In the last twenty years, a new and rich school of economic analysis has developed—Marxist-Feminist thought—as part of what many historians now call the "second wave" of feminism (the first was in the mid- and late-nineteenth century). This resurgence of feminism was both the result and cause of a growing breakdown in the traditional sexual division of labor as more and more married women entered into the paid labor force, and as women began to demand entrance into men's jobs (Matthaei 1982). In the early 1970s, grass-roots feminist groups sprung up all over the U.S. to study, criticize, and fight to break down gender straightjackets, including the exclusion of women from positions of power.

Marxist-feminism developed in the early seventies, with roots in radical feminism and the New Left. Some women came to Marxism and radical economics as a result of their participation in radical feminist study and organizing groups. Others had been

I developed many of these ideas, especially the unitary systems approach, while working with Teresa Amott on Race, Gender, and Work: A Multicultural Economic History of Women in the United States (1991). Marcellus Andrews and the editors of this volume provided very helpful comments, criticisms and editorial suggestions. I presented earlier versions of this paper at the Union for Radical Political Economics Summer meetings (1988), the Harvard University Seminar in Neoclassical Economics (1988), the "Marxism Now: Traditions and Difference" Conference (1989), and various meetings of Marxist-Feminist 1, and benefited from the comments and questions of these audiences. Chris McGee, Gwynne Wiatrowski and Jennifer Schoenstadt provided invaluable research assistance.
active participants in the New Left and its economics in the sixties; growing feminist consciousness led them to split off, due both to the sexist practices of the New Left and to the inadequacy of its Marxist theory for explaining women's oppression (Sargent 1981). Marxist-feminism arose, then, both to study and explain women's subordination to men and the recent changes in gender relations and to inform an active and multi-faceted women's movement.

Marxist-feminism is part of the larger Women's Studies movement, which began during this period and has continued to grow and develop. The contributions of Marxist-feminism to radical economics and political organizing also parallel those of Women's Studies in general to academia and politics in general. In this essay I will discuss two broad themes: (1) the introduction of new concepts and areas of study into radical economic theorizing, and (2) the transformation (now only in its early stages) of the entire body of radical/Marxist economics, stemming from the recognition that the actors within capitalist society are gendered and raced. My aim is not to provide an encyclopedic survey of the burgeoning literature but rather to elucidate the main contributions of Marxist-feminist thought and point out useful directions for its future development.

MARXIST-FEMINISM ENLARGES THE SCOPE OF MARXIST ECONOMICS

Marxist-feminism has enlarged the scope of radical economics in three ways: adding new topics or areas of study, developing the concept of patriarchy as a lens through which to analyze the economy, and adding feminist organizing to the discourse on radical social movements.

New Areas of Study

An early and major contribution of Marxist-feminism was simply to undertake and encourage the study of women and women's work. Early Marxist-feminist writings correctly faulted Marxist theory for being "sex-blind." Marx and his more recent followers divided people into two economic categories or classes: workers and capitalists. Men, women, whites, and blacks were nowhere to be found; implicitly, the assumption was that all economic actors were white men. The first contribution of Marxist-feminism was to bring into radical economics questions concerning women's roles in the economy and economic history, both in the labor force and union organizing, and in the family, particularly in housework and childcare. Books such as Womanhood in America (Ryan 1975), America's Working Women (Baxandall et al. 1976), We Were There (Wertheimer 1977), A Heritage of Her Own (Cott and Pleck 1979), and The Economics of Women and Work (Amsden 1980) began to redress the exclusion of women and women's work from economic scholarship.

One necessary adjunct of this addition of women was more intensive study of the
economic aspects of the family, given that the bulk of women's work has been done within the household. This study has led Marxist-feminists to uncover the changing relationship between family and economy in U.S. history, the early conflation and growing separation of these spheres with capitalist development, and the continued centrality for the reproduction of capitalism of women's work in the home and women's roles as consumers and reproducers of the labor force (Scott and Tilly 1978; Matthaëi 1982).

A second and related aspect of this study of women was the study of women's oppression, of inequality between the sexes. For Marxist-feminists, the first step in this process was to document the existence of sexual inequality, particularly economic inequality between the sexes. In capitalism, Marxist-feminists noted, women's relegation to unpaid work in the home and to the lower-paid jobs in the labor force has reduced our access to income relative to men and created economic dependency within marriage. This economic and marital inequality has been further compounded by men's monopolization of political power, of management positions, and of academia and the media. When male radicals argued in response that sexual inequality was a creation of the ruling class to divide workers and hence should be ignored as secondary, both theoretically and in radical political movements, Marxist-feminists pointed to (and worked on) studies which showed that sexual inequality preceded capitalism and persists in all existing socialist countries (Scott 1974).

The study and critique of sexual inequality necessarily led Marxist-feminists to the study of sexual differentiation, both to document and to explain it. A series of studies by Marxist and non-Marxist feminists has shown the universality of the sex-typing of jobs, indeed of all work. The question then became one of explaining this. The then-current explanation for women's lesser pay or assignment to housework was that women are biologically better suited for these tasks, and that men are, similarly, biologically better suited for higher paid managing and directing work. To attack this biological-determinist rationalization of sexual inequality, Marxist-feminists (like other feminists) drove a wedge between biological sex and the social identities of the sexes. In doing so, Marxist-feminists made use of a central principle of Marxist social science—that social relations determine and differentiate individuals, i.e., that society shapes the individual in the first instance, not vice versa. Rubin (1975) was among the first to apply this insight to the sexes with her concept of a "sex/gender system." Later studies have focused in particular on the sexual division of labor as the social mechanism which, by assigning the (biological) sexes to different and complementary work, transforms them into different and complementary social beings, or "genders" (e.g., Matthaëi 1982; Young 1981).

As feminist scholars began to conceptualize gender as a social product, the feminist critique of sexual inequality was extended, for many, to criticism of gender roles in general—as straightjackets which force each sex into distorted, less-than-fully-human identities. In our society, feminine self-seeking means subordinating oneself to the needs of one's family, serving, whereas masculinity means competing with
other men, striving to subordinate or better them. Neither, some Marxist-feminists argue, are adequate ways of being. Women's liberation, then, does not simply involve equality with men or the empowerment of women but, I would argue, the end of gender differentiation—and the emergence of a new ungendered individual involved in relations of mutuality (Gould 1983). The critique of gender roles becomes a lens through which social institutions can be analyzed and criticized, since they all involve and construct gendered individuals; one political goal then becomes envisioning and developing new, ungendered social institutions and practices.

