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THE IMPORTANCE OF MARITAL STATUS FOR WOMEN'S LIVES

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THE IMPORTANCE OF
MARITAL STATUS
FOR WOMEN'S LIVES

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Ph. D. 1984

THE IMPORTANCE OF MARITAL STATUS
FOR WOMEN'S LIVES

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A thesis submitted to the Council for National Academic
Awards in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Department of Social and Political Studies

Collaborating Establishment :

Department of Sociology, University of Essex

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, whilst registered as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with the Council for National Academic Awards I have not been a registered candidate for another award of the Council for National Academic Awards, nor of a University.

The following activities, comprising the programme of related studies, have been undertaken:

- (i) A schedule of reading guided by the supervisors.
- (ii) Attendance at various courses and conferences including the ECPR Summer School at Essex University (1981), the BSA Summer School (1982), the University of London course in Sources for Social and Economic Historians (1982), the 1983 BSA Conference and Oral History Conferences.

A. D. Graham

ABSTRACT

Anthea Duquemin

The Importance of Marital Status for Women's Lives

This thesis aims to investigate the ways in which women's marital status influences various aspects of their lives. With the growing sociological interest in women many statements have been made and theories put forward, the majority of which assume women to be wives and mothers. The intention of this thesis is to examine whether such theories are relevant to all women, irrespective of their marital status and merely because of their gender, or only to those women who have husbands of their own.

Much emphasis has been placed on context in this study, for individuals' lives can only clearly be seen against their wider background and within the opportunities and restrictions of their particular surroundings, and for this reason the research was undertaken entirely within one small town, with women of working class origins and amongst women of two distinct age groups (over seventy and twenty to forty-five) thereby restricting the geographical, cultural and historical settings.

Secondary sources, a survey questionnaire and in-depth interviewing were all used in this study. The former two provided information on the historical and contemporary background to, and content of women's lives, whilst in-depth interviewing with twenty women explored personal actions and feelings on a deeper level.

The research suggested that improved standards of living have altered and blurred the reasons for which women of working class origins marry and hence influenced their understanding of marriage. Wider opportunities for more diverse ways of behaving permit currently unmarried women more variation from their married contemporaries in the practical aspects of their lives than was the case earlier this century. Both older and younger unmarried women, however, indicate considerable differences from married women in the internal and emotional aspects of their lives, suggesting that further consideration need be taken of marital status when discussing women as a group.

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INTRODUCTION

Marriage is an experience which the majority of the population of Britain undergo at some point in their lives. For women in particular it is assumed to be a crucial stage in their life history and the fact that women become wives is generally acknowledged to influence women's development and lifestyle, both before and after marriage. Studies of the family, of communities, of work and leisure all place much emphasis on the position of women as wives, and feminist theories in particular stress the influence of the wifely role on women's lives.

During this century not only has the proportion of women marrying increased, but changes have also occurred in the ways in which partners move into and out of marriage - divorce and remarriage being far more common now than they were earlier this century. Rates of marriage are therefore changing, as are the legal rights of both partners and the more implicit understanding of what marriage involves. All of these issues demand attention, but whilst much emphasis is placed on marriage, one factor goes apparently unnoticed - this being the significant number of women who exist outside marriage, either never marrying or through separation, divorce or widowhood.

By remaining outside marriage such women contravene their anticipated role, but the extent to which this influences their lives is largely unexplored. In spite of the consider-

able attention paid to marriage and its effects on women's lives, it is rarely made clear whether this applies to all women by nature of their gender, or whether it is relevant only to women who actually are wives. It may be the case that the image of the woman as a wife is so pervasive that women's actual marital status is unimportant. Nevertheless, unmarried women (whether never married or previously married) face quite different circumstances to those which wives face, having no husband to consider, and when the concept of a woman is so closely bound to that of a wife the degree to which women outside marriage relate to this concept is unclear. If these women's lives are significantly different in fact, or if they feel themselves to be different from married women, the degree to which feminist theories based on marriage can be applied to all women is brought into question, and unmarried women thereby challenge the notion of womanhood as based on wifedom.

Thus, whilst women's experiences are explained as being largely dependent on their position as wives or mothers it is unclear how relevant such theories are for women who are neither. Consideration of various aspects of women's lives in order to investigate the similarities or differences between married and unmarried women may clarify the extent to which all women conform to the notion of wifedom, or areas of life where marital status becomes significant. Such an investigation also holds possibilities for identifying areas where the ideology of woman as wife over-rides actual

circumstances, or aspects of life where the ideology breaks down in the face of material practicalities.

When considering marriage and its impact on women's lives it becomes clear that marriage means different things at different times. Partners entering into marriage do so for reasons and with expectations that change over time, and the implications of marriage change accordingly. The meaning of marriage therefore bears a direct relationship to its position in historical time, but other factors are also influential in determining the ways in which marriage affects women's lives. The area within which women live, their social class, family background, age and other circumstantial factors all influence the opportunities and restrictions which make up the total context of women's lives. It is only against an understanding of the context with its corresponding possibilities for action that feelings, decisions and behaviour can be understood. This is relevant for women's understanding of marriage, which must be seen against a background which is historical, geographical and personal in order to comprehend the factors which prompt women to marry and the ways in which marriage influences their lives.

Women who remain unmarried demand attention too, however. Exploration into the lives of the unmarried reveals circumstances, thoughts and actions which expose non-marriage as being more than just the negative of marriage. To present non-marriage as merely the failure to marry denies unmarried

women the right to any experience of their own and perpetrates the invisibility of the unmarried. The general and individual factors which influence unmarried women indicate that non-marriage is a changing state in the same way as marriage is and, as such, demands attention too. The considerable increase in cohabitation during this century has blurred the distinction between legal and common law marriages. Cohabitation is an issue which is currently too ill-defined to identify accurately, and for this reason only women who were currently living alone (or with children or relatives) or with a husband (with or without children) have been studied here.

Besides marriage and non-marriage the marital statuses of divorce and widowhood also demand consideration. Women in these positions are actually unmarried, yet they have previously indicated their allegiance to the wifely role. The ways in which their lives conform with those of wives or with never-married women is a further indication of the workings of the ideology which associates all women with the position of a wife, even in the absence of a husband.

The research incorporated a variety of methods of obtaining information in order to explore different aspects of women's lives. Considerable emphasis was placed on methodology for, to a large extent the methods used determine the findings. Each method demands careful assessment of its merits and biases in order to utilise each to its best advantage and assess the findings realistically.

Marriage and non-marriage are issues which are all-pervasive in their influence on women's lives, and a wide-ranging exploration into the impact of these statuses demands that women's lives should be seen from various viewpoints. Three levels of information - or ways of looking at women's lives - were identified, these being first, the relatively fixed conditions of women's lives which are convertible into statistical facts; second, the ways in which women lead their lives, which can be described but tend to be more fluid than the previous level; and third, the ways in which women feel about their lives, this being the most fluctuating level. Each of these levels is relevant and real to the women concerned, but each poses different problems of collection and analysis.

A crucial aspect to this study was the need to recognise the interconnection between each of these levels of information, identifying the ways in which the conditions of women's lives, the way they spend their time and the way they feel influence each other, are all of relevance, and can only be understood in terms of the women's whole experience.

The study therefore has three main themes. The first is the necessity of combining methods in order to explore the variety of levels on which lives are led; the second is the importance of recognising and examining the context within which people live, incorporating cultural, geographical and individual circumstances in order to identify opportunities and res-

trictions within which decisions are made and actions taken; and the third, the study of marriage and non-marriage to explore their relevance for women's lives.

Bearing in mind the importance of context this study began with a general examination of the meaning of marriage and its changing implications for women throughout the last hundred years. This, however, was on a national scale, and whilst essential as a background to the understanding of marriage it provided only limited information regarding the local and personal factors which surrounded individual women. For a real understanding of marriage women must be seen at closer quarters, exploring their circumstances with a fuller understanding of their surroundings, with information available at all three levels of their lives.

Such an acknowledgement of the relevance of context implied narrowing down the parameters of the research and concentrating on a smaller area where the variables were fewer and the opportunities and restrictions could be more clearly identified. The study was therefore based entirely within one small town. Context, however, as already mentioned, comprises more than geographical area, but incorporates individuals' total circumstances and for this reason further restrictions were placed on the study. Not only was the research limited to women from within one town, it was further delimited by the women's position in historical time, their age and social class, each of which influence the context within which women

live. The research therefore concentrated on women of working class origins living in Buckfastleigh (a small town in South Devon) studying in particular two groups of women, the first group being women who were in their mid-twenties to forties during the first decades of this century, and the second group being of this age now. In this way the general circumstances which surrounded the women's lives were more readily identified, and changes could be viewed over a time-span of approximately fifty years.

Within these general surroundings each individual woman experienced her own set of personal circumstances, these being as influential to the context of her life as were the local and national factors. For this reason ten women were selected to be representative of each group, permitting detailed information to be collected at the three levels of each of the women's lives. In this way the meaning and relevance of marital status were explored within the specified conditions of twenty women's lives. Further information was collected at a more superficial level from a larger and more varied group of women from the town.

The account of this research therefore begins with a general discussion of the understanding of marriage as it has been portrayed during the last century, and with a description of the changing rates of marriage, followed in Chapter Two by the theoretical background to the research, indicating the issues which prompted the study and areas where an investiga-

tion into marriage and non-marriage may broaden the understanding of women's experience. Chapter Three describes the methods by which information was collected, assessing the value and problems inherent in each, this being essential for a fuller understanding of the consequent results. Chapter Four takes the shape of a small community study of Buckfastleigh, setting the research in its local context, thereby permitting women's experiences to be understood within the setting in which they lived.

Chapters Five to Seven deal with the data collected specifically on marriage and non-marriage. In Chapter Five marriage and non-marriage are looked at first from the general position of working class women in the town, both currently and earlier this century, and then at an individual level, exploring the issues which prompt women to marry or not marry. Chapter Six studies some of the ways in which women's marital status influences their lives at a practical level, assessing differences and similarities between the various marital statuses of both groups of women, whilst Chapter Seven discusses the more hidden aspects of women's lives, attempting to discover more about the women's views of themselves and their feelings about their lives.

Whilst many questions remain unanswered, this research is an initial exploratory attempt to investigate the general assumption that theories based on marriage are relevant to all women.

CHAPTER ONE

CONCEPTS OF MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

The legal, material and conceptual aspects of marriage have varied with time, place and social class. Similarly, marriage rates and notions of the suitable age, reasons and expectations of the partners entering into marriage have also changed⁽¹⁾. As concepts of marriage and its implications change, so do notions of the unmarried.

Legally, the various laws relating to the creation, consequences and termination of the marital relationship have modified the roles of those involved. The most significant legal changes to take place with regard to marriage have been those relating to divorce, particularly since 1971 when divorce became very much easier to achieve⁽²⁾. Other changes relating to women's legal rights within marriage, and the distribution of property and maintenance after a marriage has ended have achieved a situation where technically the effects of marriage are the same for both men and women. The law, however, only intervenes at the beginning and end of a marriage, or when there has been a serious marital breakdown. Whilst the position of the spouses before the law is an important and influential consideration, the technical equality granted to the couple is not necessarily put into operation as such, nor is it carried through to all realms of life.

In various aspects of daily life the concept of man as the breadwinner, woman as the dependent still operates and affects married people materially. For example, on a formal level this remains the case with the Inland Revenue where, although since 1972 - with her husband's permission - a married woman can be taxed separately from her husband, the situation still remains that the husband can claim a married man's tax allowance. The wife on the other hand, is taxed as a single person and can claim no such allowance for her husband unless he is unemployed or disabled. Beveridge, in his creation of the Welfare State, assumed that the career of the majority of women would be marriage, and he did not question the traditional attitudes about married women's social and economic roles. The Social Security system is gradually coming into line with the notion of a husband and wife as equal, but various interpretations of the rules still point to the notion of the woman as a dependant and a housekeeper. For instance, the assumption that if a man is present in a marital or cohabitation relationship it is he who is the head of the household and consequently he who receives the higher benefit. Similarly, married women are denied an Invalid Care Allowance if they remain at home to care for an invalid husband, which is not the case if the husband stays at home to care for his wife.

In less formal ways, the continuing assumption that wives will act as dependant housekeepers is more clearly seen, for instance in the case of wives of men in certain occupations,

such as diplomats, where the wife is expected to devote herself to performing the role of 'the diplomat's wife'. Less extreme but similarly supportive roles are expected of the wives of many other male job holders, such as the wives of policemen, doctors, vicars and small business owners⁽³⁾. Such expectations permeate the worlds of work, home and school, and equally influence the decisions made by 'experts' such as doctors, social workers and lawyers. Though rarely made explicit, the ideal of the 'good mother', or socially well-adjusted woman remains that of one who finds satisfaction from staying at home and caring for her family. In this way therefore, society's expectations influence those inside and outside of the marital relationship. Whilst the expectations of what marriage should involve may not be relevant to all - or even any - of the married population, the prevailing ideology is extremely influential though often based on values inherited from earlier times. For this reason it is appropriate to examine the changing concepts of marriage and the role of a wife over the last century. This not only has relevance for those inside marriage, but also for those outside the marital relationship, who gain and lose visibility according to society's preoccupations, but generally tend to be viewed in opposition to their married counterparts.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONCEPTS OF MARRIED AND UNMARRIED WOMEN

During the early 19th century much emphasis was placed on the

importance of the home and the family among the new middle classes, so that the home acquired an almost religious sanctity. As Davidoff, L'Esperance and Newby say, the cyclical and timeless quality of family life was emphasised in opposition to the sharp disjunctive growth and collapse of commerce and industry⁽⁴⁾. This romantic ideology saw the home as an idyllic refuge from the 'real' world of men, and ascribed a morally superior but basically impractical role to women⁽⁵⁾. The family was seen as both a pillar of society and a refuge from it. The association between woman and the home was absorbed as a given facet of middle class Victorian life, creating a notion of womanhood which revolved around the demands of domesticity, purity and impracticality. The home was the only place for a woman to be, first as a daughter and later as a wife and mother - basic to each of these roles being the notion of dependancy.

The 1851 Census first clearly indicated the number of women for whom this was not applicable. As the first Census to require a statement of marital status it identified approximately 2½ million single women between the ages of 15-45, a number which rose to almost 3½ million by 1871, with a rise of 72.7% in the surplus of single women to single men⁽⁶⁾. Such a predicament created growing alarm amongst the Victorian middle class, as they realised the impossibility of all these women finding suitable domestic roles. Public debate centred around what could be done with these 'redundant' women. Previously, middle class opinion had been that employment was

unsuitable for a gentlewoman and, in fact, the 'genteel' way in which middle class girls were prepared for the life of a middle class wife left the majority with little of employable value. A spinster therefore became pitiable - 'trained to be a submissive ornament, she was trained for a life she could not lead' (7).

Whilst vastly inferior to marriage, the role of a governess or a 'companion' had been seen as a respectable occupation for unmarried middle class women, but it now became clear that the numbers involved were far greater than could be accommodated by such positions. Much debate centred around possible alternative solutions. The Victorians viewed those outside of the patriarchal family - and single women in particular - as a destabilising threat to the social order, and were anxious to incorporate these women into a familial situation.

One apparent resolution of the problem was to restore the numerical balance of men and women by encouraging large scale emigration of unmarried women to the colonies, as advocated in particular by W.R. Greg in 1862 in his widely discussed article 'Why are Women Redundant?' (8). Greg proposed sending up to forty thousand women a year abroad to eliminate the surplus women, whom he regarded as 'redundant' in the sense that they lacked the opportunity to fulfil their 'natural' role by not being supported by and administering to men. Between 1862 and 1914 voluntary societies did help

over twenty thousand women to emigrate⁽⁹⁾. Alternative solutions were proposed by feminists, who were anxious to improve women's education and possibilities of employment. Although many feminists had earlier approved of emigration as a potentially advantageous option, others changed sides following Greg's association of emigration with husband-hunting.

Whilst middle class feminists were demanding better education, the conservative backlash was decrying such options for women. The medical profession in particular put forward the view of women (though only middle and upper class women) as frail and delicate. Menstruation and pregnancy were seen as reasons and proof of women's need to rest and not exert mental energy, reproduction being central to the function of womanhood. As Professor M.L. Holbrook said in 1870, it seemed 'as if the Almighty, in creating the female sex, had taken the uterus and built up a woman around it'⁽¹⁰⁾.

As women attempted to attain higher educational standards, the brain was posed in opposition to the uterus. Dire warnings were given in America by G. Stanley Hall that female education was creating women who were sacrificing their biological functions for their brains. The educated woman tended towards selfish celibacy, 'She has taken up and utilized in her own life all that was meant for her descendants'⁽¹¹⁾. In the Principles of Biology Spencer claimed that too much intellectual activity produced sterility in

women and that highly educated women frequently had difficulties in breast feeding⁽¹²⁾. Any ambition other than that of being a home-bound wife and mother was therefore a selfish and dangerous notion, contravening all that nature had intended.

