

for what Selma
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2311 Seventeenth Avenue
Oakland, California 94606
U S A
August 31, 1975

Mariarosa Dalla Costa
c/o Falling Wall Press
79 Richmond Road
Montpelier
Bristol BS6 5EP, England

Dear Mariarosa Dalla Costa,

When I was living in England, before June 29, 1973, someone mentioned your name to me and said I must read a work you had written and also contact Selma James, whose address was given to me. Their reason was that they had just read the enclosed article, written by me in 1971, a year before your pamphlet was printed. I did not then get hold of your pamphlet, "The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community," nor did I contact Ms James. I was too busy preparing to return to America under family pressure now that I had become a grandmother.

Today, having bought and read your pamphlet on August 27 for the first time, I am truly sorry for this omission on my part, for in England I had thought I was absolutely alone in my analysis of woman's position in our Society.

First, I will explain how my analysis came to be written and why it was not distributed. In London, I belonged to the Camden Marxist-Leninist Group (CMLG), an offshoot of the Finsbury Communists. Both these groups were run by one man and his wife, let's call him "X", because his name is immaterial to the story. I had joined his neighborhood group near where I lived because we were agreed on one major point: that virtually the entire Western working class constitutes a modern labor aristocracy living off the "Third World" and at least temporarily allied with "its own" bourgeoisie.

In the CMLG, I wrote most of what was published. But our method of "writing" was this: the writer submitted to the group for discussion his draft of the topic agreed on. Any word or phrasing which could not be 100% agreed on was scratched out. In effect, then, anything published in the name of our group was a complete consensus.

Due to rising living costs, I moved out of London, and attending their meetings became physically very difficult for me. As a result, I missed four meetings in a row. When I returned, I was handed a copy of a mimeographed (i.e., "published") article, "Housework and Exploitation." The gist of its message was that women's nagging about housework could easily be taken care of if only the Government - or "Someone" - could be forced to pay more (they believed child allowances were "remuneration" for housework) for the silly chores we perform with such wringing and twisting, the nagging would stop and we could get on with the main, "important" revolution (run, dominated and master-minded by non-nagging men). It had been a long time since any theoretical treatise so wrought me up. I told them I would reply.

The enclosed, therefore, replies, sentence by sentence, to that article. It took me about a month to think through, for it forced me at last, after years of vagueness and generalities, to FOCUS on what happens to women in their cells in the social bee-hive. I submitted the result to the CMLG. WHAT a hullabaloo!

First, they absolutely refused to send my reply to the 200 people who had received their article: when it was a question of theory about women, unanimity went out the window.

Second, it seems they felt impelled to defend Karl Marx's honor regardless of what Truth might demand: "If you think Karl Marx was wrong," said X, "you should come straight out and say so." I assured him that that presented no problem at all for me: "No man's mouth is a prayer-book to me."

Third, when one of their number, a man of gentle disposition, suggested I was right and the group should mail my analysis out in rebuttal, X said no, he disagreed with it and it would not go out. And the disagreement was that if my analysis were accepted, it would mean that women's "petty personal domestic service" would in effect be elevated to a position possibly above that of social - i.e., industrial - labor. "That," X assured all present, "we will never agree to." Never is a long time.

To this day, I can find nothing basically wrong with my analysis. Now, reading your pamphlet, I see that someone else without a baffle to bounce back against, made the same analysis. I had already decided that the main task of the remainder of my life (I am now 60) would be to go into this matter further: I hoped and still hope to study everything available about Labor Power as a commodity. I intended and still intend to investigate the family set-up AS RELATED TO Society's economic production, both historically and geographically. In a word, it is my hope to document my original arguments, and show - as you have done - how women's work supports the entire capitalist economy.

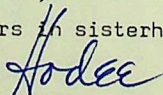
Before I can really get into this self-set chore, I have to try to solve the problem of eating while writing and researching. I have applied for grants; I will try to obtain research fellowships in Universities now featuring women's studies; I will perhaps do the actual work as papers for a Master's Degree (M.A.) and for a doctorate (PhD).

However, since your work exists and is so clear and along such similar lines to my own, I somehow feel that we should collaborate. I seem to recall somewhere in your pamphlet (though I cannot at the moment find the reference again) that you are or were working on a larger work along the same lines. Will my study and research thereby become redundant? Naturally, I shall be forced to use your words - with acknowledgements - now, but is my entire idea of writing this book now, by your work, rendered obsolete? Or would you consider some form of collaboration. What I am attempting is a synthesis and perhaps "new insight" into the commodity "labor power," along the lines of Page 3 of the Addendum to the enclosed, linked to an analysis of how woman's role inside ANY family has tied in to SOCIAL (society's) method of earning a living for all or for ruling classes, or however my studies indicate the matter should be posed. I, too, must then conclude what form our struggle should assume and how it ties in to the other revolutions now under way in various stages of development.

I hope that this letter reaches you, and that you will take me seriously enough to reply. In any case, I am impelled by my entire life to get on with my work; I want greatly to work with you in some manner.

Thank you for reading this, in any case, and for reading the enclosed.

Yours in sisterhood,



Hodee W Edwards

HOUSEWORK AND EXPLOITATION

by H.W. Edwards (1971)

The following quotations, put together without the intervening comment, make up a piece called "HOUSEWORK AND EXPLOITATION," issued by the Camden Marxist-Leninist Group, 8 Chesterford Gardens, London NW3. Because the theory on the role of women in society is in such a currently inchoate state; and because of the crude male supremacist approach of the theses presented, it is necessary to refute the entire piece, thought by thought. What follows is an attempt to destroy its false arguments with facts and analysis.

It starts with two quotations taken from a leaflet by WOMEN'S LIBERATION FRONT in connection with the 150th birth anniversary of Frederick Engels. These quotations are reproduced here for the record, and for comparison with what CML did with them:

"The emancipation of women and their equality with men are impossible and must remain so as long as women are excluded from socially productive work, and restricted to housework which is private. The emancipation of women becomes possible only when women are enabled to take part in production on a large social scale, and when domestic duties require their attention only to a minor degree." - F. ENGELS.

"True emancipation of women is not possible except through Communism. You must lay stress on the unbreakable connection between women's human and social position and the private ownership of the means of production." - V I LENIN

A. "How private is housework? Can it really be equated with other private activities such as stamp collecting?"

This is not a subject to open discussion on by trying to be cute. When you ask if housework is private, you use the term in the Marxist economic sense, linked to the type of ownership. But stamp collecting refers to a trivial personal activity, which it must be clear was not what Engels had in mind in his use of this word, "private." In this way, you set the tone of the entire piece: women's work (whatever the reply to the question) is immediately associated in the reader's mind with a trivial personal hobby. The net effect is to begin discussion of a serious question with a flippant - and objectively dishonest - play on words:

B. "To a certain extent it can."

That is, housework CAN be EQUATED to stamp collecting; i.e., to personal, trivial hobby-type activity. This is a lie, as will be shown in what follows.

