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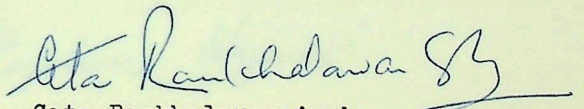
University of Toronto
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
TORONTO 181, ONTARIO

INX 260: Women - Oppression
and Liberation
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Please be advised that Dr. Mariarosa Dalla Costa, lecturer at the University of Padua, Italy, Faculty of Political Sciences and Selma James, had been invited by the University to give a lecture on "The Central Role of Women in the Class Struggle", which took place on Thursday, April 26th., 1973 at 8 p.m. in the Medical Sciences Building of the University of Toronto.



Ceta Ramkhalawansingh
Lecturer
INX 260: Women - Oppression and
Liberation
Department of Interdisciplinary Studies

THE GRADUATE FACULTY
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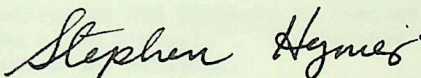
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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

May 29, 1973

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Please be advised that Dr. Mariarosa Dalla
Costa, lecturer at the University of Padua,
Italy, Faculty of Political Science, was
invited by this University to give a lecture
on Marxism and Feminism which took place on
April 25, 1973.



Stephen Hymer
Professor of Economics

SH:ls

State University of New York / College at Old Westbury

Institute for Policy Studies

100 Washington Avenue, New York, New York 11568

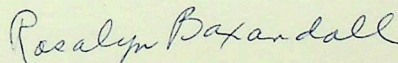
Box 210, Old Westbury
Long Island, New York 11568
Telephone (516) 876-3000

May 24, 1973

To whom it may concern:

Please be advised that Doctor Mariarosa Dalla Costa, lecturer at The University of Padova, Italy Faculty of Political Sciences had been invited to The New York State College at Old Westbury to lecture on "A Reorientation of Women and the Class Struggle". The lecture took place on April 26, 1973, was well received and attended.

Sincerely,



Rosalyn Baxandall
Women's Studies

Institute for Policy Studies

1520 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

(202) ADams 4-9382

June 1, 1973

To Whom It May Concern:

Please be advised that Dr. Mariarosa Dalla Costa, lecturer at the University of Padova, Faculty of Political Sciences, was invited by the Institute for Policy Studies to give a seminar on "Political Perspectives in the Women's Movement." This seminar took place on May 15, 1973 at the Institute.

Charlotte Bunch

Charlotte Bunch, Fellow
Institute for Policy Studies

QUEENS COLLEGE

of THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

FLUSHING • NEW YORK 11367

OFFICE OF THE HONORS DIRECTOR

TELEPHONE: 212-445-7500

May 15, 1973

To Whom It May Concern :

Please be advised that Dr. Maria Rosa Dalla Costa--lecturer at the University of Padova-- has been invited by this University to give a lecture in the Women's Studies Program on "Feminism, the New International", on April 25, 1973.

Sincerely yours,

Silvia Federici

Silvia Federici
Honors Program
Queens College

program: Univariate.

URB

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THE GRADUATE FACULTY OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Econ. 111 Socio-Economic Formations Spring 1973 Prof. S. Hymer

COURSE OUTLINE

In order to fulfill the requirements for this course, the student will be expected either to hand in a term paper or take an exam on the last day of class (May 16, 1973).

Those students who wish to write a term paper, please submit to the course assistant a brief description of the topic. The topic should relate to the material covered in class and in the readings or deal with one of the exam questions.

The exam will be a two hour in class essay exam. The questions you will be asked to answer during this time will be selected from the list of questions handed out in class several weeks before the exam. This is not a take home exam but you may bring in any notes and books to use during the exam.

Discussion group-study groups will meet Wednesday at 8 p.m. in Room 309.

Nadine Falton is the course assistant. She will be available after class to answer any questions, or from 5-6 p.m. on Wednesdays, Room 359.

<u>Lecture Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Readings-refer to outline reading list</u>
Jan. 11	Introduction: Transition to Capitalism	Marx: <u>Preface</u> and <u>Afterward</u>
Feb. 7	History of Development of Capitalism	Edwards, et.al. Williams, <u>The Great Evasion</u> Galbraith, <u>The New Industrial State</u> Kolko, <u>The Triumph of Conservatism</u>
Feb. 14	Capitalism's Dilemmas	Gorz, <u>Strategy for Labor</u> Weinstein, <u>The Corporate Ideal....</u>
Feb. 21	Multinational Corporation I	Williams, "The Large Corporations...." Hymer, "The Multinational Corp...."
Feb. 28	Multinational Corporation II	Assar Lindbeck Hymer & Roosevelt, "Comments on Lindbeck" Tuchman, <u>The Proud Tower</u>
March 7	Keynes	J.M. Keynes
March 14	China	Gurley, "Maoist Economic Development" Belden, <u>China Shakes the World</u> Barry Richman; <u>Fortune</u> article
March 21	Cuba	David Barkin
March 28	Development	Arthur Lewis
April 4	International Economy	Hymer, "The Internationalization"
April 11	Market Socialism	Roosevelt, "Market Socialism...."
April 25	Nationalism and Racism	
May 2	Feminism and Socialism	Margaret Benston; Juliette Mitchell; Dalla Costa articles
May 9	Summary	Sherman, "The Economics of Pure Communism"




for exam: univ. version

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THE GRADUATE FACULTY OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Eco. 111 Socio-Economic Formations Spring 1973 Prof. S. Hymor

READING LIST

1. Karl Marx, Preface to the Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Afterward to the Second German Edition in Volume I of Capital, New York: International Press, 1967.
2. Edwards, Reich & Weiskopf, The Capitalist System, New York: Prentice Hall, 1972.
3. Andre Gorz, Strategy for Labour, Boston: Beacon Press, 1967.
4. Stephen Hymor & Frank Roosevelt, "Comments on Lindbeck," Quarterly Journal of Economics, Nov. 1972.
5. William A. Williams, "The Large Corporation and American Foreign Policy," in David Horowitz, ed., Corporations and the Cold War, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967.
6. _____, The Great Evasion, Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964.
7. John K. Galbraith, The New Industrial State, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967.
8. Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism, New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963.
9. James Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal and the Liberal State, Boston: Beacon Press, 1963.
10. Stephen Hymor, "The Multinational Corporation and the Law of Uneven Development," in J. Bhugwati, ed. Economics and World Order, New York: Macmillan & Co., 1972.
11. J.M. Keynes, Essays in Persuasion, New York: Norton, 1963.
12. _____, The Economic Consequences of the Peace, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1920.
13. _____, "National Self-Sufficiency," The Yale Review, June, 1933.
14. Barbara Tuchman, The Proud Tower, New York: Macmillan, 1966.
15. Assar Lindbeck, The Political Economy of the New Left, New York: Harper & Row, 1971.
16. Arthur Lewis, "The Development of a Labour Surplus Economy," in Agrawala and Singh, The Economics of Underdevelopment.
17. Stephen Hymor, "The Internationalization of Capital," Journal of Economic Issues, March, 1972.
18. Margaret Benston, "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation," Monthly Review, 9/69.
19. Juliet Mitchell, "Women: The Longest Revolution," in Altbach, ed., From Feminism to Liberation, Cambridge, Mass: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1971, or in New Left Review, Nov./Dec., 1966.
20.  Mariarosa Dalla Costa, The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community; Selma James, A Woman's Place; pamphlet put out by the Falling Wall Press, Eng., 1972.