Attempts to locate the roots of sexual inequality led Marxist-feminist anthropologists to cross-cultural studies, which found gender and a sexual division of labor everywhere. Early studies (Rosaldo 1974) concluded that sexual inequality was a universal consequence of the assignment of women to private (intrafamilial) activities dominated by the public (interfamilial) activities of men. More recent studies have disputed this claim; women are not universally excluded from interfamilial activities (e.g., women traders in West Africa) and women's assignment to the home doesn't always bring social inferiority (Leacock 1981; Coontz and Henderson 1986). In other words, as Rosaldo (1980) argues, "women's place in human social life is not in any direct sense a product of the things she does (or even less a function of what biologically she is) but of the meaning her activities acquire through concrete social interactions." So apparently sexual inequality is tied to, but not necessarily the product of, the sexual division of labor and gender itself. Marxist-feminists need to avoid projecting characteristics of the present onto the past. Nevertheless, there is agreement that, in capitalism, gender differentiation (masculine/feminine and public/private) and gender inequality (the domination of public over private) are clearly linked. In other words, women's primary assignment to the private, home sphere and concomitant exclusion from paid and high-paid labor is at the root of sexual inequality in capitalism. There is no agreement on whether or not the social differentiation of the sexes must be abolished if women's oppression is to cease.

Patriarchy: A New Way to Analyze the Economy

Marxist-feminists have used the term "patriarchy" or "patriarchal" to characterize social systems which both differentiate the sexes and place men above women. Patriarchy thus involves relations and institutions of gender differentiation, in which feminine activities are devalued relative to masculine ones and men are given power over women. However, the relationship between inequality/power and differentiation is different for different theorists. Some see men's successful struggles to subordinate and terrorize women as the origin of patriarchy; here, men organize to force women into devalued and low-paid activities and the unpaid service of men. Others (myself among them) begin instead with gender and the sexual division of labor, as unconscious or semi-conscious social systems which place men (as economic and political beings) above the family-centered women in most societies. Either
way, patriarchy reproduces itself by creating sexual difference and inequality through different levels of consciousness, from the subconscious to the self-conscious.

The Subconscious Reproduction of Patriarchy by Mother-Dominated Parenting. Dinerstein (1976), Chodorow (1978), and Harding (1981) have given psychoanalytic accounts of the ways in which mother-dominated parenting accounts for both gender differentiation and for men’s need to dominate women. Daughters mold their identities after their mothers; sons out of differentiation from their mothers. Children by an early age acquire “gender identities” which they pursue as a given by striving to engage in the activities proper to their sex and by shunning the activities thought proper for the “opposite” sex (Eichenbaum and Orbach 1983). Not only does the feminine role exclude women from economic and political power, mother-dominated parenting creates in men a subconscious need to dominate women. These theorists argue that, unless both sexes participate equally and similarly in parenting, gender differentiation and inequality will continue. Sexist language is another subconscious force in reproducing gender difference and inequality: third person pronouns must specify gender, the masculine “he” or “men” represents “the generic,” and sexist occupational titles have overtly dictated the sex of the worker, from “chairman” to “stewardess” to “men working” (Lakoff 1975).

Patriarchal Institutions and Social Practices. A second interrelated way in which patriarchy reproduces itself is through institutions and practices. Central among these for Marxist-feminists is the job structure, which includes jobs that require and reproduce masculine or feminine workers. Marxist-feminists have intensively studied the historical development and contemporary landscape of the labor market. White masculine jobs pay a family wage, involve progression upward through seniority, often in competition against other white masculine workers, and include the direction of other men and of women. Feminine jobs pay secondary wages, neither demand much continuity nor reward it, and often involve performing widly or motherly functions, such as waitressing, nursing, or personal secretary. The job structure institutionalizes gender by objectifying it in jobs to which individuals then have to accommodate themselves through training. Other institutions noted by Marxist-feminists as central to the reproduction of patriarchy include: property laws (which formerly denied married women the right to their property or wages); marriage laws and laws against homosexuality (which dictate heterosexuality); divorce law and practice (which assign children and property); laws and practices concerning sexuality, birth control, and sterilization (which reduce women’s control over their own bodies); the educational system (with its “masculinist” textbooks and scholarly work); and the welfare and child support systems (which prop up “broken,” i.e., husbandless, families without empowering women).

Self-Conscious Choice and Struggle. Certain aspects of patriarchy are the result of self-conscious individual and collective actions. Many Marxist-feminists have simplistically assumed individualistic, materially-oriented “utility-maximization” from the sexes, viewing everything from marriage to union organizing as the result of such
self-conscious, self-interested struggle. I would argue instead that most people, now and in the past, have accepted their gender identities and roles without thought, rather than having come to them as the result of struggle and choice. However, given the constraints of their subconscious minds and existing social institutions, individuals are still left with a good deal of choice as to how to live out their gender roles, or whether to do so at all. Many have been individually and collectively involved in the continual effort to redefine, refine, and sometimes attenuate patriarchal practices. These openings for action within a seemingly given sex/gender system occur when: (1) the system is internally contradictory, (2) new social practices are coming into being, particularly within the context of the rapid change brought by capitalist development, and (3) the gender interests of two or more groups are in conflict. Often two or all of these openings for change occur simultaneously.

An example of the first case is women’s higher education. Nineteenth century white women (and some white men) viewed higher education for middle-class women as necessary training for their vocation of mothering. Yet once these women went to college, a substantial portion of them wanted to work in paid professions to use their developed knowledge and abilities. This conflict caused growing numbers of these women to choose to be “career girls” and later to try to enter white masculine jobs. Another example of an internal contradiction in gender is the nineteenth century white feminist argument that women should be able to vote in order to express their special feminine sensibility; in other words, women’s special abilities in the domestic or private sphere were said to qualify them for participation in the public political sphere (Matthaey 1982, pt. II).

An example of the second case is the sex-typing of new jobs according to employers’ needs and technological options, their views of “proper” gender roles, their perceptions of the different abilities of the sexes, workers’ views and perceptions, and the relative supply and cost of the genders. At the turn of the century, firms chose to replace male clerks with female typists equipped with typewriters (Davies 1979; Rotella 1981), a decision which, with this century’s explosion of clerical employment, has helped draw white women into the labor force in increasing numbers. The managers of multinational corporations have chosen to employ mostly women and girls in their labor-intensive shops in the Third World, leaving men in those communities with high unemployment. Such decisions, which extend, reproduce, and perhaps problematize the sexual division of labor by breaking down separate sexual spheres, involve numerous historical factors and are thus historically contingent. Gender is not given in biology or in men’s diabolical minds, but produced, transformed, and now attenuated by the confluence of a variety of social forces.5

An example of the third case is the development of the family wage system, the much debated practice of excluding women from high-paid jobs which evolved in the nineteenth century with the expansion of wage labor (Hartmann 1979; 1981; Humphries 1977:1981; Brenner and Ramas 1985; Benenson 1984). Hartmann presents the process as a power struggle between women seeking entrance into
such jobs (albeit for slightly lower wages) and men defending themselves against women's low wage competition. However, others have pointed out that these men may have been fighting for family wages to help their families as well as to retain their positions as heads of households. Furthermore, we must recognize that the individuals involved were also members of families, with whom they pooled income. We can suppose that the families of these women, including husbands, fathers and sons, may have supported them in their attempts to gain employment and enhance family income, whereas the families of the employed men, including wives, daughters and mothers, most likely would oppose women's employment in this case. But these were not the only parties in conflict—potential employers also lined up in support of women's employment, while opposing it also were upper-middle-class women reformers who wanted to "protect" poor women from exploitation by the capitalists and to impose their own definition of womanhood upon them. If we realize that the workers in question also had gender identities to shore up, we can conclude that on the whole men and women may have supported the family wage system because it maintained, even strengthened, the social differentiation of the sexes. Since home-bound women were the opposite of job-centered men, a family wage allowed for a clear sexual division of labor in marriage. Further, as Humphries (1977) has pointed out, households may have decided it was in their best interest to keep one sphere of production, housework, outside of the control of capital, which would also force capitalists to pay higher, family wages to men in order to reproduce the labor force.