C. "Housework in so far as a woman does it purely for herself is private."

That is, a woman keeping house just for herself is engaging in activity equatable to a trivial hobby-type activity.

Wrong again. Women who live alone, with some minor exceptions like pensioners or upper crust women, have to WORK to support themselves. Therefore, in the vast overwhelming majority of cases, a woman doing housework for herself is doing the very same thing she does when it is for a family: she is preparing labour power for the "labour market." In this particular case, a woman may be compared (that is, is in the position of) a small businessman who owns and sells a commodity he produces solely by his own - not by hired or slave - labour. (But see Addendum, following, for interpretation.)*

In the U.S., for example, this sector of the working class in 1967 (latest date for which complete figures were available to the

writer) comprised only 5,915,000 women out of a total of 27,565,000 in the labour force. That was 21% of the female labour force, but only 8 1/2% of total female population. This figure and the U.S. are used as being the farthest out possible in the West, of which it is thus more-than-representative. So EVEN if it had been correct that a woman working for herself (i.e., living alone) is doing personal work in keeping herself alive and producing, it is nonetheless an argument which applies to only 8 1/2% of ~~total female population~~ ~~total female population~~ ~~total female population~~ ~~total female population~~ ~~total female population~~ female ~~population~~ ~~population~~ ~~population~~ ~~population~~ ~~population~~ a leading sector of the international Western female labour force. It should however be stressed that the argument itself is false, as will be shown. Nor will this writer stop to deal with the male supremacist implications brought almost to surface by the entire concept that a woman living alone is - as it were - wasting time keeping herself going...reinforcing the Female Stereotype fashioned by millenia of female servitude that a single woman is a loss to herself and society.

D. "There is another kind of private housework, that of a woman for a man."

That is, housework done by a woman for a MAN is ALSO in the category of stamp-collecting; i.e., a trivial hobby-type activity. This is the only admission in the entire piece that women actually do housework for a man. ~~Thereafter~~ ~~thereafter~~ the latter bi-ped completely disappears from this "analysis" and only children are left to give the "housewife" any serious meaning. The disappearance by sleight-of-hand from the piece of men in the household is a piece of out-and-out dishonesty on which the entire house of cards rests. But, as will be shown, it was a magician's trick absolutely necessary to sustain the remainder of the "arguments."

E. "Imperialist Britain extracts enormous superprofits from Asia, Africa and the West Indies. This has led to a higher standard of living. At certain levels it enables a man to keep his wife purely for the purpose of looking after the house, without bringing up children." (My emphasis -HE)

Aside from the fact that the statement in this section of the piece is slipshod (higher standard of living WHERE? for example), the important admission is that a man KEEPS his wife, for whatever purpose. It is also significant that it is implied that only those wives are "kept" that are at "certain levels."

In addition, the thought implied is that, without such superprofits, capitalism would have jobs for ALL women; NO women would be kept - they'd all "have to" get out and work and would, by implication, BE working. This is an obvious fallacy, as shown by the huge return to the home-cells by the large and steady female labour force of the war years, once the war ended. ~~there would NOT be jobs for ALL females if they repudiated housework.~~

What is almost amusing is to note the complete absence of the MAN in that HOUSE the woman is merely "looking after." Obviously, to discuss this would expose the real nature of the argument. He is doing exactly the same as the children whom "Mama" is "looking after," namely, having his labour power produced. 90% of American women work "at some time in their lives." But this is NOT the MAJORITY of their lives; nor is that work their MAIN job in life. The fact is that, aside from the tiny minority of ruling class men, who ~~the~~ "keep" wives and/or mistresses, the majority of working class men also "keep" their wives for the main part of those wives' lives, to "look after the house."

It is not even true that wives' being kept by husbands is made possible by super-profits. African women, for example, spend almost their entire time preparing food. Many of them (at least in West Africa) go out to sell, as petty traders; but almost none of them work in social production. Nor is the preparation of food done for any other major purpose than to prepare the MEN to go out to jobs; the men eat first. Children eat last, after even the women, and get just the leftovers. African women are visibly and daily preparing male labour power for the labour market. But, including the super-

profits increment, that is also precisely what Western women are doing - ~~but~~ not doing cooperatively like African women in a compound, but singly in their little dream homes.

According to this argument, the woman at home without children just looks after the house. A billion and a half women throughout the world can give this implication the horse laugh. Moreover, it falls into the trap Marx exposed of mistaking relationships between things for real relationships that are actually between people: in this case, in looking after the house, it is the man that is being looked after; and being looked after is the nature of his relationship with her and hers with him.

Of 17,486,000 married women in the 1967 U.S. labour force, only 1,578,000 were NOT living with their husbands while working. Admittedly, many of these - as well as of the 15,908,000 who lived with husbands while working, had children living in the house too. But that makes a point: the two jobs that woman does "looking after the house" cannot be (so conveniently) separated as has been done here. Such separation merely evokes an erroneous conclusion out of an erroneous "theory."

F. "The capitalist system provides a cosy life for such women."

Uh-huh. That's familiar: "Gee, Baby, ain't I good to you?" - Popular song. Or: "The masters were very good to the slaves, who were happy, well-fed and satisfied with slavery." - Gist of teaching about the institution of black slavery in U.S. history texts for fifth graders. Here, the "human and social position of women" is utterly ignored.

G. "In return, these housewives often play a big part in the municipal councils and in the thousands of voluntary organizations which help to keep up the morale of the capitalist system."

See how subtly and insidiously it has become WOMEN who "keep up the morale of the capitalist system," though it is not stated baldly in precisely those terms! However, by implication - that this particular service is performed by women in return for being kept by men - it shows that men have more than one vested interest in the system.

H. "But housework, in so far as it consists of childrearing, is only private to the extent that it is produced individually and not socially. The product of childrearing, namely grown-up workers, or, in Marxist terms, labour power, is undoubtedly socially necessary."

At this point, through the phrase "in so far as it consists of childrearing," the reader is slyly led - without reasoning or proof of any kind, of course - to a point at which the woman is "given approval" for exactly that portion of her whole function which Adolf Hitler allowed her. From this point onward, the piece at first speaks of housework solely in terms of "childrearing;" and then dispenses with the term "housework" altogether, leaving only "childrearing," a stilted and pretentious pseudo-learned expression in the first place.