21. John G. Gurley, "Capitalist and Maoist Economic Development," Monthly Review, Feb., 1971.
22. Jack Belden, China Shakes the World, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970.
23. Barry Richman, Industrial Society in Communist China, New York: Random House, 1969.
24. "I Have seen China and They Work," Fortune, Aug., 1972.
25. David Barkin, "Redistribution of Consumption in Socialist Cuba," Review of Radical Political Economists (URPE), Fall, 1972.
26. Frank Roosevelt, "Market Socialism: A Humane Economy?", Journal of Economic Issues, Dec., 1969, or URPE, Summer, 1970.
27. Sherman, "The Economics of Pure Communism," Review of Radical Political Economists (URPE), Winter, 1970.

Esempio di esentazioni
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contorno "Capitale"

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- by Wally Secombe
Feb. 73.

MR
Dobson

The Housewife and her Labour Under Capitalism

- The family's relation to production
- Domestic labour and surplus value
- The relation of domestic labour to the productive forces
- Domestic labour: Economic and ideological reproductions
- The family's relation to base/superstructure
- Further results of locale and function
 1. Structural dependence
 2. The impact of labour power as a commodity
 3. The superstructural reinforcement of inequality
 4. The privatization of domestic life
 5. The derealization of domestic labour

The purpose of this paper is to examine the nature of domestic labour in capitalist societies, to attempt to situate the housewife within production and to discuss the implication of her work and locale for her consciousness of self and her relations within the family. 1

Domestic labour has largely been ignored by modern Marxists. Those who have considered the housewife have often dismissed her labour as occurring outside production and therefore somehow irrelevant to the dynamics of capital accumulation. Such a position situates the housewife solely within the superstructure and tends to deny her economic function. In any case, regardless of its theoretical import, such a position has had strategic implications for the left because it has downplayed the impact of housewives in the economy and more particularly has dismissed their potential within the class struggle.

Another characterization of domestic labour that has achieved some currency is that it is "pre-capitalist" 2. This term is at best a partial characterization (addressing the exclusion of domestic labour from commodity relations) and creates more problems than it resolves. Again the impact of this position has been to obscure rather than to clarify the role of housewives within the bourgeois order.

For many feminists, the theoretical inadequacies and political omissions of Marxists on the women's question is proof positive of the male dominated nature of Marxist theory, and reason enough to discard it. Certainly it is true that Marx did not explicitly elaborate an analysis of the domestic labourer. But this paper will attempt to show, beyond a doubt, that Marx, in *Capital*, did indeed lay the conceptual framework for understanding the specific character of domestic labour within capitalist relations. The shortcomings of subsequent generations of Marxist theoreticians and revolutionaries had little to do with the theoretical tools of Marxism but were failures in their commitment and application.

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1. It should be stated clearly what this paper is not. It is not an investigation of the changes which the family is undergoing in recent times. It does not make an analysis of the relationship between advanced capitalist crisis and family decomposition. This paper is more in the nature of a background paper which may hopefully be useful (together with its criticism) in contributing some elements of theoretical foundation to the development of a strategic position. The urgency of this latter task can not be overemphasized but the development of such a perspective will be necessarily a collective effort.
 2. C.F. Benston, Margaret The Political Economy of Women's Liberation, Monthly Review, September 1969

In order to situate domestic labour within production it is necessary first to describe the family's relations to the mode of production. For the totality of social relations that comprise a society are founded upon one central cluster of relations that substructure the rest, and are causally prior. These are the relations of production. The family is ultimately dependent upon the dominant mode of production for its existence and form.

The Family's Relations to Production

In feudal societies, the family was co-terminus with the basic unit of production, and as such, domestic labour was embedded within the labour of general production. Capitalism entailed fundamental alterations in the mode of production. These structural changes have altered the position of the domestic labourer within production. They are here briefly listed, so as to provide an initial overview of our investigation before proceeding to a full analysis of their implications for the development of the economy as a whole and for the consciousness of the housewife in particular.

The following general features of the capitalist mode of production pertain to domestic labour's position and function within it.

- 1. With the advent of industrial capitalism, the general labour process was split into two discrete units; a domestic and an industrial unit. The character of the work performed in each was fundamentally different. The domestic unit reproduced labour power for the labour market. The industrial unit produced goods and services for the commodity market.

This split in the labour process has produced a split in the labour force roughly along sexual lines - women into the domestic unit - males into industry.

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- 1. Perhaps the best general enunciation of this concept is the oft-cited passage from A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Charles H. Kerr & Co. p 911-12

"In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development in their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society - the real foundation on which rise the legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary, their social existence that determines their consciousness."

2. Within industry, the worker is divorced from the means of production and therefore from the fruits of his labour. The mode of appropriation is embedded within the industrial unit only. Although capital accumulates from the appropriation of the use value of both labours, it is only in production "proper" that wage is paid. One result of this is that the domestic unit is generally not considered to be part of the economy at all.

3. The domestic worker is divorced not only from the means of production but also from the means of exchanges. She is therefore dependent upon the redistribution of exchange value (accruing from their combined labour) to be conducted in private between her and her husband without the benefit of contract.

4. Because the wage form presides exclusively over labour within industry, it is only within this unit that the productivity of labour time is of interest to capital. Therefore it is only the labour of this unit that enters directly into the development of the productive forces.

This difference, coupled with the marked divergence in the function of the labour performed in each unit, has produced massive differences in the respective social structures and the labour process of each unit. These differences, reflected in the differing consciousness of workers in the two realms. Because gender difference correlates with work locale and consciousness, character differences appeared as biological destiny to male and female workers alike.

5. The split of the labour process, divorces production from consumption and interposed the commodity market between the two, so that family and individual consumption necessarily occurs in commodity form.

Domestic Labour and Surplus Value

Surplus value is that value created by the labour of the worker after she/he has produced the value necessary for the means of her/his own subsistence. In other words, the entire basis for the generation of wealth is that labour power produces value above and beyond that amount necessary for its own subsistence. In the Grundrisse, Marx clearly illustrates the division of the labour time of the worker into two parts.