A final important instance of the third case of self-conscious organizing occurs when feminists attempt to challenge established patriarchal practices. Most (but not all) of the defenders of these patriarchal practices will be men, upon whom such practices confer special privileges and powers. Yet from this we cannot infer that men's self-interested organizing necessarily created these institutions—only that patriarchal institutions, by giving men power over women, give men a vested interest in their defense. In this way, the three levels at which patriarchy is reproduced—subconscious, institutional, and self-conscious—reinforce one another. Thus, any struggle against patriarchy must involve all three levels if it is to be successful.

**Marxist-feminist Contributions to the Feminist Movement**

While feminist political practice is not the subject of this paper, I want to note the important role played by Marxist-feminists not only in developing an analysis of patriarchal oppression that could support feminist movements for change but also in shaping the directions that movement has taken. In the U.S., Marxist-feminists were active in "Socialist-feminist groups" formed in Berkeley, Chicago, and New Haven, among others; they have been central participants in the struggle for comparable worth, and also reproductive rights (in particular, with the Reproductive Rights National Network and the Coalition for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse). In this, they have had to fight the opposition of their male left colleagues,
many of whom have dismissed feminist action as "reformist." Further, because feminist organizing often brings together women across class, racial-ethnic, and sexual preference lines, organizing activity has forced Marxist-feminists to deal with the difficult question of the relationship between women's gender oppression and these other sources of oppression (Molyneux 1985). This has led many Marxist-feminists to argue that class, race, and gender oppressions are intrinsically linked and must be simultaneously addressed by any progressive movement (Hooks 1984). Thus the Marxist-feminist interest in the political links among these different oppressions has reinforced the need for theoretical and historical study of these same links, and has raised the question of the relationship between Marxist-feminist theory and Marxist theory, which we will now explore.

BEYOND THE UNHAPPY MARRIAGE OF MARXISM AND FEMINISM: MARXIST-FEMINISM AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF MARXIST ECONOMICS

How have Marxist-feminists related their new areas of study to the traditional corpus of Marxist theory? Marxist-feminists' starting point was the analysis of capitalism based on Marx's method of historical materialism. But Marxist theory and method were not only gender-blind, they also enabled traditional Marxists to argue that the topics of interest to Marxist-feminists represented a diversion into non-economic, "superstructural" and therefore secondary theoretical territory.

Marxist-feminist theory has built upon Marxist theory in three distinct ways: (1) fitting the topics of Marxist-feminist concern into traditional Marxist analysis and categories, (2) developing a set of separate and parallel theoretical constructs to analyze patriarchal relations, and (3) transforming fundamental Marxist concepts to produce a more adequate analysis of economic and social reality. To some extent, these different strategies can be seen as chronological stages. The first stage took the form of an analysis of patriarchy as part of the capitalist mode of production, with a particular focus on women's work in the home. The second meant analysis of patriarchy as a system or mode of production distinct from and parallel to capitalism, without challenging Marxist theories of the latter. The third and current stage involves analysis of class, gender, and white supremacy as interconnected, inseparable systems of differentiation and oppression within our historically specific social structure. I argue that the latter is the only correct way to grasp gender and class issues.

Fitting Women's Work in the Home into the Capitalist Mode of Production: Housework as Domestic Labor or Ideology-Generator

When women Marxists first became feminists, we faced the task of justifying and pursuing our interest in women's lives and feminist struggles within our accepted theoretical and political framework, Marxist economics. This was no easy task.
Marxist theory took class as its central category, and in the theoretical world populated by ungendered capitalists and workers, women, and men’s domination over them, didn’t fit. Neither did feminist struggles for women’s liberation; Marxist men saw them as reforms, which at best did nothing to further the struggle for socialism and at worst divided the working class and put off the coming of socialism, as capitalists wanted. Instead, we were told, women should organize with men workers to overthrow capitalism; our liberation could and would only come after the revolution; in socialism. To make things worse, women’s unique and central activity, homemaking, takes place in the family, a site which Marxist historical materialism relegated to theoretical and political insignificance as part of the superstructure.

The task early Marxist-feminists set for themselves thus was to fit women and our work into this framework. This meant either placing women’s work in the home in the material base, by conceptualizing it as labor, or placing it in the superstructure, by conceptualizing it as the production of ideology. Both routes were tried.

The “domestic labor debate,” which raged in the 1970s, concerned the relationship of housework to the capital accumulation process. Marxist-feminists argued for the centrality of housework, as domestic labor, to capitalist production. Theorists pointed out that housework maintains capitalism by reproducing the labor force, both daily and generationally. When a capitalist hires a male worker, he is also buying with the wage the unpaid services of a housewife/mother which both maintain that worker and produce new workers. The debate focused on whether or not domestic labor produced surplus value, since if this could be shown, it then followed that housewives were also exploited by capital and their struggle would be the same as that of wage workers. Housewives would be part of the revolutionary working class. Dalla Costa (1973), in particular, argued that housewives were workers like men, could equally disrupt capitalism by striking, and should be paid wages in recognition of the value they produce. The upshot of the domestic labor debate was a strong “wages for housework” movement, despite the theoretical conclusion that housework could not be said to produce surplus value.

One contribution of the domestic labor debate was its discovery that the household work of women—both as producers of labor power and as consumers of capitalist products—is central to capitalist production (Weinbaum and Bridges 1979). As Miller (1976) pointed out, male supremacy rests in part on the denial of men’s dependence on women’s work; standing, as it were, on the shoulders of the women who fulfill their everyday needs, both physiological and emotional, men act as if they are only abstract thinkers, commodity producers, capital accumulators—not flesh and blood individuals. Capitalism in particular relies on the existence of unpaid labor, whether generated through women’s housework or subsistence modes of production (Mies 1986, ch. 2). After the domestic labor debate, one hopes that Marxists will never again be able to pretend that capitalist production exists independent of women’s household work.