Whilst this concept of marriage and the anxieties surrounding those who might escape it reveals something of the Victorian view of middle class womanhood, little of this related directly to the working class woman of the time. As Davidoff, L'Esperance and Newby say, 'It is still very unclear how far working class men or women accepted the domestic idyll for married women, even in a watered down version, as part of their own life-style'⁽¹³⁾.

S. Mitchell claims that the penny magazines of the 1840's and 1850's imply that the working classes of the time did not consider work outside the home to be a disgrace. The heroines in the stories frequently worked for a while, and then married a man who was happy to have a useful woman around the house. The fiction in these magazines however, depicted no alternatives to marriage for the vast numbers of readers who would inevitably remain single⁽¹⁴⁾.

Although the most heated public discussion appears to have been over the plight of the middle class spinsters, numerically, probably more working class women were affected. Deacon and Hill point out that the two major causes of the

sex difference in the population were male emigration and the differential death rate, both of which were predominantly working class features⁽¹⁵⁾. The surplus working class women posed a somewhat different problem to that of the middle classes. They too were seen as a threat to the family and to the social order, but they were not faced with the same handicap of 'delicacy' as were their middle class sisters. Domestic service provided a convenient solution to the problem for many, securing a familial setting for working class women whilst at the same time protecting the apparent frailty of middle class women.

During the mid nineteenth century however, increasing numbers of young girls migrated to the growing industrial towns to find work. These unattached women were seen as a dangerous threat to morality, which prompted a number of organisations to set up charitable homes, such as Dr. Barnardo's, to keep these women under some sort of supervision. Considerable numbers of lower middle class women made use of the emigration societies and went abroad to enter domestic service⁽¹⁶⁾.

Those who remained might attempt to become socially mobile by working in the new professions such as office work, telegraph operators or printing, but marriage was still the only real route to upward mobility, and in fact the only position which would provide a woman with an acceptable role, duties and economic security. Little is known about the plight of the working and lower middle class women who grew old, unmarried,

at the end of the last century.

Interest in the unmarried diminished as the anxieties with regard to the threat they posed died down, and the First World War brought a change in circumstances and in ideology. Women's work was needed during the war⁽¹⁷⁾ but after the immediate post-war period there was an upsurge of interest in the domestic sphere. Two main factors prompted this: the vast decline of the numbers of domestic servants, which left an increased work load for middle class wives, and the depression of the 1930's which encouraged an atmosphere of saving and security in the home. Having proved their strength during the war, wives were no longer seen as too weak to leave the home, but rather, too busy. Housekeeping was exerting new demands on women as it acquired the notion of 'domestic science'. Middle class wives were now directly involved with the ever rising standards of hygiene and house care they struggled to attain.

The model of the wife as house-wife spread to the working classes in most areas (textile towns were generally an exception) and educationalists debated to what degree girls should be trained in housewifery and mother-care. Whereas prior to the First World War high infant mortality rates and low levels of domestic care had been blamed on women working, the emphasis later shifted to women's ignorance, with education being offered as a solution⁽¹⁸⁾.

The image of good womanhood had thus become that of an efficient, capable housewife. Feminists at this time were stressing the fact that women deserved more than this and claiming, as Hamilton did, that 'enormous improvement' had taken place in the social position of the spinster. 'In many ranks of life the lack of a husband is no longer a reproach; and some of us are even proud of the fact that we have fought our way in the world without aid from any man',⁽¹⁹⁾. Such a fight, however, was not easy and optimism about the improved position of spinsters seemed largely confined to the middle classes. Various women's associations fought to improve the lot of the single with regard to housing, work and pensions. The National Spinsters' Pension Association, formed in 1935, was the most prominent of these and appears to have attracted some considerable numbers of working or lower middle class spinsters⁽²⁰⁾. Nevertheless, little attention was paid to unmarried working class women and the emphasis placed on the home and the image of woman as housewife left the spinster - if no longer a threat - as something of an anomaly.

Following the upheavals of the Second World War there was another resurgence of emphasis on the home - bringing women away from the workplace where they had been during the war, and coupled with this was the growing emphasis on motherhood. The post-war panic which started in the 1930's about the declining population was one element in this theme. There

were fears that free secondary education and the labour shortage might tempt women into paid work, just when Britain most needed children. Moral arguments emphasised the 'selfishness' of not having a large family (as for instance in the Mass Observation Survey 'Britain and Her Birthrate' in 1945), and women were encouraged to stay at home and 'aim at building a family world in which men and women act together for the sake of the children', according to a pamphlet produced by the Bureau of Current Affairs in 1949⁽²¹⁾.

Another element in this pressure for women to stay at home as mothers was the increasing demands of motherhood. Whilst the birth rate had been declining throughout the century, ideals of child care had become increasingly scientifically based, drawing more and more on the judgements of psychological 'experts'. Post-war anxieties about the disruption caused to evacuees was confirmed in 1953 by the publication of Bowlby's book Child Care and the Growth of Love, which stressed the dangers of maternal deprivation. No longer did a child simply need loving care, but he or she needed the mother's loving care. Motherhood was presented as a noble calling, providing true fulfilment for women. To deny a child full time attention was to jeopardise his or her personal development and to reject the proper role of a woman, wife and mother.

Women also had a role to play in the community. Voluntary action was an important adjunct to the new Welfare State and

mothers could become involved in various schemes such as planning and helping run schools, clinics and leisure facilities⁽²²⁾.

All of this excluded the unmarried woman. The threat of a declining population does not seem to have prompted any lessening in the stigmatisation of unmarried mothers: the assumption remained that those who married would have children, and that those who wanted children would marry. Whilst married childless women were accused of selfishness, unmarried mothers were (and in many cases still are) seen as morally reproachable⁽²³⁾. Unless they fitted into the dubious role of a 'career woman', women who were neither wives nor mothers seem to have been given no role to play in the building of a post-war Britain, and seen against the glorification of motherhood their lives appear unfulfilled and/or forgotten.

The portrayal of women as mothers - whilst a persistent theme - has been embellished with further demands on women: that they should be attractive companions for their husbands. The panic about the declining population turned into a fear of a world population explosion, and birth control became increasingly respectable throughout the 1950's and early 1960's, particularly with the development of the Pill. Sexuality and fertility could be safely separated and there was a growing emphasis on the sexual side of marriage. Sexual manuals and popular magazines increasingly stressed the importance for a

wife of remaining desirable to her husband, and of finding and providing sexual satisfaction within marriage. With the additional stress on personal relationships women's sexual adequacy became recognised as a more important feature of femininity.

Sexual liberation for women became a prevalent theme of the 1960's and, according to Ehrenreich and English, 'The "single girl" who burst out into the media in the early 'sixties corresponded to a new social reality: the single woman, divorced or never-married, who lived alone and supported herself' (24). These authors claim that Helen Gurley Brown transformed the 'spinster' of the 1940's and 'fifties into the 'newest glamour girl of our times' through her book Sex and the Single Girl published in 1962, and her magazine Cosmopolitan. This single girl apparently lived alone, spent money and enjoyed an active sex life (25). Though originating in America this image spread to Britain and the successful unmarried working girl began to receive more attention than in the recent past. Not all of this attention, however, was favourable. Much of the emphasis on these girls' active sex lives took the form of criticism and charges of promiscuity. The corollary of this was to see such women as a threat to the family and the husband/wife bond.

Whilst singleness for some acquired negative moral connotations, this bold image was limited to women in particular circumstances. For most young unmarried working class girls

low wages and limited facilities prevented the glamorous lifestyle which the media portrayed and, in any case, the cult of the 'single girl' was only ever applicable to women within a certain age range. Outside of this age bracket unmarried women revert to the category of 'spinster'. With the more open acknowledgement of sexuality as a feature of femininity, such 'spinsters' - now no longer regarded primarily as a threat - are susceptible to some suspicion as to their maturity and 'normality'. As Busfield says, marriage 'is a sign of personal and sexual adequacy, of competence in one's sexual role. Those who are not married are believed to be somehow less competent and successful in their personal relationships, to be less desirable and less attractive',⁽²⁶⁾. Once again, therefore, the unmarried appear desexed or sexually 'suspect' when seen in opposition to the image of the married woman.

Much of the current debate about marriage centres around the 'crisis of cohabitation',⁽²⁷⁾. As Barker says, 'while the process of getting married is clearly defined, the division between the status of being and not being married in Britain is sharper in theory than in practice',⁽²⁸⁾. The title of 'common law wife' is gaining growing acknowledgement and acceptance in judicial and social practice: the social security system and on many occasions, the law, interpret cohabiting relationships as equivalent to marriage. This provides problems with regard to defining and measuring marriage

but does not alter the fact that marriage continues to represent a particular concept of womanhood, and that this concept varies throughout different times, social classes and geographical locations. Certain aspects of other notions that marriage confers on women remain permanent, such as the assumption that married women have reached some degree of maturity, acceptability and independence from their parents. By marriage they also appear to confirm their femininity and their ability to cope with the woman's role, but it is in the interpretation of this that concepts differ. As the concept of what marriage involves changes, so, by comparison, does that of the image of the unmarried.

If the concept of 'a wife' is a reflection of what society wishes womanhood to be, the image projected of the unmarried tends towards a reflection of society's anxieties of what a woman should not be. Society thus constructs a category of 'unmarried' which incorporates in counterpoise the negative values of 'womanhood'. Little consideration is given to the matter of whom the 'unmarried' includes. Carter and Glick are probably in accord with general opinion when they define spinsters as women thirty years and over who have never married⁽²⁹⁾, but it is often unclear whether the widowed, separated or divorced are included in the 'unmarried' bracket. To view the unmarried only in parallel with married women is an inadequate means of investigation, leading to a tendency to create opposition between the two socially constructed concepts, whilst at the same time disguising sig-

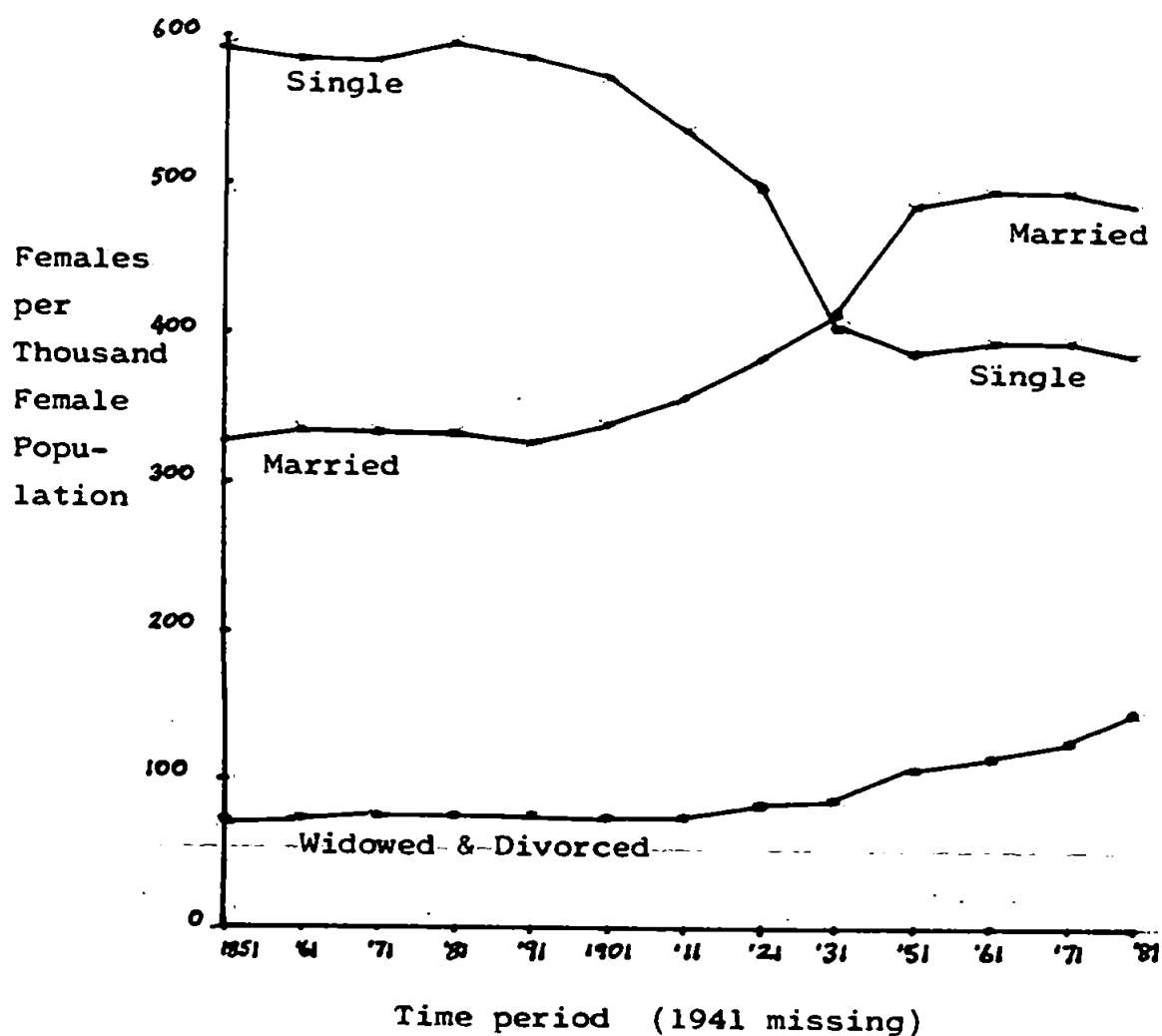
nificant differences. The popular image of the married is an influential factor in the creation of the concept of the unmarried, and as such needs acknowledging, but it is time that sociology delved further into the actualities of the lives of those women outside marriage.

CHANGING PATTERNS OF MARRIAGE

Having considered the legal, practical and conceptual aspects of marriage, a further factor to be examined is the actual occurrence of marriage and how this has changed over the last century. The changing structure of the female population of England and Wales with relation to their marital status is displayed in Table 1. Some of these changes can be accounted for by the difference in the age structure of the population, in particular the increase in the elderly. Besides this, however, it clearly reflects an overall increase in the proportion of women married, widowed and divorced, with a corresponding drop in the proportions of single.

Hajnal identified a pattern of marriage which he claims operated for at least two centuries up to 1940, but which was unique to Europe - hence his term, the European Marriage Pattern⁽³⁰⁾. The distinctive features of the European pattern are, according to Hajnal, a high age at marriage and a high proportion of people who never marry, in contrast to the almost universal prevalence of other marriage patterns whereby the majority of the population marry. The uniqueness of the European pattern lies primarily in the high age of women

TABLE 1 - MARITAL STATUS OF ALL FEMALES PER THOUSAND FEMALE
POPULATION ENGLAND & WALES 1851 - 1981



Source: Marriage and Divorce Statistics 1980
and Mitchell and Deane (1971) p. 11.

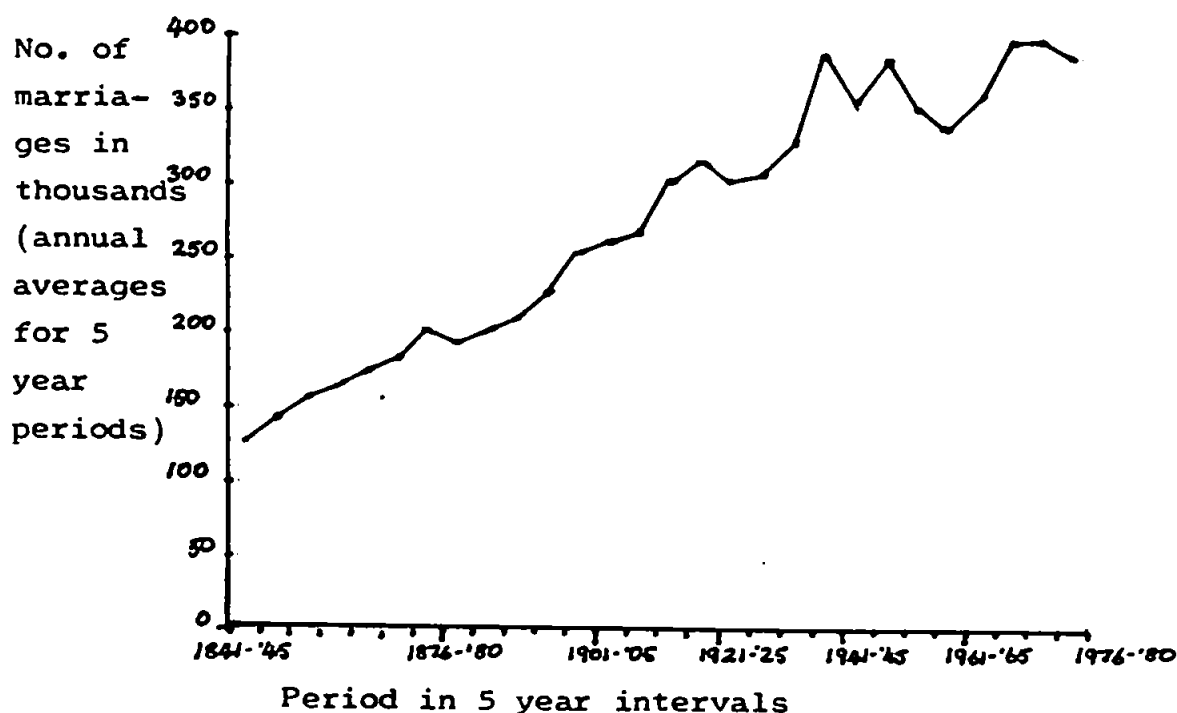
at marriage (often with a relatively small difference between the age of husband and wife) rather than in a high age at marriage for men.