"If a day's labour was required in order to keep a worker alive for a day, capital could not exist, for the day's labour would be exchanged for its own product and capital would not be able to function as capital and consequently could not survive ... If however a mere half day's labour is enough to keep a worker alive during a whole day's labour, then surplus value results automatically.

(Grundrisse, p. 230)

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The first part is termed "necessary labour time" - it is within this time that the worker produces value equivalent to that which is necessary to sustain him and his family. This value is expressed as the worker's wage.

In the second portion of the workers time - surplus labour time - he produces value which is transformed into capital for the capitalist. The entire accumulation of capital is based upon the value produced by surplus labour time above and beyond necessary labour time.

At this point, the nature of necessary labour time must be examined closely. For included in this category must be that labour time (the domestic labour time of the housewife) necessary to the reproduction of labour power. Marx was clear on this point:

"The owner of labour power is mortal. If his appearance in the market is to be continuous .. the seller of labour power must perpetuate himself by procreation. The labour power withdrawn from the market by wear and tear and death, must continually be replaced by, at the very least, an equal amount of fresh labour power. Hence the sum of the means of subsistence necessary for the production of labour power must include the means necessary for the labourer's substitutes, i.e. his children, in order that the race of peculiar commodity owners may perpetuate its appearance in the market." (Capital I, p. 150)

Necessary labour time is therefore inclusive of domestic labour time - the labour time that reproduces labour power.

By including domestic labour in the labour process which generates surplus value, it is now possible to analyze this labour properly within capitalist productive relations.

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1. To be clear, Marx did not mean by this that there was literally a part of the day that the worker devoted to necessary labour and another time for creating surplus. Rather, these expressions denote that within the total time that labour is exercised a portion of the value created returns to the worker as wage while another part becomes the capitalist's. It is this proportion conveniently expressed in a time dimension, that is described by the terms necessary and surplus labour time.

Since the wage worker's labour power is constantly being consumed in the act of production, it must be constantly renewed and restored in order for the worker to continue working. This restoration and renewal of labour power, including the production of a new generation of labourers, is the central function of domestic labour. The value of this labour, is determined in the same manner as the value of any labour that produces a commodity.

"The value of labour power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour time necessary for the production and consequently also the reproduction of this special article ...the value of labour power resolves itself into the value of a definite quantity of the means of subsistence ... Its value is already fixed before it goes into circulation since a definite quantity of social labour has been spent upon it ... The value of a commodity is determined not by the quantity of labour realized in it, but by the quantity of living labour necessary for its production." Capital I, p 149

Domestic labour, the work that goes into the worker, is the principal determinant of his value in the labour market. The time lag that occurs from the moment this labour was expended until the time when it is realized through the worker's pay cheque is, of course, highly valuable. Some of this labour was expended in childhood - a full generation before it begins to be realized. But because the basic nature of labour, for Marxists, is its cumulative embodiment in a final product that achieves use value (and under capitalism, achieves exchange value) the variable time delay should cause no real problems for it does not alter the basic nature of the process. 1

What then of surplus value? How does domestic labour figure in its generation?

The key to surplus generation in capitalist relations is that the wage form does not achieve equivalence with the use value that the worker's labour power has for capital. The exclusion of domestic labour from this equation is central to its non-equivalence.

1. "The reproduction of the working class carries with it the accumulation of skill that is handed down from one generation to another."
Capital I p. 587

"But the past labour that is embodied in the labour power and the living labour that it can call into action ... are two totally different things. The former determines the exchange value of the labour power. The latter is its use value ... this difference is what the capitalist had in view when he was purchasing the labour power ... the seller of labour power realizes its exchange value and parts with its use value. He cannot take one without giving the other." Capital I p. 174

Here then, is the 'core' of the matter. Surplus value is generated out of this difference between the exchange value of labour and its use value to capital (realizable later as exchange value in the sale of the commodity).

The categories of necessary and surplus labour time discussed previously merely express this same relation as one of time. In both cases the result of our investigation is the same. Domestic labour is the principal component of the wage workers labour power. Domestic labour time must be included in the calculation of necessary labour time. Domestic labour must therefore be considered a vital component in the generation of surplus value.

Some may argue that family labour cannot be considered really "necessary" as such. They would point out that it is possible to perform wage labour while living alone - in fact many people do. This may appear to be true, but in fact, necessary domestic labour does not disappear when the wage-worker does not support a family. Where a worker lives alone, domestic labour is either performed by wage labour with a service function paid directly from the workers wage (restaurant, laundry, domestic service) or it is performed by the worker her/himself in time additional to time spent on the job.

The very fact that service labour has exchange value (draws wages) where it is not performed domestically is a strong indication that domestic labour is, in reality, necessary labour within the relations of production.

Secondly, it must be kept in mind that the worker was produced in the first place by domestic labour. (meal preparation, laundry housecleaning, socialization etc.). It is not just the daily maintenance of the present worker but the preparation of a future generation of workers ("the labourers substitutes") that is involved in domestic labour time.

It is a-historical to say that domestic activity is not really necessary just because some workers do not as adults live in families. In an epoch where the majority of adults and the vast

majority of children live in family units and where this grouping is the primary unit of the reproduction of labour power, the exceptions cannot be regarded as determinant in the dominant mode of social activity.

Marx, when using the economic terms "necessary labour time" and "means of subsistence", always refers to general historical conditions which exist above and beyond mere physical necessity. He writes:

"If the owner of labour power works today, tomorrow he must again be able to repeat the same process in the same conditions as regards health and strength. His means of subsistence must therefore be sufficient to maintain him in his normal state as a labouring individual. His natural wants, such as food, clothing fuel and housing vary according to the climatic and physical conditions of his country. On the other hand, the number and extent of his so-called necessary wants, as also the modes of satisfying them, are themselves to a great extent on the degree of civilization of a country, more particularly on the conditions under which, and consequently on the habits and degree of comfort in which, the class of free labourers has been formed. In contradistinction therefore, to the case of other commodities, there enters into the determination of the value of labour-power a historical and moral element." (Capital I . 149-50)

Marxists must include domestic labour time in necessary labour time and consider it as an integral part of the relations of production. Just because the bourgeois construct of the wage form appears to exclude domestic labour from the formation of capital is absolutely no reason for those whose interests are opposed to the bourgeois order to perpetuate this appearance as reality.

Marx took pains to warn of the deception involved in the wage exchange.

