburgh study found fifty-three percent of sixteen to thirty year old women surveyed had had at least one "worrying or frightening experience" that year (Pain 1991, 421); another British study found that during their lifetime, seventy-five percent of women under age sixty-five had at least one frightening experience, which ranged from verbal harassment or whistling to flashing or physical assault (Valentine 1992, 25).

The cumulative effect of an unwanted touch - perhaps from a stranger, perhaps not - the occasional sexual comments or suggestive looks, the warnings from family and friends, and the media reports of physical or sexual violence, is that many women, if not outright fearful, are often suspicious or cautious of male strangers, especially in situations where male behaviour may not be regulated. Women's fear is most often experienced in isolated public spaces, especially at night, and women respond by modifying their behaviour in a number of ways. One strategy women employ is to look for cues in the environment which signal potential danger. Women make judgments about the safety of their surroundings based on the design of the environment and the time of day.

A 1982 study of sixty-five Seattle rapes which occurred in public places found a number of commonalties between the sites of the assaults (Whitzman 1995, 93). The same design features which were identified in the Seattle study were identified by women in Canadian and British studies as features which caused them fear or uneasiness. These included locations where a potential attacker might be able to conceal himself, where visibility was blocked or limited, where the possibility of escape was blocked, or where any combination of these features

occurred (cf. Nasar and Fisher 1993). After dark, for example, places with poor lighting or signage, or with 'blind' corners can appear threatening, as well as any place where a woman can be isolated, away from the potential intervention of others, such as parks, parking lots, or multi-storey car parks and their isolated stair wells and elevators (Valentine 1989; Nasar and Fisher 1993).

Women also look for cues in the environment which suggest that crime is permitted or possible. These cues may come from 'social incivilities', that is, behaviour which connotes disorder or potential victimization, such as public drunkenness, or the presence of people which appear threatening such as drug addicts, prostitutes, gangs of youths, or homeless people. 'Physical incivilities' can also convey messages about social conditions, especially when the environment is run-down and poorly maintained. These cues may include graffiti, litter, vacant lots, abandoned buildings, vandalism, and dilapidation, all of which indicate that behaviour is unregulated and potentially dangerous (Nasar and Fisher 1993; Valentine 1989; Pain 1991; Whitzman 1995).

Women respond to threatening environments in several ways. In places which they perceive as dangerous, women are constantly on alert for aberrant behaviour and areas of reduced visibility which may conceal a potential attacker (Valentine 1989). Women also take precautionary measures to avoid areas which are perceived as dangerous. As Valentine reminds us, many of our taken-for-granted choices about routes and destinations are part of ongoing coping strategies women employ to feel safe (1989, 385). These strategies are so much a part of women's daily lives that they are rendered virtually invisible. It is only when asked directly about these precautions that the extent of women's behavioural adaptations reappear. When this question was posed to sixteen to twenty-four year old women in Britain, ninety percent of respondents indicated that they habitually take precautions which range from avoiding certain streets to not going out at all (Whitzman 1995, 91).

The effects of violence, and the media reporting of violence, extend beyond the population of victims to influence the spatial patterns of most, if not all, women. Fear of violence causes women to significantly limit their movements and can even affect their social and economic activities. For example, forty percent of women questioned in a 1985 study conceded that fear affected their social life, and twenty percent felt that fear restricted the jobs available to them (Pain 1991, 425). Fear of violence exacts a cost to women in terms of time, energy and lifestyle choices. As Pain contends:

> the threat of crime, by creating a constant state of apprehension...and by leading to the self-imposition of behavioural restrictions...limits women's opportunities to be active participants in public life (Pain 1991, 425).

Spaces of Representation

An additional, if subtle, psychological barrier to women's political participation and sense of citizenship may lie in their lack of formal representation in urban public space.[24] Public monuments and historical preservation sites are created to officially commemorate the lives and activities of people who are recognized by a community as historically significant, whether at a local, regional or national level. Yet a survey of these sites of formal public remembrance would reveal that women, as well as members of ethnic communities, people of colour, the working class, and lesbian and gay men, are virtually absent.

In Los Angeles, for example, where nearly sixty percent of the population are Latino, African American or Asian American, and half the population are women, 97.5 percent of official landmarks commemorate Anglo history, and only four percent acknowledge the achievements of women, including Anglo women (Hayden 1994, 467). Gail Dubrow found similar absences in her study of historical preservation sites: only two percent of American

---

[24] By urban public spaces, I include urban spaces to which any member of the public will generally have access, whether or not there is an admission fee. These spaces may include public parks and squares, streets, preservation sites, etc.

national historical landmarks commemorate women's achievements; and in five major US cities, Miami had the highest number of historical sites representing women's history (eight percent), while Boston had none, and the norm for other cities was closer to three percent (Dubrow 1994, 8-9). In addition, although public monuments of men usually recognize living or historical military and political leaders, national and local heroes or captains of industry, when women appear in statues they most often depict mythical or allegorical figures (Johnson 1995; Monk 1992). Thus, it is no surprise that while the historical contributions of actual men are celebrated, one of the most famous female figures in stone is the Statue of Liberty.

It is difficult to gauge the importance of historical sites and public monuments to communities and their members. How often do people pass by a historic monument and really notice it, or even sit an eat their lunch underneath one without later being able to name the historical figure or the event it memorializes? Yet, even if public monuments can so easily disappear into the backdrop of daily life the absence of women and minority groups from such public commemoration may be important for several reasons.

Monuments are designed to pay public tribute to individuals and events, to be a source of inspiration and to demonstrate the respect of a community, and as such represent of the values of that community at the time of their creation. When members of a community do not find themselves publicly commemorated, the underlying message is that the social group to which they belong is not as valued and that they do not play a role significant or consequential enough in that community to warrant its respect. In the same way, when historical sites preserve examples of architectural excellence, they commemorate the homes, clubs, and business sites of the most affluent, but overlook the social and economic struggles of the majority of ordinary citizens (Hayden 1994, 446-7).

Just as attempts are being made to recover women in art, literature, and history, and to find powerful female role models in business, labour and political life, so too an increasing number of feminist scholars and community planners are endeavouring to re-instate women, as

well as other minority communities, into the commemorative landscape of the city. One such undertaking, the Power of Place project in Los Angeles, is responsible for projects that commemorate the lives of women and members of minority groups. One of the first projects saw the installation of an eighty-one foot commemorative wall chronicling the life of Biddy Mason, a former slave who became the city's most famous midwife. Another project won the designation of the Embassy Theatre as a cultural-historic landmark. The facility had been the historic gathering site for labour unions and community organizations, including Russian Jewish and Latina garment workers (Hayden 1994). On the other side of the continent, the Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, New York was established in 1980 to mark the site of the 1848 convention that launched the women's rights movement (Dubrow 1994, 7).

As Johnson (1995) reminds us, public monuments can serve as the loci for collective participation in politics and public life, most obviously in ceremonies such as those held at cenotaphs on Remembrance Day. But they also serve as a subtle reminder of who the important contributors to a community are. Attempts to establish monuments and historical preservation sites which honor women's contributions, and the contributions of members of other socially, politically, and economically marginalized groups, stem from the desire to foster a more democratic and inclusive approach to preservation planning, and to renew pride in the family and the traditions of a all members of a community (Dubrow 1994; Hayden 1994). As Hayden suggests, recognizing women's contributions helps women to see themselves as strong and wise people (1994, 484), and to remind women they are valued citizens whose presence matters.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the static nature of the built environment, there has been increasing dispersion of business and industry to the suburbs. Nonetheless, while decentralization has re-integrated the public and privates spheres to some extent, bringing jobs to the suburbs and challenging the dichotomous separation of male and female roles that characterized first half of the twentieth

century, women remain unequally distributed in the core labour market, and over-represented in the secondary. In addition, as Gad (1985) points out, the most powerful positions in the labour market remain in the central city, creating the potential for a new spatial segregation by rank and pay, as well as gender. Decentralization has also brought shopping, recreation and services closer to suburban women, reducing the distance they must travel, often with children, to accomplish daily tasks. Because of their low density, however, suburbs remain resistant to the benefits of mass transportation, thereby penalizing suburban women who must rely on public transportation for their excursions outside the home.

Gentrification is also challenging the propensity to separate home and work. As Markusen observes, gentrification has resulted in large part from the breakdown of the patriarchal household (1981, 32). Gays, singles, and professional couples with jobs in the central business districts are increasingly attracted to central city residences. From here they can minimize their journeys-to-work and take advantage of conveniently located retail, recreational and service institutions. However, as Fishman (1987) notes, gentrification is a relatively minor phenomenon when examined in the context of the continued size and scope of the suburbs.

As women's labour force participation levels have increased, there has also been a corresponding increase in market-produced 'instant' dinners, ranging from frozen dinners, ready-to-eat meals, and pre-cut and packaged foods, to delis, bistros and fast food outlets where entire meals can be assembled to eat in or take home. Service institutions and retail stores have also extended their hours, making it possible in many areas to shop for groceries any time of the day or night; to shop for other household items after work or on Saturday or Sunday; even to find a doctor or dentist, or other professionals, available on evenings and weekends.

In addition, there is some evidence of changes to the division of domestic labour. Although women still retain primary responsibility for the household (Hanson and Pratt 1990), younger couples are beginning to lead the way to a more egalitarian division of domestic labour, especially child care (England 1993a). However, as Kathy, a thirty-eight year old working

mother, demonstrates, this sometimes requires a conscious reassessment of deeply ingrained attitudes towards the roles of women and men in the household:

> I was doing everything, I thought that I should be 'Supermom.' I didn't realize that I had the right to ask my husband it's time for you to take the kids out, do the dishes, and so on. Then five years ago I decided I couldn't handle it anymore. The kids *always* called me, and I was the one taking time off for their doctor's appointments. As I've moved up the ladder, I can't take time off. I was the one doing all the cleaning while they were out. If I was lucky I had a couple of hours on Sunday evenings. Now he does more than half. We got counseling, because I said if this is what marriage is about then I've had enough. We decided we didn't want to break up the marriage, so we got counseling and got it all ironed out. He's stuck to his bargain and I've stuck to mine. Whoever gets home first starts dinner. Whoever is in the basement puts a load of laundry in. It's no longer 'mom's job' (cited in England 1993a, 38).

With more and more women combining waged labour with existing domestic responsibilities, renegotiations of the division of labour within the household are inevitable. Perhaps, as Markusen predicted in 1981, as men assume their share of responsibility for housework and child care, they will begin realize just how inefficient current household production and urban structures really are (1981, 31). Maybe then we will begin to experience significant changes in both household structure and urban form that will facilitate women's ease of mobility.

Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries women have made dramatic strides in economic, social and political access. As cities grew and populations mushroomed, so too did women's urban mobility. Female political participation, from parades to public oration, blossomed in the nineteenth century, especially with the coming of the suffragists. By the end of the twentieth century, women have now entered political office and hold jobs in almost every labour category. The progress women have made over the past two centuries is nothing short of phenomenal.

For all this progress, however, women have not yet reached male levels of representation in business and industry (Hanson and Pratt 1988; Rutherford and Wekerle 1988; Wekerle and

Rutherford 1988). And, in political office, the participation rate of women is even more

disheartening. In the US federal legislature, only 10.8 percent of seats in the Lower House and

six percent in the Upper House are held by women (Nelson and Carver 1994, 737). After the

1988 elections, three out of fifty governors were women, two out of one hundred senators, and

twenty-six out of 435 congressional representatives (Spain 1992, 224). In Canada the numbers

are only slightly better: women hold 13.2 percent of seats in the Lower House, and 12.5 percent

of the Upper House (Bashevkin 1994, 142).

If we assume that (contrary to the nineteenth century 'different but equal' hypothesis)

women and men have equal mental capacity, the question becomes why women have not yet

reached male levels of participation. In this chapter I have offered a partial explanation.

Women's role as the primary persons responsible for the coordination, and execution, of

domestic labour, in conjunction with the layout of the built environment which creates obstacles

to women's mobility and exacerbates existing time constraints, has restricted their full and

focused participation in both the private and public realms. In the next chapter, I look at

women's experiences with the democratic system of government.

CHAPTER 3:

WOMEN, CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRACY

INTRODUCTION

I have proposed that women's access to the rights and obligations of citizenship is compromised by their restricted access to the public sphere. In Chapter 2, I explored how the physical structure of the city has affected women's mobility and, as a consequence, their ability to participate in the public sphere. In order to establish whether women's restricted access to the public sphere affects their status as citizens, the concept of citizenship and how it may be exercised by members of society must first be examined. In this chapter, I therefore explore women's relationship to citizenship. First I look at the notion of citizenship, and its associated rights and obligations. This, however, is not as straightforward as it may first appear, because the notion of citizenship is a highly contested one.

Marshall's highly influential thesis on the civil, political, and social rights of citizenship forms the point of departure in my analysis of women's access to citizenship. Despite the prominence of Marshall's theory, his focus on citizenship rights, to exclusion of any notion of obligations, has recently prompted fierce criticism from the political Right. Mindful of these critiques, I have broadened my inquiry to include women's access to both the rights and obligations of citizenship, paying particular attention to social and political rights, as these are the ones most closely scrutinized in contemporary discussions of citizenship.

The social rights of citizenship form the basis of the democratic welfare state, and the social obligations promote responsible citizenship through economic self-reliance, charity and volunteerism. Women's relationship to these rights and responsibilities comprise the first element of my analysis.

Next I examine the political rights and obligations of citizenship, paying particular attention to the concept of democracy because these political rights and responsibilities are inextricably linked to the system of governance in which they are located. To unravel the complex relationship between democracy and citizenship requires a careful study of the goals of democratic government. As with citizenship however this is no easy task because the concept of democracy is nebulous, resistant to any one definition, and constantly undergoing change.

To best accomplish my analysis, I have chosen to review theories of democratic theory and 'women's place' within it. I propose that women have historically had a tenuous relationship with the democratic process and this lies at the root of some of the continuing barriers to women's full political participation. Expectations about women's capabilities and capacities, which had provided the rationale for their prolonged exclusion from the political arena, still resonate to a disturbing degree in contemporary society. A gendered approach to democracy must therefore acknowledge the disparity of opportunities between women and men, and where necessary, compensate for these to provide women with greater access.

The routes to democratic participation lie primarily in formal political participation through voting or holding public office, or informal participation in the public sphere. As a final element in my study of women's access to citizenship, I look at barriers to women's formal political participation, reserving for my final chapter, a study of their access to informal participation in the mediated public sphere.

Defining citizenship

No single concept can describe either a universal notion of citizenship or what it means to be a citizen of a particular nation. A broad definition of citizenship may touch upon the collective entitlements and obligations of members of a community, such as a nation-state (Kofman 1995, 122). Some theories focus on the rights and entitlements of citizenship, while

others include the role of active involvement in the affairs of a community (Vogel 1991, 59).

Bryan Turner notes that citizenship also encompasses a "set of juridical, political, economic and

cultural practices that define a person as a competent member of a community" (Turner 1993, 2).

Perhaps the definitive twentieth century notion of citizenship, however, was laid out by

T.H. Marshall in 1949 in his now classic treatise, *Citizenship and Social Class*.[1] Marshall's

thesis emphasized the rights of citizenship, focusing on passive entitlements rather than

obligations for active political involvement. He identified three basic entitlements of citizenship

as civil, political, and social rights, and maintained that these rights, which had evolved over

three centuries, were necessary to ensure the full and equal treatment of all members of society.

He began his discussion with a summary of these three aspects of citizenship as he perceived

them:

> The civil element is composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom -
> liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own
> property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice. The last is of a
> different order from the others, because it is the right to defend and assert all one's
> rights on terms of equality with others and by due process of law. This shows us
> that the institutions most directly associated with civil rights are the courts of
> justice. By the political element I mean the right to participate in the exercise of
> political power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an
> elector of the members of such as body. The corresponding institutions are
> parliament and councils of local government. By the social element I mean the
> whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the
> right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being
> according to the standards prevailing in the society. The institutions most closely
> connected with it are the educational systems and the social services (Marshall
> 1992, 8).

Civil rights, the first to be established, were secured in the eighteenth century, followed

by political rights in the nineteenth with the realization of universal (male) suffrage. The

attainment of social rights in the twentieth century represented, for Marshall, the final stage in

the evolution of citizenship rights.

---

[1] Marshall would later expand this thesis in *Sociology at the Crossroads* (1963, London: Heinemann Educational Books); *Social Policy in the Twentieth Century* (1965, London: Hutchinson); and *The Right to Welfare and Other Essays* (1981, London: Heinemann Educational Books).

Marshall viewed social rights as a critical aspect of citizenship because despite the formal political equality achieved with the franchise, extensive social and economic inequalities persisted in society. To address this contradiction, Marshall reasoned that citizenship should be extended to include a set of rights that would enable all eligible individuals to participate fully in the social, economic and political life of a society, and thus "to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society" (Marshall 1992, 8).

The social rights of citizenship therefore existed, for Marshall, to counter the effects of social and economic inequalities that exist in a capitalist society. Incorporated to offset the inequalities created by class differences, they may potentially mitigate the effects of any sources of discrimination, whether based on race, ethnicity, gender or any other mark of 'difference'.

Critiques of Marshall

While his description of citizenship as a series of rights has become a benchmark for subsequent examinations of, and challenges to, contemporary notions of citizenship (cf. Kofman 1995; Kofman and Peake 1995; Kymlicka and Norman 1994; Lister 1990; Turner 1993; Turner 1990; Vogel 1991; Walby 1994), Marshall is not without his critics. Some reject his evolutionary notion of the acquisition of citizenship, charging that it both suggests an inevitability in the development of social rights and, especially in the case of women, that is historically inaccurate (Turner 1993, 6). His theory is also criticized for its ethnocentrism, as he assumed the British experience universal when, in fact, it is historically and comparatively inaccurate for other societies (Turner 1990, 193; Kofman 1995, 125).

The New Right

Others, like Kofman, contend that Marshall's view of citizenship was too optimistic given the current massive erosion of social rights that has accompanied the onset of globalization

(Kofman 1995, 125). Indeed, while most people still identify citizenship with the notion of rights (for example as social rights in Britain and civil rights in the United States), in recent years the concept of citizenship-as-rights has come under increasing attack (Kymlicka and Norman 1994, 355).

After a nearly thirty year boom in post-war growth, an economic downturn in the mid-1970s and 1980s spurred the growth of the politically conservative right, who author some of the most frequent contemporary challenges to the citizenship-as-rights thesis (Parry 1991, 188). From Thatcherism in Britain to Reaganism in the United States, the New Right mounted a sustained attack on the welfare state, challenging its fundamental objectives and values. The welfare state was accused of promoting passivity without improving the life chances of the unemployed (Kymlicka and Norman 1994, 355) and many western governments, operating under mushrooming national deficits, began to roll back the social welfare gains of preceding decades, citing efforts to stabilize national economies.

In dismantling the welfare state, the New Right sought to replace citizenship as a language-of-rights with citizenship as a language-of-obligations, rewriting the 'passive' citizenship of rights and entitlements to an 'active' citizenship of economic self-reliance, political participation and civility. Increasingly, active citizenship, and the idea that the rights of citizenship should be enjoyed only in return for fulfilling of certain individual obligations, was championed. The entitlements of citizenship were to be supplemented, or even replaced, by the active exercise of civic responsibilities, as in the case in American workfare programs where labour in low paid, often dirty jobs, became a condition for the receipt of welfare benefits (Smith 1995; Kymlicka and Norman 1994, 355; Lister 1993, 5).

