

The Other Side of the Paycheck: Monopoly Capital and the Structure of Consumption

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I

The housewife is central to understanding women's position in capitalist societies. Marxists expected that the expropriation of production from the household would radically diminish its social importance.¹ In the face of the household's continuing importance, Marxists have tried to understand it by applying concepts developed in the study of production.² Yet obviously, the household is not like a factory, nor are housewives organized in the same way as wage laborers.

As Eli Zaretsky has written, the housewife and the proletarian are the characteristic adults of advanced capitalist societies.³ Moreover, households and corporations are its characteristic economic organizations. Just as the socialization of production has not abolished the housewife, so accumulation has not abolished the economic functions of the household. Harry Braverman has demonstrated how the accumulation process creates new occupational structures, and he has documented the expansion of capital's activity to new sectors. We will argue that these developments also change the social relations of consumption, an economic function which continues to be structured through the household and performed by women as housewives.

We will show how capital organizes consumption work for housewives, drawing them out of the household and into the

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market. The changing relations of consumption work require more time to be spent outside the house, and create a context in which housewives develop their own political perspectives on capitalist society. In particular, the context of housewives' political consciousness will be found in the contradictions between their work in the market and their role in the home. We think that this aspect of women's activity provides a perspective for viewing women's work inside the home, and women as wage laborers, about which a great deal has recently been written. We will argue that capital makes contradictory demands on women's energies, structuring conflicts for individual women, and structuring conflicts between housewives and wage laborers in the market. These arguments require an understanding of capitalism in which we can locate consumption, which is the purpose of the next section.

II

In every society, people must have food, clothing, and shelter in order to live. In capitalist society, production of these necessities is organized for private profit, and people must acquire the things they need for survival by buying commodities. Therefore, as capital expropriates production from households, it also expands market relations. These, like production relations, are "definite relations that are indispensable and independent of [our] will."⁴ The obvious consequence of monopoly ownership of the means of production is monopoly ownership of commodities, and the necessity of *purchasing* the means of life.

Insofar as capitalist production is reconciled with social needs, this happens in the market. In a society of small, independent producers, sellers brought their products to the market for exchange. Only in the market would they discover if their product filled a social need. Since producers worked indepen-

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dently, rather than coordinating their activities, the outcome was chancy. If the product was salable, its price (money in the pocket of the producer) placed constraints on the producer's ability to fill his or her needs. So the "social character of each producer's labor" only showed itself "in the act of exchange,"⁵ and the market was the place where private production and socially determined needs were—more or less—reconciled.

In advanced capitalist society, the organization of production as a whole retains anarchic characteristics, but large-scale production makes the "social" character of production apparent in the workplace. And "markets" are not organized for individuals to exchange their products. Rather, selling is an activity organized by capital—increasingly, by large-scale capital replacing "Ma and Pa" stores. Yet just as the small producer measured the "social worth" of his product by its price, so wage-laborers largely measure their social worth by the size of their paycheck.⁶ And just as the price (small) producers received for their products placed constraints on the ability to meet needs, so income constrains access to commodities. Thus the relation of private production to social needs continues to be evident in the market: consumption via the market is the other side of the paycheck. Just as in all societies people work while in capitalist societies people labor,⁷ so in all societies people reproduce themselves, but in capitalist societies they consume. In capitalist societies, the market serves as the bridge between the production of things and the reproduction of people.

The reproduction of people happens in the household. By this we mean simply that the household is the place where people's needs for food, rest, shelter, and so on are met. Of course the household is not a self-sufficient unit containing resources to meet these needs. Household members must enter the labor market to exchange their labor power for wages, and they must also go out to exchange wages for needed goods and services. Most households are made up of families, in which men are the primary wage-earner, and women are responsible for consumption. In the labor market men confront capital in the form of their employers; in the market for goods and services women confront capital in the form of commodities. This sexual division of labor is not absolute: increasing numbers of

women work for wages, and many men participate in consumption work.⁸ However these roles are divided, household survival requires participation in exchange relations.

Yet the contradiction between private production and social needs remains. Capitalist accumulation creates its own necessities: the reserve army of labor is the clearest expression of capital's needs, which contradict and take precedence over people's needs for their own reproduction. By saying the market is the bridge between private production and social needs, we draw attention to the fact that people must express "effective demand" to get what they need (they must have money). Of course, effective demand is not a matter of choice, for income is determined by position in the class structure. Thus consumption is always a function of class, and when we say that capitalist production is reconciled with social needs, this is always with the recognition that this reconciliation is imperfect under capitalism.