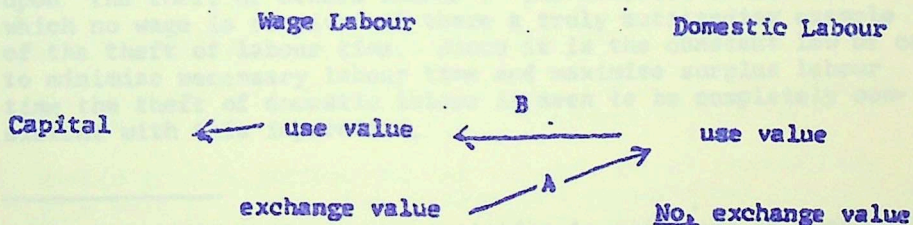
"The wage form thus extinguishes every trace of the division of the working day into necessary labour and surplus labour into paid and unpaid labour. All labour appears to be paid labour." (Capital I p. 550)

Here is a clear indication of how domestic labour, left out of the wage equation "disappears" as real labour. In Marx's words the wage form "makes the actual relations invisible".

When domestic labour is included in necessary labour time an analysis of the domestic worker's relation to capital can proceed. It is clearly the pay cheque of the wage worker that must sustain both components of labour.

But the wage appears to be payment for activity in only one of these parts. Domestic labour is therefore sustained indirectly by wage labour. But wage labour is reciprocally sustained by domestic labour. In this way, capital gets these two forms of labour for the price of one. This includes the wage workers forty hours of weekly work plus the estimated ninety hours performed by the housewife in a week.

These relations could be illustrated as follows:



*The arrows indicate the following relationships:

- A - that the worker's wage sustains domestic labour
- B - that domestic labour reproduces labour power

In fact, the relation between unpaid labour (which includes domestic labour) and paid labour is at the root of capital accumulation and the determination at the wage rate:

"The correlation between accumulation of capital and rate of wages is nothing else than the correlation between unpaid labour transformed into capital and the additional paid labour necessary for the setting in motion of this additional capital.

If the quantity of unpaid labour supplied by the working class and accumulated by the capitalist class, increases so rapidly that its conversion into capital requires an extraordinary addition of paid labour, then wages use, and, all other circumstances remaining equal, the unpaid labour diminishes in proportion. But as soon as this deminuation touches the point at which the surplus-labour that nourishes capital is not longer supplied in normal quantity, a reaction sets in: a smaller part of revenue is capitalized accumulation lags, and the movement of use in wages receives a check." (Capital I, p.634)

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This entire passage places in sound structural context the relation between unpaid and paid labour in capital accumulation. The oft-noted role of women as part of the industrial reserve army, shunted in and out of industrial production depending on the phase of the business cycle, can be understood, once the underlying relation of paid/unpaid labour is shown.

In summation then; flowing from the separation of labour from capital, domestic labour stands outside the wage transaction. While capital indirectly appropriates 1) the use value of domestic labour, the capitalist relations of exchange exclude domestic labour and in this manner, obfuscate the underlying relations of production.

This mystification is central to the operation of the capitalist system. If domestic labour were paid at even the minimum legal rate, the accumulation of capital would cease. 2) As Marx said, in the Grundrisse, the accumulation of capital is based upon "the theft of others labour". The domestic labour for which no wage is received is there a truly outstanding example of the theft of labour time. Since it is the constant law of capital to minimize necessary labour time and maximize surplus labour time the theft of domestic labour is seen to be completely consistent with this imperative.

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1. The phrase indirect appropriation is used here in recognition of the fact that the mechanism of appropriation (the relation of the worker to the company) occurs at the point of production once removed from the family domain. In this sense, the appropriation of use value created domestically is an appropriation occurring indirectly through the appropriation of the wage workers labour power.
 2. There is no attempt here to speculate on the changes that are possible within capitalist relations to alter the relation of domestic labour to wage labour without eliminating surplus accumulation. It is being maintained however that in its historical form and at the present, this relation is essential to surplus accumulation.

Perhaps Marx's most explicit overview of the entire process is this:

"By converting part of his capital into labour power, the capitalist augments the value of his entire capital. He kills two birds with one stone. He profits not only by what he receives from, but by what he gives to, the labourer. The capital given in exchange for labour power is converted into necessaries by the consumption of which the muscles, nerves, bones and brains of existing labourers are begotten. Within the limits of what is strictly necessary, the individual consumption of the working class is, therefore, the reconversion of the means of subsistence given by capital in exchange for labour power, into fresh labour power at the disposal of capital for exploitation.... The maintenance and reproduction of the working class is, and must ever be, a necessary condition to the reproduction of capital." (Capital I p. 585)

The Organization and Technology of Domestic Labour

The separation of domestic from wage labour has had profound historical consequences on the development of housework.

Within general production, any increase in the productivity of a unit of labour time results in a proportional increase in surplus value. Since such an increase raises profits and provides a corporation with competitive advantage, it becomes a general law of capitalist development that management constantly seeks to increase the productivity of a unit of labour time. The impetus of this imperative has produced within the history of capitalism a relatively rapid development of the productive forces.

This development has largely by-passed domestic work. As a labour process, this work has not undergone a corresponding development but has remained relatively stagnant. Why is this so?

The fact that housework is not performed under wage contract means that the capitalist has no particular interest in the productivity of a unit of domestic labour time. There exists no continual impetus to reorganize domestic labour to improve its efficiency. Whether a domestic task is completed in one hour or four has no effect on capital. As long as the wage worker appears at the plant gates every morning, able and willing to work (and his children in the future) that is all that really matters. It is no surprise then that the nuclear family household, with the single labourer working alone is, the least efficient organization of a labour process existant within capitalism. The stagnation of the domestic labour process, within a developing economy, can be described as an uneven development of the productive forces.

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It is principally through commodity consumption that domestic labour is combined with the productive forces of industry. For it is via this route that the products of advancing technology are introduced into the labour process of the household. But this is in no way a progressive application of technology. Capital's interests are served in personal consumption by the most inefficient product application. In this way, more commodities per capita can be sold. 1)

And so the uneven and combined development of the domestic labour process has resulted in a constant infusion of new technology into the household combined with a completely stagnant organization of labour. A century ago the housewife toiled alone in her kitchen over a wood stove, now she has an electric stove and an array of new fangled devices but she still toils alone in exactly the same organization of labour.

"to the extent that she must in isolation procreate, raise and be responsible for children, a high mechanization of domestic chores does not free any time for the women to leave the household. She is always on duty ... her work day is unending not because she has no machines but because she is isolated." (Dalla Costa, Radical America, Vol. 6 No. 1 p. 75)

While broad layers of the proletariat have gained higher levels of technical expertise and general knowledge through the re-organization of the labour process, the housewife has been largely by-passed in this historical development. The level of skill and knowledge generated from her work has made little advance in the last century. Because other labour processes have been developed over this time span, the position of the domestic labourer relative to all but the lowest sectors of the proletariat has deteriorated. General advances in education and culture have mitigated this effect somewhat but the housewife's atomized location removed from the public milieu, has minimized even this generalized transmission.