The rhetoric of the obligations of citizenship, argues Kearns, replaces a collectivist approach with an individualistic approach to the provision of welfare (Kearns 1995, 157). In rolling back taxes, the New Right reduced public provisioning, appealing to citizens to make up for loss of public services either through volunteerism or by donating to charity. To fulfill their

civic obligations, active citizens may volunteer in the community, in the management of collectively enjoyed services, or on a personal level by keeping safe, fit, and well (Smith 1995, 192).

Feminist critiques of citizenship

Feminist critiques of contemporary notions of citizenship focus mainly on women's relationships with the social and political aspects of citizenship.[2] As noted above, some of the central obligations of citizenship identified by the New Right are economic self-reliance, political participation, volunteerism and charity (Kymlicka and Norman 1994; Smith 1995; Lister 1990). Yet women's relationships with each of these obligations can vary significantly from men's. In what follows, I look at how unequal access to paid employment colours women's access to the social rights and obligations of citizenship. I then explore women's relationships with the political rights and obligations of citizenship.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO THE SOCIAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP

Marshall described the social rights of citizenship as those which ensure a "modicum of economic welfare and social security" and "the right to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society" (Walby 1994, 380). To achieve this level of economic welfare, citizens must be guaranteed both an education, to prepare them for the labour market, and social security for when they were unable to work, whether as a result of unemployment, illness, or retirement.

---

[2] Perhaps there are feminist critiques of the civil rights of citizenship, for example, women's lower economic status may afford them differential access to legal representation. Such concerns, if they exist, are not found in the general literature on women and citizenship therefore in this paper I have restricted my discussion to women's access to the social and political rights of citizenship.

Access to the social rights of citizenship forms the basis of the welfare state and relies on several assumptions. First, the welfare state is founded on the notion that members of society are entitled to a minimum level of existence and are therefore simultaneously independent individuals and members of a larger community:

> The welfare state has been fought for and supported by the labour movement and the women's movement because only public or collective provision can maintain a proper standard of living and the means for meaningful social participation for all citizens in a democracy. The implication of this claim is that democratic citizens are both autonomous and interdependent; they are autonomous in that each enjoys the means to be an active citizen, but they are interdependent in that the welfare of each is the collective responsibility of all citizens (Pateman 1989, 203).

A second assumption is that workers earn full access to pensions, social security, unemployment benefits and other entitlements because they contribute to the financing of a social welfare system when they are working (Walby 1994, 386). This in turn relies on a final assumption: in order to contribute to the welfare state citizens must have access to, and be able to participate in, the paid labour force.

It is because of this emphasis on the necessity to finance the welfare state that Pateman can argue employment has replaced military service as the key to citizenship (Pateman 1989, 187). It is here, however, that feminist critiques of citizenship are also the most resonant because, as I discussed in Chapter 2, women and men enter the labour market under significantly different conditions.

Women, citizenship and the paid labour force

The persistent association of women with the private sphere, and men with the public, helps to perpetuate the full or partial economic dependency of women upon men. Despite women's increasing levels of labour force participation, many people still consider women the primary persons responsible to household management and child care (Hanson and Pratt 1990) and men the primary 'breadwinner'. The assumption that women's primary responsibility lies in

the home has fed the expectation that their economic contributions are marginal, supplemental to the male family wage, and contributes to the occupational segregation of labour by gender (see Chapter 2 - Occupational segregation by gender, supply and demand side explanations). Such beliefs affect women's career patterns by making their labour force participation more discontinuous and fragmented than men's.

Unlike women, most men are not responsible for the physical care of children or household management, are domestically serviced by women, and are therefore free to pursue full-time paid employment. Most women, on the other hand, can expect to be excluded from paid employment at some stage, often later to struggle with the triple burden of child care (and caring for elderly or infirm family members), domestic labour and paid employment (Lister 1993, 4).

Because their roles as primary carers in the family often interrupt paid employment or are undertaken at the expense of more lucrative careers in the paid labour force, women's earning potential tends to be lower than men's. Women's incomes also tend to be significantly less than men's due to the occupational segregation of labour. In a social security system in which entitlement is based on contributions, however, the link between the marketplace and social rights is long-term. Benefits such as pensions are based on employment history and are therefore correspondingly smaller for women, whose employment may be discontinuous, leaving many women to face poverty in old age (Lister 1993, 8). In addition, women are not equal contributors to the financial upkeep of the social welfare system.

Private vs. public dependency

Private economic dependency can significantly shape women's relationship to citizenship. Once married, women often lack control over how resources enter the household, and how they are allocated and consumed within it. Economic dependence on a partner, who

may arbitrarily decide how his income is spent, can affect power relationships within the family. In addition, when measuring income the social security system conflates women with men in a single unit called 'the family', obscuring the degree of poverty women and children face when the male does not share his income fairly. Women, who often have no enforceable rights to their partners' income, are then deemed ineligible to receive benefits if the 'family' income appears sufficient (Lister 1990, 450). As Phillips notes:

> [W]hen...men presume the authority to take major decisions because they bring in the money on which the household survives, there are strong resonances of what is a classic argument for democracy. Income and wealth should be entirely irrelevant; each individual should have an equal voice (Phillips 1991, 110).

Economic dependency can also create a sense of obligation towards the economic provider and how the money is spent. As Lister argues, "the lack of security, rights and autonomy involved in a personal relationship of economic dependency and the sense of deference it can create are corrosive of any notion of citizenship rights" (1993, 6). In a social system where citizenship is linked to paid employment, the economic dependence of women on their male partners persistently undermines their access to citizenship.

The welfare state is based on the premise that everyone contributes and everyone benefits (Lister 1990, 459), and thus paid employment is recognized as the 'legitimate' entry point into the social welfare system. When women contribute their time to raise families, care for the sick and elderly, and maintain a household, but do not contribute financially to the system through waged labour, the pressing question of women's entitlement to social benefits is raised:

> Is being a carer compatible with being a full citizen? If not, then what should change? Should women only be entitled to citizenship if they behave like men and have lifetime commitment to paid employment? And if so, what are the implications for those who need caring? Or should the rules of the welfare system be changed so that paid employment is not the only or main route to access to decent support in old age? (Walby 1994, 386).

Walby's concerns echo what Pateman has dubbed 'Wollstonecraft's dilemma'. In the nineteenth century, feminist Mary Wollstonecraft argued that women's work as mothers, just as their husbands' paid work, is central to their citizenship. The dilemma for citizenship is whether women should be granted citizenship in a gender neutral manner, with the same expectations and

requirements as men, or whether women's different societal role entitles them to express their citizenship differently than men (Pateman 1989, 196-197).

William Beveridge, 'father' of the contemporary British welfare state, was one of the first politicians to address the effect of women's economic dependence on their status as citizens. In 1942, The Beveridge Report officially recognized the value of women's unpaid work, stating that "the great majority of married women must be regarded as occupied in work which is vital though unpaid, without which their husbands could not do their paid work and without which the nation could not continue" (Beveridge 1942, 49). With the introduction of family allowances, women were given important recognition as independent members of the state (Pateman 1989, 199), but were only marginally alleviated from their economic dependence on men.

Nevertheless, the glaring contradiction remains: as long as economic independence is one of the main criteria for citizenship, because of the operation of the socio-economic system countless women remain virtually cut off from access to full citizenship. As Right wing governments reduce funding to the welfare state and the elderly, the disabled, and the sick increasingly rely on their families for home care, this responsibility falls more and more upon women, once again reducing their access to waged labour.

Charity and volunteerism

Women's relationship to the labour market also affects the other social obligations of citizenship identified by the Right: donating to charity, and volunteerism. While the Right lobbies for reduced taxes and the voluntary contribution of tax breaks to charity, women, who earn less than men, are in less of a position to benefit from these tax breaks, and therefore to pass these breaks on through charitable donations. In addition, only unpaid work performed in the

public sector is recognized as 'volunteer work', rendering the unpaid work of millions of women who care for aging parents and ailing family members invisible (Lister 1990, 455; Kearns 1995; Walby 1994, 386). Thus, despite the untold hours women spend caring for others, they remain in a position where they can be accused of either not contributing to the social welfare state or not upholding the 'moral' obligations of citizenship.

In addition to social rights and obligations, citizens of the democratic welfare state possess political rights and obligations, and access to these depend on the nature of the political system and routes to power within it. In the remaining sections of the chapter, I therefore examine the democratic system and its built-in prejudices and suppositions about the role of women; the routes to official power within the system; and women's level of success attaining political leadership.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO THE POLITICAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP

Just as there is no single definition of citizenship, neither is there a single definition of democracy. Rather, democracy is an ever-evolving project, constantly being adapted to the demands and conventions of history and the state. Marshall noted that the right to participate as a member of a political authority or as one of their electors formed the crux of the political rights of citizens (Walby 1994, 180). To determine precisely what these rights are and how they can be achieved, I look at the democratic state, its current form, and its origins.

Contemporary theories of democracy

In 1970, Carole Pateman undertook an evaluation of contemporary theories of democracy in a book entitled *Participation and Democratic Theory*. She reviewed the work of

some of the most prominent twentieth century political theorists, distilling from their writings a 'contemporary theory of democracy' in which she attempted to capture those themes which were most consistently supported among them (Pateman 1970, 14).

Among these authors, Pateman found democracy generally described as a political *method* which is characterized by a set of institutional arrangements at the national level. Political leaders, who were most often members of the elite, competed for votes at periodic, free elections. Because the sanction of loss of office was the primary way to control and ensure the responsiveness of leaders, elections were considered a crucial element of democracy. In turn, voting was considered the primary route to exercising the political rights of citizenship in a representative democracy because, although decisions of leaders could be influenced by active groups during non-election years, most theorists maintained that in order to remain stable the system required high levels of apathy[3]. Political equality within democracies was believed to be found in universal suffrage and the equal opportunity to access channels of influence over leaders. For the majority of citizens, participation was restricted to the choice of leaders, protecting the individual from the arbitrary or private interests of their leaders (Pateman 1970, 14).

Pateman noted that these theoretical treatises on democracy were formulated in the shadow of the Weimar republic where a democratically elected government had committed atrocities against its own people and the world. Extensive public participation in the democratic process was therefore treated as suspect because the second World War had instilled a fear that mass participation collapsed into fascism. Subsequent research appeared to support these fears, as political data gathered between 1950 and 1970 suggested that most citizens, especially those from the lower socio-economic scale, generally lacked an interest in politics and supported widespread, authoritarian attitudes (Pateman 1970, 1-3). Political theorists of the day therefore

---

[3] See Pateman's discussions of Schumpeter, Berelson, Dahl and Sartori (Pateman 1970, 2-11).

cautioned that public participation must not exceed the minimum level necessary to keep the electoral process working (ibid., 14).

Democracy in the late twentieth century

The description of democracy Pateman compiled in 1970 remains closely related to present day democracies. While some writers, like Pateman, argue that true democracy requires more direct participation of its citizens (see Pateman 1970; 1987; 1989), for most citizens formal participation is largely restricted to the minimal level available in a representative democracy: a visit to the polling booth on election day.

A look at contemporary liberal democracies reveals that they have drawn heavily from their eighteenth and nineteenth century predecessors, and some of their historical characteristics continue to dominate the current operation of the democratic process. In order to better understand women's relationships with the democratic welfare state, I therefore look at the history of liberal democracies and women's roles in them.

History of liberal democracy

Anne Phillips marks two moments as critical to the history of contemporary liberal democracies: the origin of the democratic process in the ancient Greek city-states, and the beginning of the liberal tradition in seventeenth century Europe (Phillips 1991). Early Greek democracies were republics, and demanded the active participation of their citizenship[4]. Athenian citizens, for example, met at least forty times each year to debate and resolve major issues of state. At these assemblies, citizens were expected to debate matters of general concern, transcending personal interests as they addressed the needs of the republic (Phillips 1991, 23-24).

---

[4] It is important to note however that citizens were restricted to native-born, male property owners; women, children, slaves, foreigners, etc., were excluded from citizenship.

These grand ideals, however, differed vastly from those of the liberal democratic ideals that replaced them, and which emphasized the individual and his or her interests.

Carole Pateman's essays on feminism and democracy are among the most extensive and most frequently cited among feminists exploring women's status in the democratic process. I therefore use these as a base for my own research. Pateman cites three central figures as responsible for laying the foundations of the liberal democratic state: Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679); John Locke (1632-1704); and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1788). Known as the social contract theorists, each contributed to the revolutionary shift from the long-standing belief that dominant and subordinate relationships were based on 'natural' differences, such as age, sex, strength or ascribed characteristics, to the idea that all individuals are rational beings, born free and equal to one another. This belief would allow for a corresponding shift from the conviction that political authority was ascribed, to one which would reprise the governance style of the Greek city-states, where public leadership was achieved through contract, consent and agreement (Pateman 1989, 18).

Locke and the liberal tradition

Whereas Hobbes laid the groundwork for social contract theory in the seventeenth century, Locke's expansion of the concept in the eighteenth century provided the crucial building blocks. Locke argued that individuals were born with a natural, God-given right to interpret the laws of nature but because humans are fallible, this right should be voluntarily ceded to elected representatives. Civil or political society was justified, he believed, because it was difficult for adults to live together without some form of government. Friction between individuals was inevitable because large inequalities of property and holdings tempted some individuals to use force to get what they desired, thus introducing the possibility of warfare. Neither could monarchs be trusted to arbitrate fairly between competing interests because, like all individuals, they too were affected by the desire to expand their personal resources. Under conditions of

unequal wealth and property, and where a diversity of beliefs and institutions existed, Locke argued that only a political form of government, one that excluded individual private judgments, could be both legitimate and effective (Pateman 1989, 97-99).

Locke proposed that at the time of the formation of civic, or political, society, each individual gave up their right to interpret the laws of nature and passed this right to a representative who would act as an umpire between competing interests, exercising political judgment on behalf of the community (Pateman 1989, 99). In the liberal tradition, it was the consent of the people, and only their consent, which constituted the 'social contract' that gave governments the right to rule. While Hobbes and Locke were not revolutionaries themselves, their articulation that the tacit consent of the citizenry was a necessary prior condition for the power to rule truly was revolutionary (Phillips 1991, 24).

Thus, in democratic states, the regular election of political leaders came to replace monarchic rule. Free elections were held to be critical in protecting citizens from governments that might otherwise be tempted to exceed their allotted roles, were they not held accountable through the ballot box (Phillips 1991, 15). The infrastructure of democracy could therefore provide a fundamental, if limited restraint on the employment of coercive force of government, preventing agencies of power, law, and knowledge from fusing into a single domineering organ (Turner 1990, 191). Or, as nineteenth century political theorists Jeremy Bentham, James and John Stuart Mills agreed, 'the people' were the only way to ensure that the 'sinister interests' of government were kept in check (Pateman 1970, 18).

Characteristics of the liberal democracy

The liberal tradition is characterized by a number of principles. Two closely related tenets are the belief in the priority of the individual, and the separation of the political and private spheres. Unlike the civic republicanism of the early Greek city-states, where political matters were deemed to be those that transcended private interests to address the common good, the liberal democratic tradition maintains that all political issues flow out of private interests

(Phillips 1991, 24). In the liberal democracy, specially chosen representatives act to protect life in the private sphere, arbitrate between conflicting interests and make political decisions to benefit the community (Pateman 1989, 90). Government therefore exists with the consent of its citizenship to mediate between the conflicting interests of private individuals.

The second critical feature of the liberal tradition is the clear division between matters pertaining to the state, that is, those in the 'public' or political sphere, and those pertaining to the private interests of individuals, or in the 'private sphere' (Benn and Gaus 1983; Pateman 1989; Phillips 1991). The delineation of separate spheres is liberalism's way of dealing with the problem of social order inherent in a system where individual judgment and interest may conflict. By dividing social life into two spheres, individuals retained the 'God-given' right to make decisions about issues in the private sphere while ceding that right to the state's representatives in matters where one individual's interests may conflict with another's (Pateman 1989, 101-2). The separation of public and private life therefore designated certain areas as outside government control, sometimes formally by establishing individual rights and freedoms in a written constitution, but more commonly through historically shifting conventions over what can be considered a public concern (Phillips 1991, 10).

In addition, the fully developed liberal state claims to abolish distinctions based on birth, rank, education, occupation, race and sex by declaring them politically irrelevant (Phillips 1991, 15). However, as social and political theorists from Hegel and Marshall to contemporary feminists have shown, and as I shall discuss later in this chapter, declaring something irrelevant, and eliminating its effects on democratic participation can be two entirely different matters.

These historical attributes of liberal democracy would have considerable impress on women's relationship with the state and the public sphere. In addition, the theoretical contributions of yet another architect of the democratic state would also have a significant and enduring impact on women's role in society.

Rousseau, civic republicanism and transcending the state of nature

In the eighteenth century, Rousseau distanced himself from Locke's assumption of the priority of the individual and proposed instead a return to the tenets of early Greek civic republicanism. He argued that in civil life individuals must transcend their ascribed characteristics and private interests, and create a society in which their actions are regulated solely by general or universal rules and laws that apply impersonally to all. Furthermore, he contended, individuals would more readily uphold the rules of civil association if they developed a sense of justice or morality, *internalizing* the rules that ordered their socio-political relations (Pateman 1989, 20-21; emphasis added). In order for civil society to succeed individuals therefore must be capable of abstract thinking and of conceptualizing the general good (Kofman and Peake 1990, 319), as well as developing a sense of justice. As a sense of justice was fundamental to the maintenance of public order, if for any reason some individuals were inherently incapable of developing one the basis of civil society was threatened, and contained a permanent source of disorder (Pateman 1989, 21).

Women's incapacity for participation in the political sphere

It is here that Rousseau positioned women, formally and theoretically at odds with the democratic process, by proclaiming them incapable of the manner of reasoning required of a political citizen (Kofman and Peake 1990; Pateman 1989; Phillips 1991). Rousseau argued that, unlike men, women were incapable of sublimating passion and hence could not develop the sense of justice needed to participate in civil life. For Rousseau, and for many who followed him, women belonged to that category of individuals who were unable to develop a sense of justice and therefore presented a threat to social order. Women's prioritizing of family bonds over the 'public good' epitomized their particularistic dispositions, and stood in stark contrast to the goals of a system in which the demands of private interests were to be subordinated to the public or universal good (Pateman 1989, 21).

Because of their inherent 'disorder', Rousseau argued that women must be barred from civil life, and that the only way to protect the state from the impact of women was through strict segregation of the sexes (Pateman 1989, 24). To accomplish this segregation, women must therefore be contained in the domestic sphere, where the destructive effects of their passion on society could be curtailed. For Rousseau, the separation of the private and public domain was therefore integral to his vision of social life, for it was only when women were safely tucked away in the private sphere that their passions could be contained and rendered harmless to the public order (Lloyd 1993, 78).

A 'good citizen', on the other hand, was imagined to be a father (i.e., a man) whose sense of justice was able to override his love for his family, his desire to protect its interests, and the influence of his impassioned wife; in other words, an individual ruled by his intellect rather than his emotions (Pateman 1989, 25). Ironically, support for Rousseau was not restricted to men, who presumably had the most to gain by accepting his tenets. Following his publication of *Emile* in 1762, Rousseau's ideas of what constituted a good mother and father gained substantial support among women as well (Kofman and Peake 1990, 319).

