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My dear Adriana,

I have re-read your outline again and given it some thought. Here are some things that have come to my mind as ~~valuable~~ worth considering.

I think your outline is good. One question that I think would be worth exploring and which confused me in CAPITAL was how women working affects the value of labour power. Marx makes some references to this but never makes it clear. The way the question is actually posed in life is that women have to work - this is not only for "extras" or for having not only what you need (in bourgeois terms) but what you want (actual need in our terms). But ^{many} women have to work because if they did not the family would not be able to manage. Secondly, with the advent of actual liberation, that is, divorce, the right to set up a family independent of men, women are the support of many families, especially in the United States. Thirdly, with the collapse of the bourgeois family, many men are no longer psychologically able to accept the responsibility of a family. They gamble or drink and women have to be the actual support of the family. Fourthly, in some minority groups, such as blacks in the U.S. it is sometimes the women who can get servant jobs when the men can't find employment at all. This is also true in underdeveloped countries where there is no industry but only domestic jobs open.

There is also the question of men working overtime (let alone night work) and what that does to the family. Even where women have gained for themselves the help (never the shared responsibility) of men in the home, all this is destroyed when the day is more than eight hours. As for night work, the firmst "decree" of a socialist regime will be its abolition, since every aspect of family life, in particular sexual relations, is decimated when people are working on two separate clocks. Is this common in Italy?

By the time you have the baby for a few months, you will not have to have any help from anybody about describing housework. What has to be borne in mind is that

1. the work is done in isolation, within the context of a society of socialised labour, and where the socialising process is the fundamental source of our education. Even the bourgeoisie knows that city people are smarter than country people because they have more contact with ~~xx~~ more people. The woman has contact with very few people, most of them women with very ~~xxx~~ similar experiences. (This is also a strength, since it makes for a certain kind of loyalty and ~~xxxx~~ cohesion which is a form of organisation.) It is these women, deprived of social contact and social education, who are placed in charge of children for the first five years of their lives. This is a disaster for the whole of society in my view.

2. the work is done under primitive conditions. If even we leave aside cooking on charcoal as is done in Spain and the West Indies and I have no doubt in many other parts of the underdeveloped world, the most modern American kitchen is a pale reflection of 19th century technology. It looks modern but actually does not approach the technology of modern industry.

3. the work is repetitious and compulsive. When you clock out of a factory, responsibility ends. The place could blow up when you are gone and that is not ~~xx~~ your worry. A woman is never free from housework and is driven to complete what is uncompletable. This is reinforced by the fact that the whole training of society is that who a woman is can be seen by her "home", and women who have found no other justification for their existence clean their houses with religious fervour. But this can only happen because the work itself is by nature compulsive.

I think all the above becomes crystal clear when you apply the "rejection of work" to the rejection of housework and the rejection of childcare, The very act of going out to work is precisely the rejection of the home. This is in no way to imply that the incorporation of women into direct

exploitation is any solution. What does happen, however, is that the justification for existence as a housewife is weakened. I must put it more clearly. Once a woman is incorporated into social labour, and makes a social experience, she is less tied to the routines and domination of the home itself, though she is not in any way else liberated from the home, i.e. liberated.

The difficulty here is that if the working class ~~woman~~ housewife rejects her work, the family, the basis of working class stability (and this means ability to be exploited and ability to rebel) is destroyed. Middle class women in the U.S. recently brought their children to their husbands' offices. Can you imagine if a whole set of working class women brought their children to the factory, and left them there!

The question of political wages for housewives is more difficult. This has already been raised (I know I have raised it, and from the response of others it appeared to me it was not new to them). It is obviously first of all a question of paid versus unpaid labour. You are going to be dealing with how much unpaid labour is done by women (and how non-industrialised this labour is). But why should recognition come in the form of money? I think we have to fight the idea that unless you earn money you have no rights. This is precisely the position of children in school who are at the disposal of the yet parents and the state's discipline and education because they are not contributors to the economy (which is of course the ~~specifically~~ specifically bourgeois relation of children to production). The evidence is that they do not support themselves. Most women who do not work outside the home are not considered self-supporting, even though they may work harder than the men and certainly work longer hours.

Here also the whole demand for equal pay flounders, since if even women get equal pay with men (which I believe is impossible), they are still doing unpaid work when they return home, and it is in a sense more fully unpaid when they work outside, since they contribute and not merely consume financially when they have outside jobs.

Why I say it is difficult is that there is enough in the women's liberation movement already which leads to an amelioration of women's position but does not have the perspective of a totally new society. I feel the need is much greater to destroy bourgeois assumptions than to take them literally and insist that the bourgeoisie pays. But my mind is open on this question, and I would have to be more fully engrossed in the movement itself to discover whether this demand has validity in context.

I am sorry this letter is so choppy but there have been a million interruptions. ~~But~~ I hope however that Ferruccio, to whom I am sending a copy of this letter, will be able to ~~translate~~ translate without difficulty.

As soon as I ~~make~~ make copies of a piece which will be appearing in the U.S. some time soon, I will send one to you. There you will see that I am very concerned that all the specifics be related to a redefinition of socialism which I believe women's liberation, even more than the struggle of the working class, presses upon us. I think when Marx wrote on this he ~~wrote~~ wrote with extreme caution and therefore in very general but broad terms. He understood that to discuss the liberation of women is to discuss not only the nature of society but the nature of the human species, the relation of humanity to nature and a world without institutions. Therefore to discuss women is not to discuss another aspect of the class struggle (although of course it is this too) but to make a separate and independent contribution to the revolution which cannot come from anywhere else. This is why, incidentally, aside from my own identity, that the question will not and has never let go of me. That the division of labour began with men and women before class division is not accidental to the breadth of the questions it poses and the answers we must find.