Busfield and Paddon suggest that the two key factors involved in Hajnal's analysis - the age at marriage and the proportions of the population marrying - should be seen as separate issues. These two factors may be affected by different circumstances and are capable of changing independently of each other, though admittedly there is often influence and statistical correlation between the two⁽³¹⁾.

Looking first at the actual numbers of people marrying in England and Wales (Table 2) it can be seen that the figures have risen steadily from 1841 until the 1930's, since when there has been a considerable change in the numbers marrying. Some of the increase in absolute numbers is attributable to the increasing population, but more than this, marriage would seem to have gained dramatically in popularity since the 1930's, reaching a peak in the 1970's, with a decline since then. The high preponderance of marriage in the last half century would seem to imply that Hajnal's European pattern is no longer applicable to this country, though whether this change is permanent, or what it implies, has yet to be discovered.

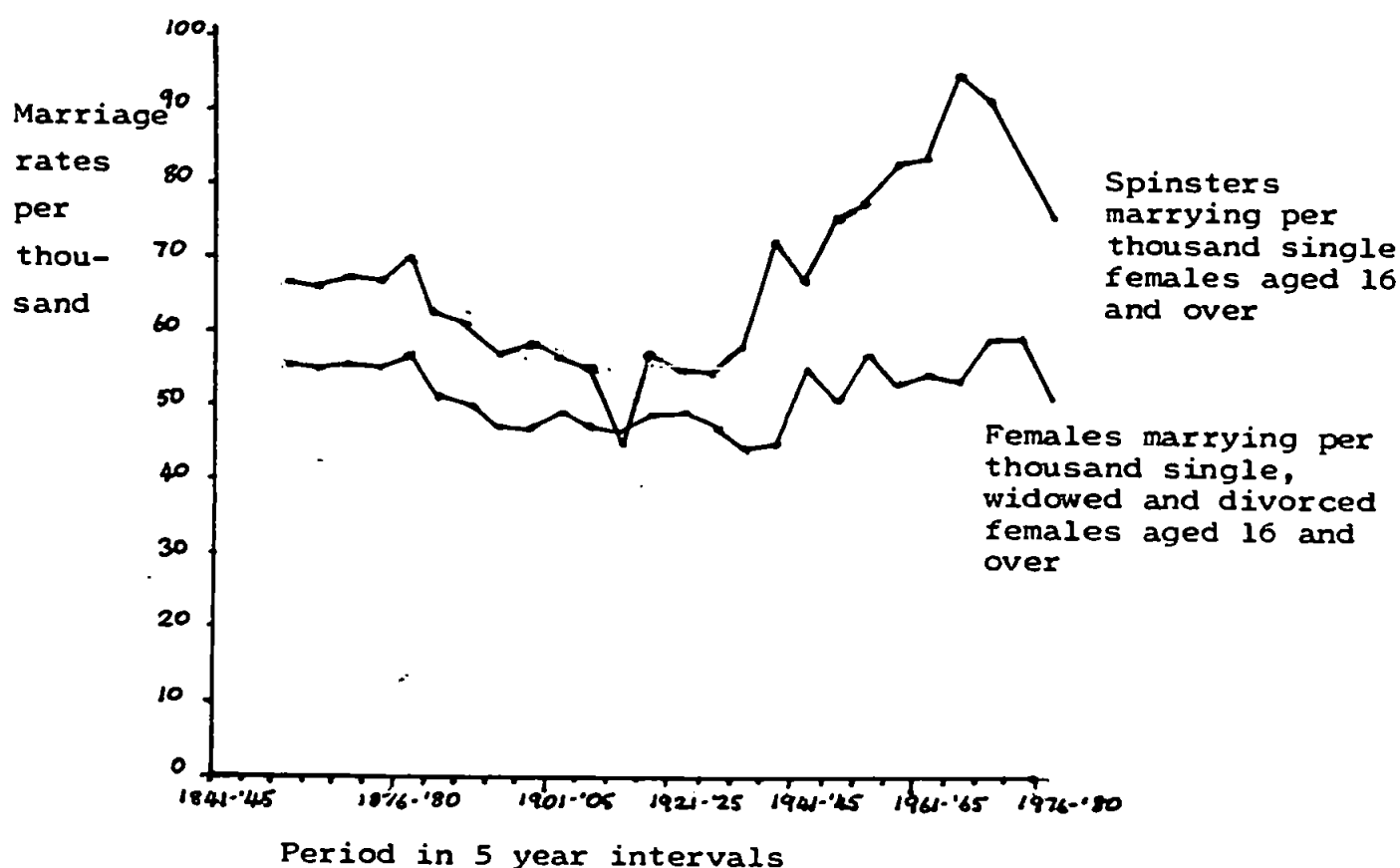
Looking at the effects of the overall increase in marriages on women, Table 3 indicates a growing percentage of spinsters marrying from the beginning of this century up to a peak in

TABLE 2 - NUMBER OF MARRIAGES IN ENGLAND & WALES 1841 - 1980



Source: Birth Statistics 1980

TABLE 3 - MARRIAGE RATES ENGLAND & WALES 1851 - 1980



Source: Birth Statistics 1980

the late 1960's and early 1970's, with a decline since then. The proportion of females marrying per thousand marriageable women (which includes remarriages of women who are widowed or divorced) also shows an overall increase throughout this century reaching a peak in 1972, since when it has dropped somewhat.

When recent figures are studied more closely the decline in marriage rates over the past decade becomes more apparent. In spite of a small increase between 1978 and 1980 the overall decrease has been significant (see Appendix 1, Table A). This decrease in the number of marriages has taken place despite a considerable increase in the number of remarriages. ~~Between 1961 and 1980 the remarriage rate for women doubled~~ and the remarriage rate for men (which is between three and four times higher than that for women) also increased substantially⁽³²⁾. Table 4 indicates the increasing proportion of remarriages as a percentage of all marriages.

Divorce and remarriage will be considered further later: the present point to be made is that the current trend towards remarriage has boosted otherwise declining marriage rates.

TABLE 4 - MARRIAGES & REMARRIAGES - ENGLAND & WALES
1961 - 1980

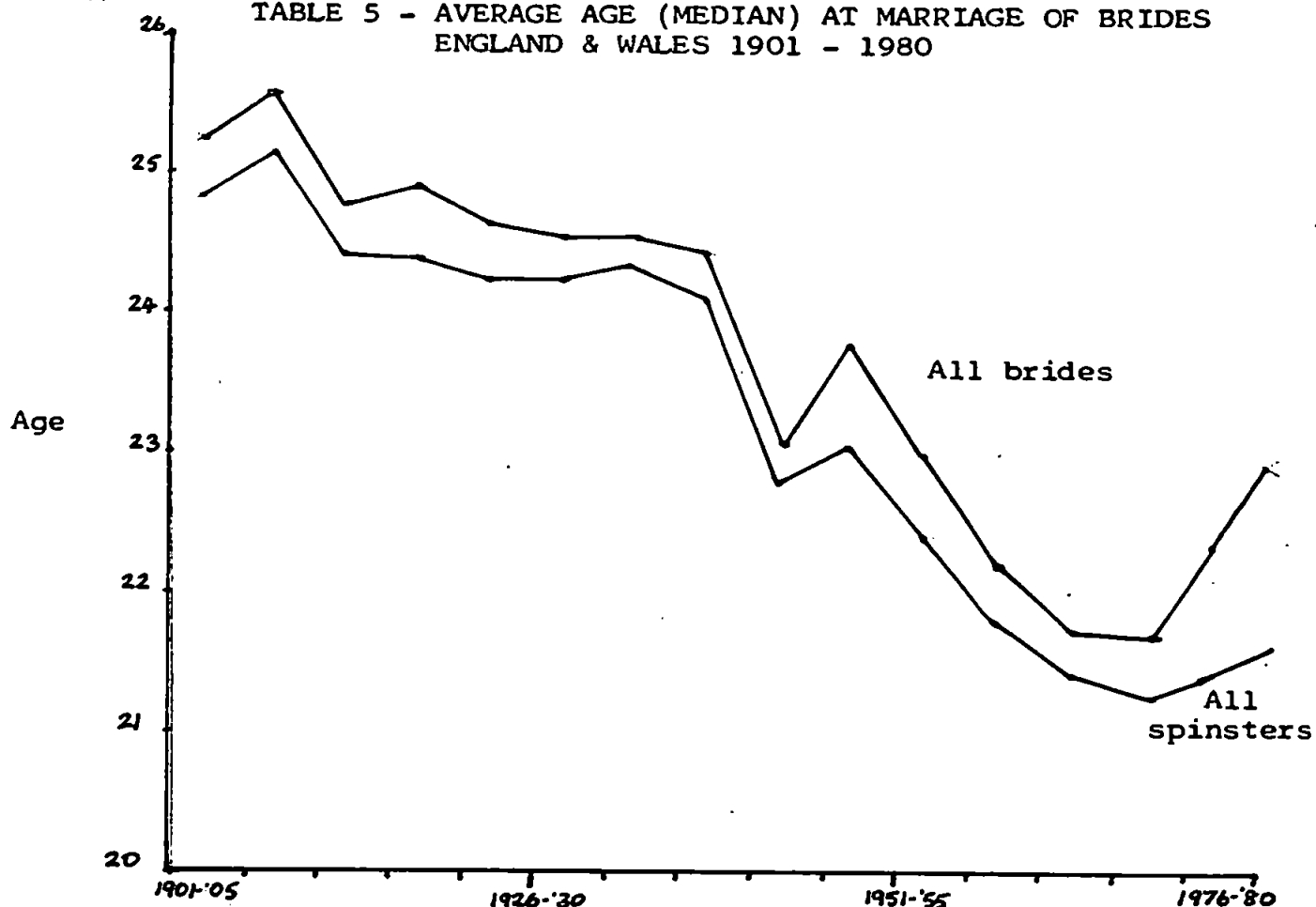
	1961	1966	1971	1976	1979	1980
Total marriages (Thousands)	387	426	447	396	407	409
First marriage for both partner	331	358	357	273	270	270
Remarriage for one or both partners	56	66	90	123	137	139
Remarriage as a percentage of all marriages	15	16	20	31	34	34

Source: Social Trends, 1983.

Local marriage patterns in Buckfastleigh during this century have closely followed national trends, as Tables B and C in Appendix 1 illustrate. Overall marriage rates in Buckfastleigh have been slightly higher than those for England and Wales as a whole, and the proportion of the female population widowed has also been somewhat higher, whilst the proportion single has been consistently lower. These differences, however, are largely a reflection of the population structure⁽³³⁾.

Turning next to look at the age at marriage, although during the nineteenth century marriage already occurred at a late age in England compared with non-European countries, the age at marriage became even later during the last decades of that century. This was initially and particularly true for

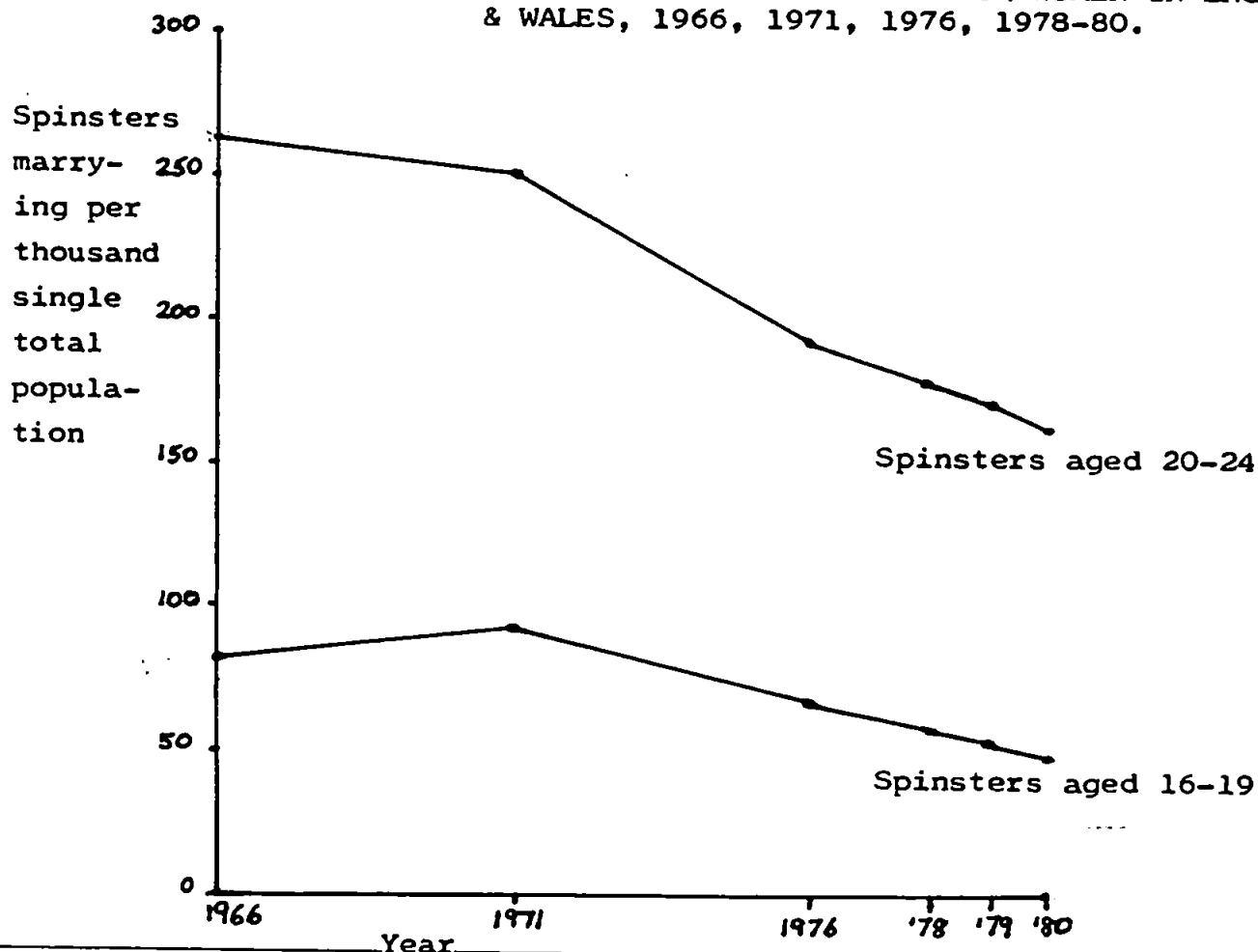
TABLE 5 - AVERAGE AGE (MEDIAN) AT MARRIAGE OF BRIDES
ENGLAND & WALES 1901 - 1980



Time period in 5 year intervals

Source: Marriage and Divorce Statistics 1980

TABLE 6 - RATES OF FIRST MARRIAGES FOR WOMEN IN ENGLAND
& WALES, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1978-80.



Source: OPCS MONITOR, Marriages 1982.

for the middle classes, though the pattern did spread to the working classes to some extent. During most of this century, however, and particularly since the 1930's, there has been a reversal away from Hajnal's 'European Pattern', and the age at which men and women marry has steadily declined for all social classes, though the differential remains that those with higher occupational status tend to marry later than those of lower occupational status⁽³⁴⁾. Whereas marriage for women had often been postponed until the later twenties the median age of marriage for all women in England and Wales dropped from 25.5 in 1906-10 to 21.7 in 1966-70; the corresponding figures for spinsters were 25.2 to 21.3 (see Table 5). During the last decade however, this trend has reversed somewhat, as Table 6 indicates, with decreasing proportions of younger spinsters marrying. Over this last decade the marriage rates for spinsters in their thirties have increased slightly⁽³⁵⁾.

The implications of the recent trend away from earlier marriage are not clear. As yet it certainly would not signify a return to the previous 'European Pattern' of late marriage. Some of the decline in first time marriage rates may be accounted for by an increase in cohabitation. 11% of women in Great Britain aged 18-49 were cohabiting during 1980-81 but not all of these were spinsters. Cohabitation is in fact considerably more prevalent amongst widowed, divorced or separated women, particularly amongst the 18-24 age group.

Nevertheless 7% of all spinsters aged 18-24 were found to be living with a man as his wife and 9% of all spinsters aged 18-49, as shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7 - PROPORTION OF WOMEN AGED 18-49 COHABITING 1980 - 81, GREAT BRITAIN

Age	Single	Widowed, Divorced, Separated	All Single, Widowed, Divorced or Separated
18-24	7	20	8
25-49	11	17	15
All aged 18-49	9	18	11

Source: Social Trends, 1983, p. 28.