Well, any idiot knows that women REproduce labour power and must continue to do so until that day when males figure out and agree to bear the kids as well as begetting them. Also, it is far harder to hide children in a home than men. The former are there all the time and damned noisy; the latter is usually invisible behind the morning or evening paper. According to this piece, the moment the kids grow up, they become either "kept" women (or, equally mendacious, non-housewives doing personal service for themselves) or they become invisible men. The age of miracles has not passed: without female or any other apparent intervention, the god-like male appears at his machine each day, self-created! Incredible - literally! But revealing.

It is also a most gracious concession on the part of the perpetrators of the CML piece to concede that "the product of childrearing" is "undoubtedly socially necessary." But Marx took a slightly different view. He said that labour power was the only commodity in the capitalist system which, upon being purchased and used, produced value. So even "childrearing" is not just "undoubtedly socially necessary." Without this activity, and the rest of what women do in that house, there would simply be no capitalist system. Also, the ordinary sense in which the word "undoubtedly" is used is to suggest, to imply, doubt. So, in reality, the CML writers plainly themselves actually doubt whether even "the product of childrearing is socially necessary."

The sleight of hand involved in adding to "the product of childrearing" the phrase "namely, grown-up workers" will be exposed as another lie later on.

- I. "Without the surplus produced by this labourpower, it would eventually prove impossible to support the unproductive part of the population, such as pensioners."

This trivial statement is not up to the usual standard of thinking of CML writings, alas: Without the value produced by all labour power, it would immediately prove impossible for the capitalist to make profits. Finish. What the ruling class do with those profits, once they're made, has nothing to do with the fact that it is from the purchase and utilization of the commodity labour power, the only value-producing commodity in the world, that the capitalist coins his ruddy profit in the first place. THIS IS THE KEY TO WOMEN'S REAL POSITION IN THE ECONOMY. TO OVERLOOK IT IS JUST GROSS MALE SUPREMACIST HYPOCRISY.

- J. "Having established that childrearing is socially necessary, it remains to investigate the remuneration attaching to this activity."

My, oh my! Just LOOK at those rabbits pop out of that hat! "established"? That's a bit of arrogance: it was not "established"; it was merely STATED, which is not the same thing, except when issuing from a male supremacist. "Childrearing" has simply been used to cover up the other, major, portion of the woman's real activity and function in the home. "remuneration"? It has not been "established" that even "childrearing" is actually "remunerated." IT IS NECESSARY TO CHALLENGE THAT "CHILDRREARING" OR ANY OF THE REST OF HOUSEWORK IS REMUNERATED. "investigate"? Like where in this hastily-done hodge-podge was anything "investigated"? This whole sentence is a masterpiece of high-handed arrogance, consistent with male supremacy.

- K. "This remuneration is at its highest for the unmarried mother living on social security payments."

Let's look into this now: Are payments by Western governments to mothers, married or unmarried, really "remuneration" for "child-rearing"? Or are they something else?

HOW are WAGES paid? What is the result of the transaction? A worker offers his labour power (his energy, ability to work) to a BOSS and is HIRED. The payment from Boss to WORKER is called wages. Marx showed that these are equivalent - at a CLASS (i.e., today, an international) level - to the socially necessary labour time embodied in the commodities required to produce the commodity sold; in this case HIS (the worker's) labour power. These wages, Marx also showed, cover not only the workers' subsistence (on a CLASS basis) but that of a wife and children.

IN RETURN, the boss owns the commodity or commodities produced. He sells them (i.e., realises the value embodied in them) and in this way, HE MAKES A PROFIT. It is by this transaction on a class scale that a capitalist class gets rich and powerful. History has proven that, at the class level - internationally - the prices paid for the commodity labour power vary between the imperialist centres

and the colonial areas in such a way that workers in the West get higher than the value of their labour power while colonial workers get less.

This is the general picture. Let us now apply it to the case of a housewife.

To what boss does the unmarried mother apply to hire her to do her work (which this piece erroneously pictures as "child-rearing")? This piece says, "the Government." That is, according to them, ALL unmarried mothers in the West are "working for the Government." Where, pray tell, is the profit realised by this transaction? Government - quite rightly - considers these payments a dead loss. They are NOT "remuneration" to the woman for "childrearing" or anything like it.

What about the married mother (this is dealt with here in order not to break up the complete analysis; it can be referred back to later)? This piece claims that, when the Government pays allowances or tax rebates based on the number of children, the married wife is ALSO "working for the Government." But it is also quite obvious to all but the perpetrators of this mindless nonsense that the wife works "for" the husband. So we come up with this "analysis": when producing HIS labour power (a factor entirely omitted from this piece, of course, with logical brilliance equivalent to the remaining assumptions), the wife works for the husband; when REproducing that same labour-power (HIS) by "childrearing," she "receives children's allowances" and is thus working for the Government. The only case in ~~the~~ history ~~where~~ where someone is paid by TWO bosses for the SAME JOB and dies of overwork without a penny of her own!

Nevertheless, let us persist: What WAGES does the husband pay his wife? Obviously, he MUST give the poor creature money if she is to perform all the shitwork entailed in getting HIM ready to go to work - plus the increased amount of same if she too must work; and the final pile of horse manure involved if, in addition, she is also to REproduce HIS labour power, i.e., do this "childrearing." So the husband does pay his wife some sort of "allowance." It comes out of HIS WAGES. HERS may be added to this; but if so, the addition is, ^{generally} HIS and under HIS control. (Incidentally, the FACT that bachelors and married men are not distinguished between in wages payments - i.e., that the bachelor receives the same ~~WAGES~~ ^{subsistence allowance} for a potential wife and children - ^{proves why capitalists will NEVER pay "equal pay for equal work," a detail overlooked by all those Marxists who like to embellish Marx without referring to what he has said}.) *(People are not paid for their work, anyhow; but for their ability to work.)*

But, if this "allowance" paid by the married man to his wife to enable her to "look after the house" and do the "child-rearing" constitutes the wife's WAGES ("remuneration" is a very conveniently vague word for a vague theory), it follows that the husband owns the commodity produced: his own labour power. This is a known fact. Score one point for wives getting "wages" from husbands for "services rendered". Of course, the man ALSO owns HER labour-power and the potential labour-power embodied in his children. This is an ^{elsewhere} obvious fact under analysis; but it is not admitted or discussed, however, if these husbandly "allowances" to wives are WAGES, it must also follow that the husband would MAKE A PROFIT out of the transaction. This is too absurd even to elaborate. The husband makes no profit from his wife's work.