However, this first Marxist-feminist attempt to bring women into Marxist analysis
was a very partial advance. It viewed women only as housewives, ignoring their position as wage workers. It viewed housework and family life inadequately, since analysis based on economic categories like labor, exploitation and surplus value stresses their material, physical aspects, not the social relations surrounding them. It provided no real explanation of the forms of domestic labor other than as means to fulfill capitalism’s needs, and hence tended to functionalism. Finally, although some mention was made of men’s privileged role in the home, the focus on the relationship between housework and capitalism obfuscated the issue of gender domination.

A second, early route to integrating women into traditional Marxist economics involved using its historical materialist method to analyze the family as the generator and reproducer of capitalist ideology, preparing children for lives as workers or capitalists. Marxist-feminist theorists, most notably Mitchell (1974) and Chodorow (1979), used psychoanalysis and object-relations theory to analyze the role of the family and of women’s work within it in producing and reproducing ideas and personalities compatible with capitalist production. This analysis began to explore the psychological aspects of women’s work, and indeed of gender roles and inequality, in counterposition to the domestic labor focus on the physical production aspect. Nevertheless, as ideology-production, women’s housework was construed as superstructural and secondary, essentially shaped to satisfy capital’s needs.

Conceptualizing women’s work in the home as part of the capitalist mode of production, either as base or as superstructure, meant assessing its role in filling capitalism’s needs. The subject of male domination and its connection to women’s work in the home remained slighted. In their desire to give weight to the patriarchal aspects of women’s work, Marxist-feminists began to examine patriarchal institutions with a set of new concepts which they put on par with Marxist concepts of class and exploitation: Marxist-feminists added onto the capitalist mode of production a second system or mode, one which organized and reproduced sexual inequality.

Adding Another Sphere or System to the Capitalist Mode of Production: Patriarchy, Reproduction, and the Patriarchal Mode of Production

Patriarchy. In their attempt to “wed” an analysis of sexual inequality and oppression to the Marxist class-based analysis, one group of Marxist-feminists has suggested that our economy is best conceived as two systems, capitalism (characterized by class exploitation and struggle) and patriarchy (characterized by sex exploitation and struggle). Here, Marxist-feminists have built on analyses of “radical feminists” such as Firestone (1970) and Millet (1969), who had developed a conception of patriarchy as a system of domination. Indeed, Firestone had used modified Marxist categories to understand sexual inequality: history, she argued, was the history of struggle between the sexes (not the classes); male domination (not class domination) was based on male control over the means of reproduction (not the means of production).

Since Marxist-feminists were already convinced of the importance of Marxist
class analysis, the logical development was a “dual systems” approach, adding a conception of patriarchy to the traditional Marxist notion of capitalism. Extending and transforming Marx’s historical materialist method, Marxist-feminists have constructed conceptions of patriarchy which, like Firestone’s, paralleled the Marxist notion of capitalism. Each system produces its own form of social differentiation and domination: in capitalism, class and capitalist exploitation; in patriarchy, gender and male domination. Each has a “material base” comprised of an exploiting/oppressing group (capitalists or men) which extracted unpaid labor (surplus value or unpaid housework) from the exploited/oppressed group (workers, women). Each is maintained and reproduced by struggle between the groups (class struggle, sex struggle). Capitalism and patriarchy, Marxist-feminists argued, sometimes reinforce, sometimes conflict, depending on historical circumstances. Hartmann (1981), a major advocate of this approach, argued that the “family wage” system was a compromise between capitalism and patriarchy (embodied by male workers, wishing to exclude women from their high-paid jobs). Ferguson and Folbre (1981) argued that capitalism has been breaking down patriarchy by reducing the economic benefits of child-rearing, hence freeing women to work in the labor force, beyond their husbands’ patriarchal power.

Production and Reproduction. Another form of dual systems theory instead focused on reproduction as counterposed to and interconnected with production. Taking off from Engels’ (1972) statement that a society is a “mode of production and reproduction,” these Marxist-feminists argue that Marxist analyses of capitalism should be expanded to include the family and women’s work within it, the sphere of “reproduction.” Building on the earlier analyses of housework as domestic labor or ideology-producer, these Marxist-feminists posit the mode of reproduction as different from but interconnected with and necessary to capitalist production. With a material base of its own (domestic labor physically reproducing labor power) and an ideal (psychological) aspect, the arena of reproduction is conceptualized as a different “mode” or “sphere” which is at least semi-autonomous from capitalist production. Marxist-feminists (e.g., Humphries 1981) conceptualize family relations as involving shared income and concerns as well as sexual inequality and antagonism. Humphries and Rubery (1984) have begun to explore the effects of the organization of reproduction on the capitalist labor market. Others such as Benneria (1979) have emphasized the patriarchal nature of the relationships of reproduction.

The Patriarchal Mode of Production. Another group of Marxist-feminists has wedded these two approaches, adding both patriarchy and reproduction to their analysis through the conception of a patriarchal mode of production or reproduction. In these theories, the capitalist and patriarchal modes of production can be distinguished by their objects (one produces commodities, the other human beings), their sites (workplace, family), and their relations of domination (class, gender). Folbre (1982) actually formalized an analysis of patriarchal exploitation parallel to that of worker exploitation, based on the number of labor hours each family member
works and consumes. The conception of a patriarchal mode of production builds on the insight that the central locus of women's oppression is in the family: in the sexual division of labor in marriage, in women's assignment to reproductive labor, and in men's control over the latter. For such theorists, the material base of women's oppression lies in women's physical production of children, with men in control of the means of reproduction. While some, such as O'Brien (1981) and Brenner and Ramas (1985), root the patriarchal mode in women's unique abilities to reproduce, thus tending towards biological determinism, others, such as Ferguson (1984) and Delphy (1984), acknowledge the social and particularly the emotional, aspects of what Ferguson calls "sex-affective production" and account for women's assignment to it as the result of struggle, not biology.

The strength of dual systems theory is its full-blown analysis of (1) the relationships and divisions of labor which differentiate the sexes and give men power over women, and (2) the family, especially in economic terms, as a source of determinate effects, rather than a superstructural expression of the needs of capital. Marxist-feminists made this progress by placing gender on an equal footing with class, setting it up as a parallel phenomenon. Thus, the dual systems approach allowed us for the first time to inquire into the nature of this system which most of us have chosen to call patriarchy. As seen in the variety of insights surveyed above, this has resulted in a rich literature.

Production/reproduction analyses which differentiate the product of each system (commodities vs. labor power) can accommodate a unified theory of the economy encompassing both production and reproduction; however, these formulations tend to collapse into the domestic labor position—an enlarged view of capitalism in which gender domination is underemphasized (e.g., Humphries and Rubery 1984). Theories which, on the other hand, emphasize reproduction as the sphere where gender domination originates tend to limit patriarchy to the sphere of reproduction and class to that of production. One interesting insight of the production/reproduction analyses concerns how, with men's domination in both the economy and the family, the requirements of the production sphere (capital accumulation) have come to prevail over the needs of the feminine sphere of reproduction (Himmelweit 1984).