Some of the decline in early marriage rates may be due to young women delaying marriage whilst they cohabit with their future partner. Table 8, showing premarital cohabitation rates, indicates the considerable increase during the past twenty years in the proportions of women of all ages who lived with their husband prior to marriage. Only those in rows 2 and 3, however, would affect the decrease in the numbers of spinsters marrying in their teens. Since the marriage rates for persons aged under twenty were almost halved between 1971-80 cohabitation clearly does not account for the whole of the change.

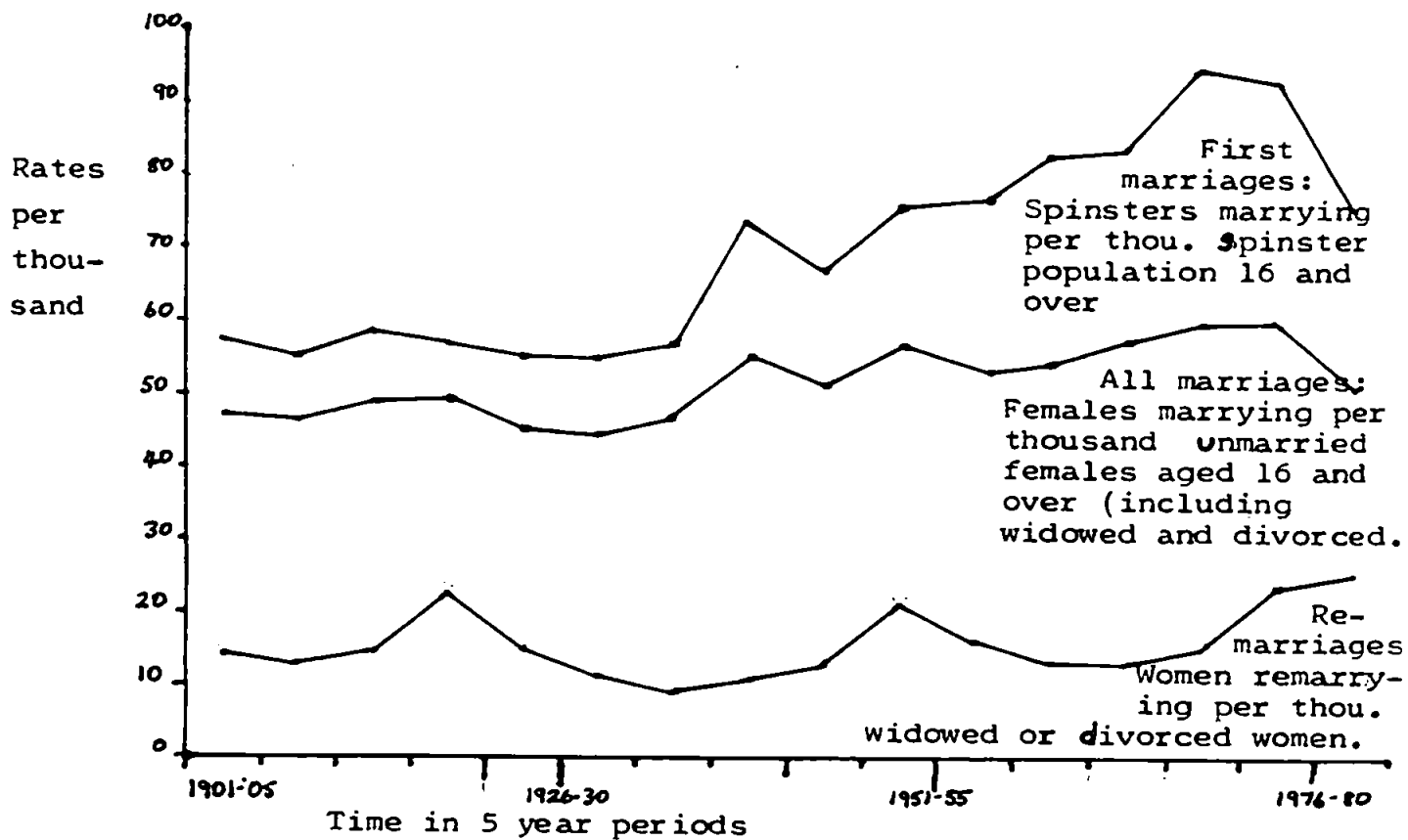
TABLE 8 - PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN AGED 16-49 IN 1981 WHO HAD LIVED WITH THEIR HUSBAND BEFORE THEIR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT MARRIAGE (GREAT BRITAIN)

Age of woman at marriage	Year of Marriage					
	1960-1964	1965-1969	1970-1974	1975-1976	1977-1978	1979-1980
1st marriage 16-19	3	3	6	9	21	19
20-24	2	2	6	9	13	15
25-49	7	3	8	18		
All aged 16-49	3	2	6	10	16	18
Remarriage for one or both partners						
All aged 16-49	26		43	71	51	58

Source: Social Trends, 1983, p. 28.

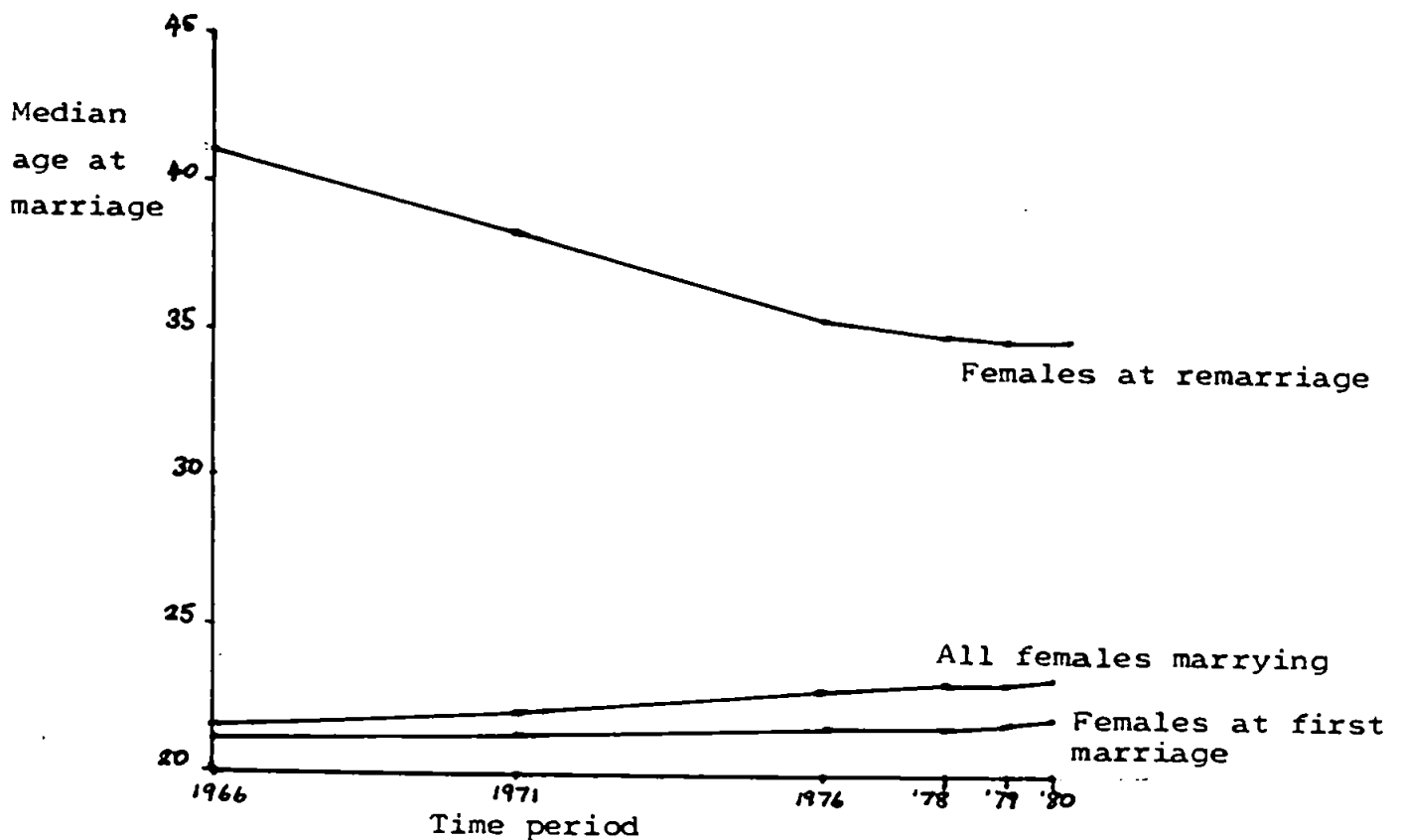
As already mentioned, remarriage currently accounts for a growing proportion of all marriages performed (34% in 1980). Table 9 indicates the effect of remarriages on the overall marriage rate during this century. Apart from peaks following each war the remarriage rate for women had remained relatively static until the 1970's, but since then rapidly rising rates of remarriage have prevented the overall marriage rate from falling as fast as it otherwise would have done with the decline in first time marriages.

TABLE 9 - MARRIAGE AND REMARRIAGE RATES FOR WOMEN IN ENGLAND & WALES 1901 - 1980



Source: Marriage & Divorce Statistics, 1980.

TABLE 10 - AGE AT MARRIAGE OF FEMALES IN ENGLAND & WALES 1966-80



Source: OPCS MONITOR, 1982

Remarriages have also had an effect on the overall age of marriage for women during the last decade. Whilst the age of spinsters marrying has shown a slight but steady increase, from a median of 21.2 in 1966 to 21.4 in 1971, up to 21.8 in 1980, the median age of women remarrying has dropped considerably, from 41.1 in 1966 to 38.3 and 34.7 in 1971 and 1980 respectively. In spite of this drop in the age of women remarrying, the considerably larger proportion of these older women entering into marriage for a second or subsequent time has boosted the median age at marriage for all women to a greater extent than that for spinsters alone (from 21.6 in 1966, to 22.0 in 1971 and 23.2 in 1980), as seen in Table 10.

This drop in the age of women remarrying is entirely due to the increase in divorced women who remarry. Statistics showing the age of widows at remarriage during this century indicate later ages (at remarriage) for the latter years of this century, increasing from a modal range of 35-9 in 1901, to one of 60-4 in 1980⁽³⁶⁾. The median age at remarriage in 1980 for widows was 55.0, whilst that for divorced women was 33.1⁽³⁷⁾. The overall proportion of widows has increased throughout this century due to the ageing population, from 74 per thousand female population in England and Wales in 1901 to 115 in 1980, as seen in Table 11.

TABLE 11 - WIDOWS PER THOUSAND POPULATION, GREAT BRITAIN,
1901 - 1981

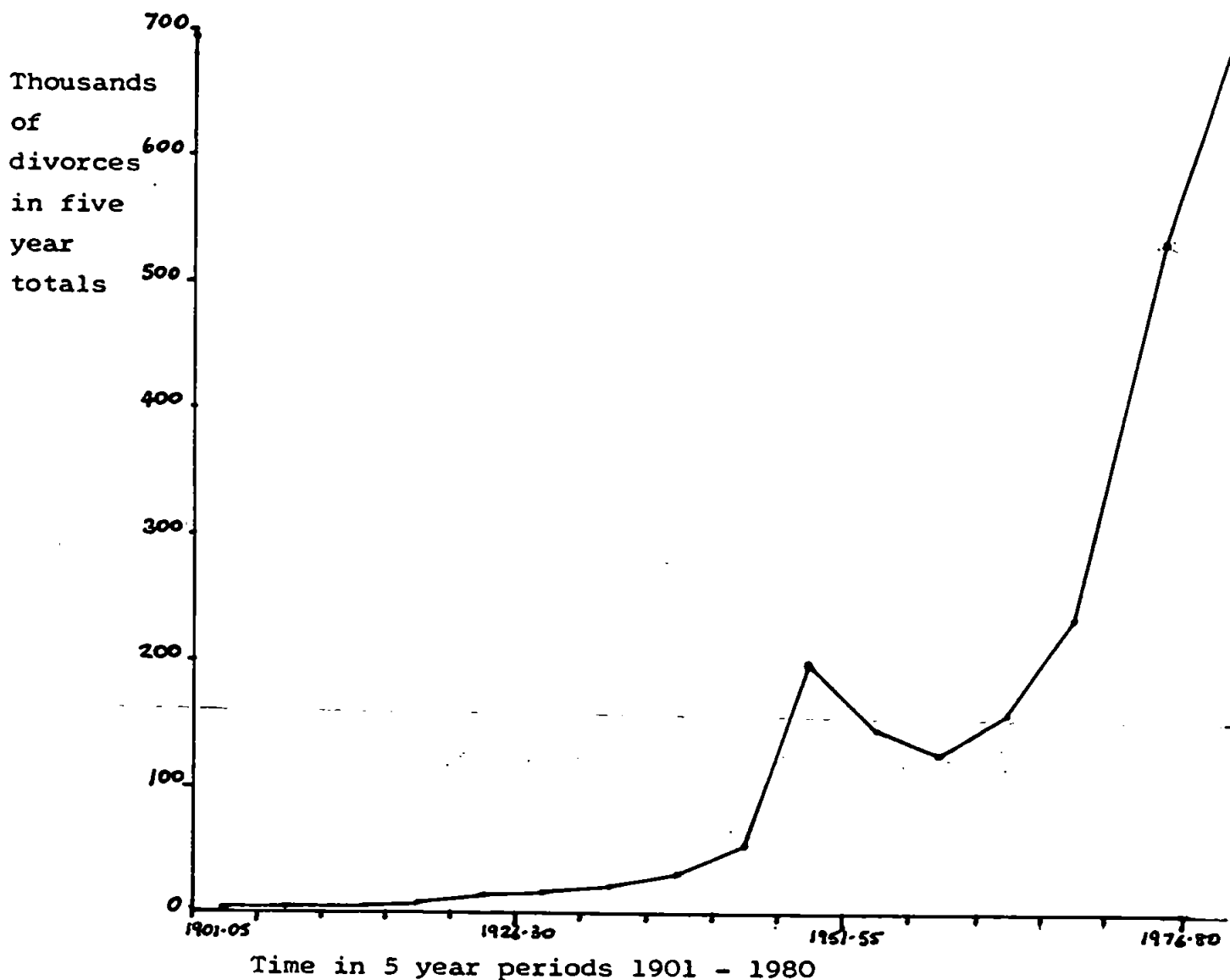
Year	1901	1911	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981
Widows per thousand female popula- tion	74	73	82	86	102	106	111	115

Source: Marriage and Divorce Statistics

The proportion of widows in each age group however, has fallen over the century, revealing the increasing number of widows who remarry⁽³⁸⁾.

The striking impact of divorce has only occurred since the passing of the 1971 Divorce Reform Act. Prior to that time the numbers of divorces in England and Wales did show some considerable increase during the course of this century, but the increase in the rates during the past decade have been dramatic, as seen in Tables 12 and 13. The numbers of divorces granted virtually doubled between 1971 and 1978, and since that time have moved erratically, but remained high. The highest divorce rate currently occurs for women in the 25-9 year age group, these accounting for 23% of wives who divorced in 1981. The median duration of marriages ending in divorce in 1981 was 10.1 years. The number of men and women who divorce for a second or subsequent time is increasing; this accounts for one in nine of those who divorced in 1981⁽³⁹⁾.

TABLE 12 - NUMBER OF DIVORCES IN 5 YEAR TOTALS 1901 - 1980,
ENGLAND & WALES



Source: Marriage and Divorce Statistics, 1980

TABLE 13 - NUMBER OF DIVORCES IN ENGLAND & WALES 1970 - 1981



Source: Marriage and Divorce Statistics, 1980
and OPCS MONITOR, 1983

Whilst many statistics are available for the married, divorced and widowed, information about the single is more difficult to find; most of it only becomes evident through a process of deduction, and many analyses of statistics for women exclude any details about the unmarried (for instance the OPCS booklet Women in Britain 1971-76 nowhere mentions women who are neither wives nor mothers). As already mentioned, there has been an overall decrease in the proportion of those remaining unmarried since the 1930's, this being particularly dramatic for women in their twenties during the years 1931-60, and true for all age groups until the 1980's. Since the 1970's the proportions for all women in the age groups 16-34 remaining single has increased, though that in all subsequent age groups has decreased, largely due to the numbers of spinsters in these age groups marrying men in their second or subsequent marriage. Nevertheless, single women of all ages now make up 36.7% of the population in England and Wales, and currently 10.8% of women aged 16-59, and 10.0% of women in the age group sixty and over⁽⁴⁰⁾. This accounts for over thirty-seven thousand women aged sixteen and over.