While Rousseau's interrogation of the conflict between emotion and a detached sense of justice is vital to theories of democracy, by ascribing to one sex the inability to set aside passion, and to the other the sole capacity for requisite powers of reason, he set the stage for a prolonged and continued subjection of women. Civic republicanism, like liberalism and feminism, relied on the notion of individuals as "free and equal beings, emancipated from the ascribed, hierarchical bonds of traditional society" (Pateman 1989, 103). By declaring women an exception, Rousseau was able to remove women from this state of fundamental equality and place them outside its purview.

The early American republic

Combining elements of liberalism and republicanism, the early American state became a nation which rejected ascribed hierarchies of rights and privileges in favour of the equality of the 'citizen' (Marston 1990, 449-452). The strategy of its founding architects was to "build a state around the bourgeois political and economic principles of a community of rational individuals who had a package of formal rights" (ibid., 450). The United States held strongly to liberal ideals of individualism and a government which operated primarily at arms length to ensure economic security, protect its citizens from the infringement or interference of others, and guarantee the opportunity for equal access (ibid., 451). Thus it clung to the liberal ideal of equality, where government existed only with the consent of its citizens, to ensure equal access to pursue their private interests. In the nineteenth century, adopting the liberal tradition of Locke, and the Enlightenment tradition of Rousseau, many in the young nation enthusiastically endorsed the separation of domestic life from the state, sparing both the public sphere from the disruptive passion of women, and women from the disruptive influences of the public sphere.

Limitations of contemporary democracies

As contemporary democracies evolved, they retained some of the principles conceptualized by Locke and Rousseau and, often after considerable struggle, rejected others. The priority of individual interests, though less strongly felt in the Canada, remains an axiomatic feature of the American state. Women, and members of other social minorities, are no longer formally excluded from the democratic process, nor do distinctions based on birth, rank, education, occupation, race and sex formally structure an individual's rank in the socio-political hierarchy. Nonetheless, inequities arising from the tenets of the early democratic form persist, creating limitations within the contemporary state, and several of these are particularly relevant to women's access to the political public sphere.

Liberal universalism

One of the criticisms arising from the liberal democratic tradition pertains to the assertion that all 'men' (later amended to include women) are created equal. Born out of the rejection of ascribed characteristics and hierarchies of dominance, liberal universalism aspired to ignore difference between individuals and social groups[5]. Yet, while the elimination of group difference was an extremely important step in the history of emancipatory politics (Young 1990, 159), differential access to society's social, political and economic resources did not automatically ensue.

Although liberalism promotes the ideal of the rational individual whose particularities are irrelevant (and civic republicanism attempts to rise above difference), it has not escaped serving the interests of the privileged group. As Iris Marion Young observes, "blindness to group difference disadvantages groups whose experience, culture and social capacities are different from the privileged group" (1990, 164). Prior to affirmative action, for example, jobs routinely were awarded to members of the privileged group, leadership positions in business, industry, and government continue to be dominated by members of the privileged group. Thus, despite liberalism's attempts to eliminate social hierarchies, "behind the mask of so-called universal ideals, mechanisms of exclusion have always existed" (Natter 1995, 270).

Many feminists have therefore argued that in order to ensure that the interests of all members of society are served equally, we must continue to recognize difference until it no longer has bearing on an individual's life chances (Mouffe 1995a; Mouffe 1995b; Natter 1995; Young 1990; Phillips 1991; Pateman 1987; Pateman 1989; Lister 1993). Universalism, under the idiomatic guise of serving an inclusive community, in effect overlooks the many sources of disparity and discord in society. Mouffe proposes instead that democracy will always contain antagonisms because there can never be a fully inclusive community in which division and

---

[5] I use Young's definition of social group as "a collection of persons differentiated from at least one other group by cultural forms, practices or ways of life" (Young 1990, 43). These can include those based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, etc.

conflict have disappeared (Natter 1995, 271). Because each of us consists of multiple identities - no one, for example, is 'just' a worker, 'just' a woman, or 'just' black - division and conflict are endemic to social life. Thus conflicting priorities and desires exist even at the individual level and it is therefore unrealistic to imagine they will ever disappear at a societal level.

Although we may have no 'essential' identity, the possibility for communal action nevertheless does exist. In her vision of 'radical democracy', Mouffe proposes the creation of a space in which practices, discourses and institutions that allow for the expression of conflicting interests and values may exist.[6] Here the demands of women, blacks, workers, and gays, as well as numerous other social groups, would not be swept along in the tide of 'the democratic majority' but stand independently on the political agenda (Mouffe 1995a; Mouffe 1995b; Natter 1995).

Likewise women are not a monolithic group. Just as there is no single prototypical woman, neither is there a single group of interests that defines the needs, interests and desires of all women. As Spelman cautions, there is no 'woman's place' unmediated by class, race, ethnicity, religion, and so on. The challenge for feminists is to acknowledge the multiplicity of women's voices and ensure all women's interests are taken into account. Otherwise women in dominant groups are apt to neglect or silence other women, just as they have been neglected and silenced by most political theorists (see Pateman and Shanley 1991, 9). Whenever a woman (or man) enters into public discourse, their voice must be seen as only one among many. Just as no single person can speak for all people, because of the multiplicity of each person's identity, no member of one social group can speak for all members. In a truly participatory democracy, all citizens must therefore be encouraged to speak and each citizen must have an equal opportunity to be heard.

---

[6] Unfortunately Mouffe does not expand on how this can be achieved in practice. (See critique of Mouffe in Kymlicka and Norman, 1994.)

Class disparity

When difference is ignored another important criterion separating the powerful from the less powerful is overlooked: class disparity. Hegel first brought the relationship between class difference and citizenship to theoretical attention in the nineteenth century when he addressed it in terms of a moral dilemma undermining citizenship. He argued that the operation of the capitalist market leaves some citizens impoverished, without the resources for social participation. When individuals are thrown into poverty, they lose the means for self-respect and the means to be recognized as citizens of equal worth (Pateman 1989, 182). As Phillips observes:

> The equal right to vote, for example, does not guarantee equality of influence in political decisions, for the resources we bring to the politics (money, contacts, education, time) disproportionately favour certain groups, while the economic or bureaucratic power of non-elected bodies (private companies being one obvious example, the civil service or executive branch another) is such that major decisions are made on their terms...[As Marx argued,] the fully developed liberal state 'abolishes' distinctions based on birth, rank, education, occupation (and by our own century even distinctions based on race and sex), but only in the sense that it declares them politically irrelevant (Phillips 1991, 15).

As countless women seeking promotions, public office or jobs in male-dominated fields have discovered through the years, simply declaring difference irrelevant does not necessarily make it so. The fundamental inequalities of a class society, more specifically the economic distance between its citizens, falls beyond the political scope of a liberal democracy. The liberal tradition deliberately set out to ignore differences in order to avoid the preferential treatment of individuals which had characterized earlier monarchic regimes. In choosing to ignore differences that privilege, the varying needs and abilities and absolute differences in social and economic positions, by extension, also had to be ignored (Mitchell 1987, 28-29). However, distinctions that advantaged the privileged class were not eliminated, a fact which has led many to observe that equality in a capitalist society can only be "equality under the law". As Tawney

argued in 1929, "freedom of privilege must be controlled: freedom within a class society means freedom for one class to exploit another" (cited in Mitchell 1987, 41).[7]

The liberal separation of the public and private

Perhaps the single most important legacy of the liberal and Enlightenment traditions, in terms of its effect on the lives of women, has been the separation of the private and the public spheres. As I discussed in the previous chapter, the strong identification of women with the private, domestic sphere and men with the public economic and political sphere has severely restricted women's social, economic and political opportunities. While women certainly have more mobility in these areas today than in the nineteenth century, lingering attitudes about a 'woman's place', her role in caring for children, her spouse and the household, continue to influence the organization of our cities and homes. As Phillips observes, as long as the sexual division of labour can result in domestic tyranny and has direct consequences on the nature and degree of women's political involvement, it must be regarded as a political, as well as social, issue (Phillips 1991, 157).

Redefining the political

Nevertheless, the relationship between the public and private spheres is not carved in stone, as an examination at the state and individual level reveals. Prevailing political philosophy and public temperament dictate whether governments will be predominantly laissez-faire,

---

[7] The liberal emphasis on the individual also remains fundamentally contradictory to the notion of the 'public good'. Advocates of a more participatory democracy or of civic republicanism therefore find the limitations on political participation, public spiritedness and civic action of liberal democracy particularly repugnant. Liberalism is accused of reducing political participation to passive acquiescence, and the scope of the political from general concerns to parochial, private interests (see Mouffe 1995a; Phillips 1991; 48). To recover a notion of the 'public good', Benn and Gaus attempt to theorize two parallel strains liberalism, one focusing on individual, the other on public, interests (see Benn and Gaus 1983, Chap. 1).

providing only a cursory presence in economic and social life, or more heavily involved, as in the case of the welfare state, where state jurisdiction may extend into the economy and even into private life. At the individual level, feminists have vigorously criticized the division between public and private and its effects on women's social, economic and political opportunities. The public/private divide is therefore not immutable, and as the next section will reveal, ongoing challenges to the boundaries of the political continue to blur the distinction between public and private.

The democratic welfare state

Boundaries between the state and private interests have proven increasingly permeable in the twentieth century. This is particularly evident in the expansion of the welfare state, which has eroded distinctions between public or state activity and private economic activity. The expanding reach of the state into private enterprise has come, in part, from the unanticipated growth in the size and scope of corporations. In classical liberal theory, no single producer or consumer could become so large that they could have a significant impact on the marketplace (Benn and Gaus 1983, 53). In the twentieth century, however, some private corporations have begun to resemble government in the scope of their organization, power, and scale (Young 1990, 67). Today, decisions made by a single large corporation, for example in the auto industry, can affect a whole nation's economy. Because individual corporations can have such a far-reaching impact, governments have become increasingly involved in economic coordination in fields ranging from transportation and communication to research and development, and education and training (ibid., 67).

Changing political values have prompted increasing government intervention in all areas of social life. Young locates an additional two aspects of the democratic welfare state which are absent from laissez-faire liberal capitalism. First, the state is held to have an obligation to meet the needs of its citizens when other mechanisms fail. As T.H. Marshall identified in the social

rights of citizenship, the contributions of the welfare state range from unemployment insurance and social security to pensions and health insurance. Second, the state embodies formal equality and procedurealism rather than an arbitrary, personalized form of authority characteristic of absolute monarchies (Young 1990, 67-69).[8]

The personal is the political

Similarly, the definition of personal, domestic issues has also become politicized. Pulling back its cloak of respectability, feminists exposed the family as a breeding ground for domestic tyranny, challenging the notion that what goes on in 'private' is a solely private concern and making the case for democratizing the relationships and decisions made in the home (Phillips 1991, 115-116).

From as early as the nineteenth century, feminists challenged the professed equality of liberalism, arguing that the public/private dichotomy obscured the subjection of women to men within an apparently universal, egalitarian, and individualist order (Pateman 1987, 105). In 1869, John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* charged that the relationship between husbands and wives was an "unjustified and unjustifiable" exception to the liberal principles of individual freedom and equality, free choice, equality of opportunity and allocation of positions by merit, and denounced conjugal relations as an enduring example of the "primitive state of slavery" (Pateman 1987, 115; Pateman 1989, 214-215).

---

[8] Young also maintains that the bureaucratization characteristic of government was conceived as a way to eliminate domination, especially class domination. Decisions could be analyzed not by whether they were right or just, but whether they were legally valid, which allowed for the universalization and standardization of social and corporate activity. However, the expansion of bureaucracies ultimately resulted in a new kind of domination — that of workers, clients and consumers who were subject to rules made by, and for the convenience of, the provider or agency. Thus, since the 1960s, new social movements, from the anti-nuclear power movement to the environmental movement, have risen to challenge the domination and colonization of unresponsive governmental bureaucracies (Young 1990, 76-82).

In the twentieth century, second wave feminists adopted the slogan 'the personal is the political' in order to broaden the scope of the political. Anne Phillips traces the origins of this axiom to the civil rights movement of the 1960s where, despite common liberatory ideals, female activists found their labour was being exploited by their male colleagues, and their concerns sneered at and trivialized. In this behaviour female activists recognized a pattern that mirrored the interaction between women and men at home and in the workplace. No longer willing to accept treatment as 'second class citizens', feminists sought to politicize the subjection that women had traditionally experienced in private (Phillips 1991, 93-112).

As feminists began to reconceptualize the distinction between the public and private, 'the personal is political' laid claim to a continuum that stretched across what previously had been considered the trivial and mundane to 'grand politics' (Phillips 1991, 112). Daily life became politicized, and women's demands for equality with men in education, pay and child care, as well as demands for control over their bodies through contraception and abortion, became part of the political arena (Kofman and Peake 1990, 316). Feminist scholars, in turn, began to study how personal circumstances were structured by public factors, from laws about spousal rape and abortion to women's status as wives, and from policies on child care and the allocation of welfare benefits to the sexual division of labour in the household and the workplace (Pateman 1987, 117). In this way, 'the personal is the political' drew attention to the interdependence between personal and public life.

Broadening the political

Acknowledgment of the changing boundaries of the political, brought about by the welfare state and perhaps to some degree by feminist critiques, is evident in the continued efforts to define and quantify the political. Some contemporary theorists have responded by broadening the political to include relations of power at any level of society, from small groups, including families, to formal government. Dahl, for example, finds a political system in "'any persistent

pattern of human relationships that involves, to a significant extent, power, rule and authority'" (cited in Pateman 1989, 105). Kofman and Peake note that the political can take place wherever behaviour is shaped and altered by human decision and action. Like Held, they find that politics "is manifested in the activities of cooperation, negotiation and struggle over the use, production and distribution of resources" (Kofman and Peake 1990, 315). Natter, in turn, finds the political in the dimension of antagonism that is always present in social relations (Natter 1995, 271).

A gendered approach to democracy therefore stresses domestic inequalities as part of what balances out each person's political weight: as long as a sexual division of labour exists it should be part of the political debate. Michael Walzer proposed that liberalism is a "world of walls", and between every sphere these walls should exist, so that one's success in commerce should not carry any particular power in politics, and so on (see Phillips 1991, 158). The problem for women has been that their ascription to the domestic sphere has extended outside the family to impede their access to employment, education, and political power.

Access to public office is the highest plane of formal political participation to which most citizens can aspire, and to which all citizens are theoretically equally eligible. In practice, however, access is not truly equal. Attitudes towards women, their roles in the domestic sphere, and their capacity to participate in the political realm lay at their early exclusion from suffrage. In the twentieth century, after decades of lobbying, in 1917 Canadian women and in 1920 American women were finally granted the right to vote. However, long-standing prejudices are much more slow to change and, even though women are now formally eligible to vote and hold public office, on the cusp of the twenty-first century the overwhelming majority of government positions remain in male hands.

CONSTRAINTS TO WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

In Canada and the United States, as in most representational democracies, women's record of participation in public office has been discouraging. In 1989, women constituted twenty-seven percent of the world's representative assemblies, up a mere 1.5 percent from 1972 (Brodie and Chandler 1991, 8). With the exception of Nordic countries, however, women's levels of representation range between two percent to ten percent worldwide (Phillips 1991, 61).

Levels of female participation

Between 1920 and 1970, less than one percent of elected federal or provincial officials in Canada were women, continuing the pre-suffrage tradition in which the legislation of social, economic and political policy an exclusively male prerogative (Brodie and Chandler 1991, 4). Between 1972 and 1988, the number of female candidates increased from sixteen to nineteen percent and female representatives in the House of Commons rose from six to nine percent (ibid., 5). In 1993, the number of female Members of Parliament inched up to 13.2 percent, or thirty-nine women (Bashevkin 1994, 150).

In the United States, figures are similar, if somewhat lower. Only ten percent or forty-seven of the 485 members of Congress, and six of the 100 senators, are women. The numbers of women in state offices are slightly better: sixteen percent of mayors and fourteen percent of other municipal officers are women (Nelson and Carver 1994, 745).

That the nominal majority of the population consistently represents less than fifteen percent of elected officials, and therefore are virtually excluded from power, calls into question the legitimacy of our democratic institutions and biases of our electoral systems (Brodie and Chandler 1991, 9; Megyery 1991, xvii). This would not matter if, as our forefathers argued prior to female suffrage, women's interests were adequately represented by their husbands, fathers and

brothers. However, as recent studies of gender-based voting patterns in North America demonstrate, women and men *do* have different political priorities.

Voting priorities: women vs. men

In the late 1970s, a 'gender gap' was beginning to form at the polling booth as women showed evidence of voting as a cohesive bloc. In the US, for example, eight percent fewer women than men voted for Reagan, and women were less likely than men to support Reagan's neoconservatism or his rejection of the Equal Rights Amendment (Brodie and Chandler 1991, 23). American women also voted more frequently for social spending, equal rights, government regulation, and less often for military spending (Nelson and Carver 1994, 746-747).

In a survey conducted during the 1988 federal election, slightly less than fifty percent of Canadian women said they had been influenced by the women's movement. This figure is important because women who identify with feminist issues differ from men, and other women, on questions of reproductive choice, militarism and government support for the poor, ethnic minorities, and single parents (Brodie and Chandler, 23-24).

If women demonstrate differing voting priorities than men, why are there not more women in government positions? This question has been approached from a number of angles, and in the remainder of the chapter I examine some of these discussions, including how barriers to formal participation are identified by female candidates; how attitudes of women towards formal political participation affect their decision to participate; and how political socialization of girls and boys may affect later inclinations among women and men to run for political office.

Constraints identified by female candidates

Female candidates identify a number of impediments to running for political office. Of these, three of the key ones are: obtaining financing; obtaining competitive ridings; and the role of family responsibilities.

By far the largest hurdle identified by female candidates in both Canada and the United States was the ability to procure campaign financing (Brodie and Chandler 1991; Nelson and Carver 1994). The reasons for this appear to be directly related to women's roles in the gendered division of labour. Seventy-five percent of female MPs elected in the 1988 Canadian federal election indicated that female candidates had special financial burdens when seeking elections, ranging from the costs of child care and housekeeping to buying clothes for the campaign. In addition, they maintained women have more difficulty raising funds because they are more likely to have lower paying jobs, less financial security, and more difficulty obtaining bank loans than male candidates, as well as less access to business contacts, corporate donors and money networks (Brodie and Chandler 1991, 46).

Female candidates in the US regularly report that parties are more likely to fund male candidates. In addition, a major source campaign funding comes from political action committees (PACs) - organized special interest groups that raise funds and back sympathetic candidates.[9] PACs are less likely to fund female than male challengers, though equally likely to fund male or female incumbents (Nelson and Carver 1994, 746).

Even if a female candidate makes it past the first hurdle and lines up campaign funding, she is much less likely to find herself running in a competitive riding. Between 1947 and 1973, for example, sixty-three percent of Canadian women candidates were nominated in ridings that had lost in at least five consecutive elections (Brodie and Chandler 1991, 39). American women

---

[9] Support from PACs is increasingly important for candidates, as the number of PACs has risen from 860 in 1974 to 4000 in 1988. In the 1988 election alone, PACs financed at least half of the $151 million campaign dollars spent on attaining House seats, funding 210 of the 435 winning candidates (Nelson and Carver 1994, 740).

face the same hurdles when running for office, often being placed in unwinnable ridings or, if they are lucky, in safely liberal ones (Nelson and Carver 1994, 746).