While the market provides the setting for the reconciliation of private production and socially determined need, that reconciliation is primarily the work of women. Women are responsible for "nurturance," and while nurturance requires many kinds of activity, in its concrete aspects it can only be accomplished through the careful management of income. Consumption (purchasing goods and services for household members) is the first step in this task, and it is the housewife's responsibility for nurturance which conditions her confrontation with capital in the form of commodities. Thus the work of consumption, while subject to and structured by capital, embodies those needs—material and non-material—most antagonistic to capitalist production; and the contradiction between private production and socially determined needs is embodied in the activities of the housewife.

III

Consumption is the work of acquiring goods and services. This work is the economic aspect of women's work outside the paid labor force, and we term women doing this work "consumption workers." The term is not meant to imply that women

in this role are themselves wage laborers, but it is used to emphasize that what they are doing is work.⁹ As already explained, given housewives' responsibility for the home, consumption work is part of the attempt to reconcile production for profit with socially determined needs. In addition, consumption work involves a set of relations between housewives as consumption workers on the one hand and wage laborers in stores and service centers on the other. We will examine consumption work from the point of view of the housewife, and then look at relations between consumption workers and wage laborers in the market.

Ellen Willis was the first leftist to write about "consumerism" as work necessitated by capital, and to insist that understanding "consumerism" as neurotic is simply sexist.¹⁰ Other writers have been more likely to see women as consumers trying to "compensate" for being cut off from socially organized labor by buying things!¹¹ As the means of production have been progressively expropriated from the household, and as capitalists produce commodities which can be more economically bought than made there,¹² the sphere of the market and the necessity for finding things we need there expands. The main impetus to consumption work is not a psychological need to express creativity through purchasing (though keeping a family going on what most people earn is indeed a creative undertaking, with its own gratifications). The force behind consumption work is the need to reconcile consumption needs with the production of commodities.

Housewives' work, therefore, cannot be understood if we see women as simply "sweeping with the same broom in the same kitchen for centuries."¹³ And while many men are accustomed to saying that "women are their own boss" and can arrange their work as they will, a careful examination of housewives' work shows that capital and the state set quite a schedule for them. Leaving aside the fact that young children are demanding and insistent taskmasters, the hours of the husband's work, the time the children must be in school, and for households that live from week to week (which is *most* households) the day of the shopping, are not determined by the housewife herself. Housewives must work in relation to schedules developed

elsewhere, and these schedules are not coordinated with each other. Housewives are expected to wait for weeks for installations and repairs, to wait in lines, to wait on the phone. Changes in the distribution network and the expansion of services demand physical mobility within this less-than-flexible series of schedules. The increase in the number of services as well as shopping centers means housewives spend more time travelling between centers than in producing goods or services. The centralization of shopping centers and services may make distribution more efficient, but at the expense of the housewife's time.¹⁴ The consumption worker, unlike the wage laborer, has no singular and obvious antagonist, but many antagonists: the state, the supermarket, the landlord, etc.

Examination of consumption work also requires analysis of the division of labor between paid and unpaid workers in shopping centers. Relations of production in these sectors reappear in a corresponding structure of consumption work. Here the consumption worker frequently plays an important part in affecting productivity. Ben Seligman illustrates this mechanism with the example of retail food centers:

It is sometimes argued that gross margins have gone up since the 1950s because modern supermarkets' methods shift the burden of services to the housewife. No longer is a human clerk available to advise her as to which product represents the superior buy; the clerk has been transformed into the "materials handler," stamping prices on canned goods, and the only information he is able to impart concerns the location of the canned beans. In effect, the housewife now performs services that at one time were paid for by the retailer. In Switzerland an effort has even been made to have supermarket customers punch their own cash registers (it has not met with success). The housewife performs more and more tasks—searching the shelves, grinding the coffee, filling the basket—and contributes to the upward drift of the margins because she is not reimbursed for her services. Of course, she ought to be paid in the form of lower prices, but in the present course of events, that seems unlikely.¹⁵

The same holds true in retailing, health, education, and other service industries:

In the supermarket and the laundromat, the consumer actually works, and in the doctor's office the quality of medical history the patient gives may influence significantly the productivity of the doctor. Productivity in banking is affected by whether the clerk or the customer makes out the deposit slip—and whether it is correctly made out or not. Thus the knowledge, experience, honesty, and motivation of the consumer affect service production.¹⁶

Capital, therefore, demonstrates this ability to increase its own profit by rearranging the labor process and working conditions of shopping and service centers. Those employed there find their work increasingly reduced to detail labor; those who shop for services do the walking, the figuring, the comparing, and sometimes even the services themselves (as when auto drivers fill their own gas tanks). Each center has its own rules of behavior and performance. Both those who are employed and those who are shopping or seeking services suffer a speedup.

As we have indicated, consumption work is not just buying "things," but also buying services. Just as it has become more economical to buy many things than to make them (bread, clothing, chicken soup), so "the care of humans for each other has become institutionalized,"¹⁷ and households have become increasingly dependent on securing services from the state and through the market. The expansion of services has been undertaken both by the state (education, welfare, prisons, old age homes) and by capital (some medical services, some old age homes, insurance, banks, fast-food chains, laundries, hairdressers). Together, and with the absence of reasonable alternatives, they render households increasingly dependent on a proliferation of widespread centers.

This transition is most vividly demonstrated in changes in the organization of medical services. At an earlier stage of capitalism, doctors could carry a bag of tools to make house calls. The doctor who now relies on an array of testing equipment can only provide medical care in hospitals and clinics, and housewives must bring family members to them. Indeed, there, as in other service centers, the housewife is little more

than a detail laborer, lacking access to expertise to judge the quality of what she gets, power to choose what she will purchase, or the ability to replace the service with a self-organized counterpart. Even the women's health movement, for example, while it can provide many kinds of routine care, has barely begun to appropriate the expertise of the medical profession and re-work medical science to be more useful to women.

At times, particular developments in the accumulation process draw more women into the paid labor force. At present, the expansion of the service sector and of clerical work,¹⁸ in conjunction with the fall of real wages among men, pushes increasing numbers of women into the labor force. Just as consumption work requires increasing time and energy,¹⁹ fewer women are able to provide that time and energy. While capital enters new arenas of activity, it continues to organize them in an anarchic rather than a socially coordinated way. The needs of capital are contradictory, therefore, in regard to its demands for women's time. Worse, in a recession public funding for services declines, and work we are increasingly ill-equipped to perform is pushed back into the home. Day care centers close;²⁰ schools go to double sessions (making it harder to coordinate children's school hours with parents' work hours); Mayor Daley even encourages neighborhood vegetable gardens! Since women are usually both the consumption workers and the wage laborers in the distribution of goods and services, it is especially clear that capital shifts between paying and not paying for the same work. The wage laborers in the commercial and service sectors have strikebreakers perpetually at their door. Capitalist organization pits cashiers and shoppers, nurses and patients, teachers and parents, against each other.

There are, of course, class differences in the work of "housewives." Ruling-class women need not concern themselves directly with reproduction on a daily basis, though they do have a particular role in the reproduction of capitalist class relations. Charity activities, for example, smooth the rough edges of capitalism and help legitimate the social system as a whole.²¹ Our sketch of housewives' work is most representative, we believe, for working-class and so-called middle-class women. We may, however, make some distinctions between

them. More income gives middle-class women freedom from the more degrading aspects of consumption work (they can have their groceries delivered). These women may also make consumption a "creative" activity, and a means of self-expression. This is no doubt the basis for the idea that *all* women engage in consumption for its psychological benefits. Finally, middle-class women take upon themselves the responsibility for organizing others' consumption, through voluntary organizations.²² Working-class housewives more often participate in the wage-labor force, thereby taking on a second job. Lower income makes consumption a complex survival task. Women who are dependent on the state for support obviously spend more time obtaining both goods and services from civil bureaucracies than other women do; in addition, the commodities available to them are overpriced and of poor quality.²³ Thus, capital constructs consumption work for women in complex ways: capital organizes the distribution of income to the household, and this largely determines the distribution of households into neighborhoods; at the same time, capital organizes distribution of particular goods and services to particular areas.