Problems with Dual Systems Theory and the Tri-Systems "Solution"

The most evident problem with dual systems theory was pointed out by Marxist-feminists of color—what about race? As Joseph (1981) noted, the concept of patriarchy as a system through which men dominate women makes sense only if race is ignored. Black men do not have power over white women; indeed, the reverse is usually the case. Similarly, black women rarely feel a unity of interest with white women, who have often been their race and class enemies. Similar criticisms of "race-blindness" and "white bias" were aimed at the feminist movement by women of color, many of whom decided to form autonomous groups (Hooks 1984). History was
replaying itself in short succession: white Marxist-feminists, who had accused white Marxists of being gender-blind and sexist, were now being accused by Marxist-feminists of color of being race-blind and racist. And both accusations were correct.

One response to these criticisms has been to add race as a third system of oppression. In tri-systems theory, as advocated by Ferguson (1984), race, sex and class are conceptualized as distinct social systems of differentiation and oppression. But once one has opened the door to other oppressions suffered in our capitalist system, where does one stop? Other groups within the feminist movement have argued that their oppressions are similarly ignored: lesbians and gay men are oppressed by heterosexism or homophobia, older women by agism, disabled women by "able-ism," Jews by anti-semitism, Third World by First World. Where do we stop? If we truly wish to encompass each type of oppression created within our economic system, do we need an eight-systems theory?

I believe not. "Multiple-systems" theory is certainly superior to a Marxist theory which recognizes only one kind of oppression within capitalism: class. However, besides being extremely unwieldy, multiple-system theory is conceptually faulty. It is, I argue, impossible to conceptualize adequately any of these types of social differentiation/oppression—class, gender, race, sexual preference, age—while "abstracting from" or "controlling for" the others (see Armoit and Mathaeri 1991, ch. 2).

Let us take the example of class. Marx defines it as determined by one's relationship to the means of production, a clear concept for distinguishing the white male craft worker from his boss. But what about the white woman who is married to this industrial worker? She doesn't own the means of production, but neither is she necessarily a wage worker selling her labor power to capital? And what about the black woman who does laundry for the white woman married to the craft worker? Or the prostitute who services his sexual needs?

The concepts of patriarchal theory are similarly problematic. This theory focuses on the unpaid labor which housewives do for their husbands as the essence of their gender oppression. But what if this housewife uses her husband's income to pay another woman to do her domestic labor? And what if this other woman not only performs all of her employer's domestic labor (except actually bearing children for her) but also serves as her personal maid? Where is the housewife's unpaid labor? Where is the material oppression of the housewife, when her husband may actually be laboring many more hours than she is? In the "mode of reproduction," are men oppressing women, or women oppressing women, or women oppressing men by oppressing women?

Finally, let us attempt to discuss race as a distinct conceptual category. First, can we compare the racial oppression of blacks with that of Native Americans, Chicanas, Puerto Ricans, Japanese, and Filipinas, other than by noting in a qualitative sense that these groups were all in some way oppressed/exploited/disinherited by whites? How can we analyze the roots of black oppression in their enslavement without discussing slavery as a class system? Can we understand contemporary race without
class — or, as Wilson (1987) has argued, must we recognize that the basis of the current economic oppression of most blacks lies in their separation from wealth, income, and human capital, from the means of production?

When we as Marxist-feminists confine our study of patriarchy to a separate conceptual sphere, we leave intact the central conceptions of Marxist economic theory. When we focus on patriarchal oppression, we are then forced to downplay class and race differences among women. What is needed for the further development of Marxist-feminist theory and Marxist theory in general is analysis of race, class, and gender differentiation and inequality as integral parts of our complex economic system—one which, for lack of a better word, we can still call capitalism. Thus, rather than adding race and gender systems of oppression to Marxist theory’s race- and gender-blind categories of class, Marxist-feminists must work to transform the conception of capitalism to encompass its historically patriarchal and white supremacist nature. And this, I believe, means revising Marxist methodology as well.

Transforming Marxist Methodology

There are two basic ways in which Marxist methodology must be transformed: first, its theorizing must become explicitly historical; second, it must abandon its insistence on differentiating material from ideal, privileging the former. It is my view that we can understand the present workings of race, class and gender oppression only by studying them as they have historically developed, viewing the U.S. or any other country as part of an increasingly world-wide system. In other words, we have to locate our theory in time and space.4

Despite the clear precedent in the wedding of history and theory in Marx’s historical materialism, Marxists constantly deny the historical nature of the economy in their theoretical practice. First, Marxists (including Marx) incorrectly project into the past our present institutions and practices—such as the primacy of the economic (“material”) and the universality of overt and self-conscious, self-interested struggle over the surplus—and then view these as central, transhistorical forces. Second, there is still a tendency for Marxist theorists to “abstract” from history, presenting capitalism as a timeless universal force unaffected by its historical grounding in patriarchal and racist social relations; the fact that all relations within capitalism are both gendered and raced becomes, for them, simply a matter of historical contingency, one which need not be incorporated into the theory in any explicit way. When theory proceeds without specifying a particular era in capitalist history, it is easier to ignore race and gender in the economy. Marxist-feminist theorists have similarly been guilty of ignoring historical change, particularly in our early positing of universal sexual inequality, as discussed above.

In order to locate our theorizing in space, we must acknowledge that capitalism does have a different nature in different parts of the world (with pressures both for homogenization and differentiation of regions) and that capital has always been
involved in relations with non-capitalist systems which play a non-trivial role in the explanation of its development (see Mies 1986). We cannot simply study the U.S. economy and assume that what we find characterizes the rest of the world, or even the rest of the capitalist world. Here we can learn from Marxist-feminists, who have discovered the extreme variability of the sexual division of labor across cultures, even among capitalist countries, and who, as well, have been soundly criticized by Third World feminists for projecting issues and political programs on them. 19

If, rather than projecting the present onto the past, we see how the present has grown out of past and qualitatively different social relations, we arrive at a very different result. This historical approach allows us to see how pre-capitalist patriarchal relations (relations of male and parental dominance) were built into capitalism from its inception, preventing any of capitalism's social relations of production from being "gender-blind" (Matthaesi 1982, ch. 5, 9). If we also locate early capitalism in space, noting that capitalism developed among white Western Europeans, in Europe and in their settler colonies, we can see that early wealth accumulation was based on the displacement, destruction, and/or subordination of societies and peoples of color; indeed, the rapid growth of capitalism involved the underdevelopment of much of the rest of the world. Thus western capitalism is not only white supremacist, in that it spread white social relations and culture while destroying or subordinating non-white peoples and their ways of life; it is also inherently white supremacist in that its practices reproduce racial difference and white superiority (Amott and Matthaesi 1991).