1. The small nuclear family, living within a self contained dwelling unit that is completely outfitted with all the commodities of daily life is an idea vehicle for grossly inefficient consumption. Consider the duplication and underutilization involved in stoves, fridges, cars, washers, dryers, sinks, toilets, etc. for this unit averaging 4.5 people.

Furthermore, the modern two generation nuclear family has produced a large number of fragmented peripheral populations who do not fit within it (grandparents, university students, singles, young marrieds). These peripheral populations live in atomized dwelling units of a smaller size than the family and are even less efficient than the family as a unit of commodity consumption.

Economic and Ideological Reproductions

"Every social process of production is, at the same time, a process of reproduction"

(Capital p. 578)

The Reproduction of Capital

"The reproduction of a mass of labour-power which must increasingly reappear itself in capital for that capital's own reproduction... This reproduction of labour-power forms, in fact, an essential part of the reproduction of capital itself." (Capital, p. 529)

1. There are four overlapping sub-processes involved in the total process of reproduction. 1) Production, 2) Circulation, 3) Expansion, 4) Adaptation. It is not necessary to explore each of these sub-processes in length. Suffice to say that they are included because the subjective dynamics of capitalist development necessitates such one for a total reproduction of reproduction.
2. The social formation per se has no will of its own to reproduce the conditions of its own production. Logic must intervene if not necessary to account for reproduction. Hence, the social order serves the interests of a particular class, and it is this class that secures its own reproduction by maintaining the social formation in a way suitable to its interests.
3. Althusser, E.P. Essays on Ideological State Apparatuses in Lenin and Other Essays - 223

A social formation in order to continue to exist, must reproduce 1) continually, the conditions of its own production. 2) This means concretely that three different reproductions must take place - 1) in the means of production, 2) in the forces of production (labour power) and 3) in the relations of production. 3)

Domestic labour is integral to the second and third of these reproductions. While both are embedded within the same labour process and are carried out by the same labourer within the same work day, it is important to keep them conceptually distinct because they reproduce different aspects of the social totality. The reproduction of labour power is an economic function while the reproduction of the relations of production is ideological in nature. If these functions are analyzed separately, the family's location within the base/superstructure edifice may then be more precisely considered.

The Reproduction of Labour Power

"The reproduction of a mass of labour power which must increasingly reincorporate itself in capital for that capital's self expansion ... this reproduction of labour power forms, in fact, an essential of the reproduction of capital itself." (Capital I p. 319)

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1. There are four overlapping subconcepts involved in the total process of reproduction. 1) Perpetuation 2) Renewal 3) Extension 4) Adaption. It is not necessary to explore each of these subconcepts at length. Suffice to say that they are included because the objective dynamics of capitalist development necessitates each one for a total presentation of reproduction.
 2. The social formation per se has no volition of its own to reproduce the conditions of its own production. Super human teleology is not necessary to account for reproduction. Rather, the social order serves the interests of a particular class, and it is this class that ensures its own reproduction by maintaining the social formation in a way suitable to its interests.
 3. Althusser, C.F. Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatuses in Lenin and Other Essays - NLB

The reproduction of labour power is the reproduction of the capacity for work. Domestic labour reproduces labour power on two levels which proceed concurrently a) on a daily basis, b) on a generational basis. The former gets the wage worker "to the plant gates every morning" the latter reproduces the next generation of both wage and domestic labour power.

To show this concretely, I have broken down this capacity into three component parts and have detailed the domestic labour that reproduces them. Also described (by letters) are the two levels delineated above. a) daily b) generational.

<u>Labour Power Reproduced</u>	<u>Domestic Labour Required</u>
1. Physical maintenance	pregnancy and childbirth ^B , child care ^B , housecleaning ^{AB} , cooking ^{AB} , schedule management ^{AB}
2. Psychological maintenance	general tension absorption and management ^{AB} , promotion of cordial family relations ^{AB} , sexual relations ^A
3. Skills	child socialization ^B (now shared with the school) 1

1. The history of capitalism has involved the relatively rapid development of the productive forces. This takes the form of an increasing technological complexity and a corresponding advanced specialization in the division of labour.

-As a result of this process certain key facets of the reproduction of labour power have been assumed by the state. This has involved an exponential growth of education facilities (technical schools, community colleges, universities). They have the dual functions of teaching a wide array of specialized skills to meet the requirements of capital and inculcating the attitudes appropriate to the perpetuation of the existing relations of production.

The increasing state responsibility for these functions has eroded the family's role in this aspect of the reproduction of both labour power and the relations of production.

Reproduction of the Relations of Production

The family has a special role to play in the ideological reproduction of the relations of production. The state (through its educational and media apparatus) is a complement but not a substitute for the family. For it is the family, and above all the mother 1) that produces willing participants for the social order. The early socialization of children is primarily the mother's task. Eventually young adults must be produced who have internalized a repertoire of attitudes and perceptual structures that enable them to self-actualize willingly in an adjusted manner within bourgeois relations. The formation of character suitable to the requirements of life within the capitalist world is accomplished, first and foremost through primary socialization, in the early years of life. Despite serious flaws in his method (its biologism and a-historicism) Freud was perfectly correct when he pointed out the centrality of the first six years in the formation of character structure. This period of life occurs almost in its entirety within the two-generation nuclear family in the capitalist epoch. It is in these first years that the ground work is laid for the child's eventual adult character. The necessity of aligning this character structure with the child's eventual position in the social formation is apparent from the outset of life. Socialization must be future-directed, for the child will eventually integrate her/himself with a social order which is itself in the process of changing.

Primary socialization occurs within the family (a microstructure) in order to effect an eventual alignment within the social formation (a macrostructure) - this alignment is indeed a complex phenomenon. It "makes sense" abstractly. It is apparent that this must happen, but how it concretely occurs is largely an unknown. Bridging the gap between such remote and compartmentalized facets of the social whole is of mind-stretching scope.

The complex of mediations that link the family to other structures within the social formation must be shown. The analysis in this section is merely a crude first approximation - a sketch of the terrain.

In setting out to investigate the nature of any ideological reproduction (in this case, the character formation of children within the family) it is necessary first to establish the general nature of consciousness and the process of its (re)production.

1. Mother will be used in referring to the housewife's role in ideological reproduction, while domestic labourer is used when economic reproduction is referred to.

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Within a Marxist framework, consciousness is situated in a dialectical relationship with material reality. "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their social existence but on the contrary, their social existence that determines their consciousness." Consciousness then is structurally derived from the social configuration of the real world. But this is not a passive process of sensual reception and contemplation. Rather consciousness is the derivation of productive social activity (of labour in the broader sense) - human subjects acting in concert upon the material world to transform it to their own ends.