We have argued that consumption work is structured by the state and by capital, and that this work is alienating and exhausting. The reproduction of labor in *capitalist* societies requires that the products and services produced with a view to profit be gathered and transformed so that they may meet socially determined needs. In this situation, it is not clear what kinds of reorganization will take place. Certainly, ideas for the reorganization of consumption work on a social basis have been around for a long time (cf. Gilman's *Women and Economics*). Yet the reorganization of consumption work and services to living labor on the part of capital and/or the state can hardly be expected to result in humanized social services. The experiences of and proposals for state-run child care are a case in point, that the profusion of goods and services under capitalism results in increased dehumanization.

There is nothing in shopping, or going for health care or education *per se* that must be alienating and tiring. After all, for centuries the market was the site of social interaction, and a time for holiday. It is housewives' responsibility for "nurtur-

ance” on one hand, and the impossibilities of helping other human beings be healthy and creative within the constraints of the present system on the other, that create the incredible tensions of the practice of consumption work.²⁴ As Roz Petchesky says:

It's the connection between the shit private production provides in the market and the miracles women are supposed to perform with it inside the family that's really the key. The cutting edge of consumption work isn't procuring but taking up the slack—trying to maintain goods designed for obsolescence; trying to prepare nourishing meals out of vitamin-depleted, over-processed foods . . . trying to encourage and tutor kids that the schools doom to failure.²⁵

For all her efforts, the housewife lacks the social power to provide what she feels is best for her family. It is consumption work on one hand, and the ends which it is supposed to serve on the other, which form the network from which housewives' perspective on society is developed.

IV

How has this perspective been organized in practice?²⁶ In the first instance, consumption work leads to specific areas of political activity, for example, housing. As explained by an organizer in a Boston tenants' union: “The majority of workers in the tenant movement are women. An explanation for this is that tenants' unions are an area where women can be aggressive and take on an active leadership role because we are spending a great deal of time where we live and know the people we live with.”²⁷ Similarly, boycott activities, militant responses to inflation (especially of food prices), and community struggles (often directed against state policies), are areas in which women play important, if not predominant, roles.²⁸

But more generally, the dispersed organization of consumption workers, prey to many capitalists as well as to the state, seems conducive to recognition of the oppressiveness and exploitation of capitalism as a system. During the Brookside miners' strike, the miners' wives not only supported the demands of their husbands, but also made more radical and far-

reaching demands, insisting on food stamps, boycotting and picketing stores, protesting anti-strike propaganda, and harassment of strikers' children in the schools. Their practice as housewives demonstrated to them that not just the workplace, but the whole city was dominated by the mine owners, and their political activity demonstrated this to the community.²⁹ In cities where the ruling class is more immediately diverse, this perspective is more complicated, but it still underlies many of women's non-workplace struggles.

Women's activity in revolutionary times may flow from activities ordinarily engaged in, but which take on more political meaning during political upheavals.³⁰ In Portugal since the overthrow of the fascist regime, women in working-class neighborhoods have formed tenant committees to take over buildings for dwelling units and for community service facilities. These tenant committees have survived their initial activities and remain a basic organizational form in urban communities.³¹ Similarly, Chilean women were active in the construction of distribution networks before the coup in Chile. During the *Unidad Popular* government, one of the most severe problems was shortages, creating difficulties in food distribution. These problems were in part engineered by rebellious small merchants threatened by socialism, and in part by cattle-growers who slaughtered their herds rather than relinquish them to expropriating cooperatives. These induced shortages and distribution difficulties led to the formation of *Juntas de Abastecimientos* (JAPs) or Prices and Supplies Committees, which were a spontaneous popular response and succeeded in reducing the need for rationing. Housewives played a dominant role in neighborhood groups representing both mass organizations and local retailers. Their task was to ensure fair distribution of consumer goods. In the first month of their existence, 450 JAPs were formed in Santiago, Chile's major city. The committees incorporated 100,000 households and over 600,000 people. Within a few months, 20 percent of the country's beef consumption was distributed through the committees.³²

Marxists have been too hasty to see community-based struggles as reformist. A struggle is not necessarily progressive because it is in a factory, or reformist because it is outside it.