Finally, potential female candidates, unlike men, tend to delay entry into politics until their children are grown (Brodie and Chandler 1991, 34; Bashevkin 1994, 149; Rinehart 1992, 26). Of the women elected in the 1988 Canadian federal election, for example, fifteen percent were under age forty, and few had children.[10] Delaying candidacy can significantly affect a woman's long term political prospects because, as many politicians have discovered, to get to the top in politics one has to start early (Brodie and Chandler 1991, 34).

Women's attitudes toward running for political office

Sylvia Bashevkin argues that many women are ambivalent about running for public office, especially in English Canada, because of a long-standing strategic dilemma between whether political independence or conventional partisanship best serves women's interests (Bashevkin 1994, 145). She traces the origins of this dilemma, in part, to leading suffrage groups who believed women could bring the purity of their private domain into the public world of politics. When women were enfranchised, new women voters were encouraged to "avoid the corrupting, immoral political organization and to adopt an independent, non-partisan route to national influence" (ibid., 146). The desire to retain the organizational autonomy and influence of independent feminist groups, Bashevkin maintains, continues to undermine their decision to join partisan politics. However, in a parliamentary system where conventional partisanship is more likely to ensure political influence and legislative success, such a strategy can limit women's access to political power.

---

[10] In the same post-election survey of successful female MPs, the majority of women indicated that family responsibilities were not an important obstacle in their election bid. However, few of these women had children (Brodie and Chandler 1991, 44). As the survey can provide no indication of how family responsibilities affected unsuccessful female candidates, nor begin to address how family responsibilities may hold back other women from even contemplating running for office, the value of this information is questionable.

The political socialization of women and men may also play a significant role in the dearth of female elected officials. Sue Tolleson Rinehart analyzed a number of studies undertaken from the late 1960s to the late 1980s, in which levels of female political involvement from adolescence to adulthood were examined. The studies indicated that until grade twelve, girls demonstrate more internal political competence than boys in both awareness of the 'democratic rules of the game' and a sense of civic obligation, and are twice as likely as boys to be simultaneously involved in school, community and political affairs. Despite this internal political awareness, their political ambitions, once rivaling boys, fell dramatically during adolescence. By the time they reach college, women and men are equally unlikely to consider women's political candidacy favourably. As a simulated election in 1984 revealed, physically attractive female candidates performed worse, while physically attractive male candidates fared much better among student voters, suggesting that for women, the social environment can be inhospitable to one's attempts to be political (Rinehart 1992, 23).

Rinehart searched for evidence of structural barriers that may be at the root of this phenomenon. She examined a series of studies of adult women and found that the effects of structural barriers appeared strongest among less educated, lower income women. For example, a study of East Texas women in 1985 indicated that they were "too tired, too financially pressed, and too skeptical to expend their limited energy on doubtful political returns" unless the issues involved directly affected their families (Rinehart 1992, 23).

Even among the most active and committed women, political involvement tends to remain in the background, and most women find it difficult to even imagine running for office (Rinehart 1992, 26). Rinehart proposed that although partly an outcome of internalized gender role socialization, the reluctance to hold office is more likely the result of externalized impediments, including cultural expectations. Societal values which dictate that women assume the major responsibility for child care and household management can deter all but the most determined women from seeking public office. Studies indicate that even among more affluent,

better educated women, high levels of political involvement decline rapidly as the degree of

disruption to family life increases. For example, a 1981 study showed that female office holders

were much more likely to rate spousal support and the ages of children as very important factors

in their decision to run for office (Rinehart 1992, 26). Such sentiments do not differ greatly from

those expressed by suffragist Hannah Mitchell, who noted nearly a century ago how husbands

can actually impede women's participation in politics:

> No cause can be won between dinner and tea, and most of us who were married had to
> work with one hand tied behind us, so to speak...domestic unhappiness, the price many
> of us paid for our opinions and activities, was a very bitter thing (cited in Lister 1993,
> 10).

In social systems where women are expected to be politically active, however, somehow society

is able to accommodate them:

> [I]ndividual expectations are inseparable from society's: women are held accountable their
> low ambition, when they may be doing no more than experiencing a very human reaction to
> blocked opportunities...When, on the other hand, society *expects* female political actors, as in
> places where there is a tradition of women holding office, it continues to *have* political actors
> (Rinehart 1992, 26-27; emphasis in original).

Attitudes towards women in politics

It would appear from currently available research, that society's acceptance of female

political leaders may leave room for optimism. In 1921, when Agnes MacPhail became

Canada's first female MP, she was considered a "freak" (Bashevkin 1994, 146). More recent

studies, however, paint female candidacy in a better light. Nelson and Carver, for example,

found evidence that the public see women as "upright outsiders who can clean up government",

echoing the sentiment of early suffrage groups who believed in the purifying potential of female

politicians (Nelson and Carver 1994, 746). Although similar studies are not available in Canada,

studies in the United States, Australia and Britain indicate that there is no electoral risk in

running female candidates, and if given winnable ridings women would fare as well as male

candidates. In fact, American voters gave women higher grades than their male counterparts for

honesty, intelligence and understanding of voters needs (Brodie and Chandler 1991, 33). Thus

there seems to be little evidence that the will of the voters creates a tangible barrier to formal female political participation.

Women's access to citizenship and political participation remains shadowed by the public/private dichotomy which tempers all social, economic and political relations in North American society. In addition to the formal routes to democratic participation, Habermas's mediated public sphere must also be examined. In my final chapter I therefore look at women and the media: their levels of participation as contributors in the media production process, as subjects of both entertainment and news media, and as interlocutors in the mediated debate of the public sphere.

CHAPTER 4:

WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

INTRODUCTION

> Citizens behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion - that is, with the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and publish their opinions - about matters of general interest. In a large public body this kind of communication requires specific means for transmitting information and influencing those who receive it. Today newspapers and magazines, radio and television are the media of the public sphere (Habermas 1974, 49).

> In fully democratic systems...everything is in perpetual motion. Citizens are...catapulted by their liberty into a state of permanent unease. There is a difference, openness and constant competition among power groups to produce and to control the definition of reality. Hence, there is always an abundance of information flows....All this is unavoidable and proper. For the chief and unsurpassed advantage of democracy is not that it guarantees peace and quiet and good decisions, but that it offers citizens the right to judge (and to reconsider their judgements about) the quality of those decisions. Democracy is rule by publics who make and remake judgements in public (Keane 1992, 129).

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas (1991) identified the discursive arena of the public sphere as fundamental to the process of democracy. He believed that issues of concern identified and debated by citizens in the public sphere could then be reflected in governmental policy and legislation. Because the notion that the rule of government is legitimated by citizens is a basic tenet of democracy, the role of the public sphere became paramount to it.

In large, complex societies the media's role in democracy is fundamental for two reasons: public debate cannot take place face-to-face, and citizens must have access to information and issues beyond their immediate environment. In addition to providing a forum for public discussion, the media therefore play a critical role in the circulation of information and ideas. Because of the importance of the media's dual roles, freedom of the press has become a cornerstone of democracy and part of a package of related basic rights - which also include

freedom of opinion and speech, and freedom of assembly and association - that citizens can

employ in scrutinizing and challenging government (Habermas 1991, 83). As Nicholas Garnham

notes:

> The rights and duties of a citizen are in large part defined in terms of freedom of assembly and freedom to impart and receive information. Without such freedoms it would be impossible for citizens to possess the knowledge of the views of others necessary to reach agreements between themselves, whether consensual or majoritarian, as to either social means or ends; to possess knowledge of the actions of those to whom executive responsibilities are delegated so as to make them accountable; to possess knowledge of the external environment necessary to arrive at appropriate judgement of both personal and societal interests (Garnham 1991, 364).

In an effort to uphold their role in the democratic process, the media construct

professional codes of ethics to guide their approach to deciding what will be defined as news,

and to ensure truth and accuracy in journalism. In the United States, two of the most prominent

of these are the American Society of Newspaper Editors' (ASNE) *Canons of Journalists* and the

Society of Professional Journalists' (SPJ) *Code of Ethics*. Laid out in 1923 and modified in

1975, the *Canons of Journalists* established the first set of guidelines for journalistic

responsibility, freedom of the press, independence, sincerity, truthfulness and accuracy,

impartiality, fair play and decency (Beasley 1997; Lorimer 1994). In 1987, the SPJ *Code of*

Ethics delineated six similar principles under the headings of truth, comprehensiveness, privacy,

loyalty, confidence and freedom, and are now considered to be the United States' most widely

invoked journalistic standards (Beasley 1997, 235-236).

Although clearly a priority, the aim of such codes was not solely to ensure journalistic

integrity. In addition, professional codes acknowledged the importance of the media in

providing a public forum for the exercise of democratic freedom of speech. The ASNE *Canons*,

for example, explicitly noted that the media as "'agencies of mass communications are carriers of

public discussion and information, acting on their constitutional mandate and freedom to learn

and report the facts'" (cited in Lorimer 1994, 123). The problem for the representation of

women's concerns and issues, has been how the media decide what constitutes news, and which facts they choose to report.

Media coverage is one of the few avenues in which members of society, especially those who are marginalized, can bring their issues and concerns to widespread public attention. The media, in turn, can help set social, political, and economic agendas by influencing the manner in which issues and events are perceived, either legitimizing them through positive coverage, or undermining their validity through negative coverage or by ignoring them altogether (Coffey 1991, 25). Because of this power to manipulate public perception, feminists have focused considerable attention on the portrayal of women in the media and the coverage of women's achievements and concerns.

In examining women's relationship with the media, feminist researchers have found that the patriarchal culture that confined women to the private sphere likewise impedes their access to the mediated public sphere (Fraser 1992; McLaughlin 1998; van Zoonen 1994; Rakow and Kranich 1991). The effects of this limited access on women's role in democratic participation are twofold. First, it has limited women's participation in the public sphere. Women have not been equal participants in public debate because they have not had access to a forum in which they can present their views. Second, the content of the existing debate in the public sphere has perpetuated the marginalization of women and their concerns. Representation of women in the media has tended to reinforce the association of women with the private sphere, often "symbolically denigrating women by portraying them as incompetent, inferior and always subservient to men" (van Zoonen 1994, 16).

In 1963, Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, a ground-breaking work which critiqued the portrayal of women in the media, and one which many feminists believe triggered the beginning of second wave feminism (Bradley 1998; Farrell 1998; van Zoonen 1994). The impact of *The Feminine Mystique* was immediate and persuasive, inspiring a series of studies and reports on how the representation of women in mainstream media, especially women's

magazines, perpetuated stereotyped images of women as housewives, mothers and brainless consumers (Cantor 1988; Farrell 1998). In a response that illustrates the importance of the media in the public sphere, the furor caused by *The Feminine Mystique* also prompted government reaction. Shortly after its publication, a President's Commission on the Status of Women was released in the United States in which the mass media was criticized for "'projecting, intentionally or unintentionally, an image of women that contains old myths, misconceptions and even distortions of true images'" (cited in Cantor 1988, 77).

News and entertainment media have been equally culpable in the sexually stereotyped portrayal of women. The insidious nature of these portrayals has haunted feminists, who argue that portraying women as ineffectual outside of privatized roles such as mother, housewife, and sexual object, has encouraged the treatment of women as second class citizens and seriously constrained women's integration into the public sphere of government and business (Trimble 1991, 327).

In this chapter, I look at women's level of participation in the media as media workers, subjects of media attention, and participants in media discourse, as well as how the representation of women in the media works to promote or undermine their legitimacy as equal participants in a democracy. Mediated images constitute a crucial element in reproducing the dominant social order. Access to the media in the production of these images, as well as to the representation of one's social group, can be imperative in establishing its social legitimacy. I therefore begin with one of the key elements in feminist critiques of the media: the stereotypical representation of women.

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE MEDIA

Gender stereotyping

Stereotypes are socially constructed, mental 'pigeon-holes' that allow us to sort through the seemingly endless array of information with which we are confronted in our daily lives (Fowler 1991, 17). In the absence of detailed knowledge of new people, ideas, and events, stereotypes enable us to categorize new information and experiences by comparing them to existing paradigms, and thus make our world more comprehensible. The media, in turn, may also utilize stereotypes in their presentation of information: sometimes unwittingly, sometimes when characters or events are not deemed important enough to warrant detailed, nuanced examination or treatment.

Linda Trimble describes gender stereotypes as "rigid and fixed generalizations based on the assumption that males and females, by virtue of their sex, possess distinct psychological traits and characteristics" which in broadcast media "are manifested in the differing portrayals of women and men in terms of appearance, abilities, personality, power, occupation and status" (Trimble 1990, 327). Indiscriminate use of stereotypes can confine people, especially members of marginalized groups, into one-dimensional roles or caricatures, minimizing their role in, and importance to, society. Conversely, stereotyped portrayals of (white) males can serve to reinforce their dominant role in society.

Feminist studies conducted between the mid-1950s and the late 1980s demonstrated that gender stereotypes employed in television programs around the world were remarkably similar. Female characters were found to be focused on the family; most were married with children, and were defined by their relationship to male characters such as husbands, sons, bosses, fathers or some other man (van Zoonen 1994, 17). Before the 1970s, female characters rarely worked outside the home, and if they did, it was in 'pink collar' jobs. They were pleasant to look at and pleasant to be with. They were nurturers, commonly portrayed as passive, submissive, indecisive, dependent, concerned, emotionally volatile, and relatively powerless (Duke 1996;

Trimble 1990; van Zoonen 1994). Women of colour were subject to additional stereotypes ranging from the black woman as the 'loud but lovable mammy' to the overpowering black matriarch or the sexually insatiable black temptress (van Zoonen 1994).

Male characters, on the other hand, far outnumbered female characters: in 1987 by a ratio of two to one (Duke 1996, 233). They held the power, and the jobs: ninety percent of educated, professional characters on television were male. Male characters were also rational; they made decisions, at work and at home; they were active and authoritative; and were strong, powerful, independent, career-focused professionals (Duke 1996, 233; Trimble 1990).

Prevailing media stereotypes therefore positioned women in subordinate social roles and reinforced the image of men as the wielders of power in society. One of the problems arising from the media's use of gender stereotypes, is that the media play an integral role in the reproduction of dominant social values or hegemony. The persistent use of gender stereotypes may therefore reinforce attitudes and expectations towards women's abilities and their roles in a democratic society.

The media and hegemony

The concept of hegemony is used in cultural studies to describe how common culture and shared meanings are derived and reproduced in society. Current usage of the term follows the pre-World War II writings of Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who used hegemony to describe the complex process by which the ideology of the ruling class is subtly diffused throughout society (Eley 1992; Lewis 1992; van Zoonen 1994).

Gramsci argued that through the use of intermediaries such as intellectuals and religious leaders the dominant class achieves hegemony by repeatedly demonstrating its moral and intellectual superiority. Gradually, the ideology of the ruling class comes to be accepted as 'common sense', and constraints created by the hegemonic order are perceived to be part of the

natural limitations of living, not the outcome of a particular cultural, economic and political ideology. By the time this state is reached, the hegemonic order has become so pervasive that it invisibly structures all social relations, from taste and customs to morality and religious and political consciousness (Eley 1992, 321-325).

Hegemony is believed to inform social consciousness to such an extent that a single concept of reality dominates society (Eley 1992, 323). Nevertheless, because of economic and cultural pluralism of societies, the dominance of the ruling class is never complete. Rather, it faces constant challenge from subordinate classes attempting to impose their ideas and agendas onto the dominant social order, thus creating dissenting counter-discourses. Hegemony must therefore be constantly defended, won over and over again in an atmosphere of the ever-fluctuating cultural, economic and political strengths of subordinate classes which continually break down and transform it (Eley 1992, 323; Lewis 1992; van Zoonen 1994).

One of the long-standing manifestations of the current hegemonic order is the association of women with the private sphere of the home, and men with the public world of industry, commerce and politics. Nancy Fraser (1992) dates this aspect of hegemony back to the emerging bourgeois public sphere, where new gender norms which promoted feminine domesticity and the sharp separation of the public and private spheres were among the key signifiers that distinguished the bourgeoisie from higher and lower social strata (Fraser 1992, 114-115). The growing power of bourgeoisie to set social standards is evidenced in the fact that these markers of distinction later became hegemonic. As the primary site for the construction and expression of public will, the bourgeois public sphere therefore became a place in which social meanings were "created, circulated, contested and reconstructed" (Fraser 1995a, 287), and thus the site for the reproduction, and contestation, of hegemony.

In contemporary society, the public sphere rests largely with the media and thus the media are the primary site for the creation of hegemony (Habermas 1991; van Zoonen 1994; Fraser 1995; McLaughlin 1993). The reception of *The Feminine Mystique*, and the intense

scrutiny of the media's representation of women that it prompted, may be seen as testament to the power of hegemony. Friedan's book, and the feminist studies it inspired, shook many women and men out of their unwitting acceptance of hegemony by demonstrating that women's subservience to men and their confinement to the private sphere was not immutable but a social role imposed on women by an ideology which could be contested. Friedan, however, was not the first feminist to attack the women's status in the hegemonic order. Women have balked at their restriction to domesticity since at least the nineteenth century (Ryan 1990; Stansell 1987), and suffragists had launched their own relatively successful assaults in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But it was not until Friedan systematically exposed the demeaning representation of women in the media that the 'common sense' expectation of differential roles for women and men faced its most sustained and widespread challenge to date.

Feminists allege that the media's use of stereotyped portrayals of women and men reinforce social attitudes that confine women to the domestic sphere. These critiques are premised on the belief that gender stereotypes are incorporated into a lifelong process of socialization. Through the use of "symbolic rewards and punishment for different kinds of behaviour", socialization equips individuals with a repertoire of appropriate behaviours for given situations, and teaches them the kinds of behaviours that are expected to accompany particular social roles and statuses in society (van Zoonen 1994, 34).

Socialization can therefore be seen as the mechanism by which society's norms and values are reproduced, and thus an instrument for perpetuating hegemony. Liesbet van Zoonen (1994) maintains that the media are the main instruments in conveying stereotypical, patriarchal and hegemonic values about women and femininity. The media "present capitalist and patriarchal order as 'normal', obscuring its ideological nature and translating it into 'common sense'", and therefore also play a crucial role in reinforcing social and economic relations through their representation of male and female roles (ibid., 24).

Challenging the notion of hegemony

While the concept of hegemony can be used to describe the dominant tendencies and predilections of a society, the idea that power and, by extension, hegemony can be centralized in a single social stratum has come under increasing attack in recent years. Lyotard, for example, claims that power is "dispersed across diverse institutions and discourses, including mass media" (in Livingstone and Lunt 1994, 24). Among these diverse discourses are the counter-discourses of subordinate groups. Thus the reproduction of hegemony is achieved only to the extent that subordinate classes willingly accept and embrace its precepts.

Media analysts have also begun to question the actual extent to which the media is able to influence societal norms. In many early media theories, audiences were portrayed as passive recipients of the media's hegemonic representations of reality, accepting these representations as if they were the truth. Stuart Hall, for example, argued that the apparent objectivity and realism of television tends to naturalize its discourse, causing it to appear as an unmediated representation of reality. While television images may in principle be open to multiple interpretations, in practice, audience interpretations are structured and thus limited by "the dominant cultural order" (cited in Barry 1993, 489). van Zoonen argues that psychoanalytic and ideological theories of the media similarly depicted female audiences as passive, apparently immersed in and unable to recognize the ideological workings of patriarchal and capitalist hegemony (van Zoonen 1994, 105).