Take back that one George about husbands paying wives wages.
If, despite this evidence, it is still insisted that the husband is simply a lousy capitalist who "manages badly," ^{his transaction} is nonetheless a CLASS phenomenon. The man is thereby clearly put in the position of a capitalist, a boss, and his wife in the position of the hired hand or proletarian. But isn't that what Engels SAID, decades ago? You also thereby, of course, admit if you do not prove that the man exploits the wife. There is no profit, yet her hours and conditions are hardly better than those of a colonial worker, who supplies super-profits; yet, he exploits her. How?

~~Illustration~~ While he makes no profit out of this unique class transaction, the man does go to market and peddle a commodity which he owns but did not produce. This is HOW the husband EXPLOITS the wife; the man, the woman. By doing this - going to market and selling that labour power - the man enables the capitalist to make a profit. So, the capitalist class benefits most out of the work of the wife. This is not in dispute. It IS a matter of dispute whether or not the husband exploits the wife. Engels said he did when he said the husband was in the position of capitalist to the wife's "proletarian." ^{in the bourgeois family} This analysis shows HOW Engels was RIGHT. This conclusion could ONLY be avoided in the manner in which it was done: by removing the man from the analysis. That is, an analysis of capitalism without capitalists.

Another consequence of the above analysis is that, since the man does not make a profit out of his wife's work, he is NOT paying her WAGES; the wife is NOT being "remunerated" for her expenditures of labour power in running the house, bringing up the kids, and feeding, clothing and otherwise servicing HIM so he can go to work each day. But Marx already TOLD the world: her subsistence and that of the kids is included in the MAN'S WAGES. She is KEPT, as a small admission leaked through in the piece itself to claim. In a word, economically speaking, she is a SLAVE. She works but does not earn in so far as that "house" is concerned.

And so, the so-called "remuneration" of unmarried mothers is not payment by the Government FOR the activity here called "child-rearing." In view of the facts disclosed, I suggest that, rather, the Government, on behalf of the ruling class which controls it, is paying these unmarried mothers that portion of a husband's wages which, if he existed for these particular women, he would have to invest in the wife's work of preparing his own and his replacement labour power for the market. This is NOT "remuneration for childrearing"; it is money that enables "wifely duties" to be carried out in the absence, formally, of a husband. Even in this, the wife is still REproducing the labour power of that man who got her pregnant, a labour power that must be reproduced in so far as the capitalist class is concerned. That is why, in the West, when a husband does not exist, the ruling class factor, the Government, acts as surrogate, supplying the husband's economic role. That may also explain why it is so infrequent in colonial areas to find even the concept of "unmarried mother" or "illegitimate child." These are Western luxuries, made possible by Christianity and the super-profits which follow its administration. Also, a woman in Western society is thus clearly shown to be doing ONLY "childrearing" if there is NO husband - and then ONLY if she is not working at production, in which case she also prepares her own labour power for market.

- L. "For the married mother, it is paid in the form of a tax rebate and children's allowances and is considerably less."

Yes, it is "considerably less" because (as is common Marxist knowledge) every MAN'S wages cover the subsistence of wife and children. Such "children's allowances" are paid, as ~~well as the wife's~~ ^{well as the wife's} ~~own~~ ^{own} noted, out of super-profits. But to WHOM are these rebates paid? Or, even if the woman goes to collect them; even if they are "in her name," WHO CONTROLS THEM? Or is this little detail too inconvenient for the Great Theory being developed in this piece? These allowances are LEGALLY THE PROPERTY OF THE HUSBAND with only minor individual exceptions. The woman only does the usual shitwork of going to collect them, deposit them, or the leg-work of spending them - all under MALE control. So there goes this splendid "theory."

(SPC!)

- M. "These types of payment are common throughout Imperialist Western Europe, North America and Australasia. They are not, however, found in the neo-colonial areas of Asia, Africa and the West Indies. Only imperialist super-exploitation of Asia, Africa and the West Indies enables these allowances to be paid in Western Europe, North America and Australasia."

This statement applies equally to social security payments and other benefits of "syphillisation." Proving what? That Asia, Africa and Latin America (as well as the West Indies) are neo-colonial areas which furnish Western super-profits; that super-profits provide various benefits to ALL Western people. Hardly a discovery. But it does add to the proof that "childrearing allowances" are NOT "remuneration for childrearing." They are slices from the super-profits cake, and have no bearing on the Woman Question as such. They are just means, exactly like social security payments, to bind various sections of the Western working class closely to the apron strings of the ruling class and thus prevent international working class solidarity. Women are among those included.

N. "Even for the unmarried mother in Britain, the remuneration is less than half the average wage."

We have already seen why this is. But so what? Is this remarkable discovery designed to entrain a campaign for higher allowances? Later remarks in the piece show it is. We shall deal with that when it arises, below.

O. "It is generally accepted by Marxists, and by workers, that the average worker receives in wages less than the full value of his labour."

It is generally accepted by Marxists (whatever workers may believe) that "the average worker" receives less than the full value of his LABOUR POWER. This is NOT the SAME as his LABOUR, which is fully owned by the capitalist. It is always dangerous to erode scientific definitions because such erosion inevitably leads, however "eventually," to the erosion of a material structure. In this case, this ordinarily-permitted "slip" involves specific consequences. It permits the erroneous statement to get by that what the woman produces is "grown-up workers, namely, labour power." What the woman produces is labour power and not JUST "grown-up workers." The production of "grown-up workers" neatly and conveniently eliminates the entire MAJOR component of a woman's work in a house, namely the labour power of husbands, brothers, and fathers whom she is forced to service in order to get them to work each day.

P. "It cannot be maintained that the production of labour power is inherently less valuable than the production of cars."

Show me ~~where~~ ^{where} JUST ONE CAR which, purchased and used, produces VALUE?

Q. "The conclusion therefore follows that capitalist society is obtaining the production of labour power on the cheap; that it is only paying the mother for a fraction of the socially necessary labour time involved;"

Now it comes out WHY it was necessary to confine the meaning of "the production of labour power" to "childrearing." But the admission that the woman does produce labour power is valuable in itself, because we can always refer back to Marx and Engels, ~~who said that the woman produces labour power~~. We have seen that capitalist society obtains the production of ALL labour power FREE, NOT "on the cheap." This has been proven by the fact that no benefits for "childrearing" are - admittedly even by the authors of this utter nonsense - paid in colonial areas. It was naturally omitted from this piece that women there definitely produce labour power for the market without such allowances and that their major effort is directed toward the preparation of male labour power. In this, our colonial sisters help to expose that the production of ALL labour power is done FREE for Society by women. This is SLAVERY. Failure to identify it as such leads to results which will be exposed below.