A second needed transformation of Marxism is the abandonment of materialism, which has been a central barrier to the incorporation of Marxist-feminist insights into Marxism. Since women's work is centered in the family and materialism views the family as "superstructural," Marxist-feminists have attempted to extend the "economic base" to include the family as the site of domestic labor or reproduction. Doing so has meant violating the distinctiveness and sociality of familial and economic relations, reducing them to a nondescript "labor" which physically produces either commodities or people (e.g., O'Brien 1981). We must not give up the distinctiveness of familial relations as the price for making them important. Family relations involve a level of love and sharing and indeed of fusion of personality absent from production relations. Yet the family should be of central importance to Marxist economists. Historically, the family played a pivotal role in structuring early capitalist relations; currently it is crucial both to the distribution of income and wealth and the construction of gendered, raced and classed personalities who can then fit within an authoritarian classed, raced and gendered work structure. Further, we must be open to the real historical relationships between economy and family, rather than impose an assumption that the economy dominates at all times and in all ways. It is not at all clear that all of the forces for change in present day capitalism come from the economy, and it certainly is clear that, in earlier systems, familial and kinship relations often played a determining role.
A second problematic aspect of materialism is the very attempt to characterize activities as material or ideal. Women's work of mothering is the perfect example of an activity which is neither material nor ideal but both—as are, I would argue, all social practices. Marxist-feminists have shown how women's actual physical production of children, from pregnancy and childbirth to breast-feeding, is at the same time a social and ideal process in which children develop their consciousnesses and identities.11 Similarly, men's participation in wage labor is not simply a physical or material expenditure of energy which can be exploited but also a social and ideal relationship, one critically structured by their gender and race identities, as has been shown in the family wage controversy discussed above. We must, as Marxists, find a way to acknowledge in our theories the centrality of social relations in constituting subjectivity. Otherwise, we are reduced to viewing individual motivation in the most simplistic sense, as the "material" struggle for a larger piece of the pie, ignoring individuals' struggles, for example, to prove or defend their gender or racial or sexual identities, or to fulfill themselves, or to aid their families, or to establish their solidarity with others who are oppressed in different ways.12

This rejection of materialism allows Marxists to have a more complicated understanding of consciousness and social action, both individual and collective. Instead of simplistically assuming that individuals always engage in self-interested struggle against the "opposed" racial, gender or class group, we can look at individual subjectivity as structured by the complex web of social relations we call capitalism. The Marxist-feminist analysis of the psychological production of gendered beings needs to be extended to encompass the class and race and sexual dimensions of identity. Such an analysis would necessarily include another important aspect of personality formation: the process of repression of a child's true self and feelings created by Western parenting, repression which then prepares him or her for life in a world of authoritarian work, family and political relations.13 Issues like these deserve attention, since the transformation of parenting and family life is crucial to the success of a radical movement for democracy.

Further, Marxists should learn from Marxist-feminism's exploration of women's identities and political consciousness. Marxist-feminists have identified the ways in which individuality is blurred in familial relations, especially for a woman who sees her goal as caring for her husband and children, and who (correctly) identifies her economic position with that of her husband rather than defining herself solely by her own relation to the labor market. We have learned that women's opposition to the feminist movement can result from: (1) the "internalization" of patriarchal oppression—something which can be "exorcised" through consciousness-raising; (2) the fact that some women actually see themselves as privileged by patriarchy because it has given them access through their husbands to high income and to the domestic labor of other women; or (3) the fact that feminism, focused typically on gender oppression alone, cannot adequately deal with patriarchy as experienced by working-class women or women of color, or with the racism and classism often
present in the feminist movement. Class and worker struggles can be similarly understood as impeded by: (1) internalized oppression on the part of the worker, in particular a childlike relationship to the employer as the authoritarian parent against whom one rebels or demands or even struggles, but in whose hands one leaves authority; (2) the worker’s potential identification with capitalism as a system which has benefited him (particularly if the worker is male and white) by placing him very near the top of the world wealth distribution (see Baron 1985); and (3) the fact that working class struggles, traditionally focused on class oppression alone, do not deal with the class experiences of white women or workers of color, or with the racism and sexism of the union movement. In other words, individuals do not struggle just as workers, or women, or people of color—they take with them all parts of their identities, and these include their multifaceted relationships with both oppressor and subordinate groups (Spelman 1988).

This more complicated look at socially-constructed identity allows for a more sophisticated and promising sort of progressive political practice. Once we recognize the complexity of each group’s position within a system incorporating multiple dimensions of oppression, then even a successful struggle by one oppressed group to increase its share of income may not lead to the breakdown of any of the dimensions of oppression. Consider, for example, white male workers’ successful struggles to monopolize the best jobs, at the expense of the majority of workers and without challenging the capitalist-worker relationship. Or what about upper-class white women’s “feminist” struggle to gain access to the top men’s jobs by acting masculine and capitalist (à la Maggie Thatcher or Jeane Kirkpatrick)? True progressive change is not brought about if one subgroup increases its income share at the expense of others who are more oppressed, or if some females or people of color fit themselves into the white, masculine, upper-class mode by acting white, masculine and upper-class.

The only clearly progressive action is action which takes all dimensions of oppression into account simultaneously, as a truly feminist or radical political movement must. This means that a major goal for any progressive movement must involve building “solidarity interests,” i.e., the willingness of individuals to fight against oppressions from which they do not directly suffer, even at the expense of their narrow self-interest, in the larger self-interest of building a whole, healthy and ethical community. This also means that the multiply oppressed, those most marginalized (Hooks 1984), are best able to take the lead in envisioning a radical movement which is truly progressive. The issue from a radical perspective is to abolish the class, gender and race divisions themselves, by transforming our institutions and consciousness. Progressive political work means (1) making people aware of their internalized oppression, usually through meeting with others of their group, (2) recognizing the systemic enemy, rather than viewing the privileged as individuals who “have what I want,” and (3) developing solidarity interests, including an awareness of the interconnectedness of us all and a vision of the fulfillment that could come from a more just social and economic order (Hooks 1984).
Reconceptualizing U.S. Capitalism as Inherently Patriarchal and Racist

Here I will suggest and briefly explore the directions for Marxist research which would correct the white and masculine bias of its economic theory. As I have suggested above, what is needed is a unitary theory of capitalism. I will discuss three major areas: (1) competition between capitals, (2) the job structure, and (3) the present family/economy connections.

Capital as White and Masculine. Capitalism began as competition between property, white, patriarchal familial lineages in Western Europe and in its colonies; families of color in the colonies were excluded from property ownership, indeed robbed of their lands and/or forced to be property themselves. Whereas the feudal family inherited from its ancestors a fixed social position, the early capitalist family inherited property, a social position which could be enlarged or diminished by the family's efforts. Hence families could, through hard work and luck, elevate their social position and pass their accumulated wealth and influence on to their children; we can think of the early motivation for capital accumulation as tied to lineages' efforts to better their social positions. In fact, we can think of the energy unleashed by the developing market economy as that of lineages freed to elevate their social position (or threatened with deterioration of the same) and that of sons freed from determination by their fathers (Barker-Benfield 1976).