Recent media theories, on the other hand, have begun to emphasize the audiences' role in interpreting media representations. van Zoonen uses bell hook's discussion of how blacks construct alternative readings of prime time television to challenge the notion of audience passivity. As a child growing up in the 1950s and 1960s, hooks would listen to adults in her household and community discuss the absence of black characters, evidence, she claims, that hegemonic norms and values are evaluated and negotiated by ordinary people on an everyday basis (van Zoonen 1994, 107). van Zoonen also argues that feminist media theories which

condemn women's magazines, soap operas and romances do not sufficiently examine their enduring popularity for women. Even feminists, who logically should be the first to reject these so-called women's genres, are increasingly 'coming out' and admitting to being hooked on these formats that previous feminists have claimed promote a 'false consciousness' which keeps women in their subordinate social roles (van Zoonen 1994, 106).

Thus it is not just how reality is represented but how individuals interpret these representations that shapes social meaning. Yet while audiences may not be passive, empty vessels waiting to blindly accept the hegemonic representations of reality provided by the media, discarding the effect of media altogether is also unwarranted. Kielcolt and Sayles (1988), for example, argue that television programs do not change audiences' interpretations of the world, rather audiences specifically choose to view programs that reinforce already existing views. While there is a certain logic to this contention, it does not address how these 'already existing views' came about to begin with, what the role of the media may have been in the earliest stages of the socialization process, that is, with young children, or its role in maintaining stereotyped perceptions.

Gendered stereotypes do exist. Lack of coverage of women's concerns is well-documented. Women's primary association with the private sphere is a long-standing, easily observed phenomenon. All are aspects of the current hegemonic order. Thus, while the extent of the media's role in the reproduction of hegemony is unclear, it does not necessarily follow that it plays no role at all. Lisa McLaughlin (1998, 612-613), for example, charges that current feminist media studies which celebrate the resistance of the audience are conservative because they treat the hegemonic tendencies of the media as unproblematic. In practice, television dominates many peoples' leisure time, and consequently will often provide material for later conversations with friends and co-workers. This ability to affect what people talk about and how they find out what is happening in the world gives media a powerful influence that should neither be ignored nor minimized.

The enduring strength of gendered stereotypes and how they can affect women's political possibilities is perhaps best illustrated by auditing actual coverage of women involved in formal politics. I therefore now turn to an examination of the media's coverage of female politicians.

Representation of female political candidates and politicians

An important aspect of women's access to the political public sphere is the representation of women who choose to become involved in the formal political arena. In investigating the media's treatment of women's political participation, feminists look at both the use of gendered stereotypes, and compare the quantity of coverage between female and male politicians and candidates.

Gender stereotypes in political campaign coverage

Analyses of political campaigns are an important aspect of political studies, creating models and theories which are useful both to political hopefuls and to theorists tracking the intricate operations of the democratic process. One of these, the 'resonance' model of campaigns, has found that the average voter is unlikely to acquire even a minimal amount of factual information about candidates or campaign issues. In the absence of actual information, voters will then tend to assess candidates based on cultural stereotypes, including gender stereotypes (Iyengar, Valentino, Ansolabehere and Simon 1997).

Studies of voters, in turn, indicate that they associate male and female candidates with stereotyped personality traits and corresponding policy strengths. Women are more likely to be perceived as warm, compassionate, honest, dependent, noncompetitive, passive, gentle, emotional, empathetic and as weak leaders; whereas men are typically perceived as more independent, objective, competitive, insensitive, aggressive, unemotional, ambitious, tough,

knowledgeable, and strong leaders (Kahn 1994; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991, Norris 1997a; Iyengar et al. 1997).

Voters also tend to assume that male and female candidates have specific areas of competence based on their gender. Women are perceived as more effective in areas related to education, health, environmental issues, minority rights, abortion, drugs and social programs; while male candidates are considered better suited to foreign policy, crime, defence, agriculture and immigration issues. Overall, the media highlight 'male' issues more frequently than 'female' issues, regardless of the candidate's gender, although coverage of 'female' issues will rise for both men and women if at least one of the candidates is female (Kahn and Goldenberg 1991).

When candidates choose to apply these gendered political stereotypes to themselves in their campaign advertising, the effects appear to coincide with voter expectations. In independent studies, both Iyengar et al. (1997) and Duke (1996) tracked the outcome of elections and found female candidates fared better with voters when they emphasized issues associated with their gender.[1] Women who hope to achieve political office must therefore take into account the limitations they face in media coverage and voter expectations because of their gender, especially if they opt for strategies and platforms which may contradict these stereotypes.

Campaign coverage

The quantity of campaign coverage that candidates receive is also an important aspect of a successful bid for office. Voting theories suggest candidates are more likely to be successful if they are recognized, and voter recognition increases with media coverage. Candidates are also evaluated on the basis of their policy stances, their personality, and whether they appear viable, all of which can be affected by campaign coverage.

---

[1] Whether or not the use of these stereotypes were sufficient to win an election however depended on what voters perceived as key issues during that election year (Iyengar et al. 1997).

In a study of US Senate races, Kahn and Goldenberg (1991) discovered that female candidates received less media coverage than their male counterparts. Coverage of women candidates also focused on their viability, to their detriment. Because women are more often challengers than incumbents, and tend to have more difficulty in accumulating campaign financing, viability coverage tended to present female candidates in a negative light. Trait and personality coverage, in turn, depended on the sex of the reporter, with female reporters more likely to report on the issues raised by female candidates. Although the number of female reporters covering political campaigns is currently low (around twenty-five percent), this suggests that their increased presence may be an important resource for women running for office (Kahn and Goldenberg 1991). Based on their findings with respect to the quantity of coverage, representation of viability, and coverage of issues and personality, the authors concluded that media coverage may be a serious obstacle for female senatorial candidates (Kahn and Goldenberg 1991).

Coverage of female political candidates, from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective, therefore does not yet match that of their male counterparts. In addition, female political candidates must walk a fine line between appearing too feminine, and risk being dismissed, or not feminine enough and thereby fly in the face of voters' expectations. While not as pervasive as in the past, Deborah Rhode discovered that media coverage can still be found which describes female candidates is surprisingly "sexually freighted terms". During the 1992 political campaigns, for example:

> Lynn Yeakel was 'an unlikely standard bearer, a former full-time mother,' and
> Carol Mosley Braun was 'ebullient, a den-mother with a cheerleader's smile'....In
> the profile on Braun, not until the twenty-second paragraph does a persistent
> reader learn that she was also a lawyer, former prosecutor, and veteran state
> senator (Rhode 1995, 696-697).

As such coverage suggests, the use of gender stereotypes can diminish women's credibility and obscure the importance of their messages.

Coverage of women in office

Once elected, many female politicians believe that the media tends to trivialize their roles by focusing attention on their appearance or by positioning coverage in the women's pages or style sections of newspapers. Contrary to this perception, however, a study of the women elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1992 found most media coverage of female politicians was positive; sixty percent of coverage reached the front page or national news section, and there was little evidence that coverage was biased or trivializing (Carroll and Schreiber 1997). Disturbingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, coverage nonetheless tended to give the impression that women politicians were focusing on 'female' issues such as abortion, women's health and, to some degree, sexual harassment. Despite the substantial contribution individual women made to the Crime Bill and health care reform, media coverage of their involvement was nonexistent[2] (ibid., 145).

Pippa Norris also looked at coverage of female heads of state in 1994, a total of nine women out of 189 leaders worldwide. She found that female leaders were covered slightly less often than male leaders, but the difference in coverage was not great. In addition, there was little evidence that journalists employed simple sexual stereotypes when covering women world leaders (Norris 1997b).

As the data on the use of gender stereotypes in both entertainment and news media demonstrate, feminists analyses of the representation of women in the media remain a critical area of study. Feminists have linked stereotyped portrayals of women, inadequate coverage of women's perspectives and issues, and women's limited roles as analysts, news sources and newsmakers, with the absence of women media workers, especially in media decision-making roles (Beasley 1997; Rhode 1995; Coffey 1991; Cantor 1988; Norris 1997a). They also criticize

---

[2] Because of the absence of media coverage, the authors of the study were only able to find evidence of the women's participation in these areas from reading Congress records.

the news media for their focus on issues of interest to men, arguing that the news is a masculine genre, revolving around the political and economic interests of men (Rakow and Kranich 1991, 11). In the next section I look at theses critiques, as well as one of the first steps taken by feminists to combat the media status quo: the call for greater participation of women in the media production process.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE MEDIA

The persistent absence of women as media sources is readily apparent when their participation levels are tracked. A 1991 study found the ten most frequently seen analysts on the three American nightly network news were men (Norris 1997b, 161), and surveys conducted in the early 1990s indicated that in the US, men provided eighty-five percent of newspaper quotes or references, and were seventy-five percent of television interviewees and ninety percent of the most frequently cited pundits (Rhode 1995, 687/88). In 1994 men still dominated the front pages of newspapers, garnering seventy-five percent of the news references and appearing in sixty-seven percent of the photographs (Duke 1996, 233). By 1995, though nineteen percent of the front page references were about women, and thirty-nine percent of the photographs, few of the women newsmakers were political or opinion leaders (Norris 1997b, 155).

To get a true picture of women's status as newsmakers requires more than simply counting how frequently the media reference women, as Rakow and Kranich demonstrated in their July 1986 study of evening network newscasts. After viewing a month of nightly newscasts, they found that of 1,203 news items, women appeared in only 181 as on-camera sources. However, only forty-three percent of the women were referenced because of political affiliations or expertise in a given area. Of these, sixteen percent were experts and authorities, thirteen percent politicians or candidates, and four percent were involved in political activities. Fifty percent of the women who appeared in the news were private individuals selected by the

media to illustrate the effect of a particular event, whether a crime, a disaster, public policy or the actions of family members, such as mothers or relatives of hostages, gunmen or afflicted children. Another eight percent were celebrities and the final two percent were unidentifiable (Rakow and Kranich 1991, 13).

Thus both content and quantity of coverage must be taken into account when tracking women's level of participation as media sources. In addition, feminists argue that if women are to receive greater and more balanced coverage by the media, more women must be admitted into the ranks of media workers.

Women's participation as media workers

In the early twentieth century, there were few female journalists, and those working on newspapers were restricted almost exclusively to the 'women's pages', covering issues such as food, fashion, furnishings, and society news. In broadcast media, the late 1940s found only one female journalist on American television news. By 1960, the number of had risen to one for each of the three major US television networks, but their roles were low-profile, limited to coverage of political wives or becoming 'weather girls' (Rhode 1995, 686). From the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, women journalists rose from less than five percent to thirty-four percent in American television news, and in print media from less than twenty percent to almost forty percent (Rhode 1995, 686; Weaver 1997, 22-40).

Although their numbers were increasing, female journalists still had difficulty obtaining the most highly coveted story assignments and story placements (on-air time in broadcast media, and in newspapers, bylines - an important symbol of recognition and status) (MediaWatch 1991). Reflecting on her own history in the media, Marlene Sanders recounts how in the 1970s and 1980s 'on-air' women were given anchor spots only during what were considered fringe times: early mornings or weekends. Women also had difficulty garnering on-air reporting time. Of the

609 stories aired on the three American television networks in November of 1986, women reported on only seventy-six. In 1987, of the 239 American network news reporters only thirty-six were women; none ranked among the top ten in terms of air time; and their top six men colleagues captured more air time than all thirty-six female reporters combined (Sanders 1988, 113). In the same year in Canada, a CBC count found thirty-nine percent of their reporters were female, while in 1986 at its competitor, CTV, only sixteen percent of its journalists were women (Trimble 1990, 335).

By 1992, one third of American journalists were women, but the number of women in television reporting had dropped from about one third in 1982/83 to about one quarter (Weaver 1997, 25). In the United States, men still wrote about two thirds of front-page stories and seventy-two percent of the commentaries on newspaper op-ed pages, and provided eighty-five percent of television news reporting, while a survey of fifteen major Canadian newspapers found less that than thirty percent of bylines were accredited to women (Duke 1996, 234; Rhode 1995, 686; MediaWatch 1991, 22). In addition, of the female journalists who did manage to obtain positions in print and broadcast media, most found themselves working predominantly on stories that could be seen as an extension of their domestic responsibilities: children's and educational media, consumer and domestic programming, human interest and feature sections of newspapers, entertainment programming, and the like (van Zoonen 1994, 49).

Women of colour face even stiffer challenges breaking into the ranks of the media. Although 18.6 percent of the American labour force are members of ethnic minorities, women of colour comprise less than seven percent of the newspaper workforce, and three percent of its executives and managers; provide two percent of broadcast media stories; and in an annual survey of the fifty most prominent reporters in the early 1990s not a single women of colour was mentioned (Weaver 1997; Rhode 1995, 686).

In the management positions of media organizations and journalism schools, the number of women remains lower than national averages. By the early 1990s, less than ten percent of

deans or directors of journalism schools were women (Rhode 1995, 686). In the print media, 8.7 percent of American publishers, 19.4 percent of executive editors, thirty percent of newspaper executives, and thirty-two percent of lower-level managers were women, compared to an overall average of thirty-six percent in the American labour force (Beasley 1997, 240; Weaver 1997).

Nonetheless, women journalists now constitute almost sixty-eight percent of American journalism school graduates, and about fifty percent in Canada (Weaver 1997; Rhode 1995; MediaWatch 1991, 22), although these figures have not yet been translated to parity for women in the workplace. Yet evidence suggests that as the number of women in media increase, they are more likely to become managers, especially in weekly newspapers and news magazines, where in 1992, they were already almost on par with men (Weaver 1997). With increasing female participation in the production of news, feminists hope to counteract what they see as the media's tendency to focus their coverage on issues which are primarily of interest to men.

The absence of women as news analysts and experts, sources of news, and newsmakers (subjects of news stories) may be explained in part by their relative absence in the public sphere. Because news media traditionally focus on issues and events that occur in the public sphere of business, politics and economics, the limited role of women in the public sphere as authority figures or experts provides the news media with a "ready-made justification" for subsequent absence of women from news coverage (Rakow and Kranich 1991, 12). Expanding the definition of news to include issues which are of concern to women is one way feminists envisioned to reach broader coverage and inclusion of women in the media.

The news as a masculine genre

Feminists also argue that the news is a masculine genre which revolves around the political and economic interests of men (Rakow and Kranich 1991, 11). The journalistic distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' news reflects this emphasis: hard news is equated with

serious, important information (read masculine), while soft news focuses on human interest and lifestyle, and is associated with women audiences and reporters. News can therefore be seen as men talking to men, about men, and about the world as seen through the eyes of men (Rakow and Kranich 1991, 11).

Other feminists claim that women feel alienated from the news, because it does not provide them with knowledge that enables them to make sense of their own daily experiences. Whereas television news provides legitimation for many male viewers, and an opportunity to feel part of a particular social order, for example, women may feel outside of that social order and therefore may feel no need to keep up with it at all (van Zoonen 1991, 232-233).

The assumption that media emphasis on politics and economics serves solely male interests is increasingly dubious, however, especially given women's increased participation in political and economic life. As van Zoonen observes, many studies are conducted on women living in 'traditional' family settings, who are not participants in the paid labour force, and who, more and more, constitute a diminishing segment of the female public.

The long-standing absence of women's issues is evident when contrasted to the increased coverage in recent years of domestic violence, child absence, rape, women's health, day care (for aging parents, and children), abortion, welfare and social services. More important than the abundance of so-called male values, is the neglect of these and other issues and topics of concern to women. The fact that women do not see their lives reflected in the news media continues to sideline women, elevating involvement in the public sphere and diminishing the aspect of lives lived outside of public visibility.

Increasing female participation and the role of media conventions

Because many feminists interpret the relative absence of women as newsmakers and sources as directly related to the lack of female media workers, they propose that increasing

women's access to the production of news may foster greater access of women's concerns and achievements to the public sphere, and create more balanced and less stereotypical coverage of women. More women in management and high visibility positions in the media is seen as a means to pave the way for more women in the ranks (van Zoonen 1991, 220).

Such reasoning, however, is limited for several reasons. As van Zoonen points out, it is an essentialist view which assumes that women share a common perspective that is different from men (van Zoonen 1994, 63). When feminists call for an increased number of women, there is also an implied expectation that they will have a feminist approach. Ultimately, however, trusting that an increased number of women in the media will dramatically change the coverage of women ignores the strength of the organizational environment and entrenched news traditions within which the news is produced.

The fundamental flaw with anticipating that greater female participation in media production will lead to improvement in the coverage and portrayal of women, is that it assumes a level of individual autonomy that journalists simply do not possess. As Rakow and Kranich (1991) note, it is unlikely that in traditional media coverage male media workers conspire to exclude women or to present them in a particular fashion. Rather it is news conventions that shape what will be determined to be news. Journalists are socialized into the unwritten rules and prevailing norms, practices and values of newsrooms through a process of rewards and punishments which ultimately leads to self-censorship. To further complicate the issue, this process is subtle, so that it appears to 'make sense' to do things a particular way, thus making socialization is hard to resist even for female journalists (van Zoonen 1994; Bradley 1998; Rakow and Kranich 1991, 11-12).

van Zoonen contends that because of the sheer number of people involved in media production, the personal ideas of a given female journalist may have little impact on the production of news. In examining the factors which influence news production, she looks to Dimmick and Coit who propose a complex hierarchy of influences which range from the

personal characteristics of media workers, such as gender, ethnicity, age, education, as well as professional, cultural and political background, to national and international regulatory policies (van Zoonen 1994, 47-48).

Dimmick and Coit argue that although some journalistic latitude is possible within particular news organizations, most newsrooms are sufficiently bureaucratized that different individuals ultimately react the same way under similar circumstances. Journalists, including women, are socialized into news traditions through face-to-face contact with colleagues; through formal and informal groups and meetings such as editorial meetings, professional organizations, and informal socializing; and through organizational factors such as policy, organizational structure, work routines and power relations within organizations. Added to these are the competing commercial, professional, and artistic goals of individuals and departments which cut across all aspects of media production (van Zoonen 1994, 47-48).

News production is therefore conducted in an environment rife with internal and external pressures, all of which can have an impact on production values. As David Weaver reminds us, the societal and cultural environments within which the media operate, as well as audience expectations (or, perhaps more to the point, what the media interpret as these expectations to be) all have a powerful impact on journalistic autonomy (Weaver 1997). Thus the weight of newsroom tradition is a formidable force against which even the most determined female media workers have limited impact. Among these traditions are those employed to determine what shall constitute the news.

Media shape the news

News media do not simply reflect the world, but help shape how the world is perceived by choosing what they will cover and how. Of the myriad of events that occur in a single day, the vast majority will never make it to the newsstands or be broadcast over the air waves because

events and topics are not *intrinsically* newsworthy. Rather, as Stuart Hall observes, 'news' is the product of a complex process of systematic sorting and selection based on a socially constructed set of categories. News is therefore a creation of the journalistic process, dependent on what the society and the news media deem is important (quoted in Fowler 1991, 11-13).

Which events and issues the media choose to cover depend on media conventions and standards of newsworthiness. While the media do not follow a prescribed format for producing the news, researchers can nonetheless extrapolate from examples of news presentations to track common media practices. Roger Fowler, for example, notes the extent to which the criteria for newsworthiness reflects cultural values. To attract audiences and readership, news media seek out issues and events that hold meaning for their audiences. One of the chief criteria for newsworthiness thus tends to be found in stories related to countries, societies and individuals who are perceived to be most like oneself (Fowler 1991).