The emphasis here is on the dynamic relational quality of consciousness, as opposed to a static view of the reception and storage of impressions. Just as the potential of new relations is immanent in a given social configuration, so correspondingly, the consciousness of the interactive subject perceives new potential within the actual and acts upon the social terrain in order to bring about new relations.

There is, in this theory of consciousness, a great scope for including at one pole, consciousness formed from mass social phenomena to the others - the consciousness of the individual. This is not to say that one reduces into the other, or that mass consciousness, is, in any sense, the sum total of individual consciousness. For Marxists the activity of a social class is not the sum total of the activity of its members. The same relations applies to the consciousness of each. Clearly a great portion of individual consciousness never directly enter into public phenomena and visa versa. What these two poles have in common however, is that in each case consciousness is generated by the socially active subject interacting with the objective world.

Piaget, widely regarded as the world's foremost authority on the formation of the child's intelligence, puts it this way:

"The great merit of Marx is that he made a distinction in social phenomena, between an effective basis and a superstructure which oscillates between symbolism and an adequate consciousness, in the same sense (and Marx himself explicitly says this) as psychology is obliged to make a distinction between actual behaviour and consciousness ... The social superstructure stands in the same relation to its basis as does individual consciousness to behaviour." (Piaget, Introduction a l'epistemologie genétique, Vol III, Paris 1950 p 249)

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Thus far, the theory of consciousness has been stated only generally. It requires a socio-historical concretization to be fully developed. In order to understand the development of bourgeois consciousness in the child, it is necessary first to establish how the internal relations of the family are based upon the general capitalist relations of production and secondly how the child's character formation is the product of her/his active relations within the family.

How are the internal relations of the family established? What in the first place determines the particular social patterns or configurations that shape the child's character? Starting from the principal that the whole structures the parts (over and above the interaction of the parts on one another) we have seen how the capitalist mode of production fulfills the requirements of capital for an economic and an ideological reproduction performed by privatized hidden labour excluded from commodity relations. The housewife - mother is the primary producer of these reproductions, working within the "social factory" of the two generation nuclear family. The conditions under which she labours are a particular instance of the general capitalist relations of production. This extension of the relations of production into every realm of the social formation is an essential feature of the capitalist system.

As soon as capitalist production is firmly established, it not only maintains this separation (labour from capital) but reproduces it on a continually extending scale. (Capital I VAI p 752)

Within the capitalist social formation, its central production relations, namely: 1) property relations, 2) authority relations, 3) division of labour, 4) relation of exchange all are reproduced within the nuclear family as 1) monogamy 2) patriarchy, 3) sex roles (breadwinner/housewife), 4) redistribution of wage.

By asserting that these internal relations of the family are a particular instance of the general relations of production, it is not maintained that the family is somehow a duplication in miniature of the factory. It means rather that family relations are another distinct level of relations. Certainly the general and dominant relations of production are manifest within the family, but the form they take is distinct because the structure and function of the realm are distinct. The household's not the factory but another part of the social totality. Its general alignment within the whole is secured through the mediation of the relations of production (occurring not only structurally but also superstructurally) but those relations will be mediated in configurations specific to the realm.

To concretize this rather abstract formulation by example I will address the division of labour, and attempt to show how this general productive relation is manifest within the family and aligns it structurally.

As has been mentioned elsewhere in this paper, the fracturing of general production into two tended to split the labour force along sexual lines. The division of labour that occurs at the point of production cannot be considered in isolation from the complimentary division of labour that occurs within the family, 1) A massive segment of the labour force must perform the necessary labour in absence from the realm of production.

Divergencies in the structure of these realms and the character and function of the work conducted in each then became manifest as sexual differences. Roles, specific to sex, were thus entrenched.

Roles are patterned activity mediating between structural relations and character formation. As such, they produce and encapsulate consciousness. Because of the sexual division of labour within the couple, the role of mother/housewife is a complimentary role to father/breadwinner. As a woman goes through the day preparing meals, cleaning house, getting kids off to school etc. she is involved in patterned activity that generates her identity both for herself and other members of the family. The various family members have a shared, approximately reciprocal perception of her. Her character takes on the appearance of an autonomous biological destiny.

Of course her self conception also acts back upon her role to influence how she carries it out. In this way she measures herself against an ideal (e.g. Am I a good mother?) This idealized conception of motherhood which becomes an aspiration and a prod against which she (and other family members) measure her behaviour, is not primarily generated within the family, but is an intrusion of bourgeois ideology from outside mediated superstructurally. Civil law enforces her role and legitimates it legally, while the institutions of church, school and mass media propogate the ideology of motherhood constantly.

1. Even female occupations within industrial production tend to be an extension of domestic services, (e.g. waitresses, stewardesses, secretaries, nurses, teachers). This reflects the impact of the entire division of labour within the industrial sphere as well as that within the family. Clearly in the history of capitalism, the specificity of womens work within the family has been dominant in defining appropriate work roles.

In this manner, the relations of production are mediated within the family at a structural level primarily but are also reinforced by ideological models intruding superstructurally. The consciousness that the family holds of its members is thus the product of these intersecting mediations, which are embodied in the roles respective family member play.

This paper is not the appropriate place to investigate the complex intricacies of child socialization within the nuclear family. What has hopefully been established here is the structural foundations upon which that socialization proceeds - the alignment of the internal relations of the family with the dominant relations of production. The child's character is formed then by way of her/his active involvement within the social relations of the family. Since the mother is absolutely primary for the child, their relationship becomes the principal vehicle for the character formation of the child. Her labour in this regard is labour to ideological ends.

The family-'s Relation to Base/Superstructure

Now that an assessment of the family's labour has been made, the family's relation within the base/superstructure edifice may be attempted. The answer is not particularly neat, or one dimensional for clearly an analysis of the labour performed domestically demonstrates elements of both base and superstructure. The reproduction of labour power makes the family integral to production, an indispensable basis upon which the official economy is founded. By placing domestic labour within the relations of production are we calling her a proletarian? A balance sheet of her status shows that on the one hand:

- 1) she does not directly sell her labour power
- 2) her work does not bring her into a direct relation with capital

on the other hand

- 3) her labour contributes to capital accumulation and is indirectly appropriated by capital.
- 4) she relies upon an indirect payment for her labour in order to live. This comes from capital through the wage worker to her.
- 5) her labour does produce a commodity - the special commodity - living labour power.

The result of the balance sheet then indicates that the domestic labourer is not, in the strict sense, a proletarian. Just as clearly she is not an unproductive worker outside the relations of production as has often been maintained by Marxists.

The housewives of proletarians are, in fact, a backstage proletariat, providing indispensable support to the onstage production (without which the show could not go on) but never actually appearing in it. If we could imagine that in this production, the actors must hire their own prop woman out of their own wages, we would approximate the status of housewives.