Given that white families at that time were patriarchal, headed by the fathers, it was the adult white man's assignment to direct this competition, with children and wife as his aides. In this way, white masculinity was increasingly defined in the competitive struggle to best other men, as household heads and individuals. With the concentration and centralization of capital and the declining availability of "free" land, more and more white men were proletarianized; their white masculine competition became "bread-winning" (as they called it) in the labor market.

As capitalism developed, it broke down the conception of blood which had sustained a permanent and recognized hierarchy among white families. However, ideas of aristocratic and plebian blood were replaced by new types of "blood" as marks of status: nationality, the shared characteristic distinguishing all classes of a society from members of other nations (Ward 1966, 48: Ehrenreich 1983), and race, the innate superiority of whites over all non-whites (Cox 1948, pt. II). These new conceptions spread from Europe to North America with the formation of colonies of wealth-seeking, entrepreneurial white families who recognized as property-owning competitors only other white families. They robbed, displaced or killed the non-white natives they encountered and used African slave labor in their surviving for wealth. On the other hand, whites without sufficient property in the means of production (land, tools, or capital) to take part in this entrepreneurial competition were only temporarily subordinated to propertyed whites as servants or hired hands; they could eventually gain land and property of their own and enter the competition.

As the family firm was replaced by the corporation, this white masculine competition became institutionalized in the form of competition of corporate capitals.
The corporate form allowed family firms increased access to capital from shareholders, and protected the family’s economic position with limited liability. At the same time, the family lost its ownership of the firm to a more diffuse body of stockholders and gave up control of the production process to hired managers. From our standpoint, the resulting system of competing corporations represents the abstract institutionalization of lineage: now, instead of white patriarchal families competing with other families to improve their relative position across the generations, we have corporate individuals, reproduced across generations of employees, competing to be the biggest and best. In both cases, the energies of family or corporation members are aimed, through authoritarian control, at perpetuation and growth of the enterprise within the system of competing enterprises. The process of familial competition is transformed into competition between corporations, and hired managers are now the corporate entrepreneurs. The past practice of using marriage to create business alliances is reproduced in the common practice of corporate mergers.

This brief sketch suggests a few important insights for further investigation. First, structured as it is by competition for relative position and led as it is by white men, capital is disjoined and distanced from the process of actually filling needs, which is allocated to women as homemakers. Although the selling of commodities is inherent in the process through which capitals expand, this is simply a means to an end, and expansion in the marketplace commonly involves producing products which are useless or even harmful to consumers, with technologies which are often harmful to life. Because managers are white and masculine and thus preoccupied with self-advancement as opposed to “feminine” care-taking, they provide little or no check on this dangerous process.

Second, we can study the issue of corporate motivation from a new perspective. Marxists have traditionally seen firms as bent on profit and growth, but it appears that other patriarchally and racially motivated processes are involved, at least in a subconscious manner. Firms reproduce gender, race and authority hierarchies not because these practices have been scientifically examined and found optimal, but because these hierarchies, present in the white patriarchal family system, are understood to be natural and given. Managers, as white men, seek their own advancement in the white masculine competition and thus that of the corporation for which they work, not some abstract notion of profitability, growth, efficiency or productivity. Indeed, since the managers are no longer the owners, it is reasonable to expect that they would experience the profit motive and the ensuing pressure to minimize costs as less compelling (Lauterbach 1954). The recent flurry of corporate take-over bids may be at least partially motivated by a masculine competition to dominate others. Kantor’s (1983) study of technological innovation showed that corporations are excessively hierarchical and authoritarian, alienating workers and stifling innovation; this suggests that corporations are at least partially structured to provide the hierarchies in which white men can compete. There is also evidence that the masculinity of management blinds it to the centrality of feminine work within
the corporation, for example, the importance of the caring work of nurses in the production of health.¹⁹ Such findings are consistent with my contention here that, besides consciously defending and perpetuating their sex, race and class privilege, corporate managers are indeed fulfilling another and related unconscious assignment—that of perpetuating the patriarchal legacy inherited from the family.²⁰ These pressures, reinforced by self-conscious protection of white and male privilege, make capital a powerful generator of race and gender inequality.

**Patriarchy and Race in the Job Structure.** Another area of Marxist economics in need of revision is its analysis of the job structure. First, we need to broaden our conception of wage labor beyond the capitalist-worker relationship. White women and people of color have been and still are importantly employed in other types of wage work—domestic work, work for the state and non-profits, and tenant-farming²¹—and such work relationships are central in reproducing gender, race, and sexual and racial inequality. Limiting our theoretical and historical analyses of labor markets to consideration of capitalist firms means ignoring key aspects of the job structure.

Second, as I have hinted above, we need to think of the internal labor markets within firms as inherently patriarchal, racist, agist and authoritarian. These characteristics are historical legacies from the patriarchal white family. Some early firms, especially craft producers or merchants, were actually families; the early textile mills employed entire families (like Slater’s mills) or established paternalistic and patriarchal job structures for their white workers (the Waltham/Lowell system).²² This pattern of using family-like structures in the workplace has continued through the present; indeed, it is problematic for firms to place their workers in relationships antithetical to those common in their families and communities.²³ Job structures need to be “familiar” to workers—the Oxford English Dictionary’s first definition of “familiar” is “of or pertaining to one’s family or household”!

Many key aspects of contemporary job structures can be traced to patriarchal family²⁴ and racist community systems, for these have provided the context for the origin and persistence of capitalist firms: (1) the authoritarian power wielded by the white male boss (as father) over workers (as wives, sons, daughters) in commanding and overseeing their behavior; (2) the paternalistic responsibility of the boss for the worker, first construed somewhat broadly (including housing and education), later reduced essentially to providing workers with the wages with which to fill their consumption needs; (3) the development of a chain of command which delegates to older and male white workers (sons) their boss’s (father’s) authority over younger, female, and/or non-white workers;²⁵ (4) the sex-race typing of jobs, at least by firm or region, which maintains gender and racial difference and inequality (Amott and Matthaei 1991, ch. 10); (5) the struggle of adult white men to monopolize and preserve “family wage jobs” which reproduce their patriarchal positions of power in their families; (6) the establishment of “job ladders,” allowing white men to move up in the hierarchy with age (“seniority”), benefiting in terms of pay and/or position and level of authority and status, often through competition against other white
male "siblings" (white male employees at the same level); (7) the practice by white male workers of uniting in fraternal organizations (unions); (8) the employment of women workers in dead-end auxiliary positions without authority over men, based on the expectation that they will leave the firm's "family" with marriage; (9) the efforts of white managers and workers to exclude non-whites from membership in the work family or, failing this exclusion, their segregation in clearly subordinate secondary jobs (Williams 1987). More research is needed to explore these links.