Events also become news if they are unexpected or negative, as in disasters; if they occur in nations that are culturally proximate or if a comparable situation could occur in one's own nation; or if they reference elite nations (superpowers) or elite persons, such as politicians or celebrities. The media also favour unambiguous events which are recognizably significant and relatively straightforward to understand, as well as events that are easily personalized, creating feelings of identification, empathy or disapproval. Lastly, an event is more likely to become news if it has 'consonance' with the reporter, that is, if it coincides with a journalist's preconceived ideas of what should be happening (Fowler 1991, 12-16; Lorimer 1994, 205-206).

The media therefore go through a deliberate process of sorting through daily events and judging what they will present as news, selecting what angle they will use in presenting a story, how much coverage it will receive, what sources will be used and how balanced they are, and what, if any, visuals they will use to accompany it. Readers and audiences, in turn, learn how much importance to attach to a topic by the extent of coverage it receives and its positioning in the broadcast, newspaper or magazine. By virtue of the amount of attention news media give an

issue or event, they help determine what the public will consider important and whether it is worth covering (Duke 1996, 231; MediaWatch 1991, 22).

The news therefore give us only a partial view of the world, and by the time it reaches the public it has been transformed and manipulated through differential treatment in presentation both to satisfy the conventions and requirements of the media, and to conform to numerous social, political and economic factors (Fowler 1991). The question is who, or what, is responsible for the comparative lack of coverage of issues of importance to women, and for how women are represented in the media? For some feminists the answer is clear: news is shaped for, and by, men, hence the absence of women and women's concerns.

To combat the media's propensity to focus on broad political and economic events and issues yet ignore issues of concern to women, and to portray women using broad gender stereotypes of their characteristics and roles in society, women in the early 1960s began to engage in direct challenges to the media industry. These challenges were part of a growing movement in which women began questioning all aspects of their roles in society and treatment as second class citizens, and which marked the beginning of second wave feminism. In the next section I look at the ways in which women challenged the media, which ranged from protests and critiques of the media, the creation of alternative media, and greater participation in mainstream media.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND THE MEDIA

Challenging the mass media: license challenges

The publication of *The Feminine Mystique*, and corresponding protest from women and minorities in the mid-1960s about the lack of diversity in broadcasting (Cantor 1988, 76)

prompted efforts to reform media practices in print and broadcast media. Perhaps the most notable of these actions were the feminist challenges to broadcast licensing renewals.

In 1966, for the first time in broadcast history, the US Court of Appeals instructed the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that it must permit citizens to participate in its licensing proceedings (Cantor 1988, 77). Every three years, until the beginning of deregulation in 1984, the FCC required broadcasters to renew their broadcast licenses. In the 1970s and early 1980s, women's groups throughout the US began to petition the FCC to deny licenses to local television stations at renewal time. Citing FCC policy under the "ascertainment of community needs", women's groups argued that existing media coverage was demeaning to women's issues, programming did not reflect the concerns of women, and hiring policies kept women and minorities out of newsrooms (Cantor 1988).

Feminists efforts to have broadcast licenses denied ran up against the US First Amendment, which guaranteed freedom of speech. As a result, no licenses were ever revoked, making it difficult to gauge the actual success of the license challenges. Cantor notes that increases in the number of women working at local television stations began before the license challenges occurred and may have occurred anyway, given the dramatic shift in women's employment in most sectors in the past twenty years (Cantor 1988, 80). Nonetheless, the license challenges may have helped raise awareness among station owners (Cantor 1988). As Bradley (1998) observes, the actions did bring station owners to the bargaining table and as stations began to recognize the benefits of female newscasters in selling the news, women began to find more employment opportunities open to them.

In Canada, parallel actions were initiated in the 1970s by feminists who protested stereotypical portrayals of women on television and radio, and called for the federal government to promote egalitarian and progressive images of women. The Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) responded in 1979 by setting up a Task Force to draft sex-role stereotyping guidelines and make recommendations on their implementation (Trimble

1990). The resulting Task Force, *Towards Equality for Women*, consisting of industry appointees and six public representatives from feminist groups across Canada, proposed a twofold solution: equal employment for women within the industry, and regulation of advertising and programming.

As with the US actions, the direct effect of the Canadian Task Force is unclear. Broadcast media were given a two-year trial period in which they were to voluntarily regulate themselves. When their response was minimal, the CRTC imposed mandatory self-regulation but did not follow through by monitoring licensees or instituting penalties for non-compliance when licenses came up for renewal. Like the US, Canadian women have seen improvements in their representation and employment in the broadcast industry, and analysts suggest it is at least partially an outcome of the Task Force (Trimble 1990).

Calls for revision of journalistic codes of ethics

Feminists also struck back at the media by demanding that they institute guidelines to ensure fair and positive treatment of women and minorities. In 1975, the (US) National Commission on Observance of International Women's Year proposed a series of media guidelines on employment, news production, respect for women and language usage (Beasley 1997, 238).

The employment guidelines maintained that women should be involved in more policy-making positions; should be employed, at equal pay, in jobs at all levels; and have the opportunity for training and promotion. News guidelines proposed that news definitions should be expanded to include more coverage of women's activities at local, national and international levels; the media should seek out news of women; and news should be reported by subject, not sex (as in 'women's pages'). Under the title of respect guidelines, it was noted that women's bodies should not be used to add irrelevant sexual interest and presentation of personal details

should not occur unless they were relevant to the story. Finally, language guidelines included a reassessment in which courtesy titles (Mrs., Miss, Ms.) should be abandoned; females over the age of sixteen should be referred to as women, not girls; terms used should not be gender specific; and women's organizations and activities should be treated with the same respect as men's would be treated (Beasley 1997, 238).

The proposal was modestly successful; many media stopped using courtesy titles, and print and broadcast style books began to discourage demeaning stereotypes and sexist references (Beasley 1997). Journalistic codes, however, were slower to change. In 1987, the SPJ *Code of Ethics* still made no reference to discrimination, and none appeared prior to the latest revision. In the proposed code, journalists now have an "affirmative duty to report all significant aspects of global society, including its constituent groups"; they are urged to "tell the story of diversity and magnitude of human experience"; they must "avoid stereotypes in covering issues of race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, geography, sexual orientation and social status"; and they must "strive to give voice to all segments of society in public discourse" (Beasley 1997, 236).

While women's groups laboured to elevate the manner in which women's issues and women in general were portrayed in the mass media, the women's movement itself faced its own simultaneous struggle against media bias. Still dominated by men who relied on a traditional repertoire of sexual stereotypes and patriarchal expectations of women's roles, the mass media became the confused and often reluctant chroniclers of the new social movement. If women felt that obtaining credibility in the media in general was difficult, it would be nothing compared to what their sisters who challenged women's roles would face.

Coverage of the women's movement

As an excerpt from an 1869 women's rights periodical demonstrates, media coverage of the women's movement has frustrated and enraged feminists for over a century (Rakow and

Kranich 1991, 16). In a study of the early years of the second wave feminist movement,

Deborah Rhode (1995) uncovered numerous examples of how the movement, and the women in

it, were negatively portrayed, ridiculed and trivialized, or ignored altogether. In 1966, for

example, the *New York Times* reported the founding of the National Organization for Women

(NOW), a group established to represent women's issues on a national scale, in brief article

tucked in amid Thanksgiving recipes, and the *Washington Post* did not cover it at all (Bradley

1998; Rhode 1995, 609).

Feminists were also demonized in the press, portrayed as a 'lunatic fringe'; as women

who either hated men, or wanted to be just like them; as strident, humourless or extremist; or as

hairy-legged and/or lesbian (Rhode 1995, 693). Early media coverage of the movement was

often unbalanced, focusing exclusively or disproportionately on extremist tactics or rhetoric.

Marge Kovacs, an ad executive who participated in the 1970 protest march 'Women's Strike for

Equality', discovered this first hand. Although the participants consisted of a cross-section of

women including "establishment types, career women and many older citizens", this breadth of

support was not apparent in media coverage of the event. Instead, the only women made visible

in the subsequent television broadcast were those which would later come to symbolize

feminism in the news: "stringy haired, bra-less women in T-shirts, with angry signs" (Bradley

1998, 160).

The media would also focus on feminists' appearance and personal characteristics. In a

1970 protest march, for example, *Newsweek* included the insightful observation that the vice-

president of NOW wore a purple jumpsuit. Coverage of other prominent women in the

movement reflected similar emphasis on appearance and personality in the media, such as Ti-

Grace Atkinson who was described as having a "dreamy, softly sexy style"; Germaine Greer with

her "lean good looks"; Kate Millet, who did not "wash her hair"; and Betty Friedan who was

portrayed as a "'double-chinned'...'badgering eccentric' whose theories reflected her own unhappy

marriage and interpersonal failings" (Rhode 1995, 694, 696). Intentionally or not, such coverage diminished feminists' credibility and marginalized their messages.

Claiming an attempt to 'balance' their reporting, the media often present only the extreme positions on both sides of a complicated debate. In the case of the women's movement, Rhode argues, this resulted in the misrepresentation of issues because only the most radical positions were reported at the expense of any discussion of a middle ground. Use of this strategy can be seen in coverage which features shots of angry protesters marching past 'regular women' who looked alienated by the process (Rhode 1995, 701).

Feminists also charge that media varied their coverage of policy differences depending on the gender of the individuals involved. When men disagreed with each other, for example, the media treated their differences as alternative stances on a given policy or issue. When feminists were involved, however, news media pitted women sources against each other. Debates were often framed as conflicts or cat fights, and different positions depicted as a standoff between conflicting personalities (Rakow and Kranich 1991, 20; Rhode 1995). News media would also focus more on conflicts when covering events in which women were the primary actors. In the 1980 World Conference of the UN Decade for Women, for example, forty to fifty percent of the news coverage focused on conflict; a higher percentage than is generally found in the news (Rakow and Kranich 1991, 16).

"If you can't beat 'em, join 'em": using the media to publicize feminist issues

While feminists condemned the media, they also recognized its potential as a tool for counteracting the forces of patriarchy. In the 1960s and 1970s, feminists therefore began using the media itself to fight for political change. From *The Feminine Mystique* and *Ms.* magazine to marches and demonstrations staged to gain media attention, feminists sought to co-opt the media as they simultaneously tried to transform it. Recognizing the importance of using media

channels to publicize their cause, Betty Friedan for example, specifically outlined her vision for the role of the media when she founded the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. She brought in an actress friend, an ABC reporter, anchor and documentary producer, and a female high-level public relations expert to one of the first meetings to assist in creating strategies for bringing the organization to national attention.

One of the first media events to put the women's movement on the media agenda, was the 1970 Women's Strike Day for Equality which brought together 50,000 marchers in New York City alone. The women's movement was able to gain momentum because of the media coverage it was able to garner. In the decade between 1976-1985, for example, 1,705 articles related to the women's movement appeared in *New York Times* (Costain, Braunstein and Berggren 1997, 214). Media actions were also used in countless feminist events, from the 'zap actions' of radical feminists and the protests used by the 'Guerrilla Girls' to focus attention on the underrepresentation of women in the arts, to the 1971 picketing of newspapers to protest the gender segregation of help-wanted ads (Farrell 1998; Rhode 1995; Bradley 1998).

Although the women's movement had begun to receive coverage in the mass media, feminists had no control over its content, and thus were subject to the characterizations journalists, editors and producers brought to covering the movement. Because the media tend to favour 'hard' or action-oriented news, such as demonstrations and marches, over 'soft' news such as speeches and position papers, while feminist issues were getting into the news, critical discussion and analysis remained scarce.

One of the steps feminists took in trying to transform media coverage, was to force greater participation of feminists in the production of mass media. To this end, feminists organized a 1970 'sit-in' of more than 200 female writers, editors and activists at the editorial offices of the *Ladies Home Journal* which led to an eight page supplement in the August issue exposing thousands of American women to the major topics of the women's movement (Farrell

1998, 21). Infiltrating mainstream media was not always possible however. To ensure their message got out, feminists would have to create their own media.

Women's alternative media

Women have been communicating with each other in print for centuries. The first feminist newspaper, *The Female Spectator*, was established in Dublin in 1746, and in the nineteenth century, suffrage newspapers and periodicals began appearing after the Seneca Falls, New York temperance meeting in the mid-1800s. As decreasing costs of print technology in the twentieth century made printing more accessible, women's media expanded to include feminist dictionaries, thesauri and directories (Steiner 1992, 121-123).

In 1970 there were more than 500 feminist periodicals, newsletters and magazines published in the US alone, and by 1982 a list of past and present feminist literature numbered over 1500 (Farrell 1998; Steiner 1992). Feminist publications exclude the glossy women's magazines which are designed to sell advertising revenue, maximize market shares and profits, and which tend to be controlled by men. Rather, they are almost exclusively small circulation newspapers and periodicals geared to geographically or stylistically specific populations. They range from local and regional to national and international readership, often catering to specific groups such as lesbians, women of colour, or other interest groups, and include literary and art journals, non-fiction, trade and scholarly journals, as well as documentary and feature films such as Studio D of the Canadian National Film Board (Steiner 1992).

Feminist media serve women in a number of ways. Perhaps their most immediate function is to provide a network in which women can find out about what other women are doing, share ideas and experiences, explore emerging interests and issues, and showcase their art, literature and scholarship. As a communications medium, they also provides a discursive forum for challenging dominant structures and ideologies, for debating philosophical and political

issues, and for analyzing issues of relevance to women. Because new ideas and issues of concern to women often appear first in feminist media, it can also be used as a source by mainstream media (Coffey 1991; Farrell 1998; Steiner 1992).

Women's media not only enable women to communicate with each other, but can also foster a sense of community and provide a site for empowering women. For women who live in geographically isolated communities it can be a lifeline, letting them know that there are others who feel the way they do, and helping them to create networks with like-minded women who live in the same area (Coffey 1991; Steiner 1992). As an organizational tool, feminist media can provide a referral network, stimulate the formation of new groups, and help in the coordination of lobbying, demonstrations, or letter campaigns. Through feminist media, women can learn about approaches that women in other communities use to solve problems, as in the case of creating battered women's shelters (Steiner 1992; Coffey 1991).

Not all feminist publications are small-scale, however, and perhaps the most notable exception is *Ms.* magazine. First published in the winter of 1972, *Ms.* sought to translate the feminist message to mass audiences and bring them into the movement. Unlike most feminist publications, *Ms.* emulated the slick style of commercial women's magazines, in part to attract women from the mainstream alternatives. *Ms.* became a source of information for its readers as well as a forum for sharing their daily encounters with sexism, regularly publishing between three to five pages of readers letters (Farrell 1998).

During its peak, circulation ran between 400,000 and 500,000, and readership was estimated as high as five million (Farrell 1998, 1). *Ms.* strove to be a moderating voice for feminism, emphasizing inclusiveness and sisterhood among women everywhere. Despite its rhetoric of inclusivity however, *Ms.* found itself maintaining a middle ground on most issues, garnering criticism from radical feminists for its moderate views, and from women of colour who charged the magazine of subsuming difference (Bradley 1998, 168). In an age when other media were being forced to narrow their focus in order to appeal to specific market segments,

Ms. was also discovering that it could not appeal to all feminists simultaneously. In addition, like so many other feminist publications, *Ms.* has struggled to remain financially viable, and in recent years has increased prices only to face a drop in readership (Farrell 1998).

While feminist media have been successful in introducing audiences to alternative representations of women and providing women with approaches for personal empowerment, their audiences have been limited to those who were receptive to their messages. To foster women's equality throughout society, however, feminists would have to replicate these achievements in mainstream media, broadening the media's mandate to include more coverage of women's concerns and more a favourable representation of women themselves.

Women's progress in mainstream media

Much has changed in the media since feminists began to challenge it in the 1960s. The percentage of US women in broadcast journalism has risen from less than five percent to over thirty percent, and in print journalism has doubled to almost forty percent (Rhode 1995, 686; Weaver 1997). Women also hold more high-profile positions in the industry. In 1992, they comprised 8.7 percent of US publishers, 19.4 percent of executive editors, and thirty percent of newspaper executives or managers. Though less than corresponding positions in the US workforce, where an average of thirty-six percent of managers are women, these figures nonetheless represent significant strides for women in the media (Beasley 1997, 240). Salaries between male and female journalists are also approaching parity, especially when adjusted for experience (Weaver 1997).

Obtaining plum media assignments remains a struggle for women. As noted earlier, men still contribute sixty-seven percent of front page articles and seventy-two percent of opinion articles on newspaper op-ed pages (Duke 1996, 234). Though more and more women can be seen anchoring television news, these tend to be at local stations or in non-prime-time positions.

Studies also show that most female reporters are young and have limited experience, suggesting that they may be leaving the business to get married and raise families. When Smith, Fredin and Nardone (1989) interviewed three female anchors, two spoke of the difficulty of balancing a reporting career with raising a family. Few organizations make provisions for employees with children, and this is worse at the network level, where journalists may have to travel at a moment's notice. As one female anchor observed, being an anchor is not always about being a good journalist:

> All the little things like my news director being more concerned with my cosmetic appearance than he is with my journalistic ability bother me. And those are the kinds of things that are not addressed in the study. I also think it would be very interesting to talk to people who are no longer in the business to find out why they left (Smith, Fredin and Nardone 1989, 243).

Even a cursory glance at television news in 1999 would suggest that male anchors, especially those in mid-day and late night positions, may face similar pressures to appear attractive. However, as in other media productions, one might expect men to have a longer 'shelf life' than their female counterparts.

Mainstream media coverage of women has improved though men still garnered between seventy-five and seventy-nine percent of front page references in February 1994 (down from eighty-nine percent in 1989) and were featured in two-thirds of the front page photos (Duke 1996, 234; Norris 1997b, 155). Few women who appeared on the front pages, however, were political or opinion leaders (Norris 1997b). Nonetheless, Deborah Rhode (1995) contends that growing numbers of feminist journalists, critics and consumers have had a significant impact on how feminist issues are presented in the news. She cites examples from the coverage of the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings, and Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman murders.

At the 1991 confirmation hearings of Associate Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, law professor Anita Hill provided testimony that Thomas had sexually harassed her when they had worked together years earlier. Media coverage was broad and varied but nonetheless brought the issue of sexual harassment under public scrutiny and created an intense

and sustained debate. Fallout from the debate can be seen in the increased public awareness of the issue of sexual harassment, which Rhode argues marked a turning point that transformed centuries of women's subjection to male harassment into one that could now threaten men's livelihoods as well (Rhode 1995).

Media coverage of the hearings varied, some commentaries calling into question Hill's motivations for coming forward. In op-ed pieces in the *New York Times*, for example, Peggy Noonan and Orlando Patterson attacked Anita Hill as an upper-class tool of feminists (McLaughlin 1993, 613). Pieces such as these, which attempted to deflect attention away from Thomas, did not pass uncontested. When a black sociologist's editorial in the same paper tried to pass off Thomas's actions as "down home courtin'", it prompted the formation of the coalition African-American Women in Defense of Ourselves (AAWIDO) whose ad in the *New York Times* featured a statement of protest accompanied by 1500 signatures (Rhode 1995, 704-705; Fraser 1995a, 301).