Ideologically, the family is also indispensable, for this is the primary arena for the socialization of children. Churches, schools and media are compliments but not substitutes for the family in reproducing the relations of production.

A substantial portion of the housewife's ideological labour involves the socialization of her children. The mother's role has elements paralleling the roles of policeman, teacher and social worker. These occupations are all components of the state apparatus and as such are located in the super structure. Insofar as mother performs these same roles within the family, she can be described as being an agent of superstructure.

The family then, and the labour of the housewife that sustains it, has elements of both base and superstructure. The family is the product of the intersection of both economic and ideological instances of the relations of production. As a structure within the social formation, its location and function are uniquely dual - it sustains simultaneously both the economy and the ideology of the capitalist system.

Further Results of Locale and Function

1. Structure Dependence

The advent of capitalism fractured the collective labour of the precapitalist family and established the division between industrial and domestic labour. This division reproduced a physical separation in the location of these labours. Thus a sexual division of labour became a physical separation of the sexes.

For the housewife this has meant an enforced daily separation from the product of her labour - the living capacities of her husband and children who are consumed in alien production. When the husband returns from work he is exhausted - his labour power has been expended.

¹ The separation of the labourer from the product of his labour is generally considered to pertain only to the proletarian. The fact that it also occurs for the wife in the household is usually ignored by Marxists as a by-product of their failure to place domestic labour within production.

His wife must spend the majority of her time before he returns to work restoring his capacity to endure the next shift.

He is officially paid for his part in this collective labour, she is not. Her contribution to his labour power is hidden. Her exclusion from the wage transaction spells her total material dependence upon her husband who supplies the money necessary for her life and the life of their children. It is her husband's position in production that defines her class affiliation and relative social status within the class. The possibilities of her life are literally circumscribed by his income, job, location, security and status.

One of the most crippling aspects of this relation is that the redistribution of her husband's wage is an unofficial private transaction conducted between them as individuals. It has many of the qualities of a donation - he "gives" her money for the week - she must "ask" for more if she needs it.

This ritual has much the same form as the granting of allowances to children. Neither of the participants perceives it as a relation of exchange for the value of her labour. He, at least, can retain a minimal awareness that his wage is an exchange for his labour. This she is denied.

There are no recognized bargaining units for domestic labourers which a wife can join. Because her relation with capital is mediated by her husband, any action she takes in defense of her interests is an action against him, which does not get at capital. She may be charged by the state with "desertion". In effect, she is under a permanent injunction against striking on the threat of the loss of her children.

The fact that she finds it difficult to take independent action against capital without jeopardizing her husband and children, shifts the locus of her struggle inside the family and pits labourer against labourer. Their relation becomes one of structured antagonism which the ideology of marriage harmony can scarcely veil.

Her husband becomes the instrument of her reduction.

"By the non payment of a wage ... the figure of the boss is concealed behind that of the husband. He appears as the sole recipient of domestic services and this gives an ambiguous and slavlike character to housework. The husband and children, through their loving involvement, their loving blackmail, become the first foremen, the immediate controllers of this labour."
(Dalla Costa, Radical America, Vol 6 No. 1 p. 81)

Of all the structural divisions in the proletariat the division between domestic and industrial labourers is probably the most severe, and the most detrimental to the class as a whole. Internal family feuds brutalize and pacify women and rob husbands of their militance on the job. Trade unionists often comment that there is nothing that weakens a striker's will more than pressure from his wife to return to work. (Of course, the opposite is also true, militants are often made by spirited wives who hang tough in a strike situation.)

In addition, housewives form a large part of the perpetual pool of reserve labour who are brought into production temporarily to break strikes.

All these structural factors combine to produce tensions between the sexes within the proletariat that divert energy away from class struggle. Whether women's radicalization will cut across class power or contribute to it is largely a matter of how these tensions are resolved. Can the woman's position within the family be loosened sufficiently to break her struggle out against capital (e.g. struggles for community day care, rent strikes etc.) or will her frustrations remain hurried inside the family? These are problems the Left must address

2. The Impact of Labour Power as a Commodity

If the male proletarian is the family's only means of subsistence, his welfare is paramount. In this his family is forced to regard his health and ability to work as a most precarious commodity. The fluctuating price he brings on the labour market, loss of pay due to lay off, injury, sickness or strike; all these unknowns have direct repercussions on the worker's family. They create underlying anxiety and insecurity which take a heavy toll on the family unit.

Similarly, children are future worker commodities. The general conditions of the labour market that will determine their money worth are not yet known but can only be anticipated. The socialization of children is viewed with their future commodity worth and accompanying status uppermost in mind. One of the most crucial indications of "successful" socialization is the eventual occupation of the son or daughters husband.

It is virtually inevitable under these conditions that the proletarian couple will push their children to be upwardly mobile, to achieve greater wealth, status and security than they did.

"If a working class child shows particular aptitudes the whole family immediately concentrates on this child, gives him the best conditions, often sacrificing the others with the hope that he will carry them all out of the working class. This in effect becomes the way capital moves through the aspirations of the parents to enlist their help in disciplining fresh labour power." (Dalla Costa, Radical America Vo. 6 No. 1 p. 72)

And so these structural imperatives that force the family to regard the wage worker and future wage workers as commodities on the labour market have a profoundly conservatising effect upon the consciousness of the family members. But it is the housewife who is particularly alienated in this structure. For the nature of her work is that it is entirely a labour for others, that it is a constant repetitive routine to reproduce the labour power of the other members of the family in the market place for the use of capital.

3. The Superstructural Reinforcement of Inequality

In such a situation of prolonged structural inequality, the cause of this imbalance becomes obscured by its effect and a "naturalization" of the inequality takes place. Apparently it is the natural talents and temperament of women that suits them for this special vocation. The cause/effect inversion assures the acquiescence of women in the face of structurally produced powerlessness.

The law, as the superstructural expression of this structural relation, draws loosely defined terms of "non-support" for the husband who withholds a reasonable portion of his wage but this merely serves to reinforce and legitimate the wife's status as a dependent.

"... the husband's legal obligation to support the family is not an unmixed blessing for the wife. That obligation has been cited, for example, as justifying his right to choose the family home. It has not doubt also played an important part in solidifying his legal role as head and master of the family. For in according the husband this position within the family the law often seems to be applying on a grand scale, the modest principle that "he who pays the piper calls the tune." Leo Kanowitz: Women and the Law

"As part of the rights of consortium, the husband is entitled to the services of his wife. If the wife works outside the home for strangers, she is usually entitled to her earnings. But domestic services which she gives

her husband are generally considered part of her wifely duties. The wife's services and society are so essential a part of what the law considers the husband is entitled to as part of the marriage that it will not recognize any agreement between spouses that the husband is to pay for such services or society." Your Marriage and the Law:
Pitpel & Zavin

4. The Privatization of Domestic Life

A significant result of the family's location in the capitalist system has been the privatization of domestic life. The separation of the family from the work place has divorced its activity (and particularly the life-work of the domestic labourers) from the public realm. The family takes up residence literally in atomized self-contained dwelling units behind closed doors. The home in capitalist societies is architecturally structured to enforce the family's privacy.