R. "that the mother therefore is exploited by capitalist society."

What this says is that the mother is "therefore" exploited ONLY by capitalist society. This has been dealt with above. The mountain has laboured and brought forth a rat. The position expressed here is precisely that of all revisionists. It lets men entirely off the hook for all their oppressive, often savage, male supremacy and makes ^{the latter} appear an individual attribute of "nasty" men, accused by "dissatisfied" females, instead of being the class expression of definite material conditions, namely, the male oppression and exploitation of women IN ADDITION to OTHER class oppressions suffered by men and women under this system.

Furthermore, so long as it is ONLY "the capitalist system" and NOT ALSO men who exploit women, there is no need to alter the status quo in so far as women's conditions are concerned - providentially? - until revolutionary movements, led and peopled by MEN in so far as major population AND leadership is concerned, can overthrow capitalism. Say, about the year 10,071. Thanks loads for the favour.

S. "While childrearing is regarded as 'private' (see Women's Liberation Front quotation from Engels above) the 'emancipation of women' will not be possible no matter how many 'women are enabled to take part in production on a large social scale' even 'when domestic duties require their attention only to a minor degree'. Quite a large number of women take part in production on a large social scale already. They then come home and attend to childrearing for what the Government chooses to pay them by way of allowances."

Point 1. The cited Engels quotation mentions not one word about "childrearing." His word was "housework," of which - both he and the perpetrators of this nonsense know well - "childrearing" is ONLY a portion, and not even the major portion. This - the substitution of "childrearing" for "housework" - is putting words into the mouth of a founder of Marxism. That is known as revisionism.

Point 2. The statement thus loses any meaning, except possibly as an exercise in male supremacy.

Point 3. The term 'private' must be specifically confined to its Marxian sense related to types of ownership. Only in such a manner can it be made clear that never under any class society, and especially capitalism, can housework be classified as personal activity by women. ^{to pay} That is to substitute form for content.

Point 4. It can be repeated here that the government is not remunerating the woman for "childrearing." It is just adding on behalf of the ruling class from superprofits to the man's wages, even where there is nominally no man, allowing the female to do the legwork of collecting the sum, thus confusing those who enjoy jumping to conclusions as light exercise.

Point 5. The major essence of what women who work "on a large scale already" come home to "attend to" is the preparation of the value-producing commodity, labour power: firstly, of a man or men; secondly, in some cases, ^{her own}; and thirdly, for the continuation of the capitalist system, of potential labour power in the children.

T. "All of industrial history goes to show that, wherever a worker is producing a commodity for a fraction of its value, inefficient methods of production will continue. But as soon as the worker wins a higher wage, capitalist society has an incentive to increase the efficiency of production and limit the number of workers employed."

"If childrearing had to be paid for like all other forms of labour, it would speedily be realised how much more efficient than the individual housewife public nurseries, restaurants and laundries are."

Point 1. These people have settled for "a fair day's wage for a fair day's work," the well-known social democratic heaven ~~which is a mere illusion, a mere dream, a mere pipe dream~~ which, upon capitalism becoming imperialism, uses this formulation to get into the hog trough with their "ally" the ruling class.

Point 2. This formulation, "like all other forms of labour," attempts to force housework into the category of all other labour. But it is not in that category and can never be: no other form of labour results in a value-producing commodity. No other form of labour under capitalism is Unremunerated.

Point 3. Such considerations aside, this statement implies that all that is needed is to get higher allowances for women for "childrearing" and if these are high enough, capitalist society will, of its own volition and under such an "incentive", install large-scale housework services. Shades of the recent unlamented 30-hour-week campaign!

This approach plainly includes the implication that "all that is bothering these nagging women" is "Who will help with the housework?" (Or as it is so dishonestly called here, the "child-rearing.") The Left has been through that three decades ago and the Woman Question is further from solution than ever. The noble campaign was never able to get past male supremacy, which has been conditioned that the shitwork in the house is "women's work." The only reason any attention at all was ^{or is} paid to this "Woman Question" was that Lenin - apparently in a weak moment - stated that it is "important."

U. "It is only because women are not paid the rate for the job that these facilities remain negligible."

check for facts
here are occurrences of women with more than 2 children, believe

This contention is refuted by what has actually happened in countries which have gone socialist. Perhaps the greatest advance in spreading such facilities occurred in Russia. Undoubtedly, they were more widespread ^{than} in the West. But, whatever the reason, you will never be able to prove that they EVER reached more than a minority of Russian women, even when socialism had not deteriorated there. Nor will you be able to show that women in such countries, the majority of whom still do the shitwork for the men (even where, as in China, much of it may have been fobbed off on grandmothers, which simply postpones confrontation with the problem itself), are "paid" ANYTHING, let alone "the rate for the job" for "childrearing," or the more correct "housework."

Furthermore, even if the statement could be realised, the ROOT of the Woman Question would remain untouched. Even if such facilities reached 100% - under capitalism an utter absurdity, without reference to male-dominated socialist society - so long as the patrilinear nuclear family continues to exist, women would still be subjugated and the facilities would disappear; in fact, they would NEVER be provided. ^{social or state} The continued existence of the patrilinear family continues the FORM for women's slavery. It is only after women themselves analyze the nature of their own oppression and work out their own solutions that they can throw off their particular form of subjugation. Their solutions will, inevitably, include destruction of this patrilinear nuclear family, and the moment that slogan appears on a banner, women will be murdered in large numbers because they have brought forth the basic ingredient in male supremacy: ^{the key to step beyond shitwork} In Soviet Asia in the 1920s, even though the liberated women had the protection of the new government, many were murdered for the merely symbolic act of liberation of removing the veil from their faces, exactly the same as happened in non-socialist Turkey or The Lebanon under similar circumstances.

So this - being founded on the erroneous premise that women receive ANY "remuneration" for their work, erroneously defined as "childrearing" - is NOT the "only" - or indeed any - reason why such facilities are not much more widespread. The reason is

because men as a class have one vested interest in preventing any such outcome, while the capitalist system has another - related - one which is far bigger.

- V. "The cost to capitalist society of the 'unwanted' child is at present quite small. There is therefore a rather casual approach to the problems of birth control and illegitimacy, which are largely dealt with by voluntary societies. If each child born meant a substantial burden on the state, the state would be more concerned about the numbers of children born."

But, my dear, haven't you heard? The state is already concerned about "the numbers of children born" - to people in neo-colonial areas. Teddibly advanced here, to extend that concern on an "equal basis" to envelope ALL women. Why the hell they should be allowed to produce their brats in the first place is a mystery which such "Marxists" will soon clarify.