The hearings, and their coverage, had other effects as well. All future Supreme Court and cabinet nominees would now be vetted in background checks for sexual harassment; the stereotyping and silencing of black women during the hearings was openly contested, as evidenced by the founding of AAWIDO; and dissenting opinions among women and among the black community shattered the 'myth of homogeneous communities' (Fraser 1995a; Rhode 1995).

The trial of O.J. Simpson for the murder of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman performed a similar function by forcing the issue of domestic violence into the public eye. While the public fascination with the case may not have spawned the 'rational-critical' debate of Habermas's imaginings, its lengthy duration and prolonged public exposure created the opportunity for as sustained public debate (McLaughlin 1998). Amid the media frenzy were often thorough and thoughtful pieces which examined, among other issues, the nature of family violence; the limits of law enforcement; and the inadequacy of social services (Rhode 1995,

704). The media also turned their gaze inward, questioning their previous silence about domestic abuse; their lionization of athletes; their focus on the 'tragedy of O.J.' rather than the two murder victims; and noted that it took the death of a white woman at the hands of a black man to put domestic violence on the media map (ibid., 704).

Not all media took 'the high road', however. Some used the case as an excuse to create titillating and lurid copy, while others asserted that women hit men more often than men hit women, or that both sexes were equally responsible for domestic violence (Rhode 1995, 705). Neither could the media resist providing detailed commentary on lead prosecutor Marcia Clark's hair and wardrobe, reflecting a propensity to comment on women's appearance which feminists have been fighting against for at least twenty-five years (McLaughlin 1998, 84). Nonetheless, Rhode argues that coverage of domestic violence was markedly improved by the O.J. Simpson trial which "left in its wake significant, positive results: a stream of legislation, a new sense of judicial, prosecutorial, and police accountability, and an increased demand for preventive and support services" (Rhode 1995, 705).

While women have not achieved parity in media coverage, feminism has made some gains. Rape, child abuse, and domestic violence are now legitimate topics in the news. Wendy Kozol proposes that media coverage of sociological studies, reform efforts and legislative actions is at least partly responsible for establishing domestic violence as a public policy issue (1995, 652). Women's health issues can be found on the front pages, and entertainment programs can now be found which espouse feminist values. A look at television entertainment in 1999 will reveal a number shows featuring strong female characters, despite those where women remain in stereotypical roles.

FUTURE PROSPECTS: NEW MEDIA FORMATS AND TECHNOLOGIES

In recent years, new media formats and technologies are offering possibilities for unprecedented diversity and access to the public sphere. I first discuss a variation in the use of existing broadcast media technology: audience discussion programming. Secondly, I look at breakthroughs in computer and communications technology in which electronic media and the Internet are opening up new frontiers in the democratic potential of the public sphere.

Audience discussion programs

Sonia Livingstone and Peter Lunt (1994) have made a close study of the audience discussion program, an emerging phenomenon in television broadcasting which straddles the line between news and entertainment media. These programs feature a panel of experts and lay people who discuss topical social, political and personal issues, and are moderated by program hosts who encourage audience members to question panel members and offer their comments and opinions (Livingstone and Lunt 1994; Livingstone 1994).

Like news and current affairs programs, audience discussion programs feature discussion of contemporary issues, but differ from traditional formats by soliciting the views of audience members. By opening up public debate to lay people, audience discussion programs may therefore allow a radical expansion of the public sphere to include plural and diverse publics. In this way, they may create a more egalitarian public sphere; one that more closely approximates the universal access to which the bourgeois public sphere claimed to aspire (Livingstone and Lunt 1994; Livingstone 1994).

Audience discussion programs also offer enhanced possibilities for ignoring status differentials. Because they are premised on the active participation of lay audiences, even experts are required to communicate in ordinary, narrative speech styles. Discussions are thus made accessible, both in terms of comprehension and participation, to members of subaltern

groups who may not have adequate communications skills to participate in a more formalized public debate. Lay people therefore have the opportunity to confront politicians and other members of powerful elites with their lived experiences, as well as make political arguments, tell personal stories, and express a diversity of views (Livingstone and Lunt 1994; Livingstone 1994).

Though often critical and contentious, audience discussion programs do not strive to emulate the strictly 'rational-critical' style of Habermas's idealized bourgeois public sphere. As such, they more closely resemble the radical, oppositional multiple publics advocated by Nancy Fraser (1992) which aim to provide a site for resistance and the expression of multiple social identities. Nor is their goal to reach consensus or even arrive at a conclusion but rather to facilitate public debate through a process of negotiation.

Livingstone and Lunt (1994) posit that a critical reading may suggest that audience discussion programs, as with other mass media, merely dupe audiences with an illusion of influence and involvement. The authors counter such a reading with recent empirical studies of the media which increasingly challenge the image of audiences as passive or manipulated. Through a series of audience evaluations, Livingstone and Lunt found program fans valued the opportunity for 'ordinary' people to speak their minds in public, and to argue with the 'experts' (Livingstone and Lunt 1994; Livingstone 1994). Women in particular found the debates to be of social value, and appreciated the chance to speak publicly of their experiences as women (Livingstone 1994).

While it is hard to image the social value of some audience discussion programs[3], these formats, however flawed, do offer an unprecedented opportunity for multiple publics to express their concerns and identities through the mass media. Their audiences at home are therefore

---

[3] In the late 1990s the highly controversial *Jerry Springer* show, which thrives on violent and often physical confrontations, immediately springs to mind.

exposed to a cross-section of society and a glimpse at people with lifestyles which their audience may never encounter in their daily lives.

The Internet and electronic media

With over 25 million users in 1995 alone, the Internet is redefining mass media and offering users the ability to communicate nearly instantaneously with people around the world. The Internet can also be a powerful and inexpensive information source without the costs associated with publishing. By September 1995, for example, 123 US newspapers and more than 1300 magazines had web sites, though were not necessarily publishing on-line, and in 1991 North American users could already access alternative news services from South Africa, the Middle East, Japan, the South Pacific, Central America and Europe (Morris and Ogan 1996, 43; Mujer a Mujer 1991, 10).

With this kind of capability, it is not surprising that groups and associations are taking advantage of the technology and using the Internet to provide information, updates and communication between their membership. One such group, the feminist Mujer a Mujer Collective, uses electronic communications technology to communicate with activists locally, nationally and internationally, and its members have found it invaluable in maintaining relationships with contacts made at conferences (Mujer a Mujer 1991).

So valuable have they found the medium, that they now organize and promote its use when they go to conferences, buying modems wholesale and selling them at cost. This strategy is particularly important for participants from Third World countries where technology is limited and start-up costs can be prohibitive. At the conference they post notices and distribute flyers to conference attendees, and conduct workshops to demonstrate the ease of use to women who often are computer-phobic. With the technology, they have been able to create or gain access to activists' data banks; women's electronic forums and resources exchanges; women's international

wire services; and women's action networks, thus enabling women to communicate and organize regionally or internationally (Mujer a Mujer 1991).

The Internet has also enabled governments to explore the potential of 'electronic democracy', a phenomenon scholars, politicians and activists have been proposing since the 1960s. Two such examples are currently in use: the civic networking projects in the United States and Europe; and Holland's Digital Cities.

Civic networking is a term coined for the use of electronic communications in providing local political information and access to participation in decision-making (Bryan, Tsagarousinaou, and Tambini 1998). In the United States, over 1000 towns and cities had homepages on the World Wide Web and 200 had civic networking projects by 1998. In addition, political parties, voluntary organizations, pressure groups and other organizations are currently exploring the use of computer-mediated communications to reach potential supporters, and to network and share information.

Advocates of civic networking argue that it has the potential to revive public communication by increasing the efficiency and ease of communication, and dramatically reducing publishing and communication costs normally associated with collective political action. The technology can be used to measure citizens' preferences, as well as offer political access to people who generally would not have a voice, such as those who are shy, disabled, housebound, or carers. Other proposed advantages are the ability for people to immediately respond to information, thereby increasing their likelihood of participating in public debate; and the ability to bypass mediators such as journalists, parliamentary representatives and political parties, who can distort political communication, thus reducing the potential for political censorship or secrecy (Bryan et al. 1998).

In the Netherlands, the Digital Cities project has attempted to counteract political apathy by creating electronic cities where users can communicate with each other on a wide range of topics; find information about their local governments; and build personal homepages where

they post information about themselves (Francissen and Brants 1998). By mid-1997, seventy

Digital Cities boasted approximately 100,000 inhabitants and thousands of visitors daily (ibid.,

18). Digital Cities offer citizens the opportunity to debate with each other and with local

government; citizens and social groups a information platform to publicize their activities or

concerns; access to community information; and the opportunity for users to network with each

other and make new connections.

Such experiments in electronic democracy are opening new ground in the exercise of

public communication and debate and offer the possibility of reviving an eroded public sphere.

Optimism is guarded, however, as there are also potential problems associated with the new

medium.

While an historically unprecedented cache of information, the Internet places the burden

on users to assess the quality of information contained within it (Morris and Ogan 1996). Unlike

traditional mass media, where editors and fact checkers are employed to ensure the veracity of

the information they report, anyone who can operate a computer can establish a website or

homepage or visit a chat room where they can say anything they want, without undergoing

equivalent checks and balances. Unless the information providers have previously established

their credibility, users have to exercise extreme caution in deciding whom or what to believe. In

the race for market shares, even large metropolitan newspapers such as the *New York Times*

instruct reporters to post breaking news on-line before it has passed through the traditional

checks and balances that printed news are subject to.

Eagerness to laud electronic communications media as a democratic opening up the

public sphere may also be premature. As Bryan et al. (1998) note, policy initiatives have

preceded academic research and intellectual critiques of cyberdemocracy. As yet there is a lack

of empirical studies of the effects of the new media and its implications for democracy. Because

of radical differences in technology, theories from broadcast and print media cannot simply be superimposed onto the new environment (Bryan et al. 1998).

Each new stage in the development of communications technology - from writing and printing to the recording and broadcasting of sound and images - has held the promise "of liberating human beings from the limitations of information scarcity and steadily undermining the hierarchies of political, economic, social, and cultural power such scarcity underpinned" (Garnham 1993, 254). Electronic media add a whole new layer of complexity to the acquisition of information.

While the Internet can be considered a mass media in terms of scope, it is also an extremely fragmented and individualized form of social communication. The sheer volume of available information tends to dilute the potential number of visits to any individual site.[4] Nonetheless, users are given the choice of what information they will access and what contributions they will make. As such, the Internet provides one of the most flexible, inexpensive and potentially socially inclusive forms of media to date - for those who have the time, money and interest in participating.

Access to the Internet is as yet far from universal. Francissen and Brants (1998, 30) found that ninety-one percent of the inhabitants and visitors to Holland's Digital Cities were male; seventy-three percent were under thirty-five years old; and all tended to be well-educated and politically aware. For those who cannot access the new technology from their workplace, participation on the Internet often depends on the ability to own a computer and finance monthly access fees, as well as available time to spend on the computer. All of these factors contribute to the existing class and gender bias which currently characterizes Internet users, and prompts the question of who the actual participants in cyberdemocracy are, and whether they are really representative of a diverse public.

---

[4] Morris and Ogan (1996) liken the media to the myriad of local radio and television stations that currently pepper the American airwaves.

The public sphere is crucial to democracy because government is legitimated by consent, and public opinion, which originates in the public sphere, is one of the primary means for expressing that consent. Information, in turn, is key to the formation of public opinion and the media is a primary site for its dissemination.

Because people depend on the mass media for information and entertainment, the public sphere has considerable power to construct and limit social knowledge (Kozol 1995, 653). Discourse in the mediated public sphere sets the agenda for discussion and frames the key terms of public debate. For these reasons, access to the media is imperative for marginalized groups in order to communicate their needs and interests to the public. It is also one of their greatest obstacles (McLaughlin 1998).

While Habermas held that access to participation the public sphere was to be available to all, in a political system where the media are privately-owned and operated, such access is not always ensured. Constitutionally guaranteed freedoms of the press allow the media to function independently of the state and thus they are under no legislative mandate to accommodate a diversity of opinions. In choosing what news to report or whose lives and concerns to emphasize, the media must therefore monitor themselves. Yet, while acknowledging their role in the democratic process through numerous codes of ethics, the media are nonetheless commercial enterprises operating in a highly competitive marketplace.

In principle, because the free market allows anyone to publish an opinion, all significant points of view will be aired and contributions will come from diverse and oppositional sources. In practice, increasing concentration of media oligopolies and rising capitalization costs have restricted entry into the market, reducing media diversity and limiting free public discussion (Curran 1996, 92). With little hope of establishing their own media, members of marginalized groups have had to rely on mainstream media's sense of journalist balance to ensure that their issues are conveyed to the public sphere. However, in an atmosphere characterized by intense competition for audiences and readership, the media's role as a forum for public discourse often

falls secondary to profit motives which dictate they must give the people what they are willing to buy. Apparently, this had not traditionally been perceived include coverage of the needs and interests of socially marginalized groups, including women.

As studies demonstrate, women have had a history of limited access to the media as journalists, expert sources, subjects of stories, and producers. This restricted access, in turn, has limited women's ability to raise their needs and interests to the level of political debate or to conduct a sustained challenge on the hegemonic values that ascribe them to the private sphere and devalue their opinions and capacities. Thus women's experiences of domestic abuse, sexual harassment and poverty, and their calls for greater access to childcare and abortion did not reach the public agenda until they began to receive widespread media attention.

CHAPTER 5:

WOMEN AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE: CONCLUDING REMARKS

Women's limited access to the mediated public sphere is mirrored by their restricted access to the economic and political spheres. In Chapter 2, I examined studies which illustrated that for at least the past two centuries women's containment in the private sphere has severely limited their economic participation in waged labour. Similarly, as I discussed in Chapter 3, although women comprise half of the adult population, as yet they have been unable to garner more than twenty percent of elected seats at any level of political office.

Women's social egress is also affected by their spatial mobility, and one of the chief aspects of the urban environment to negatively impact women's mobility is the separation of city and suburbs. By creating logistical problems that impede women's access to greater economic and political participation, the urban/suburban divide exacerbates already-existing constraints on women by increasing the time required to manage a household - from travel to work, shopping, childcare and recreational facilities to ferrying themselves and their children to doctors, dentists, and after-school activities. This division, in turn, is a manifestation of the public/private dichotomy, an overarching ideological structure which underwrites the containment of women to the household and their differential access to spatial mobility and participation in the waged labour force and political office.

One way to counteract patriarchal ideology which constructs women as incapable of or unsuitable for roles outside the family, is for women to gain a higher profile in the institutions through which social status is derived: commerce, industry, and politics. Yet obtaining this public visibility takes time and dedication, for schooling, and for developing expertise. Once again, women run up against the logistical difficulties of accomplishing this in addition to their family and domestic responsibilities. These time constraints, in turn, restrict the ability for

women to become more politically and economically active and thus to challenge the social and spatial divisions which constrain them.

Participation in public debate which challenges the expectations of women's and men's roles in society therefore offers an alternative route by which women can participate in redefining their social status. Because of the scope of mass media, women's ability to influence government and members of society can hinge directly upon their access to the media. Without equal access to the public sphere, however, women are restricted in the extent of input they will have in restructuring society in a manner which would better accommodate their needs.

The equal right to vote does not guarantee equality of influence. What level of access to the state then, can people reasonably expect in a democratic society? Social welfare democracy is constructed on the premise that everyone contributes and everyone benefits (Lister 1993, 459). While originally intended to refer to economic participation, we can apply this principle equally to participation in public discourse. Yet as this paper has shown, access to this participation is far from universal.

We must therefore ask ourselves how 'public' is the public sphere if all members of society are not participants in its discourse; how 'public' is public opinion if all members of society have not contributed to its formation; and ultimately, how democratic is our society if all of its members do not have equal access to the means by which to influence its governance.

If, as society, we believe that each of us is created equal then we must also believe that each of us should have an equal right to express our views and concerns, to expose injustices where they occur, and to contribute to the critique of society and the state. If such conditions of equality do not exist, we must ask ourselves if we truly live in a democratic society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abrahams, Naomi 1992. Towards reconceptualizing political action. *Sociological Inquiry,* 62(3)August: 327-347.

Barry, Andrew 1993. Television, truth and democracy. *Media, Culture and Society,* (15): 487-496.

Bashevkin, Sylvia 1994. Building a political voice: women's participation and policy influence in Canada. In *Women and Politics Worldwide,* eds, Barbara J. Nelson and Najma Chowdhury, 143-160. New Haven & London: Yale Univ. Press.

Beasley, Maurine H. 1997. How can media coverage of women be improved? In *Women, Media, and Politics,* ed, Pippa Norris, 235-244. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bender, Thomas 1975. *Toward an Urban Vision: Ideas and Institutions in Nineteenth-Century America.* Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press.

Benhabib, Seyla 1992. Models of public space: Hannah Arendt, the liberal tradition, and Jurgen Habermas. In *Habermas and the Public Sphere,* ed, Craig Calhoun, 73-98. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The MIT Press.

Benn, Stanley I. and Gerald F. Gaus 1983. The liberal conception of the public and the private. In *Public and Private in Social Life,* 31-65. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Beveridge, Sir William 1942. *Social Insurance and Allied Services.* New York: The MacMillan Company (American Edition).

Binford, Henry C. 1985. *The First Suburbs: Residential Communities on the Boston Periphery, 1815-1860.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bradley, Patricia 1998. Mass communications and the shaping of US feminism. In *News, Gender and Power,* eds, Cynthia Carter, Gill Branston and Stuart Allan, 160-173. London, New York: Routledge.

Brodie, Janine and Celia Chandler, 1991. Women and the electoral process in Canada. In *Women in Canadian Politics: Toward Equality in Representation,* ed, Kathy Megyery, 48-59. Toronto and Oxford: Dundurn Press.

Brownhill, Sue and Susan Halford 1990. Understanding women's involvement in local politics: how useful is a formal/informal dichotomy? *Political Geography,* 9(4): 396-414.

Bryan, Cathy, Rosa Tsagarousinaou and Damian Tambini 1998. Electronic democracy and the civic networking movement in context. *In Cyberdemocracy: Technology, Cities and Civic Networks,* eds, Rosa Tsagarousianou, Damian Tambini and Cathy Bryan, 1-17. London, New York: Routledge.

Calhoun, Craig 1993. Civil society and the public sphere. *Public Culture, 5*: 267-280.

Calhoun, Craig 1992. Introduction: Habermas and the public sphere. In *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun, 1-50. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The MIT Press.

Cantor, Muriel G. 1988. Feminism and the media. *Society,* (July/August): 76-81.

Carroll, Susan J. and Ronnee Schreiber 1997. Media coverage of women in the 103rd Congress. In *Women, Media, and Politics*, ed, Pippa Norris, 131-148. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cichocki, Mary K. 1981. Women's travel patterns in a suburban development. In *New Space for Women*, ed. Wekerle, Peterson and Morley, 151-163. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Clark, Samuel D. 1966. *The Suburban Society*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Coffey, Mary Anne 1991. Feminist print media in Canada. *Resources for Feminist Research, 20*: 1-2.

Costain, Anne N., Richard Braunstein, and Heidi Berggren 1997. Framing the Women's Movement. In *Women, Media, and Politics*, ed, Pippa Norris, 205-220. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Curran, James 1996. Mass media and democracy revisited. In *Mass Media and Society*, eds, James Curran and Michael Gurevitch, 81-119. London, New York, Sydney, Auckland: Arnold. 2nd edition.