If leftists have, until recently, been indifferent to community and consumerist politics, this is in part for a good reason: however progressive these struggles may be as agitational or educational activity, ultimately struggles outside production cannot *alone* constitute a revolutionary strategy. And many community-based struggles have *not* been progressive. Yet to ignore these struggles altogether is unfortunate for several reasons. Demands for control, while they may be accommodated, threaten bourgeois hegemony and serve as a practice in self-management, an important component in the socialist alternative. At the same time, they have a positive education function in demonstrating the possibilities of organized action, and revealing the constraints on political activity within capitalism. Moreover, community and household-based demands insist that production and provision of services be oriented to social needs, and in this way embody values antithetical to capitalist production. They call attention to this society's inability to provide for its people. These demands also embody values upon which a socialist society must be built, that society be organized to meet social needs.³³ Finally, as in the case of the Brookside women, housewives' political activity may come from the recognition that not idiosyncratic malfunction, but the organization of society as a whole, is antagonistic to their needs and interests.

A capitalist society creates many social places from which to view capital: places in production and services (machinist, social worker), places in communities (housewife), places isolated from communities (Wall Street). It follows from the nature of capitalist societies that individuals in many *different* social places may discover that society is not organized for them, but against them. Clearly, there are no places whose occupants are automatically revolutionaries. One of our tasks as Marxists is to investigate the perspectives on capitalist societies which are provided by these different social places. We can only do this if our understanding embraces not only capitalist production itself, but also recognizes how capitalist production shapes society as a whole, and shapes the practices of people in particular places as well. We have shown some of the ways capital structures consumption work, organizing the daily practice of housewives, on which their understanding of society is

based.³⁴ The organization of a revolutionary class requires the joining of those perspectives antagonistic to capital, and forging a vision of society collectively organized to meet social needs.

Notes

1. Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Bebel, for example, recognized that women were oppressed in the family. They thought women's liberation and the possibility of healthy relations between men and women would result when the family ceased to be the basic economic unit of society. Within capitalism, men and women would become wage laborers, as the production responsibilities of the household became socialized. With the abolition of private property, services could be socialized as well, and men and women would be free to form personal relations free of economic functions.
2. In their emphasis on work done inside the household, and understood as "production," most Marxist-feminist work could be included: Paddy Quick, Peggy Morton, Mariarosa Dalla Costa, Margaret Benston, Juliet Mitchell, etc. We recognize that housewives prepare goods for use by family members, but our emphasis is not on housework as a kind of "production." Rather, we argue that housewives' activity is largely a reflection of the fact that *capital* organizes the manufacture of goods and provision of services.
3. Eli Zaretsky, "Capitalism, the Family, and Personal Life," *Socialist Revolution*, Vol. III: 1-2, 3, nos. 13-14, 15 (1973).
4. Karl Marx, Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works in One Volume* (New York, 1968), p. 182.
5. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I (New York, 1967), pp. 107-108. Cf. also the *Grundrisse*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (New York, 1973), p. 225. Marx discusses the market in Chapters 2 and 3 of *Capital*, and in various places in the *Grundrisse*.
6. See *Grundrisse*, trans. David McClellan (New York, 1971), p. 66: "In capitalist societies, the individual's power over society and his association with it is carried in his pocket." For money as a measure of social worth, see *Capital*, Vol. 1, p. 133.
7. Cf. Engels' distinction between work and labor, *Capital*, Vol.

- 1, p. 186, n. 1. Here Engels writes that the labor process has two aspects: ". . . in the simple labor-process, the process of producing use-values, it is *work*; in the process of creation of value it is *labor*."
8. We are not making an argument here about the relation of capital to the sexual division of labor. See Heidi Hartmann and Amy Bridges, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union," unpublished manuscript.
 9. See n. 7.
 10. Ellen Willis, "'Consumerism' and Women," *Notes from the Third Year*, reprinted in V. Gornick and Barbara K. Moran, *Woman in Sexist Society* (New York, 1972), pp. 658-665.
 11. Mariarosa Dalla Costa, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community* (pamphlet published by Falling Wall Press), p. 43.
 12. See Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, p. 281, and Chapters 13 and 16, *passim*.
 13. Dalla Costa, *The Power of Women*, p. 36.
 14. Centralization of service distribution is economical for capital and the state, but not the best way to provide services, since the services become less accessible. So, for example, when The Woodlawn Organization drew up a plan for Woodlawn Model Cities, an important element was the proposal for neighborhood service centers which would be accessible and would distribute *all* services. Only hospital facilities would be centrally located.
 15. B. Seligman, "The Higher Cost of Eating," in *Economics of Dissent* (New York, 1968), p. 229.
 16. Victor Fuchs, *The Service Economy* (New York, 1968).
 17. Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, p. 279.
 18. *Ibid.*, Chapters 15 and 16.
 19. Capital also increases time spent on women's work done inside the house. See H. Hartmann, *Capitalism and Women's Work in the Home: 1900-1930*, unpublished dissertation, Yale, 1974. See also Walker, "Homemaking Still Takes Time," *Journal of Home Economics*, no. 61 (1969), pp. 621-22.
 20. R. Petchesky and K. Ellis, "Children of the Corporate Dream," *Socialist Revolution*, no. 12 (November-December 1972).
 21. See G. William Domhoff, *The Higher Circles* (New York, 1971), Chapter 2: "The Feminine Half of the Upper Class."