CONCLUSION

Many facets of marriage can be seen to be in a state of flux with changing patterns in the ways in which partners enter into and extricate themselves from marriage. Cohabitation, divorce, remarriage and longer lives all influence the likelihood, meaning and expectations of marriage, and correspond-

ingly, the attitudes towards the married and the unmarried. The marked decline of first marriages during the 1970's, accompanied by the increasing age at first marriage suggests that following the increase in numbers of women marrying from the 1930's onwards, marriage is now suffering a decline in popularity amongst younger spinsters. Figures imply that some, but not all of this change may be accounted for by a substitution of cohabitation for marriage, but the trend is too recent for further interpretations to be made with any confidence.

The vastly increased divorce rate has wide-ranging implications for marriage. There is an increased likelihood of marriage for never-married older women who may marry previously-married men. The majority of divorcees remarry, and remarriages now account for one third of all marriages, though second marriages prove twice as likely to end in divorce as those of people of similar ages who marry for the first time. Serial marriages are therefore becoming increasingly common as growing numbers of people move from one marriage to another.

Changes in marriage patterns during this century mean that whilst there is an increased probability that women will experience marriage at some time in their lives, equally more women can expect to spend time outside marriage, whether due to non-marriage, divorce or widowhood, and changes in marital status are becoming increasingly common. The high numbers of marriages performed each year should not blind us to the fact

that many women are existing outside of the institution, whether permanently or temporarily, and the relevance of marital status for their lives remains largely unexamined. This research therefore aims to explore the changing meanings of marriage and non-marriage for women during this century and to assess the extent to which women's marital status influences their lives, both in material and non-material ways.

CHAPTER ONE : NOTES

1. See for instance, Busfield and Paddon (1977), introduction and pp. 130-2; and Gavron (1975), Ch. 3.
2. Since the Legal Aid Act of 1950 there has been a vast increase in the numbers divorcing as the Act brought divorce within the reach of those who otherwise could not have afforded it, and from that time women have petitioned for divorce more frequently than men have. For example, the percentages of men and women petitioning for divorce are as follows:

1874	Men	60%	Women	40%
1949	Men	49%	Women	51%
1969	Men	37%	Women	63%

The Divorce Reform Act of 1969, which became law in 1971, radically changed the law relating to divorce, abolishing all previous grounds and replacing them with one: that the marriage has 'irretrievably broken down'. This may be established by proof of one or more of five factors which are set out in the Act. Legislation therefore no longer demands that a matrimonial offence need have been committed to terminate a marriage, and as Hart points out, the power to pass judgement on the viability of a conjugal relationship has been largely taken out of the hands of the Divorce Court judge and placed within the control of individual husbands and wives (Hart (1976), p. ix). The notion of marriage thereby changes to one of a shared undertaking, dis-

soluble at the instance of either party.

3. For further discussion of this see Finch (1983).
4. Davidoff, L'Esperance and Newby - in Mitchell and Oakley (1976), pp. 151-157.
5. Ehrenreich and English (1979), p. 17.
6. Vicinus (1977).
7. Deacon and Hill (1972).
8. Greg (1862).
9. Hammerton in Vicinus (1980), Ch. 3.
10. Holbrook, quoted in Ehrenreich (1979), p. 108.
11. ~~Hall, quoted in Ehrenreich (1979), p. 116.~~
12. Dyhouse (1971).
13. Davidoff, L'Esperance and Newby - in Mitchell and Oakley (1976), p. 169.
14. Mitchell in Vicinus (1980), Ch. 2.
15. Deacon and Hill (1977).
16. Hammerton in Vicinus (1980), Ch. 3.
17. See for instance Rowbotham (1975) and Burnett (1974).
18. Dyhouse (1977).
19. Hamilton (1981), p. 133.
20. Lambertz (1983).
21. Wilson (1980), p. 22.

22. Wilson (1980), p. 22.
23. McIntyre in Barker and Allen (1976), pp. 159-169.
24. Ehrenreich and English (1979), p. 258.
25. Ehrenreich and English (1979), pp. 258-263.
26. Busfield in Richards (1974), p. 22.
27. Eekelaar (1971).
28. Barker in Littlejohn (1978), p. 259.
29. Carter and Glick (1976), p. 298.
30. Hajnal (1965).
31. Busfield and Paddon (1971), p. 116.
32. ~~Social Trends, 1983.~~
33. Buckfastleigh, in common with the rest of Devon and the South West in general, has an older age structure than that of England and Wales, as Table D in Appendix 1 indicates. In 1981 the South West had the lowest percentage of its population aged under five of all regions in the United Kingdom, and the highest proportion of people of pensionable age. This is primarily due to the popularity of the region as a retirement area; a pattern which has been in operation at least since the 1930's.
34. Busfield and Paddon (1977), p. 8.
35. From the figures available it would appear that Buckfastleigh marriage rates for each age group have

followed national trends and 1981 figures for Buckfastleigh, Devon and England and Wales are broadly similar, except for the sizeable increase in the older population in Devon. See Tables E and F in Appendix 1.

36. Marriage and Divorce Statistics (1980), p. 21.
37. Social Trends (1983), p. 30.
38. Marriage and Divorce Statistics (1980), p. 11.
39. OPCS Monitor (1983).
40. 1981 Census.

CHAPTER TWO

THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

Any discussion of theoretical issues relating to marital status tends towards a list of omissions. In general most sociological debate reflects popular opinion by concentrating on the family-based nature of life, generating theories which, implicitly or explicitly, are assumed to be relevant for the whole population and rarely questioning whether marital status plays any part in rendering these theories valid or invalid. Whilst sociological theories might assume a similarity between the married and unmarried woman, society at large does not. Adams quotes some fifteen year old's images of a spinster: 'A spinster is an unmarried woman who lives by herself and behaves in a manly way' ... 'A spinster is an elderly woman whom no-one wants to marry' ⁽¹⁾. As Hart says, the unmarried are often the subject of mystified speculation on the part of their married peers, and are either pitied, or exposed to categorisation as sexual deviants or misfits who have been left on the shelf ⁽²⁾.

Sociological studies, when they do acknowledge marital status, are not above such speculation. For instance, Carter and Glick discussing the unmarried say, 'Some bachelors and spinsters deliberately choose to remain single, but they are very likely in the minority', and again, 'some of them (will never marry) through choice, but perhaps more of them because of

unsurmounted obstacles to marriage,'⁽³⁾ (My emphasis).

Such speculative assumption appears unavoidable due to the paucity of sociological research into the reasons for non-marriage amongst women, or into the characteristics of the unmarried.

The lack of interest in the unmarried is illustrated by the ambiguity of the term. Whilst the never-married certainly fit into this category there is often confusion as to whether the separated, divorced or widowed are included. This research, in aiming to explore the effects of marital status for women includes those who have been, but no longer are, married, whilst acknowledging that each of these different statuses may have different implications. Whilst official statistics, social policies, sociological theories, and even many feminist studies tend to assume that the role of a woman is synonymous with that of a wife and mother, this research aims to explore to what extent this is true⁽⁴⁾.

The research starts from the basic question, to what extent are single women like married women? When the concept of womanhood is so tightly bound up with marriage, how far do single women conform to the female role and identity and to what extent do these relate to women who were, but no longer are married? This research has wider implications than merely questioning the relevance of marriage-based theories for women outside marriage. If unmarried women act and feel in ways which do not coincide with their married counterparts,

then new hypotheses should be generated which take women's marital status into account. When, however, women outside marriage do appear to conform with those who are married, the question which remains to be answered is - why? When the material circumstances for women outside marriage are clearly different from those who live with a husband, there seems little real reason for a similarity of lifestyles or beliefs.

MATERIAL FACTORS OR IDEOLOGICAL INFLUENCE?

In situations where unmarried women do seem to act and/or think in similar ways to married women there would appear to be two possible explanations. In the first case there may be few other options available. In circumstances where the majority of the adult population are married, few alternative ways of behaving may present themselves to those whose situation is different. The other explanation is summed up in the sociological term, ideology. The notion of ideology used in this work is that of an idea which is widely held, based on certain social practices. One of the features of ideology is the way in which individuals are unaware of the possibly contradictory ways in which they are behaving, and cannot envisage alternatives. If women grow up expecting to become wives, and understand their womanhood in terms of being the wife of a man, then whether or not the actuality arises they may act as if it had. In this way they may be conforming to the ideology that womanhood equals wifehood.

These two explanations - material factors and ideology - are clearly interlinked. Whilst limited opportunities restrict possibilities for action, they are also likely to restrict expectations and ambitions and thereby encourage the upholding of the ideology. There may however, be situations where unmarried women do wish to act differently, but because of their limited circumstances can find no way of doing so. An investigation into unmarried and married women's actions and beliefs under similar circumstances may indicate the strength of the ideology whereby women relate to the image of wifehood. If certain women find it possible to act in ways which do not conform to the expected wife-image, the implication is that others in that situation could do likewise, and therefore those who do comply with the wife-image are either influenced by other personal material factors or are reflecting the hold the ideology has on them.

THE RELEVANCE AND MEANINGS OF MARRIAGE

Sociological theories in general and feminist theories in particular place much emphasis on the oppression women suffer as wives and/or mothers. It is rarely made clear however, whether this oppression is experienced by all women irrespective of their marital status, due to the ideological belief that all will be, are, or should be wives; or whether it is only relevant to those women who actually are wives, and therefore are in the position to be oppressed by a husband. This study aims to explore certain areas of women's lives in an attempt

to clarify this issue and to understand whether women are oppressed specifically as wives, or generally as women. Acknowledging the fact that this may change with time, two groups of women, one from the first half of this century and one from the latter half are studied, thereby permitting comparison over time.

Marriage and non-marriage have different meanings and implications for women depending on their position in historical time, their social class, and various other contextual circumstances. Any attempt to look for differences or similarities between women necessitates an understanding of what marriage was expected to provide for the women concerned, thereby suggesting the factors which encouraged women to marry or not marry. The ideology which links marriage with romantic love implies that the reasons for marriage are inexplicable. Mount, for instance, explains marriage and the family as being 'a way of living which is both so intense and so enduring (that it) is part of being human'⁽⁵⁾. Whilst the current emphasis on romance, love and 'natural' partnering tends to disguise other factors, marriage clearly does have material implications, and such considerations inevitably influence women's decisions. At present little is known about the considerations which influence women for or against marriage or the personal circumstances under which women were, or are, most likely to marry. Besides their general situation, women's home life, their expectations of marriage, their hopes,

ambitions and opportunities all need exploring. Such information is an essential first step towards understanding more about the circumstances and feelings of the married and unmarried.

WOMEN AND HOUSEWORK

For those women who do marry there is a strong ideology which links them with the home. The image of the wife as housewife is a pervasive concept with a long historical background, as described in Chapter One. Housework, as an issue which combines both practical and ideological aspects, is a convenient starting point from which to explore unmarried women's relationship to the married women's role.

Whilst certain household chores are necessities, the energy expended on housework by most married women clearly goes far beyond this. Oakley's interviews with housewives indicate the increasingly high standards women set for themselves in their homes, and the guilt they experience when these are not attained⁽⁶⁾. This proliferation of housework may be partly accounted for by the way in which wives see their 'homemaker' role as an accompaniment to their husband's 'breadwinner' role. In order to feel justified in accepting the shared income they feel that they must excel at their work. Research indicates, however, that even in households where women work in paid employment whilst their husbands care for the children, men are free from anxiety about maintaining domestic standards and keeping busy in a way in which women are not. This

suggests that such standards have an ideological force for women which they do not have for men⁽⁷⁾.

In the case of unmarried women living alone, there would appear to be no practical reason why any housework chores other than bare necessities need be carried out, these women being free from obligations towards others. Ideological pressures, however, suggest otherwise. If, as Barrett and McIntosh claim, women's consignment to housework does not depend on marriage and financial support, but on the assumption that housekeeping is a natural adjunct of femininity⁽⁸⁾, women outside marriage are also likely to be incorporated in the ideology which encourages an emotional investment in housework and the corresponding proliferation of housework chores. An investigation into the time which married and unmarried women spend on housework chores and their attitudes towards them may indicate the degree to which women outside marriage relate to the ideology which links femininity with domesticity and the extent to which single, separated, divorced and widowed women play the role of a housewife in the absence of a husband. This should go some way towards clarifying the issue of whether women feel ideologically committed to the role of housewife because of their position as a wife, or as a woman.

WOMEN AND HOUSING

Closely linked with the issue of housework is that of housing. Just as women are ideologically linked with the home, the home

is ideologically linked with marriage, to such a degree that for many people the notion of setting up a home is inseparable from marriage. Whilst the strong ideological association between a home and marriage may deter unmarried women from any consideration of establishing their own home (whether rented or bought) other material factors may be equally preventative, for the ideology which links a home with marriage is translated into practical terms. As Leonard found in Swansea in the 1970's, 'To "make a home" alone or with peers is a contradiction in folk terms and difficult in practice' (9).

The housing market - and council housing in particular - is based on the nuclear family⁽¹⁰⁾. The limited housing market available for single people is documented by Morton, who points out that single adults are about a third as likely as people with a spouse or children to find self-contained accommodation - and this figure includes, along with the never-married the widowed and divorced, who are twice as likely as the single to have a home of their own. Age is another determining factor, single people of retirement age are far more likely to achieve independence than those of working age. As Morton says, 'we are in danger of creating a situation where the only road to independence is through marriage' (11).

Women who are unmarried, and especially the never-married, therefore face a double setback with regard to establishing

their own home. In the first place ideological assumptions may prevent them from considering such a move, whilst in the second, if they do consider it the material condition of the housing market may make it impractical. Even for women who free themselves from the ideology, consider living alone, and are practically able to do so, a third factor still remains to be considered, which is that of normative constraints. Whilst moving away from the parental home to set up a new home with a husband is perfectly acceptable, the notion of electing to do so alone is often viewed with suspicion. To quote Leonard's findings in Swansea again, 'To live away from home in the same town would be seen as a deliberate slight to one's parents' (12).

By investigating the housing considerations and circumstances of married and unmarried women over two different timespans the influence of these three factors; ideological assumptions, material circumstances and normative constraints may be assessed, and with them the possibly changing degree to which marital status influences working class women's circumstances and feelings with regard to establishing their own home.

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT

A further area where women are affected by the assumption that they will be, or are married is that of employment. Women's expectations and ambitions with regard to work, the types of work they do, and their attitude towards work, all may reflect a combination of ideological and material considera-

tions. Because of the expectation that the majority of women will marry, have children, and care for these children, there is a general assumption that women's availability for work will be transitory, varying with their domestic life cycle, and a tendency to view women's work as purely stop-gap and secondary to their home life.

Considerable changes have taken place in the labour market during this century, with a huge increase in the numbers of married women working. Whilst increasing the numerical significance of women for the labour force, this move has emphasised the image of the woman worker as a part-time worker. A situation has evolved whereby employers exploit this capacity for part-time temporary employment, and the result has been the 'dual labour market' with women tending to be engaged in low-paid subsidiary work, on the assumption that women's work and wages are secondary to their husband's⁽¹³⁾. Working class girls in particular normally have little opportunity to find work which is other than sex-specific, low-skilled and part of the 'secondary labour force', and their early socialisation is closely linked with work opportunities, both reflecting and reinforcing them⁽¹⁴⁾. In this way material factors uphold and strengthen the ideology which emphasises marriage for women at the expense of any real interest in paid employment.

When women remain or become unmarried however, many of the assumptions which place women in a separate category from men

with regard to employment are no longer relevant. They have no reason to interrupt their working life and they have only their own wages to rely on. In this way work can no longer be practically considered as a transitory, inessential time filler, it being of equally crucial significance for unmarried women as it is for unmarried men. The ways in which such women deal with employment is therefore important as an indication of the strength of the ideology which assumes that by nature of their gender, women relegate work to second place to their home life.

The constraining effect of material conditions must be borne in mind however. When the labour market in a particular area offers few opportunities for non sex specific work, women are not only unlikely to find any work other than 'women's work' but they inevitably and realistically hold low expectations with regard to employment. In such circumstances an examination of women's feelings towards work is of equal or greater significance than the actual jobs which women consider or carry out. A comparison of the reasons for which married and unmarried women engage in paid employment and their orientation towards work may indicate the degree to which unmarried women hold with or break from the ideology which - based on marriage - assumes that work is of low importance to working class women.

WOMEN AND MONEY

Related to the issue of employment is that of finance.

Women's attitudes towards money may be some indication of the way they view their lives. Before considering the ways in which women spend money however, their general economic position must be taken into account, for spending patterns must be understood against a background of economic opportunities and constraints. Three related factors appear to be relevant: the amount of money which women have to spend, the ways in which they spend it, and their feelings about the way they spend money.

Considering the first issue, obviously income is a key factor in determining the amounts of money available, and as Delphy says, 'if we compare the standards of living to which a woman can aspire if she remains single and the standard which she can reasonably expect from being married, it seems certain that relative economic deprivation will be experienced by single women as time goes on'⁽¹⁵⁾. Nevertheless, the amount of money which women have to spend depends on more than the actual income coming into the household. Whilst working class unmarried women are likely to have only one low income to survive on, the position of married women cannot automatically be assumed to be preferable. Although the income per head may appear to be greater in families with a male wage earner, research indicates that the allocation of money within households often leaves wives less well off than husbands, suggesting that financial arrangements within families are as relevant for married women as is the total incoming wage⁽¹⁶⁾. Allocational patterns may vary with factors such as social

class, whether both partners are earning, local norms, and the stage of the family life cycle⁽¹⁷⁾, but whatever the allocational system, there is a tendency for wives to be left with less money of their own than their husbands.