The key point is that patriarchy and white supremacy have been built into job structures and the firm. Race and gender are not merely mechanisms for allocating a predetermined set of jobs, or for dividing the labor force. This perspective on the significance of race and gender in labor markets makes it easier to understand why white working class men have not been a revolutionary force in the U.S., and why a movement to give "workers" control of the means of production, without changing inter-worker relationships, has limited appeal for white women and people of color.

**Family and Economy.** We can see, from the above discussion, that radicals cannot afford to ignore the role of the family in the reproduction of difference and inequality. First, Marxist-feminist analysis has made great strides in showing how the present family system reproduces patriarchal domination which is then both reflected onto and reinforced by gendered economic relations and institutions. Indeed, although gender divisions in family life may be breaking down, this breakdown cannot itself produce an alternative, non-patriarchal family system without the elimination of patriarchy from the economy, that is, without the elimination of capitalism. Second, we must note that the pooling of incomes and the passing of wealth across generations which occurs in the family is a central, if not the central, mechanism by which systematic race and class differences and inequality are reproduced. If the inheritance of income-producing property were banned and instead such property were appropriated by the state for collective use or distributed equally across the population, class, in the formal Marxist sense, would be abolished in one generation; racial differences and inequality would also be greatly reduced. Finally, we must keep in mind the fact that authoritarian parenting practices create individuals incapable of participating in truly democratic institutions, economic or political, while reinforcing the masculine mandate to seek inequality (i.e., to outdo or subordinate others); any socialist movement which does not take this into account is bound to fall short of its goals. Marxist-feminists have drawn attention to the family and argued for its importance in capitalism; now that we have begun to study it seriously, it is clear that changes in family organization are crucial not only to the feminist movement but also to all progressive change (Maithaei 1988).

**CONCLUSION**

The contributions which Marxist-feminists have made to Marxist theory and practice are impressive. But the work of Marxist-feminists is far from over. As I have
tried to show, the struggle to develop a truly Marxist-feminist anti-racist theory will help us both to understand the nature and contradictions of capitalism and to construct a truly radical and liberatory political movement. I hope all Marxists become Marxist-feminists.

NOTES

1. Although, as Young (1981) points out, many feminists continue to confuse gender differentiation with gender inequality.

2. In Matthaei (1982, pt. III), I explore the complicated process through which twentieth century capitalist development contributes to the breakdown of the sexual division of labor.

3. This debate has essentially been race-blind, whereas, in fact, white men monopolized family wage jobs, excluding both white women and people of color; see Joseph (1981).

4. The Left and Marxist press was full of articles to this effect in the mid-seventies. For example, it was argued that, according to Mao's theory of primary and secondary contradictions, sexual inequality is a secondary contradiction in the contemporary U.S. and must be put aside until "after the Revolution." One Marxist-feminist response was, as noted above, to stress the persistence of sexual inequality in all socialist countries.

5. Most of this debate took place in New Left Review in the 1970s. Good reviews are Himmelweft and Mohun (1977), Gardiner (1981), and Seccombe (1986).


7. Nicholson (1986, 195) argues that gender relations are class relations since they involve differential access to and control over the means of production (i.e., the making of food and objects).

8. In this, I agree with Nicholson (1986, 6) who argues that "feminist theory, to fulfill its potential for radical challenge, must adopt an explicitly historical approach," rather than looking for cross-cultural laws or for the cause of women's oppression.

9. The "Social Structures of Accumulation" school is somewhat of an exception; however, it assumes that the central dynamic of capitalism is accumulation (hence class and exploitation), ignoring capitalism's other intrinsic processes, such as the reproduction or transformation of race and gender.

10. See Cagatay (1986) for a discussion of the evolving dialogue between First and Third World feminists, and for constructive suggestions for future interactions.

11. Convinced of the significance of these consciousness-producing activities for gender oppression, yet wedded to a materialist analysis, Mitchell (1974) and Delphy (1984, 159, 171) have come up with the unlikely conception of these processes as material ideology, referring to Althusser's discussion of ideology as a distinct and semi-autonomous level of practice. For a good explication, see Beechey (1979, 72-4).


14. Hartsock's (1983) discussion of the particular theoretical strength of work done from
the “standpoint” of the oppressed is also relevant here, although she considers only the promise of the “feminist” standpoint.

15. Other Marxist-feminists have worked on unitary theories; however, they have tended to posit patriarchy as a transhistorical force which takes different forms. Mies (1986) sees different societies as different “predatory modes of production”; Al Hibri (1981, 174) posits a universal need of men to make up for their “feeling of inadequacy and mortality vis-à-vis the female.” Young (1981) argues the need for a unitary theory, but doesn’t develop one.

16. I explore the first two points in much more detail in Matthaef (1987), which examines patriarchal capital. See also Rose (1986), for an excellent discussion of other ways in which gender was an intrinsic part of early capitalist work relations.

17. By lineage, I mean the transgenerational transmission of a family’s social status, the cross-generational existence of a family, as expressed by a family surname.

18. We might expect that white women or people of color would behave differently in management; however, for them to make it into top positions in the existing structure, they must, for the most part, act white and masculine.

19. For example, hospital administrators try to increase “efficiency” in health care delivery by time-saving, cost-cutting methods, which in fact make nurses less productive by cutting down their “caring” time with patients. Kanter (1976, 45) claims that the importance of women’s work in the corporation is ignored or devalued by its nature as maintenance and support rather than production.

20. Lauterback (1954, 2) writes: “actual or expected profit is seldom the ultimate determinant of business activity in the psychological sense, even though profit is ordinarily the most direct and conscious incentive for such activity.” As Marcellus Andrews has pointed out to me, individual advancement is more and more achieved at the expense of the corporation being managed.

21. Through 1900, the majority of employed women did private domestic work; in 1940, 60% of black women were still employed in this work. Blacks and Native Americans are greatly overrepresented in state employment, as are women.

22. See Lown (1983) for an excellent analysis of the patriarchal characteristics of the early British mills.

23. Joyce (1980) argues that such use of familial work structures was central in the maintenance of class harmony in late nineteenth century Britain: “Because of its family aspect, the new distribution of authority and status in work served to accommodate the whole of the workforce, skilled and unskilled, male and female, in the prevailing order of industrial society. And it did so... by making people’s own sense of communal identification a source of the employer’s domination over their lives” (quoted in Rose 1986, 127).

24. See Weinbaum (1983) for a somewhat similar analysis of work relations in terms of family life.

25. Chandler (1977) treats the managerial hierarchy as copied from the military, ignoring the family.

26. Clawson (1980) discusses early fraternal organizations among workers as based on patriarchal kinship relations (I see unions as a later form of this fraternality). She writes: “The use of kin relations of fatherhood and brotherhood as the model for other social relations results, in turn, in a model of authority in which age and sex appear to be the basic sources of domination and subordination—even in those situations in which property and control over labor power or the use of force are the actual basis of inequality” (380).
REFERENCES


MARXIST-FEMINIST CONTRIBUTIONS