22. See, for example, Robert S. and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959) or John R. Seeley et al., *Crestwood Heights* (Toronto, 1956).
23. Largely because of the neighborhoods in which they live. See David Caplovitz, *The Poor Pay More* (New York, 1963).
24. Although our discussion of consumption work has focused on the monopoly capital stage, at places where monopoly capital penetrates prior economic modes, the tension of changes in consumption is also sharp. For example, the purchase and use of powdered milk marketed by international agribusiness corporations in the third world has led to deaths and/or deformities of infants who would have been better off with their mothers' milk, given impure water supply and the need for natural antibodies in the mothers' lactate system. See *Formula for Malnutrition*, CIC Brief, April 1975, available for 60¢ from the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, Room 566, 475 Riverside Drive, NYC. In the nineteenth century, the demands of capitalist production had the same effect: women workers in England, unable to go home to nurse their babies, gave the babies "Godfrey's cordial," a narcotic which kept the infants asleep but often killed them. See *Capital*, Vol. 1, p. 395.
25. Personal communication to the authors.
26. There is little room for examples, but see Edith Thomas, *The Women Incendiaries* (London, 1967); Alice Bergman, *Women in Vietnam* (San Francisco, 1974); J. Ann Zammit and Gabriel Palma, eds., *The Chilean Road to Socialism* (Austin, Texas, 1973).
27. Barry Brodsky, "Tenants First: FHA Tenants Organize in Massachusetts," *Radical America*, Vol. 9, no. 2 (1975), p. 41.
28. Women also played important roles in organizations created by (or against) the War on Poverty. See J.D. Greenstone and Paul E. Peterson, *Race and Authority in Urban America* (New York, 1973); F.F. Piven and R. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor* (New York, 1971).
29. Ann Marie Traeger and Weinbaum, unpublished interviews, August 1974.
30. Edith Thomas comments: "The 'political' activity of women, then, appeared first in these various consumers' cooperatives; and this follows tradition. Women are much closer to everyday realities than men are. Feeding the family is a part of their age-old role. The price of bread has been their business

for centuries. Thus, before seeking to involve themselves in truly political activity, they tried to attend to 'the administration of things,' upon which they could act directly. It is from this angle that the most aware women among them thought to have a hold on the social reality. But that was obviously only one aspect of the question" (*The Women Incendiaries*, p. 14).

31. Interview with Pacifica Radio correspondent, May 1975.
32. Zammit and Palma, eds., *The Chilean Road to Socialism*, p. 89.
33. The consequences of leaving consumption organized through the household under socialism even after production has been socialized are discussed in Weinbaum, "The Curious Courtship of Women's Liberation and Socialism: Perspectives on the Chinese Case," in the second special issue on the political economy of women, *Review of Radical Political Economics*, Spring 1976.
34. It should be obvious that we are not arguing that all housewives are politically active, much less revolutionary. Just as wage laborers may feel "inadequate" because their earnings are low or because they are not promoted (see Jonathan Cobb and Richard Sennett, *The Hidden Injuries of Class* [New York, 1972]), so housewives may internalize contradictions which are structural. Our emphasis is counter to the current understandings that housewives by nature of their "place" are conservative. For this view, see Zeitlin's book on Cuba, in the preparation of which he didn't interview women because "everyone knows" that women haven't played a role in revolution. Carl Boggs claimed (unpublished manuscript) that one reason the Italian resistance was not revolutionary after the war was "the presence of housewives"; and Weinstein has said that the winning of women's suffrage was a setback for the socialist party, for which his evidence is a single aldermanic election in Chicago, etc., ad nauseam. See also Albert Szymanski, in *Insurgent Sociologist*, Winter 1976.