With regard to the ways in which women spend money, Hunt claims that for a wife the most important issue is 'whether it is the woman who purchases the family's regular goods, particularly food products, and whether the woman sees as her main work the maintenance of the family's standard of life. If so, her domestic function, and the ideology associated with it, will make it difficult for her to distinguish her money from that of the family fund. If her sense of self-hood is lost in her family, her pocket money will get lost also'⁽¹⁸⁾. In this position women tend to see all the money they have for spending as a family resource, and find it difficult to spend money on themselves guiltlessly. The degree to which married women can separate personal and family expenditure and spend money on themselves guiltlessly therefore reflects the extent to which they have retained a sense of self-identity or whether they have totally merged their interests with those of the family, in which case they feel compelled to sacrifice their needs and wishes to the family's.

Women outside marriage are in a quite different situation. Whilst they may find it more difficult to earn a living wage, their money is their own and they have no-one to consult with or consider when deciding how to spend it. Whether such women

can guiltlessly spend money on non-essential items will depend partly on their financial circumstances, but largely on their notion of themselves. Whilst they have no reason to submerge their desire for personal spending, when the ideology of womanhood is strongly tied to the image of a woman as a self-sacrificing home-maker, women outside marriage may indicate by their attitudes towards money their identification with this role. The attitudes of women who were, but no longer are, married are particularly illustrative in reflecting the strength of the ideology and the degree to which such women have retained or recovered a sense of self, apart from the family.

WOMAN AND LEISURE

In the same way as unmarried women are theoretically able to spend money as they wish, so are they theoretically free to spend their time, unrestricted by the presence of a husband and usually without children. The issue of leisure: how women define it, how much free time they have, and how they use it, is a matter which is acknowledged to vary with factors such as age, social class, employment, financial position, familial commitments and transport. The impact of marital status however, remains largely unexplored and an investigation into similarities or differences between married and unmarried women's leisure may indicate more about the degree to which unmarried women identify with the wife/mother stereotype.

In spite of a growing awareness that much of the early sociological literature relating to leisure had been developed from a male perspective and was largely relevant only to men employed in work outside the home, attempts to explore women's leisure have concentrated almost entirely on women who are wives and/or mothers. Many assumptions are made about the influence which men have on women's leisure, but rarely with any indication whether this is relevant only to women who are materially affected by a male partner, or if all women are affected because of the ideological belief that women are or should be wives. The leisure of unmarried women after the age of thirty is largely ignored, but studied in the light of women's surroundings and personal circumstances this may prove helpful in distinguishing the material and ideological factors which determine the way women deal with free time.

Theoretically a chosen leisure activity may offer insights into a woman's perception of herself, thereby indicating similarities to, or differences from, other women. Material factors are important too, however; not only are women's choices of leisure influenced by their self-perception and wishes, but also by their geographical, social and cultural setting. The restrictions inherent in each of these may lead to a conformity in leisure behaviour which reflects only the lack of opportunity for alternative patterns of leisure. Knowledge of the available opportunities is therefore essential, as is information about women's personal circumstances.

There has been much sociological debate concerning the definition of leisure⁽¹⁹⁾ but the final decision as to whether or not an activity is classed as leisure must lie with the individuals themselves. This, however, is not always easy and recent studies of women's leisure claim that women tend to have less free time than men and that their uses of leisure are relatively limited, suggesting that women find it difficult to set time aside for leisure. Roberts, for instance, claims that 'the source of these persistent inequalities in leisure opportunities lies in the woman's domestic role being of a more general all-absorbing character than that of a man'⁽²⁰⁾. Gregory too claims that there are three common aspects to the daily lives of women: that time is fragmented - work and leisure may be going on simultaneously; that fairly radical changes in life style often take place; and that most activities - work and leisure - take place in or near the home ⁽²¹⁾.

Whilst these factors are relevant to women who are wives and mothers, there is no material reason why they should influence unmarried women without children, who theoretically are as free as unmarried men to engage in leisure pursuits as and when they please. Other factors may be significant however. Deem for instance, besides mentioning housework and child care as oppressive factors relating to women's leisure, includes more general issues such as the sex segregation of the labour market; the sexist working of the educational

system, of state institutions and of social policies; the cultural representation of femininity and the social control exerted by men over women on the basis of female sexuality⁽²²⁾.

All of these less tangible factors are based on the ideological link between womanhood and wife/motherhood leading to the assumption that women will stay at home, subsumed in household and family interests. The extent to which this assumption constrains unmarried women's leisure in the absence of the actual restrictions which affect married women is an indication of the strength of the ideology of the home-loving, family-orientated woman.

As already mentioned, the availability of money and transport may be intervening factors, as might the presence or absence of children and participation in full or part-time work. The influence of these variables on the way in which women of various marital statuses understand and spend leisure time all need consideration if a realistic comparison within the context of women's lives is to be achieved.

LEISURE, NETWORKS AND LIFE CYCLE STAGES

Age too is an intervening factor, though the extent to which it is important is debatable. As Kelly says, 'The effects of age and family life cycle changes cannot be easily disengaged'⁽²³⁾. The same chronological age does not always have the same meaning attached to it in terms of abilities, resources, expectations and responsibilities. Whilst much of the assumed

influence of ageing on leisure would appear to be more directly related to the influence of the family life cycle, this too is a questionable concept in relation to women who are unmarried.

For those within the family, marriage, children and the various stages of the children's growth influences men's and women's leisure in ways which have been closely described. Edgell for instance divides the family career into three stages: early, middle and late and discusses the leisure activities of each, whilst Rapoport and Rapoport develop a more detailed life cycle model, at which each stage has pre-occupations which lead to interests, which then manifest themselves as leisure activities⁽²⁴⁾. Whilst the various events denoting changes in life cycle stages may be influential in determining leisure patterns for married women, they are totally unrelated to unmarried women without children. If, as the Rapoports claim, a woman's activities reflect her interests and thus her pre-occupations, there appears to be no reason why women outside of the family should engage in the same leisure pursuits as those inside, when the conditions of their lives and their pre-occupations are likely to be considerably different.

When a woman's situation is discrepant with the expected stage in the life cycle for her chronological age there would appear to be no clear indication as to where to place such women. In this way unmarried women fit uneasily into the family life

cycle model, but their chosen ways of spending leisure time may indicate their pre-occupations and interests, whilst the people with whom they choose to spend leisure time may clarify who such women identify with⁽²⁵⁾. In this way unmarried women's leisure and networks may indicate the degree to which they relate to married women of a similar age in spite of their different household circumstances and responsibilities, or whether they view themselves and assess their needs differently. When considering this however, the restrictions of the surroundings must be taken into account, for where company and leisure facilities are limited, unmarried women may have few opportunities to diverge from the leisure patterns followed by their married contemporaries, and in these cases only women's feelings about leisure can be seen as indicative.

WOMEN AND INTIMACY

Another area of women's lives where marriage is assumed to precipitate a complete change is that of emotional satisfaction. As financial security and material comforts have become more widespread during the past century, increasing emphasis has been placed on the emotional benefits which marriage is held to provide, in such a way that these aspects now appear to be exclusive to marriage. The importance of emotional factors, whether they are in fact provided by marriage and whether they can be provided through other channels, are questions which are rarely considered, but which

may be illuminated by comparing the lives of married and unmarried women. As Reiss points out, there is a tendency to single out the heterosexual type of primary relationship for special attention - and to assume that only one type of love relationship is 'real' or 'true', this being the 'marriage-type love',⁽²⁶⁾. Besides idealising marriage, this assumption encourages the notion that the lives of all those who are outside marriage are emotionally barren.

Marriage at its best fulfils many emotional needs, and, as Busfield says, it 'circumvents the uncertainties of finding emotional and sexual satisfaction and friendship',⁽²⁷⁾. Bell mentions several components of marriage, these being loyalty (the commitment to help one another), partnering (collaboration with routine business), intimacy, companionship and sex⁽²⁸⁾. However, the fact that these may all exist within marriage does not mean that they are inextricably bound together, each may or may not exist within a marriage and there would appear to be no reason why they should not exist outside marriage.

Weiss discusses five categories of 'relational functions' which appear to be necessary for emotional well being, each of which is generally provided by a different relationship. The first of these is intimacy, which, in Weiss' words, 'prevents the individual from experiencing the sense of emotional isolation that is expressed in the term "loneliness"'. For a relationship to provide intimacy there must be trust,

effective understanding and ready access' ⁽²⁹⁾. Weiss, whilst claiming that marriage provides such a relationship, acknowledges that women may establish relationships of this kind with close friends, mothers or sisters, and that sex and intimacy are not necessarily associated ⁽³⁰⁾. The possibility that women might find intimacy outside marriage (or outside a marriage-type relationship) is something rarely considered, for the ideology which emphasises marriage has created a tendency to link sex and intimacy so closely that alternatives appear not to exist. Research into the ways in which women outside marriage find or lack satisfaction from intimate relationships will therefore indicate whether emotional satisfaction can be found from sources other than marriage.

The concentration on female-male sexual relationships has left virtually unacknowledged the satisfaction to be found from non-sexual friendships ⁽³¹⁾. The ways in which married and unmarried women view friends, whether they have close female and/or male friends, and whether they achieve intimacy through these friendships may clarify to what extent marriage is essential for providing emotional fulfilment. Further investigation is also necessary into the truth of the ideology which assumes that women do find intimacy and companionship within marriage, and into the impact which marriage has on their friendships with others. Another generally unacknowledged source of possible emotional satisfaction is that

of parents, siblings and other relations. Here again, the ideological linking of intimacy with sexuality hides the possibility that unmarried women living with or caring for parents or other family members may find emotional fulfilment within such arrangements.

Besides the degree to which women inside and outside marriage find intimacy and companionship, the extent to which they experience loneliness is a further issue to be considered. Because of the way in which social life is organised around families, and with the constant portrayal of the 'cereal-packet family' as the norm, whether or not women outside the family find alternative emotional fulfilment, they may not escape a feeling of loneliness. Research indicates that divorcees and widows experience a sense of isolation and anomie at the end of a marriage, feeling themselves to be peripheral to life⁽³²⁾. Having been absorbed within the family it is initially difficult for women to redefine their own lives outside it. Those who have learnt dependence on the family for emotional and social fulfilment know no other immediate solution, but this is not necessarily the case for women who have never learnt such dependence. The circumstances which provoke loneliness in women outside marriage, and the ways in which they deal with it are relevant for indicating the importance of marriage for women's emotional wellbeing. The length of time for which previously married women continue to experience a sense of incompleteness, and

how or whether they learn to cope alone is further indication of the strength of the familial ideology.

WOMEN AND SELF IDENTITY

Besides indicating a break from familial ideology, the ability to cope alone without constant companionship is to some extent a break from the accepted notion of femininity. The 'normal' 'feminine' woman, besides being home loving, caring and sharing is assumed to be dependent in both emotional and practical terms, wanting approval rather than success, and preferring to find satisfaction in meeting the needs of others, rather than individually⁽³³⁾. When personal worth for women is supposedly found through others, women outside marriage are either assumed to be 'missing out', or if they do attain their own sense of identity and appear self-reliant, are often seen to be contravening the expected womanly (wifely) role and are therefore classified as 'unfeminine'.

Marriage confers a particular role on women. Following marriage women are seen to be adult, sexually and emotionally competent, and to have a set role within society. Besides fixing a woman's role in the community, marriage clarifies individuals' notions of themselves. As Berger and Kellner point out, individuals' characters become more fixed on marriage and typifications of self and others become more settled, as each partner's definition of reality is continually correlated with the definition of the other's⁽³⁴⁾. Women

without a partner have to define life for themselves; create their own identity and find their own role within society. The success with which working class women achieve this, and the resulting consequences for them are unexplored areas which should prove enlightening as an indication of the degree to which dependent, non-assertive behaviour and feelings are a factor of gender (with all its accompanying demands and expectations) or of marriage itself. If women outside marriage can achieve a sense of independence and self reliance whilst occupying similar positions materially to married women, dependence would appear to be more an adjunct of marriage than of gender and circumstances. Similarly, the ways in which women inside and outside marriage view themselves - the role they see themselves as playing - and the way they are viewed by others, gives further information about the status confirming nature of marriage and the effects of existing outside of the expected wifely role.

WOMEN AND SELF ESTEEM

A further area for exploration into the emotional effects of marital status for women is that of self esteem. This is related to personal assessments and to the perceived assessments of others, these assessments being made primarily in relation to the individual as an occupant of certain roles, for instance the role of woman, worker, wife and so on. As Brown and Harris say, a sense of mastery is probably an essential component of optimism and self esteem⁽³⁵⁾.

Whilst becoming a wife provides a ready defined role and status for women, those who do not marry, and those who are attempting to re-create a life alone must present themselves to the world as an individual in their own right, finding their own role and identity. When the notion of femininity is so closely linked with dependence and partnership it is understandable that the role of women outside marriage should be problematic for society to interpret, but also suggests that, unlike the position for married women, unmarried women's sense of identity is less likely to be mediated through one predefined role and through one other person. The impact of this on self esteem demands attention.

Depression is seen to occur when self esteem is lost, initially in one or more roles and the resulting feeling of despair is generalised to a person's whole identity. Research indicates that the occurrence of depression appears to be linked with marriage and social class, with significantly more married than single women being affected, and more working class than middle class women⁽³⁴⁾. This suggests that self esteem is more precarious for working class wives than for single women, though high rates of depression are reported for those who have been recently widowed or divorced. Further investigation into women's sense of personal worth and their feelings of ability to cope with the world are relevant as an indication of the possible link between marital status and a woman's view of herself.

WOMEN AND SEXUALITY

One final area to be considered is that of women's sexuality. Society retains the link between sexuality and reproduction in spite of improved contraception, and marriage retains its position as the legitimate area for sexual satisfaction. Sex outside of marriage is gradually becoming more acceptable, but this still varies with area and local norms.

The degree to which sexuality is important for women is one area for debate. Hamilton was typical of many of the early feminists in her wish to deny the importance of female sexuality, finding it difficult to divorce sexual attraction from female socialisation. As she said, 'Sex is only one of the ingredients of the natural woman - an ingredient which has assumed undue and exaggerated proportions in her life, owing to the fact that it has for many generations furnished her with the means of livelihood'⁽³⁷⁾. Other feminists meanwhile have stressed the importance of female sexuality⁽³⁸⁾, and, as discussed in Chapter One, the issue of sexuality has become of increasing importance as an aspect of women's femininity. Because of the link between marriage and sex, marriage is seen as an indication of sexual adequacy, and those outside marriage are viewed with some suspicion.

Recent research into the satisfaction couples find from the sexual side of marriage report far higher rates of claimed satisfaction than surveys carried out earlier this century⁽³⁹⁾. Nevertheless, actual satisfaction is difficult to gauge, for

a degree of reticence is to be expected in a survey interview when asking individuals about sexual issues, and whereas earlier this century women may have felt that the norm was to express less interest in sex, current opinions and norms encourage an expression of satisfaction as an indication of normality. Brief survey questionnaires are unlikely to achieve any real depth of probing and therefore tend towards an expression of currently acceptable views.

Information about the sexual expectations, experience and satisfaction of women outside marriage is scarce. Depending on their location, opportunities for sexual experience are probably limited, but whether they feel this to be problematic is unknown, as is the degree to which their experiences differ from those of married women of a similar age and situation. Investigation into these issues may clarify the importance which women place on sex, and its importance for confirming their femininity both to themselves and to others.

CONCLUSION

Attitudes towards sex, like those towards many of the other issues discussed are likely to have changed during the century, as comparison between the two groups of women studied should indicate. The difference in historical time implies a different material context within which women lead their lives, and this must correspondingly affect the ideological factors which surround them. The meaning of marriage and the factors which influence women towards or away from it are

also changing, and identification of these factors sheds light on those inside and outside marriage. An attempt to investigate whether, and to what degree women outside marriage identify with the qualities assumed to be part of womanhood, when so much of what is assumed to be womanly is based on the notion of a sacrificing, home loving, dependent wife, and the extent to which unmarried women's lives conform willingly or unwillingly, consciously or unconsciously with various aspects of the lives of married women, should at least begin to discover the relevance of the female stereotype for unmarried women. When the position of women in our society is premised on the grounds that they are wives and/or mothers, and whilst feminist theories describe and debate the oppression women suffer because of this position in society, it is time that the ideological and material implications of these issues are assessed for those outside marriage, and the importance of marital status taken into account.

This research therefore attempts to explore these issues by looking at the lives of two small samples of women living in conditions which can be closely observed and described. With knowledge about their context these women's considerations with regard to marriage and non-marriage should help illuminate the issues which prompted women to marry or remain unmarried. The two samples being approximately fifty years apart in age, their differing approaches should indicate changes in attitude which have taken place during this century.