To the campaign for higher children's allowances, therefore, let there be added the active support of "Marxists" for birth control to the rather already existing on the subject among the ruling class. Birth control is a matter for individual women to decide on the basis of absolute freedom and the right to do so.

Where, in the first place, did 'unwanted' children get dragged into this piece? Was a hook required in order to link onto the world-wide philistine clamour for birth control among the "natives"? A less casual approach? At the moment, black women in the U.S., and probably in other places, are being forcibly sterilised to prevent 'unwanted' children - certainly a far less casual approach to this matter than the one outlined. But such measures should be aided and abetted: not only let's decimate "the natives;" let's cut down the size of the working class as well - and the sooner the quicker.

The point is, no matter how uncasual may be the attitude toward "the problems of birth control and illegitimacy," the problems faced by women will be no closer to solution, because what is being "treated" is a symptom, not a cause. ~~WAAAAAAAAA~~

- W. "It is not enough to say that 'the true emancipation of women is not possible except through communism.'"

"This statement is undoubtedly true, of course. Under capitalism it is possible to play off the working class, the national liberation movement, the various national minorities, the women's liberation movement etc. against each other and so to maintain capitalist rule."

The sequence of sentences here as much as states that what is keeping capitalist rule in existence is the quarreling among the various segments of the working class and other ~~populations~~ portions of the peoples oppressed by imperialism. But the statement has another purpose, revealed below. That is, to suggest that the "emancipation of women" could conceivably - granted that some way were found to persuade these groups to quit fighting among themselves - be solved under capitalism. By equal implication, the national liberation movement is included in this category, an outmoded concept: Today, national liberation is possible ONLY under socialism. The only grain of comfort in this statement is the fact that, for once, "the women's liberation movement" is actually specified as existing instead, as is usual, of being included in the "etc."

- X. "But the statement can also lead to the idea that Communism is something like the Second Coming of the Messiah when every wrong shall be righted."

Aha! Despite the statement that the "true emancipation of women" CAN only become possible through Communism, let not the unwary women imagine that these male supremacists are going to permit it to take place under their brand of "communism."

Y. "Communism is, however, the creation of human beings, primarily of the working class. Much of the ideological groundwork which determines the nature of Communism has to be done under capitalism. If it is not done not only may we get the wrong kind of Communism. We may also lose useful allies. After all, many women cannot be expected to fight for a 'Communism' which leaves them little better off than before."

Nothing could be plainer: If these philistines "kind of Communism" ever comes into being, women can count on "higher childrearing allowances from Government" and little else. In return, let them shut up and support the ^{current} groundwork needed to bring in this "right kind of Communism." No wonder these male supremacists hate the Women's Liberation movement; it definitely threatens to dislodge them from their eminence as "architects" of the "right kind of Communism" which will not disturb the many onerous privileges they now enjoy in the "home" at the expense of the woman doing the donkey work therein. Was ever there a better argument for women to do their own theoretical thinking? And how many "kinds" of Communism are there, anyhow?

Z. "There is a type of idiot 'Marxism' today which in effect asks everybody to unite around the minimum possible and get out there and do something positive. All difficult questions are to be ignored to obtain 'maximum unity'."

Yes, this piece is a splendid example, ignoring all difficult questions.

A₁. "This is the sort of attitude which in a period of theoretical chaos (WELL spoken! -HE) is like wishing mourners at a funeral 'many happy returns of the day'."

Yeah, ain't it? THIS sentence is worth retaining, if the rest of it could be reworked so it fits in.

B₁. "The maximum unity that is really needed is maximum unity for overthrowing imperialism and winning the subsequent socialist revolution."

Exactly: to HELL with such "diversions" as the Women's Liberation movement. Where has that been suggested before? This is the equivalent of the old American Communist Party slogan: "Black and White Unite and Fight." Its result was to choke the Afro-American liberation movement to death for decades and is now correctly repudiated in such a form by the Black liberation movement of the U.S.

It is quite remarkable how people - ordinarily so finicky that every phrase appearing under the CML label must be PROVED - can be so liberal and even prodigal with their own assumptions and not when the Woman Question is "all" that is being discussed. Moreover, the CML understanding of the need for black and other subjugated peoples to prepare and develop their own theory is conveniently forgotten when it comes to preparing "theory" for women. Marx said ^{the level of development of} a country could be judged by its treatment of women. The same can be said of individuals.

C₁. "Such maximum unity can only be achieved by exposing all forms of exploitation."

True. So, for a change, let's expose and not cover up the form of exploitation suffered by women.

It is the thesis of the writer that women AS A CLASS (irrespective of OTHER classes they ALSO belong to as workers, as middle class women, etc.) have as their main task in our society (imperialism, which includes the neo-colonial areas) the production of the commodity labour power. Women must REproduce as well as produce this commodity; this and this alone is the position of "childrearing" among the woman's housework. This

view does not exclude the increasing need for women in the West also to produce and reproduce their own labour power in the course of their household activities. But their main task is to prepare MALE LABOUR POWER for the market, and that is what they are doing even when they are "childrearing." They do it whether or not they happen individually to be "childrearing," and even if they happen to live alone, ~~except in a tiny minority~~ of specialised cases. They do this overall job for NO wages, because the MAN'S wages cover the cost of subsistence of the women and children, since these are necessary BOTH to the capitalist and to the man in order that the value-producing commodity labour power should reach the market daily for use in producing ~~productive~~ value (and hence, surplus value, and profits.)

If the Government - or, in some cases, industrial firms - add to these wages for "childrearing," this is just one more form of stretching the MAN'S wages (or in the small minority of cases of women living alone with or without children, the woman's INDUSTRIAL wages) by slices from ~~their~~ super-profits. This is proven by the fact that women in Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as in the West Indies, get no such wage-stretchers, yet prepare MALE labour power for the market during the majority of their working day (the man eating first; the children, last). The naked case of women's work in neo-colonial areas clearly shows that childrearing is NOT the MAJOR portion of housework, or "women's work."

It was Engels who said that the family under capitalism was a microcosm of the system, the man playing the role of capitalist and the woman's "proletarian." The profundity of this statement is apparent the moment the mechanics of this family as an economic unit is analysed. For, when a man is hired to work, the labour power he sells is a commodity he owns but did not produce. It was produced by labour power for which no wages are paid, a condition known in all other cases as slavery. The man owns the "means of production" of "his commodity," namely the woman. She, in the performance of her "housework," produces the commodity he then sells. Although this happens in individual "family" cells, the totality of these cells make up a CLASS in each case: men as owners of the "means of production" and the resulting commodity (i.e., women and labour power, including the labour power of the women and the potential labour power of the children); and women as slaves, not to mention children equally as slaves. All this revolves around the unique commodity, labour power.