Dear, Michael and Jennifer Wolch 1988. How territory shapes social life. In *The Power of Geography*, eds. Jennifer Wolch and Michael Dear, 3-18. London: Unwin Hyman.

Dubrow, Gail L. 1994 (November). Feminist and multicultural perspectives on preservation planning. *Paper prepared for presentation at the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning Conference*, Tempe, Arizona.

Duke, Linda Lovelace 1996. Women and sex stereotypes: cultural reflections in the mass media. In *Women in Politics: Outsiders or Insiders?*, ed, Linda Lovelace Duke, 229-239. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall. 2nd edition.

Dyck, Isabel 1989. Integrating home and wage workplace: women's daily lives in a Canadian suburb. *The Canadian Geographer*, 33(4):329-341.

Eley, Geoff 1992. Nations, publics, and political cultures: placing Habermas in the nineteenth century. In *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun, 289-339. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The MIT Press.

England, Kim 1993a. Changing suburbs, changing women: geographic perspectives on suburban women and suburbanization. *Frontiers*, XIV(1):24-48.

England, Kim 1993b. Suburban pink collar ghettos: the spatial entrapment of women? *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 83(2):225-242.

Farrell, Amy Erdman 1998. *Yours in Sisterhood: Ms. Magazine and the Promise of Popular Feminism*. Capitol Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press.

Fava, Sylvia F. 1980. Women's place in the new suburbia. In *New Space for Women*, ed. Wekerle, Peterson, and Morley, 129-149. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Fishman, Robert 1987. *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Fleming, Marie 1995. Women and the "public use of reason". In *Feminists Read Habermas*, ed, Johanna Meehan, 117-137. New York, London: Routledge.

Flew, Antony 1979. *A Dictionary of Philosophy*. London and Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan Press Ltd.

Fowler, Roger 1991. *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press*. London and New York: Routledge.

Francissen, Letty and Kees Brants 1998. Virtually going places: square-hopping in Amsterdam's Digital City. In *Cyberdemocracy: Technology, cities and civic networks*, eds, Roza Tsagarousianou, Damian Tambini and Cathy Bryan, 18-40. London, New York: Routledge.

Fraser, Nancy 1995a. Politics, culture, and the public sphere: toward a postmodern conception. In *Social Postmodernism: Beyond Identity Politics*, eds, Linda Nicholson and Steven Seidman, 287-312. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Fraser, Nancy 1995b. What's critical about critical theory? In *Feminists Read Habermas*, ed, Johanna Meehan, 20-55. New York, London: Routledge.

Fraser, Nancy 1992. Rethinking the Public Sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracies. In *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun, 109-142. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The MIT Press.

Gad, Gunter 1985. Office location dynamics in Toronto: suburbanization and central district specialization. *Urban Geography*, 6(4):331-351.

Garnham, Nicholas 1993. The mass media, cultural identity, and the public sphere in the modern world. *Public Culture*, (5):251-265.

Garnham, Nicholas 1992. The media and the public sphere. In *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun, 359-376. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The MIT Press.

Greed, Clara H. 1994. *Women and Planning: Creating Gendered Realities*. London and New York: Routledge.

Habermas, Jurgen 1991. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.

Habermas, Jurgen 1974. The public sphere: an encyclopedia article (1964). *New German Critique* 1(3) fall: 49-55.

Hanson, Susan and Geraldine Pratt 1992. Dynamic dependencies: a geographic investigation of local labor markets. *Economic Geography,* 68(4):373-405.

Hanson, Susan and Geraldine Pratt 1990. Geographic perspectives on the occupational segregation of women. *National Geographic Research,* 6(4):376-399.

Hanson, Susan and Geraldine Pratt 1988. Spatial dimensions of the gender division of labor in a local labor market. *Urban Geography,* 9(2):180-202.

Hayden, Dolores 1994 (August). The power of place: claiming urban landscapes as people's history. Journal of urban history 20(4):466-485.

Hayden, Dolores 1981. *The Grand Domestic Revolution.* Cambridge, Mass. and London, UK: The MIT Press.

Hohendahl, Peter 1974. Jurgen Habermas: "the public sphere" (1964). *New German Critique,* 1(3) fall: 45-48.

Houston, Marsha 1992. The politics of difference: race, class, and women's communication. In *Women Making Meaning: New Feminist Directions in Communication,* ed, Lana F. Rakow, 45-59. New York & London: Routledge.

Huber, Joan 1990. Macro-micro links in gender stratification. *American Sociological Review,* 55(February):1-10.

Iyengar, Shanto, Nicholas Valentino, Stephen Ansolabehere and Adam Simon 1997. Running as a woman: gender stereotyping in political campaigns. In *Women, Media, and Politics,* ed, Pippa Norris, 77-99. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jackson, Kenneth T. 1985. *Crabgrass Frontier: the Suburbanization of the United States.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Jagger, Alison M. 1983. *Feminist Politics and Human Nature.* Sussex, Eng.: The Harvester Press.

Johnson, Nuala 1995. Cast in stone: monuments, geography, and nationalism. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space,* (13):51-65.

Johnston-Anumonwo, Ibipo 1992. The influence of household type on gender differences in work trip distance. *Professional Geographer,* 44(2):161-169.

Johnston-Anumonwo, Ibipo 1988. The journey to work and occupational segregation. *Urban Geography,* 9(2):138-154.

Kahn, Kim Fridkin 1994. The distorted mirror: press coverage for women candidates for statewide office. *The Journal of Politics,* 56(1): 154-73.

Kahn, Kim Fridkin and Edie N. Goldenberg 1991. Women candidates in the news: an examination of gender differences in U.S. Senate campaign coverage. *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 55: 180-199.

Kasinitz, Philip 1995. Introduction. In *Metropolis: Centre and Symbol of Our Times*, ed. Philip Kasinitz, 7-20. London: MacMillan Press Ltd.

Keane, John 1992. Democracy and the media - without foundations. *Political Studies*, Special Issue: 116-129.

Kearns, Ade 1995. Active citizenship and local governance: political and geographical dimensions. *Political Geography*, 14(2): 155-175.

Kerber, Linda 1988. Separate spheres, female worlds, woman's place: the rhetoric of women's history. *Journal of American History*, 75(1):9-39.

Kiecolt, K. Jill and Mamie Sayles 1988. Television and the cultivation of attitudes toward subordinate groups. *Sociological Spectrum*, 8:19-33.

Knack, Ruth Eckdish 1986. The once and future suburb. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 52(7):6-12.

Kofman, Eleonore 1995. Citizenship for some but not for others: spaces of citizenship in contemporary Europe. *Political Geography*, 14(2): 121-137.

Kofman, Eleonore and Linda Peake 1990. Into the 1990s: a gendered agenda for political geography. *Political Geography*, 9(4): 313-336.

Kozol, Wendy 1995. Fracturing domesticity: media, nationalism, and the question of feminist influence. *Signs*, 20(3): 646-667.

Kymlicka, Will and Wayne Norman 1994. Return of the citizen: a survey of recent work on citizenship theory. *Ethics*, 104(January 1994): 352-381.

Landes, Joan 1995. The public and the private sphere: a feminist reconsideration. In *Feminists Read Habermas*, ed, Johanna Meehan, 91-115. New York, London: Routledge.

Lather, Patti 1986. Research as praxis. *Harvard Educational Review*, 56(3): 257-277 (August).

Lefebrve, Henri 1976. Reflections on the politics of space. *Antipode*, 8(2):30-37.

Lewis, Justin 1992. *The Ideological Octopus: An Exploration of Television and Its Audience*. New York and London: Routledge.

Lister, Ruth 1993. Tracing the contours of women's citizenship. *Policy and Politics*, 21(1): 3-16.

Lister, Ruth 1990. Women, economic dependency and citizenship. *Journal of Social Policy*, 19(4): 445-467.

Little, Jo 1994. *Gender, Planning and the Policy Process*. Oxford, New York, Tokyo: Elsevier Science Ltd.

Livingstone, Sonia 1994. Watching talk: gender and engagement in the viewing of audience discussion programmes. *Media, Culture & Society* 16:429-447.

Livingstone, Sonia and Peter Lunt 1994. *Talk on Television: Audience Participation and Public Debate*. New York and London: Routledge.

Lloyd, Genevieve 1993. *The Man of Reason: Male and Female in Western Philosophy*. London: Routledge.

Lorimer, Rowland 1994. *Mass Communication: A Comparative Introduction*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.

McDowell, Linda 1993. Space, place and gender relations: Part I. Feminist empiricism and the geography of social relations. *Progress in Human Geography*, 17(2):157-179.

MacIvor, Heather 1996. Women and Politics in Canada. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press.

Mackenzie, Suzanne 1988. Building women, building cities: toward gender sensitive theory in the environment disciplines. In *Life Spaces: Gender, Household, Employment*, ed. Caroline Andrew and Beth Moore Milroy, 13-30. Vancouver: Univ. of British Columbia Press.

McLaughlin, Lisa 1998. Gender, privacy and publicity in 'media event space'. In *News, Gender and Power*, eds, Cynthia Carter, Gill Branston and Stuart Allan, 71-90. London, New York: Routledge.

McLaughlin, Lisa 1993. Feminism, the public sphere, media and democracy. *Media, Culture & Society*, 15: 599-520.

Magill, Frank N. (ed) 1995. *International Encyclopaedia of Sociology*. Volume 2. London, Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn.

Markusen, Ann R. 1981. City spatial structure, women's household work, and national urban policy. In *Women and the American City*, ed. Caroline Stimpson, et al., 20-41. Chicago, London: Univ. of Chicago Press.

Marshall, T.H. 1992. Citizenship and social class. In *Citizenship and Social Class*, T.H. Marshall and Tom Bottomore, 3-54. London and Concord, Mass.: Pluto Press.

Marston, Sallie A. 1990. Who are 'the people'?: gender, citizenship, and the making of the American nation. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, (8): 449-482.

Megyery, Kathy 1991 (ed). Introduction. In *Women in Canadian Politics: Toward Equity in Representation*, ed., Kathy Megyery, xi-xix. Toronto and Oxford: Dundurn Press.

Milroy, Beth Moore and Susan Wismer 1994. Communities, work and public/private sphere models. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 1(1): 71-90.

Mitchell, Juliet 1987. Women and equality. In *Women and Equality*, ed., Anne Phillips, 24-43. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Monk, Janice 1992. Gender in the landscape: expressions of power and meaning. In *Inventing Places: Studies in Cultural Geography*, ed. Kay Anderson and Fay Gayle, 123-138. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire Pty Ltd.

Monkkenon, Eric 1988. *America Becomes Urban: The Development of U.S. Cities & Towns 1780-1980*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: Univ. of California Press.

Mouffe, Chantal 1995a. Feminism, citizenship, and radical democratic politics. In *Social Postmodernism: Beyond Identity Politics*, eds, Linda Nicholson and Steven Steidman, 315-331. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mouffe, Chantal 1995b. Post-Marxism: democracy and identity. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 13: 259-265.

Mujer a Mujer Collective 1991. Communicating electronically: computer networking and feminist organizing. *Resources for Feminist Research*, 20(1/2): 10.

Muller, Edward 1990. The Americanization of the city. In *The Making of the American Landscape*, ed. M.P. Conzen, 269-292. Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Natter, Wolfgang 1995. Radical democracy: hegemony, reason, time and space. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 13: 267-274.

Nelson, Barbara J. and Najma Chowdhury 1994. Many voices but few vehicles: the consequences for women of weak political infrastructures in the United States. In *Women and Politics Worldwide*, eds, Barbara J. Nelson and Najma Chowdhury, 737-757. New Haven & London: Yale Univ. Press.

Nelson, K. 1986. Labour demand, labour supply and the suburbanization of low-wage office work. In *Production, Work and Territory*, eds, A. Scott and M. Stroper. Winchester, MA: Allen & Unwin.

Norris, Pippa 1997a. Introduction: women, media, and politics. In *Women, Media, and Politics*, ed, Pippa Norris, 1-18. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Norris, Pippa 1997b. Women leaders worldwide: a splash of color in the photo op. In *Women, Media, and Politics*, ed, Pippa Norris, 149-165. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Novac, Sylvia 1995. Seeking shelter: feminist home truths. In *Change of Plans: Towards a Non-Sexist Sustainable City*, ed. Margrit Eichler, 51-70. Toronto: Garamond Press.

Pain, Rachel 1991. Space, sexual violence and social control: integrating geographical and feminist analyses of women's fear of crime. *Progress in Human Geography*, 15(4):415-431.

Parry, Geraint 1991. Conclusion: paths to citizenship. In *The Frontiers of Citizenship*, eds, Ursula Vogel and Michael Moran, 166-201. London: MacMillan.

Pateman, Carole 1989. *The Disorder of Women*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Pateman, Carole 1987. Feminist critiques of the public/private dichotomy. In *Feminism and Equality*, ed. Anne Phillips, 103-125. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Pateman, Carole 1970. *Participation and Democratic Theory*. London, New York, Melbourne, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pateman, Carole and Mary Lyndon Shanley 1991. Introduction. In *Feminists Interpretations and Political Theory*, eds, Carole Pateman and Mary Lyndon Shanley, 1-10. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Pawson, Eric 1993. Rape and fear in a New Zealand city. *Area,* 25(1):55-63.

Pickup, Laurie 1988. Hard to get around: a study of women's travel mobility. In *Women in Cities*, eds. J. Little, L. Peake, and P. Richardson. Hampshire & London: MacMillan Educ. Ltd.

Phillips, Anne 1991. *Engendering Democracy*. Univ. Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press.

Pratt, Geraldine 1990. Feminist analyses of the restructuring of urban life. *Urban Geography,* 11(6):594-605.

Rakow, Lana F. and Kimberly Kranich 1991. Woman as sign in television news. *Journal of Communication,* 41(1) Winter: 8-23.

Relph, Edward 1991. Suburban downtowns of the greater Toronto area. *The Canadian Geographer,* 35(4):421-25.

Reverby, Susan and Dorothy O. Helly 1992. Converging on history. In *Gendered Domains: Rethinking Public and Private in Women's History*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Rhode, Deborah 1995. Media images, feminist issues. *Signs,* 20(3):685-709.

Rinehart, Sue Tolleson 1992. *Gender Consciousness and Politics*. New York, London: Routledge.

Roberts, Marion 1991. Living in a Man-Made World: *Gender Assumptions in Modern Housing Design*. London, New York: Routledge.

Rosaldo, Michelle 1974. Women, culture and society: a theoretical overview. In *Women, Culture and Society*, eds, Rosaldo, Michelle and Louise Lamphere, 17-42. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Rose, Gillian 1993. *Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Rothblatt, Donald N. and Daniel J. Garr 1986. *Suburbia: An International Assessment*. London: Croom Helm.

Rutherford, Brent M. and Gerda R. Wekerle, 1988. Captive rider, captive labor: Spatial constraints and women's employment. *Urban Geography,* 9(2):116-137.

Ryan, Mary 1990. *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880*. Baltimore and London: John Hopkin's Univ. Press.

Saegert, Susan 1981. Masculine cities, feminine suburbs: polarized ideas, contradictory realities. In *Women and the American City*, eds Caroline R. Stimpson, et al. Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press.

Salem, Greta 1986. Gender equity and the urban environment. In *The Egalitarian City: Issues of Rights, Distribution, Access, and Power*, ed. Janet K. Boles, 152-161. New York, Philadelphia, Eastbourne, UK, Toronto, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Sydney: Praeger.

Sandercock, Leonie and Ann Forsyth 1992. A gender agenda: new directions for planning theory. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 58(1):49-59.

Sanders, Marlene 1988. *Waiting for Prime Time: The Women of Television News*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Schudson, Michael 1992. Was there ever a public space? If so, when? Reflections on the American case. In *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun, 143-163. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The MIT Press.

Smith, Conrad, Eric S. Fredin, and Carroll Ann Ferguson Nardone 1989. Television: sex discrimination in the TV newsroom - perception and reality. In *Women in Mass Communication: Challenging Gender Values*, ed, Pamela J. Creedon, 227-247. Newbury Park, London, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Smith, Susan 1995. Comment: Citizenship: all or nothing? *Political Geography*, 14(2): 190-193.

Smith, Susan J. 1984 (July). Negotiating ethnicity in an uncertain environment. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 7(3):360-373.

Spain, Daphne 1992. *Gendered Spaces*. Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of Carolina.

Stansell, Christine 1987. *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860*. Urbana and Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press.

Statistics Canada 1998. *Labour Force Information*. Cat. No. 71-001PB.

Statistics Canada 1996. *Labour Force Annual Averages*. Cat. No. 71-220.

Statistics Canada 1994. *Labour Force Annual Averages*. Cat. No. 71-529.

Strong-Boag, Veronica 1991. Home dreams: women and the suburban experiment in Canada, 1945-1960. *Canadian Historical Review*, LXXII(4):471-504.

Trimble, Linda 1990. Coming soon to a station near you?: the CRTC policy on sex-role stereotyping. *Canadian Public Policy*, XVI(3): 326-338.

Turner, Bryan S. 1993. *Citizenship and Social Theory*. London, Newbury Park, New Delhi: Sage Publications

Turner, Bryan S. 1990. Outline of a theory of citizenship. *Sociology*, 24(2): 189-217.

Valentine, Gill 1992. Images of danger: women's sources of information about the spatial distribution of male violence. *Area*, 24(1):22-29.

Valentine, Gill 1989. The geography of women's fear. *Area*, 21(4):385-390.

van Zoonen, Liesbet 1994. *Feminist Media Studies*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

van Zoonen, Liesbet 1991. A tyranny of intimacy? Women, femininity and television news. In *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and the Public Sphere in the New Media Age*, eds, Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks, 217-235. New York and London: Routledge.

Varady, David P. 1990. Influences on the city-suburban choice: a study of Cincinnati homebuyers. *APA Journal*, (Winter):22-40.

Vickery, Amanda 1993. Golden age to separate spheres? A review of the categories and chronology of English women's history. *The Historical Journal*, 36(2):383-414.

Vogel, Ursula 1991. Is citizenship gender-specific? In *The Frontiers of Citizenship*, eds, Ursula Vogel and Michael Moran, 58-85. London: MacMillan.

Walby, Sylvia 1994. Is citizenship gendered? *Sociology*, 28(2): 379-395.

Weaver, David H. 1997. Women as journalists. In *Women, Media, and Politics*, ed, Pippa Norris, 21-40. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wekerle, Gerda R. 1980. Women in the urban environment. *Signs*, 5(3): S188-S214.

Wekerle, Gerda R. and Brent Rutherford 1988. The mobility of capital and the immobility of female labor: responses to economic restructuring. In *The Power of Geography*, ed. Wolch, Jennifer and Michael Dear, 3-18. London: Unwin Hyman.

Whitzman, Carolyn 1995. What do you want to do? Pave parks? In *Change of Plans: Towards a Non-Sexist Sustainable City*, ed. Margrit Eichler. Toronto: Garamond Press.

Wilson, Elizabeth 1992. The Sphinx in the city: urban life, the control of disorder, and women. Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press.

Wilson, S.J. 1991. *Women, Families and Work*. Toronto, Montreal: MacGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd. (3rd edition).

Women and Geography Study Group (WGSG) 1984. *Geography and Gender: An introduction to feminist geography*. London: Hutchinson.

Young, Iris Marion 1990. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.