Besides the meaning of marriage this research also intends to explore the degree to which particular women in a known context conform to, or deviate from, the anticipated wifely role, thereby assessing the degree to which some of the common assumptions made about women are dependent on marital status, or whether all women behave and feel as wives do. The first issue to be considered is that of housework, where the common assumption is that women - by nature of their gender - become absorbed in household chores. The second issue is that of housing, where the assumption is that women ideologically and practically consider a home to be linked with marriage. The third assumption is that women view their employment as secondary to their home life and the fourth that women find difficulty in spending money on themselves, tending to sacrifice their needs to those of others.

Moving then to less material issues, women's leisure patterns - how women spend their free time, who they spend it with and how and when this changes throughout their life - is an issue which has been assumed to depend on women's progression through the family life cycle. This research aims to explore the experience of women who have no husband and/or children by which to gauge such timing, and to compare their leisure patterns with those of their contemporaries, thereby assessing the accuracy of the current assumptions for unmarried women. Women are also assumed to be emotionally dependent on others - on men in particular - for companionship and intimacy. The truth of this for married women

demands investigation, as does the issue of whether women without husbands find any outlet for their emotions, and whether they find any compensation for a lack of permanent companionship. Linked with this are the two issues of self identity and self esteem, both of which are often found through marriage for women, prompting the question of how unmarried women deal with their apparently anomalous position in society. Finally, women's sexuality is generally confirmed through marriage, leaving those outside marriage again in an ambiguous position, in one sense being forbidden sexual experience outside marriage, yet in another creating unease due to their 'unnatural' situation. An exploration of the ways in which women outside marriage deal with society's conflicting demands with regard to their sexuality may indicate more about their views of themselves.

In all of these issues 'feminine' behaviour has been based on the notion of the woman as a wife, and the degree to which women of the two age groups studied display similarities or differences according to their marital status indicates the extent to which it is reasonable to assume that for material or ideological reasons women outside marriage behave and feel in the same way as do those who are currently married.

The following chapter explains the methods by which the research was carried out.

CHAPTER TWO : NOTES

1. Adams and Laurikieto (1976)
2. Hart (1976).
3. Carter and Glick (1976), p. 299, p. 312.
4. There is a range of literature demonstrating and discussing the family-based nature of official statistics and social policies. See, for instance, Oakley in Rapoport, Fogarty and Rapoport (1972); Cousins and Coote(1981), Land (1978); Land (1979); Land and Parker (1978); Land and Parker in Rapoport, Fogarty and Rapoport (1972).
5. Mount (1982), pp. 255-6.
6. Oakley (1974). See also Comer (1974) and Davidoff in Allen and Barker (1976).
7. Hunt (1980), pp. 60-72.
8. Barrett and McIntosh (1982), pp. 60-1.
9. Leonard (1980), p. 50.
10. See Land and Parker for instance, who quote a policy statement made in 1945 which said that 'the Government's first objective is to afford a separate dwelling for every family which desires one', though this, by definition excluded childless and single people. As a handbook of the same period said, 'Most single people will continue to find their own accommodation as lodgers'.

Land and Parker in Kammerman and Kahn (1978), p. 350.

11. Morton (1976).
12. Leonard (1980), p. 50.
13. See Brown and Norris in Allen and Barker (1976).
14. There is an extensive literature relating to working class girls' low expectations of work, and the way in which work is seen merely as a filler, with girls' primary orientation being towards marriage. See for instance Jephcott (1942), Sharpe (1976), Ch. 2; Rauta and Hunt (1972), p. 9; Mungham (1976), p. 99; Hunt (1980), pp. 99-100; Cavendish (1982), p. 38; Pollert (1981).

15. Delphy in Barker and Allen (1976), p. 80.
16. See Oren in Hartman and Banner (1979); McIntosh in Burman (1979); Whitehead in Young, Wolkowitz and McCullagh (1981).
17. Pahl (1980).
18. Hunt (1980), pp. 43-4.
19. See Parker (1972); Parker (1976); Rapoport and Rapoport (1974); Roberts (1978); Kelly (1983).
20. Roberts (1978), p. 98.
21. Gregory (1982).
22. Deem (1982), pp. 33-4.
23. Kelly (1983), pp. 37-8.

24. Edgell (1980), Ch. 6, Rapoport and Rapoport (1975).
See also Talbot (1979).
25. Elder claims that the notion of the family life cycle model is also unsatisfactory when applied to people within families. See Elder in Haraven (1978), pp. 44-9.
26. Reiss (1960).
27. Busfield (1974), p. 23.
28. Bell in Barker (1972).
29. Weiss (1969), pp. 38-9.
30. The four remaining relational functions which Weiss identifies are social integration, opportunities for nurturant behaviour, reassurance of worth and assistance.
31. Smith-Rosenberg discusses the long-lived intimate friendships which women shared in 18th and 19th century America. The ideology of the time accepted and encouraged mutual dependency and deep affection amongst women. Given this freedom a similar romance surrounded such friendships as exists for female-male relationships today, and the satisfaction gained from these friendships was openly acknowledged and expressed. As Smith-Rosenberg says, the 20th century tendency is to view human love and sexuality within a dichotomised universe of deviance and normality, genitality and platonic love, homosexuality and heterosexuality. She suggests that

we should view sexual and emotional impulses as part of a continuous spectrum of affect gradations, which are strongly influenced by cultural norms. Smith-Rosenberg (1975).

32. See Hart (1976); Morris (1958) and Phillipson in Hutter and Williams (1981). Divorcees and widows appear to experience the greatest sense of incompleteness when confronted with images of the 'happy family', or on those occasions which stress the solidarity of the family - events such as Christmas, birthdays or Sunday lunch (Hart (1976), p. 171). These images emphasise the ideology of the family and ritualistic family life. See Bossard and Bell (1976) for further discussion of the relevance of ritual to family life.
33. See Chodorow in Rosaldo and Lampere (1974); Zolinger Giele (1982), introduction, and Brunsden in Women Take Issue (1978).
34. Berger and Keller (1964).
35. Brown and Harris (1978).
36. Barnard (1982); Brown and Harris (1978), p. 278.
37. Hamilton (1981), p. 35.
38. See for instance Sherfey (1973).
39. Compare for instance Gorer (1971), p. 113, and Thornes and Collard (1979), pp. 106-7 with Slater and Woodside (1951) and Komarovsky (1969), Ch. 4.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The issue of marital status is a vast area which has been largely ignored. Given the lack of an adequate theoretical framework, the research was based on exploration rather than on hypothesis testing. For this reason the research was designed as a reasonably intensive study of a small area, rather than a widespread but more superficial study.

Individuals' opportunities for action depend on what is available in their environment, whilst what is available influences their expectations and ambitions. Because of this, women's lives can only be seen meaningfully if set within the context of the restrictions and opportunities surrounding them. The research was therefore carried out all within one small town and incorporated a study of the town, both past and present.

Not only are material factors such as employment, housing and transport significant in composing the context within which individuals live, but other aspects such as the demographic, economic, historical and social factors must also be recognised as contributing to the background against which lives are led⁽¹⁾. As the purpose of the study was not only to explore but to compare women's lives, it was important to be as familiar as possible with the setting within which the

women lived and also to ensure that the context of their lives should be as similar to each other as possible. In order to maintain comparable cultural and economic factors, the research concentrated - as far as possible - on women from within the same social class, all of them being of working class origins.

The study also had a timescale to it, comparing women's attitudes towards marriage and non-marriage and the effects of these statuses during the first and second halves of this century. Acknowledging the importance of the historical and demographic context for individuals' lives two distinct groups of women were selected, thus permitting the women's position in historical time to be taken into account. The younger group of women were currently aged twenty-five to forty-five, being at or beyond the accepted 'marriageable age', whilst the older group of women were all aged over seventy, thereby providing a timespan of half a century.

Additional information was collected from a wider ranging group of women who, though they lived in the same community exhibited a wider range of variables and contexts.

LEVELS OF INFORMATION AND MULTIPLE METHODOLOGIES

In gathering information about women's lives three separate levels of information were identified: first, that of the unchangeable events in individuals' lives which provide hard statistical data, such as a person's date of birth or number

of siblings; second, and more variable, that of the way people spend their time, for instance the number of hours a person may spend watching television or the frequency with which they visit their parents; and third, the beliefs which individuals hold about their lives, such as someone's feelings about the way they were educated, or why a person thinks they wanted to get married. These three levels may respectively be classified as statistical facts, material circumstances, and beliefs and though different, each reacts with and is influenced by the others. In this way a woman's context influences her actions and beliefs, whilst material circumstances may be modified because of beliefs or background⁽²⁾.

Clearly each level needs investigating and no one level can stand alone. Implications about what a woman feels from looking only at her material circumstances may be misleading, whilst exploring feelings alone can be meaningless without a framework within which to set them. Each category of information is best collected in different ways and for this reason a combination of research methods was used. Such a combination is not only practical, as Glaser and Straus (1971) point out⁽³⁾ but also satisfies theoretical criteria. Each research method is based on a particular societal view, and as Ackroyd and Hughes stress, methods cannot be treated as atheoretical tools⁽⁴⁾. With the use of multiple methodologies there is an increased possibility of reaching beyond the biases that result from single research styles⁽⁴⁾, particularly if each method is approached with an awareness of the premises

on which it is based, and an assessment of its problems and advantages. Careful consideration of the implications of the methods by which information was collected was therefore seen as an essential part of the research.

This study used three different approaches. First, information was gathered regarding the historical, demographic and general background facts relating to the town, using secondary sources and in-depth interviews. Second, a series of in-depth interviews was carried out with ten women aged over seventy, and ten women aged between twenty-five and forty-five. Third, a questionnaire schedule was administered to sixty-two women, representing a random sample of women from the town. In this way information was collected relating to all three levels of the women's lives, and viewed within the context of their whole environment.

COLLECTION OF BACKGROUND DATA

The research began with the collection of historical demographic data about the town. A complete survey of the Census enumerators' records for Buckfastleigh for the years 1851, 1861 and 1871 was carried out, noting the information for each household for each year separately. Patterns and trends became apparent which were suggestive of further questions to be asked, but limitations were also evident. One of the frustrating aspects was the 'snap-shot' nature of Census records, which give no indication of what had happened in the intervening ten years between each Census.

Even more limiting was the inability to question motives and feelings behind the stark events recorded in the Census. Why did certain women live in certain types of household, was this a matter of choice, practicality or necessity, and how did they feel about this? Anderson notes the same limitation when he speaks of the 'structural' nature of the information gathered from historical records, but the lack of 'phenomenal' evidence⁽⁶⁾.

The skeletal nature of Census data is dangerously open to interpretation in the light of current opinions, with much imposition of the researcher's theories if the bare facts are allowed to be fleshed out with mere supposition or assumption. Only the hard statistical data can be examined, whilst the material circumstances surrounding the individuals' lives - such as their state of health or the hours and conditions of their work - and their attitudes towards these issues must be gleaned from other sources or accepted as being unknowable. This one-sided nature of the available information highlights one of the limitations of historical research; one which is particularly acute for working class people of the past, for whom few records exist.

Besides the mere 'factual' nature of the Census data there are other criticisms to be made, some of which relate not only to the Census records of the last century, but also to the use of official records in general. As Anderson points out, Census records can misleadingly conceal short term events

in individuals' lives, which - because of their short term nature - are unlikely to show up as being significant in the recorded data even whilst playing an important part in the prevailing pattern of life⁽⁷⁾. Similarly, there is no means by which to gauge the frequency of changes between each piece of information, for example, does a change of address between two Censuses mean one house move or twenty within the previous ten years?

A further problem common to most official statistics is that of aggregation. Without the individual data relevant information can easily remain hidden due to the conceptualisation and categorisation which takes place when statistics are aggregated. For this reason the availability of the 19th century enumerators' records proved to be illuminating, provoking questions which the aggregate Census data leave unanswered⁽⁸⁾.

It becomes apparent that only certain questions can be asked of official statistics. Obviously questions cannot be asked of the data which were not initially asked of the individuals, which means that the information is only of use to the researcher so long as his or her interests coincide with those of the data collectors. But besides the chosen area of analysis and the data that are collected, the way in which the statistics are processed and presented can make them impracticable for the researcher.

If the figures are already aggregated, for instance into geographical areas, or into conceptual areas such as 'families' which do not coincide with the researchers' definitions, the information is of little practicable help. Whilst the release of last century's enumerators' records, and to some extent this century's Small Area Statistics, helps overcome the problem of geographical boundaries, the problem of conceptual categorisation often remains.. This problem is not limited to historical data but is relevant for contemporary statistics too. The sexist use of the term 'Head of Household' in current official statistics renders the data unworkable for anyone who holds a different definition of the category, as does the underlying assumption behind the term 'Chief Economic Provider', and once presented in this form the statistics become impossible to reanalyse in any other way.

Nevertheless, where official statistics have been collected accurately and with the use of definitions and categories which correspond closely enough with those of the researcher, invaluable help can be gained from the long term and wide ranging perspective of trends which emerge. Besides the nineteenth century enumerators' records for Buckfastleigh, aggregate census data provided useful information regarding factors such as housing and employment, and official statistics indicated the demographic and economic trends against which life in Buckfastleigh must be seen. Local

population and marriage patterns were studied and compared with national ones and found to be broadly similar.

Further information was collected from other secondary sources such as parish registers, the records of Friendly Societies, workhouse records, and directories, whilst the electoral register and publications such as the parish magazine provided contemporary information. From these sources a general framework was built up providing a picture of the town over a timespan of a century.

This information, however, dealt with individuals' lives only on two of the three levels identified; those of statistical data, and material circumstances, leaving the views and feelings of the inhabitants unexplored. In order to bring the picture of the town to life, oral history interviews were carried out with eight local people who were selected for the variety of different aspects of life in the town they represented, including for instance, employers, employees, a keen trade unionist and an employer's wife (see Appendix 2 for a list of interviewees). Even where these respondents' views conflicted with each other, or with recorded data, they proved essential for a fuller understanding of the area, providing information at all three levels. Inconsistencies between sources illustrate the relevance of combining hard data with subjective views, emphasising the competing views of which reality consists and providing personal perceptions which gave another perspective to the

recorded data. Oral evidence was helpful in delineating the boundaries of the community as experienced by the inhabitants now and in the past, and individuals were able to express the value they attached to their community. Similarly sub-divisions and allegiances within the town were revealed, which gave further meaning to the notion of 'community'.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH OLDER WOMEN

Within this framework, women were selected to be individually interviewed in depth, providing information for the main bulk of the study. The older group of women was interviewed first, qualifying features being that they were aged over seventy, and that they were of working class origins. Whilst social class is an area of potential debate for women, for the older inhabitants of Buckfastleigh this posed no real problem for, as discussed in the following chapter, social class differences were clearly defined in the town at the beginning of this century and all of the older women spoken to were quite sure of their working class origins. The other qualifying feature was that the women were born in the town and/or had spent most of their lives there. (Only one older woman was interviewed who was born outside the area, and data on her life prior to her late twenties when she moved to Buckfastleigh is excluded from comparisons with the other women's early lives).

Contact with women for this part of the study was initially made through networks encountered during the first stage, that of collecting the background information. A number of

women were recommended as ex-workers in the textile industry, four of whom had been born in the same three rows of terraced houses, and all of whom had had fathers working in the textile mills. Other women were found by word-of-mouth, and later, through contacts made during the administering of the questionnaire schedule, until a total of ten older women had been interviewed. Whilst all attempts were made to make the selection of women as wide ranging as possible within the selected parameters, no pressure was put on women to agree to be interviewed, and several did decline. It must be acknowledged that those women with whom it was possible to obtain interviews may not be representative of those who refused. (A list of the women interviewed appears in Appendix 2).

Interviews generally lasted between forty-five minutes and two hours; some women were interviewed a second time. The interviews were relatively unstructured, based on a previously compiled schedule which covered a range of topics relating to home life, work and leisure. (See Appendix 3 for a fuller description of the schedule). The degree to which women were forthcoming on these issues varied, and respondents were given the opportunity to dwell on those areas about which they were most interested, in accordance with Portelli's recommendation that 'the researcher "accepts" the informant and gives priority to what he or she wishes to tell, rather than what the researcher wishes to hear'⁽¹⁰⁾. Interviewees were asked

for permission to tape the interview; all agreed. Generally good rapport seemed easy to establish, and most women were pleased to talk. Following the interviews the tapes were transcribed in full, and from these interviews new ideas and theoretical perspectives arose which could be checked further.

ORAL EVIDENCE: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Prior to discussing the interviews carried out with the younger group of women, the advantages and criticisms of oral evidence demand consideration. The objections advanced by the 'scientific' lobby of sociologists against the use of oral evidence are generally based on what they claim to be its lack of representativeness, reliability and validity. Arguments in support of oral evidence countering these attacks have been marshalled by many advocates of the method. Thompson points out that no method is free of such criticism; all are open to selective use of information, inaccuracies and contortions⁽¹¹⁾.