It thus comes out, by applying to concrete conditions the words of the theory expounded by Engels, that the remainder of ordinary commodity production, founded upon the absolutely indispensable PRIMARY commodity, labour power, rests upon a historical anachronism in more ways than method: it rests upon the primary, basic SLAVERY OF WOMEN AS A CLASS, this being their MAIN economic condition at the moment and for the foreseeable future. The method for maintaining this condition is the nuclear patrilinear family economic unit. Far more is done in that unit, it is now clear, than "consumption." In fact, the existence of this method in its nuclear form has served admirably to conceal the CLASS nature of what takes place inside it.

The OTHER, Marx-analysed, class position of ~~ALL~~ MEN in relation to the MALE capitalist class, expressed through the relationship of both to the "capital equipment," i.e., the "means of production" for ordinary commodity production. Labour power is included as one of the means of production, rather than as one among many of the commodities which the CAPITALIST has to sell. This shows WHY the slavery of females will NEVER be overcome without a revolution leading to socialism: the social nature of capitalist production far outweighs the individual nature of the production of the KEY means of production, labour power. This shows why socialism must be women's STRATEGIC goal. At the same time, the struggle for the liberation of

women is the indispensable pre-condition - the preparation of ideological groundwork that has to be done under capitalism - for the success of any socialist revolution.

Women are NOT merely "a useful ally," as the historically-conditioned male supremacist (self-proclaimed Marxist or not) imagines. Women are the producers of a UNIQUE commodity which is at once a commodity (owned by individual males) and at the same time, a CRUCIAL means of production without which the entire capitalist - or probably any other - economy could not function. Thus the woman's despised housework turns out to be a major economic bulwark of the capitalist system, a bulwark without which a man means of production would become as scarce as a well-built car.

Women, because they and they alone experience all these conditions, must find their own way to analysing and solving this complexity of contradictions. The first job, both for them and for the male theorists of the strategic - socialist - revolution, must be to recognize that, AT THE MOMENT, the contradiction between slaves and slave-owners by which labour power is currently produced, has to have precedence at least for the slaves themselves. TACTICALLY, the women's liberation movement is an absolutely indispensable adjunct to the central revolutionary movement and ~~within~~ the leadership and analysis of women has to ~~be a central part of the moment~~ ^{be a central part of the moment} on their own struggle for liberation.

This is the context within which the great overwhelming flood of sexism in our society makes sense. Moreover, within this context, it becomes clear WHY increasing "childrearing" allowances, or extending them to neo-colonial areas, will solve nothing; it would just alter the "direction of play," as if a football team changed sides during a game.

^{CML} This paper makes no case at all WHY socialism or communism alone will solve the woman question. It suggests that such a solution is contained in extending "housework facilities" into the public domain, that this could be done under capitalism if various sectors of the working class would unite, and that in such a measure consists the solution of women's problems. Its omission of the man from the analysis also entails omission of any analysis, let alone understanding, of the role of the nuclear patrilinear family in the special FORMS of women's slavery. Incipient socialism has NOT solved the Woman question, a fact also not dealt with, despite the extension of such facilities on a far greater scale than under capitalism. There is no analysis, either of the CLASS nature of women's special oppression or of what the woman is really doing in her patrilinear cell. What is produced is a hodge-podge clear only in its massive, arrogant male supremacy.

Addendum: HOUSEWORK AND EXPLOITATION

The first discussion about my reply with the authors of the original piece, "Housework and Exploitation," has finally revealed to me the correct method of procedure for analysing this subject. In order to understand "The Woman Question," it is necessary to conduct a SOCIAL investigation of the commodity around the production of which women are enslaved. Marx examined it economically and quantified it; yet he could specifically label housework (which produces this commodity - labour power) as a "personal domestic service." No other personal service produces a commodity.

The investigation I have in mind would be based on the following considerations, among others:

1. Labour power is the ONLY commodity which produces value. It is a commodity, something like a CAR; but NO CAR can produce value.

2. Labour power is a commodity less like a car than like a huge steel furnace, for instance; that is, it is a commodity which is at the same time a MEANS OF PRODUCTION. But UNLIKE the furnace, it operates by producing VALUE. No furnace produces value.

3. Labour power is the only commodity the sale of which does not - socially speaking - realise a profit for its "owners." ALL the value which it produces belongs to its BUYER.

4. Labour power is the only commodity which the capitalists as a class do not own. It is owned by working class men, apparently as individuals but actually AS A CLASS (of slave-owners: men AS a CLASS own the "means of production" of "their own" labour power; i.e., women).

5. Labour power is the ONLY commodity in the capitalist system which is not SOCIALLY PRODUCED. However, its production inside individual production cells (families) is deceptive: it is "individual" in METHOD only. The RESULT of that production is SOCIAL; labour power is a SOCIAL phenomenon, deeply involved in the various CLASS relationships.

6. Labour power, to continue the last thought, is in fact the single pivot around which ALL the class conflicts of capitalism revolve: not ONLY the capitalist-proletariat conflict; but ALSO the male proletariat vs female slave labourpower producers.

7. Labour power is the ONLY commodity production of which under capitalism is UNREMUNERATED. Therefore, it is an anachronism in far more than the admitted "backward method of production": it is, in fact, the only commodity under capitalism produced by bodily-owned slaves.

8. Labour power produced but unsold is known as "unemployment." This condition benefits the BUYER, as with other unsold commodities. However, UNLIKE other unsold commodities (all owned by the capitalist class) its inability to be sold is NOT considered by the capitalists as a disaster for them. On the contrary, a certain residue of THIS commodity MUST remain unsold (i.e., un-bought) (wasted) as a requirement for the capitalist class, to keep its price "at or below its value." Women go on producing the commodity whether or not it is sold - unlike other unsold commodities, the production of which must cease.

It is only by closely scrutinising the role of women as producers of this unique Means-of-Production commodity that their true economic and social position can ever be understood.

What comes out first is that this great concept, "the working class" refers to MALES ONLY. The working class is male. Marx even defined it as such by saying that the MAN'S WAGES cover the cost of subsistence of a wife and children. In their majority, women who work do so to augment the husband's wage. Also, while a small businessman produces "privately," owning "his own" commodities, women who produce "their own" labour power "privately" are in reality merely producing a SECTION of the SOCIAL commodity labour power which belongs CLASS WISE (i.e., socially) to MEN AS A CLASS. Though these particular women sell "their own" commodity, they are thereby merely ADDING it to the SOCIAL COMMODITY MALE labour power. THIS determines its CLASS nature.

* See main article; Page 1, bottom full paragraph.