At the same time, commodity relations have been generalized into every public sphere. All social intercourse in public is marked by the supremacy of exchange value. This has voided the public milieu of all interpersonally satisfying social exchanges. Human needs for intimacy, companionship, spontaneity, ease and affirmation cannot be met in the socially bankrupt public milieu of mass culture.

People are literally driven into private to attempt to satisfy those needs. Their daily foray into public must be counter-balanced with a time of retreat. The privatized family home functions as this vital realm where public tension can be displaced and absorbed. The housewife's role is central in all this. With the heightened dichotomy between public and private space, her primary responsibility is to sustain and orchestrate the private implosion of public tension. She coordinates family activity in order to manage tension. How much of the evening hours do wives spend keeping their children "out of the father's hair?"

Above all family conflict must be muted, and at the very least, contained behind closed doors. The spill over of discord into the public realm is avoided for it reflects badly upon the women's competence in tension managing.

The strong differentiation between public and private space heightens the impact of home as an atomized ghetto that stifles the housewife's social development.

She is cut off from the contact with other women and with her class that could breed feelings of solidarity and common purpose. She is effectively excluded from class struggle and other forms of social revolte - the invaluable forums of the oppressed where capacities for cooperation and collective power are discovered.

5. The Derealization of Domestic Labour

The economic effect of the family's exclusion from commodity relations is to contribute to the formation of surplus value - the ideological effect is to derealize domestic labour as real work. How does this come about?

With the concept of commodity fetishism, Marx cut through bourgeois relations and laid bare the dichotomy between appearance and essence in capitalist society. Commodity fetishism is the mechanism by which the social order appears to its agents to be something other than what is really is.

The appearance/essence dichotomy occurs because the relations of exchange (of which the wage transaction is one) do not correspond to the relations of production. The mechanism of the marketplace appears to realize this correspondence but it in fact veils what is really occurring.

Marx writes:

"... consequently the relations of producers to the sum total of their labour is presented to them as a social relation existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour. To them, their own social action takes the form of the action of objects which rule the producers instead of being ruled by them." (Capital I, p. 43)

It is clear that commodity fetishism has a dual impact - it is, at once, both a domination and a mystification.

A Domination: the essence of this is that commodities, and the commodity form, which are initially the product of human labour, rise to a position of impersonal dominance over the lives of the producers. In this way commodity relations operate independent of the wills of the workers and since these relations are all pervasive and inescapable they impose their rule upon the lives of the worker subjects.

See New Left Review 65 - Norman Geras on Commodity Fetishism

B Mystification: generally this refers not to pure illusion per se, but rather to real economic relations as such. The mystification is that these surface relations veil or camouflage other deeper, more essential relations (class relations) and are at the same time regarded as products of value ("self evident necessity imposed by nature").

In this way, a socio-historical form is naturalized and rendered eternal "appearing to the producers to be real and final."

How does all this apply to domestic labour? The core of the matter is that!

- 1. domestic labour reproduces labour power and is embedded within the relations of production
- 2. it is forced out of the exchange relations of value - it draws no wage.

The relations of exchange are in contradiction with the relations of production. The result of this is that domestic labour disappears as "real" work.

The following passage by Marx on commodity fetishism shows this clearly, and reveals the secret of the disenfranchisement of domestic labour:

"The fetishism of commodities has its origins in the peculiar social character of the labour that produces them ... the labour of the individual asserts itself, as part of the labour of society, only by means of the relations which the act of exchange establishes, directly between the products and indirectly between the producers ... It is only by being exchanged that the products of labour, acquire as values one uniform social status ... by an exchange we equate as value our different products, by that very act, we also equate, as human labour, the different kinds of labour expended upon them. We are not aware of this, nevertheless we do it." (Capital I p 43-44)

This passage, when applied specifically to domestic labour, reveals the full impact of commodity relations on the housewife. She is at once both (A) dominated and (B) mystified.

A) Domination - Not only does the housewife work in private, she is also paid in private. Because "the labour of the individual asserts itself only by means of the relations which the act of exchange establishes," the domestic wage for labour exchange serves to enforce the housewife's privatized passivity because her labour cannot assert itself (nor her) publicly. There are no collective bargaining units for housewives; they are supported by the wage worker at his discretion.

B) Mystification - It is useful to contrast the mystification involved in wage labour with that of domestic labour. Few wage workers describe the work they perform as meaningful for them. They work for their pay and that is all. The fruits of their labour are appropriated by capital and are not theirs. Their work is merely a necessary ordeal for attaining money. All these attitudes stem from the directly contractual nature of their relation to capital, which makes the immediate relation of production difficult to mystify.

It is the relation of exchange that introduces the illusion in wage labour. Union bureaucrats are notorious for returning to the workers from wage negotiations with 'fair' deals. This notion of 'fair' wages can obscure the exploitative nature of wage labour (the fact that surplus value derives from the worker's labour). By contrast, the domestic labourer's relation with capital is indirect. She does not work for wages (in the contractual sense) and therefore her labour must be explained in non-economic terms. She does not do it for money, she does it for "love of family" of other suitably intangible reasons. (She does not work for selfish reasons - she labours so that others may live.) The fact that the product of her labour is a living creation does not allow for a clear perception of its appropriation by capital, and of her relation to capital.

These structural differences generate a more profound obfuscation involving not merely relations of exchange, but also the deeper relations of production. The housewife is not only mystified about the nature of economic agreement with her husband, she is mystified about the nature of her work itself. Here is not a labour of wage but rather a labour of love. Her labour takes on the appearance of an arrangement of destiny - a natural feminine vocation and duty. It does not even qualify as 'real' work.

Marianosa Dalla Costa writes:

"precisely through the wage, the exploitation of the non-wage labourer has been organized. This exploitation has been even more effective because the lack of a wage hid it. That is, the wage commanded a larger amount of services than appeared in factory bargaining. Where women are concerned their labour appears to be a personal service outside capital ... her role in the cycle of social production remained invisible".
Radical America Vol. 6 No. 1

Common language idiom betrays this derealization well:

- Teacher : Who works in your family Jimmy?
- Jimmy: My father does.
- Teacher: Do you work Mrs. Jones?
- Jimmy's Mother: No. I'm a housewife.