Engels believed that, when women returned to social production, their "problem" would be "solved." It now becomes clear to me, by seeing much more clearly how women's "problem" is related to the commodity labour power, why (a) this will NEVER occur while capitalism lasts - ANY women, EVEN those who are forced to support themselves - are still doing an EXTRA, NOT their MAIN, job. NOW it becomes clear HOW and WHY it is right, in the sense of women's real ROLE for the system, ^{that} a single woman ~~is~~ is IN FACT not a "whole" woman and is a loss to herself and "society." NOT "society," of course; but CAPITALIST society. (b) It is also clear that it will never occur when socialism is STARTED unless and until this analysis is fully developed by MANY women.

One possible objection to the theory that "women produce labour power" is that "middle class women aren't doing that," and/or "ruling class women don't produce labour power." As to middle class women, it is now a fact that servants for that class are quite scarce; but so is the middle class, which is falling more and more into the upper crust of the labour aristocracy. Today, it does not seem to me too important, statistically or class-wise; to go into detail about middle class women. They still either do the housework themselves with a good supply of so-called "labour saving devices" or they superintend it. But as to ruling class women, what they are doing is producing heirs and they are responsible for bringing them up to fit into the ruling class. That is what they ARE doing and what they HAVE BEEN doing since before "history as the record of class conflict" began. Ruling class women are the ONLY women whose "herstory" has been recorded. Their slavery was obvious, literal and unquestionable from the start. It was, as Bebel noted, the FIRST slavery in human chronology. Is it likely that, if the male ruling class enslaved its women, those of the producing classes or other intermediate classes (before capitalism) would be free? If not, what were they doing?

If this slavery followed the usual pattern that Marx has pointed out - i.e., how wages disguise the nature of ruling class exploitation of the (male) working class, how much more subtly (perhaps because of so little interest to the males who have done the overwhelming majority of writing about their own activities) (the latter being possible only - thus far in human chronology - on the foundation-stone of female slavery) would the exploitation of women by their male owners be disguised by all who benefit out of it.

When seen in this light, it becomes necessary to investigate HOW female slavery became disguised and what FORMS it assumed under the disguise...i.e., to strip the disguises away and lay bare the SLAVERY underneath. *It is also necessary to look into the question of women of the exploited classes in ALL previous societies.*

Since sexual activity is indispensable either for the production of heirs or of labour power, it was only "natural" that the subjugation of women - their slavery - should find its main mask in THIS form. In the first class societies, ruling class women's ^{form of subjugation} ~~was~~ was quite nakedly slavery: they were under lock and key, forcibly segregated, forcibly detained in "women's quarters" - and that slavery was also quite nakedly sexual in form: the avowed purpose was the production of "guaranteed 100% pure" male heirs. So, what about the production of "labour power" at an epoch when its owners were bodily ^{owned} slaves? What was the FORM of the subjugated classes' families? WAS there such a thing as a "slave family"? Didn't the male ruling class cohabit with female slaves and produce their own "labour power" in huge numbers of cases? Was this general? Was there, as in the anachronistic U.S. South before the Civil War, a set of male slaves especially retained for stud purposes? If so, would this not have deeply affected male attitudes - and female reaction - to the whole realm of sexuality (as in the case of Afro-Americans)? All this needs investigation.

Somewhere along the line, however, sexuality became entangled with the then-new concept of "romantic love." When? Engels tells us: during the Middle Ages under feudalism, when certain "pure" knights fell in love with the wives (female slaves) of their lords (masters). In these early cases, there was a great to-do about keeping "love" and sex separated. Quite rightly, it now becomes clear: a master does not love the female slave who produces his guaranteed heirs; he uses her for the purpose for which he keeps her. Thus, up to this point, sex was clearly the method by which women were subjugated, not to mention the only method for fulfilling their function, since it is the story of ruling class women which is recorded.

But because sexuality was in fact - as it will one day again become - women's glory, ~~sexual love~~ could no longer (if it ever did) sustain the fiction of being separated from "romantic love." As feudalism gave way to capitalism and the complexity of society's class structure began to be reduced, sexuality played an ever-bigger, ever-more-ambiguous role in the subjugation of women. Again, the only record (written by males) is of ruling class and/or upper class women. It was still obvious (chronology of royal families, of "noble" families; and later, of the big merchant families which finally developed into bourgeois families) that these women were bodily-owned counters in the "game" of fortune-building. ^{They} ~~They~~ sold their daughters to unite fortunes; husbands used ^{their} ~~their~~ wives in a sexual manner when necessary or expedient against or for other males whose fortunes interfered with theirs; etc. Yet, amidst this scene, the theme of "romantic love" continued to grow - always and still illicit: Tennyson was writing the Idylls of the King in the 19th century.

This is the kind of chronology that stands in back of capitalist society insofar as love and sexuality are concerned.

Now, it was Marx who exposed how the new society, capitalism, now disguised exploitation by the (male) ruling class of the (male) working class through the purchase and use of the unique commodity labour power. This far, he got. But he did not see how sexuality had come to disguise the exploitation of women by men (as well as by the whole capitalist system which benefits from the commodity labour power). At the same time, it was behind this disguise that the whole Female Stereotype (what women "are like") was gradually over the millenia built up for the convenience of their male users. It was behind this mask that ^{that it was} ~~that~~ stereotype, based on the real function of women, their duty and obligation to bear children to keep the (male) ruling class and the (male) working class perpetuated for the supposedly "only basic class conflict" to the point where (quite "correctly" from the male viewpoint and from the ruling class viewpoint) a single woman was a loss to herself and ^{exploitative} ~~to~~ society. Wasn't she, in FACT?

It is not surprising that, depending as he did on the unremunerated slavery (that is, personal domestic service or housework) of FOUR women (wife, servant and two daughters) for his own activities (writing and analysis) that ^{Marx} ~~he~~ should label this slavery as "personal domestic service," and not see its vital, indispensable, inseparable connection with social production. Engels missed this as well, though he at least did clearly see that men exploited women, for he more or less said as much in making his analogy of the bourgeois family ~~with~~ capitalist society with the man playing the role of capitalist to the woman's "proletarian." What is the capitalist's role vis-a-vis the proletarian? He exploits him and this is the source of his power and his wealth. He does it by owning the means of production, EXCEPT labour power which, on the surface at least, someone ELSE (i.e., the exploited) "owns." This now needs careful and detailed scrutiny. And REanalysis - and NOT by any male. He is just not equipped for the job. Just as black people have begun repudiating - or at least penetratingly questioning - for themselves all theory written of them (and this usually goes with it) FOR them by whites, now women must openly, boldly repudiate - after questioning - all theory of them and for them by males of any colour.