ADVANTAGES

The most obvious points in favour of oral evidence are, briefly, as follows. First, the use of oral evidence means that previously ignored areas of study can be explored. Recorded data has been particularly selective, and hidden groups or spheres of life about which there is little or no published information become accessible with the use of the oral interview. Even where written records do exist, oral

evidence may provide a helpful corrective. Second, the researcher, by gathering oral evidence, bypasses the problem of finding that previously collated data is defined or aggregated inappropriately for his or her own area of interest. The information is collected on an individual basis using the researcher's own concepts and categories. Third, and most important, oral evidence is one of the few means by which the individual's perceptions, feelings and beliefs (the third level of data) can be explored. Just how feasible it is to investigate this aspect of life through an individual's words will be discussed later - however, few other sources even approach this third category of data, with the possible exception of letters, diaries and autobiographies.

Thus it becomes clear that one of the key aspects of oral evidence lies in its subjectivity, which opens it to both use and abuse, value and criticism. Whilst the collection of oral evidence gives the unwary or unethical researcher an opportunity to 'force' the data into his or her own categories, thereby promoting a world view which complies with his or her own theories, it must not be forgotten that this objection is not unique to this method of data collection. Censuses and surveys, in fact all means of data collection, are also based on definitions and theoretical frameworks⁽¹²⁾. The main difference with oral evidence in relation to this point is that all of the data in its uncategorised form (i.e. the written transcript or the recording) is available for re-scrutiny, so that other researchers can assess the applica-

bility of the concepts used and the categories into which information is assigned. In this way it becomes easier for outsiders to criticise or disagree with the interpretation of the data.

This non-classified quality of the raw data is closely aligned with another of the merits of oral evidence. Re-assessment of the categories can be a constant process, and a receptive researcher may be prompted to re-think concepts as the respondents' world views conflict with his or her own. With this re-thinking come new approaches and new questions. As Passerini says, 'Oral sources refuse to answer certain kinds of questions; seemingly loquacious, they finally prove to be reticent or enigmatic, and like the sphynx they force us to reformulate problems and challenge our current habits of thought'⁽¹³⁾.

CRITICISMS: REPRESENTATIVENESS?

To deal with the common criticisms of oral evidence, the issue of representativeness in any survey is bounded by the aims initially set for the research, and of whom the research is intended to be representative. Investigating such a broad but unexplored area as marital status it seemed important to establish hypotheses that worked for certain people in certain situations, rather than attempting to make grand generalisations, and for this reason - as discussed earlier - certain parameters were set⁽¹⁴⁾. Taking the chosen parameters of area, age and social class, all attempts were made

to make the sample of women as wide-ranging as possible, covering variables such as family size, sibling position, occupation, and most important, marital status. Within this sample the effects of these variables could then be investigated and hypotheses formed. In this way, although small, the sample was as representative as possible of what it claimed to investigate, bearing in mind the fact of non-response.

Whilst persuasion may have encouraged certain non-respondents to comply, such attempts were seen as invalidating, for the value of working on such an individual level was the opportunity it offered for exploring the meanings attached to each women's life, thereby coming closer to the respondent's own understanding of her life and making it possible to decipher actions, decisions and ways of behaving in the light of her past and present restrictions and opportunities. Reluctant interviewees were unlikely to present this opportunity.

RELIABILITY?

The criticism regarding the lack of reliability which is levelled at oral evidence can be interpreted at several levels. At the most basic level, the reliability of memory can be questioned. In response to this Thompson cites experiments which indicate that the immediate loss of memory over a short period is by far the greatest, and that later memory loss is almost negligible until senility is reached. He

points out that reliability depends partly on whether the issue interests the informant, and that individuals tend to remember the more salient points in their lives, this in itself being a helpful pointer⁽¹⁵⁾.

Nevertheless, attitudes are remembered less accurately than facts. The past is constantly being reinterpreted as part of a continuous sequence leading into the present, and previous motives and emotions tend to become distorted with time. Events too may become misplaced, embroidered or forgotten in order to fit in as part of a harmonised whole. When, however, one of the main concerns of in-depth interviewing is that of values, the very cultural construction of memory proves to be of interest. The same process of interpretation and reconstruction is in operation in all historical recall, whatever the sources or methods being used. All accounts of the past involve a combination of factual events interpreted through contemporary socially constructed values, and the fact that this is more apparent in oral evidence may be seen as one of the method's merits. Oral evidence makes visible the subjective interpretational problems common to all reconstruction of the past. It becomes clear through oral evidence that ideology is the cement which binds past and present together: factual accounts and cultural understanding of them are both represented in respondents' accounts and an awareness of this encourages careful listening, questioning and interpreting.

VALIDITY?

The validity of the evidence collected by in-depth interviewing also requires careful assessment. Various aspects of the method itself should be taken into account when dealing with the data in order to alert the researcher to possible bias. Most importantly, the interpersonal processes going on within the interview situation should not be ignored, for, as Button points out, the interview is as much a social occasion as any other meeting of individuals, and much of what is produced during an interview is interactionally constructed⁽¹⁶⁾. The researcher must therefore accept some responsibility for the results produced during the interview, and as part of this process should examine his or her role during the procedure, and the influence which this is likely to have had. The approach taken by the interviewer may vary from a detached 'clinical', 'professional' approach, to one which encourages the respondent to view the researcher as a friend⁽¹⁷⁾. Whatever line of approach is taken the interviewer will inevitably influence the response, and to ignore this would be to ignore the human component of social science.

During this research the role of the interviewer changed with the different groups of people being interviewed. When interviewing men for background information about the town, the respondents were pleased to see their role as that of an informer and they obviously viewed the interviews as following similar lines to those of television interviews. Whilst they

were happy to instruct or to supply facts about the town and about work, they were much less willing to discuss their own lives in relation to these facts⁽¹⁸⁾. Interviews with the older women, both those interviewed for background information and those interviewed for the main part of the research started out on similar lines to those with the men, as information had initially been requested about their past in Buckfastleigh, but generally personal factors were drawn in, and during most of the interviews a point was reached where the atmosphere became more relaxed as interviewer and interviewee recognised each other as people. With the younger women the point of the interview was initially explained as being that of discussing their feelings about life in Buckfastleigh, and with feelings much to the forefront a more personal approach was inevitable.

Differing approaches imply different results. In more 'clinical' interviewing however unobtrusive the interviewer may appear to be, the power balance is weighted firmly on his or her side - in fact this very unobtrusiveness is in large part the expression of the power. During the interview the normal social conventions of conversation are laid aside and the commonly acknowledged obligation to take 'turns' in any exchange no longer applies, the respondent being given unusually long turns whilst the interviewer frequently responds only with short encouragements or with silence. This silence demonstrates the interviewer's power and frequently forces the respondent to continue. Whilst giving the semblance of a normal conversation this tactic must be acknow-

ledged as being influential in the production of the response.

A more personal approach generally results in more thoughtful revelations, but as the interview progresses the interaction between the respondent and the interviewer is likely to influence the views expressed. Whatever the line of approach taken the interviewer's influence cannot be denied. Each interaction is an isolated incident and inevitably carries with it the effects of the surrounding circumstances. Some of these circumstances will be factors already present in the respondent's life, whilst others will be due to the impact of the interviewer, but this is a common feature of all interactions and all investigations. The individual's views are fluid and a researcher cannot hope to pin down one definitive summary of the individual's standpoint on any issue. What the interview does do is to indicate some expression of the respondent's view of life. Only by being aware of the manipulative forces at play may the researcher hope to come closer to a valid understanding of the respondent's views as they would wish to express them.

A further problem with regard to oral evidence is that of the selection and presentation of the material. As Portelli says, 'The transcript turns aural objects into visual ones, which inevitably implies reduction and manipulation' (19). This is an unfortunate corollary of interviewing. Intonation, changes in speed and volume, pauses, all contribute to the

meaning of what is said, yet all these nuances are lost in transcription.

This creates a dilemma for the researcher who, whilst realising that the same statement may have quite contradictory meanings according to the way in which it is delivered, is simultaneously aware of the scientific obligation to refrain from too subjective an interpretation of the 'data'. This conflict as to whether to present the pure verbal evidence, or whether to include the interpretative inference, is created through the process whereby speech becomes decontextualised in transcription. There being no clear resolution to the problem of dealing with statements which would be misleading when transcribed 'objectively', in this research the use of comments which on tape imply one thing yet when transcribed mean another, has been avoided.

Having considered the most likely areas of bias when gathering oral evidence, the method nevertheless remains one of invaluable help. An awareness of the distorting tendencies involved reveals the problems as little different in principle from those of all other methods, and bearing these tendencies in mind in-depth interviewing permits a better exploration of the third level of information about individuals' lives than any other method.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH YOUNGER WOMEN

Finding suitable women for the younger group of interviewees

proved more difficult than for the older group as few initial points of contact could be found. The administration of the questionnaire schedule provided several opportunities to meet women who fitted the relevant categories and on these occasions a request was made to meet again for a longer interview. Several women agreed and through these women further contacts were made. A possible element of bias must be admitted here however, due to the fact that the sampling frame used for the questionnaire was the Electoral Register. The sample therefore favoured women who were householders. Attempts were made to rectify this by requesting interviews with the three unmarried women of twenty-five and over who were discovered to be living with their mothers when their mother was interviewed as part of the questionnaire sample, but none of these second-hand requests was successful. No practicable means could be found of rectifying this possible imbalance.

The younger interviewees formed a less cohesive group than the older women. Whilst the older working class women had lived in a relatively closed community with limited options, the lives of the younger women illustrated a greater diversity in terms of opportunities, geographical mobility and marital status. Women who were single, married, separated, divorced and widowed were interviewed. Some of these women had previously cohabited with a man, but due to the unclear position of cohabitees in relation to marital status no currently cohabiting women were included.

The parameters set for this group were still those of age (approximately twenty-five to forty-five), residence (having been born in or near Buckfastleigh and having spent most of their lives in the town), and social class. A problem arose with the issue of social class in that no satisfactory means of social classification exists for women. Unlike the situation with the older women, the younger ones were unclear as to their class position, so father's occupation was used as the qualifying factor⁽²⁰⁾. Ten interviews were carried out, though only six of these were recorded (a list of the interviewees appears in Appendix 2). Notes were taken after the unrecorded interviews, and full transcriptions made of the tapes. (Only recorded interviews are used for direct quotations). The issues discussed in these interviews were similar to those discussed with the older women and interviews generally lasted between one and two hours. (The interview schedule is included in Appendix 3).

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The third aspect of the research, the questionnaire, was used as a means of gathering information about a wider range of women than was possible through in-depth interviewing. Information was collected on all three levels of data: hard statistical facts about the women's lives; information about the way they spent their time; and information about their feelings. The main emphasis was on the second level in an attempt to discover more about the daily details of which

women's lives consist, and to explore how these vary with marital status and other factors, including age, social class, employment, financial position, family commitments and availability of transport. The questionnaire also provided an opportunity to look at the relationship between marital status and a woman's family of origin. In-depth interviews with the first group of older women suggested some relationship between a woman's likelihood of marriage and her sibling position. The questionnaire was a means of testing this hypothesis on a larger number of women and over a wider range of variables such as age, social class and type of family. The questionnaire schedule therefore included questions about a woman's past, her marital status, her present situation, and how she spent her time.

SURVEY METHODS: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Whilst the advantages of using such a questionnaire are obvious in that it provides a suitable means of gaining information on a personal, yet more readily comparable and wider-ranging level than in-depth interviewing, the theoretical and practical biases inherent in the method also need consideration. Taking Ackroyd and Hughes' point that methods are theory dependent, it is relevant to note that surveys were initially developed as fact-finding exercises, but since then have been extended to the exploration of all aspects of individuals' lives, using largely the same assumptions as were relevant for the fact finding surveys⁽²¹⁾.

Although well suited to collecting statistical data on an individual basis, the survey method encounters problems when exploring the other two levels of information (material circumstances, and feelings and beliefs). This difficulty is partly due to the problem which arises in in-depth interviewing - the issue of whether words can be used accurately to represent thoughts and actions. Questionnaires, even more than in-depth interviews rely on the assumption that respondents can verbalise the phenomena of their lives in a way that is comparable with other people's verbalisations. During the administration of this questionnaire it was evident that women approached the questions with differing degrees of thought and interest, whilst the structure of a questionnaire schedule, with its demands of comparability and quantifiability removes the opportunity to capture the full expression of these answers⁽²²⁾. Different motives behind similar actions are also lost in a questionnaire, again indicating the weakness of the survey method for dealing with any other than the factual aspects of peoples' lives⁽²³⁾.

Unlike in-depth interviewing where situations, surroundings and events are acknowledged as part of the data, the survey method removes an answer from its context. In this way no account is taken of the changing factors which may influence the answer, but the response alone is taken to be representative, and is grouped together with all the other decontextualised answers. Whilst acknowledging that this is an

inevitable corollary to the demands of a quantitative survey, caution must be exercised in the notion that similar answers share some common denominator⁽²⁴⁾.

The survey method is thus valuable in presenting a wider picture of the factual aspects of people's lives, but inadequate alone as an indication of feelings, motives and context. The combination of the survey method with in-depth interviewing and background data collection provides a more rounded view of respondents' lives, thereby counteracting the individualised aspect which the survey method tends to emphasise.

SELECTING THE SAMPLE

When selecting women on whom to administer the questionnaire the issue of a sampling frame proved problematic, due to the difficulty of including women of all marital statuses. The only available record for Buckfastleigh on which the majority of women aged over eighteen appear is the Electoral Register. This however, gives no indication of marital status. Making use of the sexist way in which the term 'Head of Household' is defined, it seemed reasonable to assume that the majority of households where the woman's name was either the first or the only name listed for that address signified a woman who was unattached to a man. A 20% random sample was therefore taken from all the female headed households on the Register. As had been hoped, this provided a range of women of different marital statuses: single, separa-

ted, divorced, widowed and married. As already mentioned, identifying unmarried women is difficult, and even with the use of this sampling frame women who lived, not in their own homes but with relatives or friends, remained hidden within the Electoral Register. In an attempt to contact such women, and also to guard against the possibility that wives who were designated Head of Household might be unrepresentative of those whose husbands held this title, a further small random sample of women on the register not named as Head of Household was selected. No unmarried women appeared in this sample however (25).

ADMINISTERING THE SURVEY

Pilot tests were carried out on women outside of the chosen sample, the schedule was revised, then administered to the selected women. In all, seventeen women refused interviews, five were unobtainable, and sixty-two schedules were completed. (A copy of the schedule appears in Appendix 3).

The questionnaire schedule took about twenty minutes to complete, though in the majority of cases far longer was spent on discussion before and after it. Whilst the responses to some questions, particularly the more subjective ones, proved impossible to condense satisfactorily, these answers and the conversations held with the women were valuable in their own right, provoking further thought and acting as pointers towards issues to be discussed at greater length during in-depth interviews. Also, the circumstantial evidence

gained about women's lives gave a greater depth of context in which to set the information. Following the completion of the schedules all the more clear cut issues were coded and computerised, enabling trends to be detected and possible interconnections checked. The survey therefore proved enlightening on a quantitative level, illustrating a broader span of circumstances than the interviews, whilst the more subjective aspects of the questionnaire widened the areas of interest.

CONCLUSION

The combination of these methods of collecting information thus provided both historical and contemporary data relating to women's lives in Buckfastleigh from three different perspectives and on all three levels of information. Whilst the geographical context remained constant for all the women concerned, the women interviewed in depth provided a comparison of changing circumstances and attitudes over time for women of working class origins, whilst the questionnaire schedule provided a wider range of information from within the same community.

The town itself will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE : NOTES

1. See Haraven (1978), pp. 7-8, and Elder in Haraven (1978), p. 27 for a fuller discussion of context.
2. For instance, the fact of having many brothers and sisters may be significant in creating a belief in the importance of financial security, which may be influential in encouraging a person to spend many hours at work. Individuals' feelings about their lives are made manifest in the things they do, both at the level of material circumstances (e.g. spending time gardening) and at the level of statistical facts (e.g. having children), whilst their circumstances may influence their feelings. The three levels are therefore seen as inextricably intertwined, and inter-dependent.
3. Glaser and Straus believe that for generating theory no one kind of data on a category nor any single technique for data collection is necessarily appropriate. Different kinds of data give the analyst different views or vantage points from which to understand a category and develop its properties. Glaser and Straus (1971), p. 183.
4. Ackroyd and Hughes (1981), p. 17.
5. See Denzin in Ackroyd and Hughes (1981), p. 137.
6. Anderson (1971), p. 6.

7. Anderson (1971), p. 2.
8. An example of this from the nineteenth century records is that of household composition where, from a breakdown of households it became evident that a high percentage of women in Buckfastleigh were living outside of 'family' situations, yet the aggregate statistics reflect only the concept of the size of household, so that no other aspects are obvious or available for analysis.
9. For a fuller discussion of this see Oakley and Oakley in Irvine, Miles and Evans (1979).
10. Portelli (1980), p. 103.
11. Thompson (1979).
12. As Hindess points out, there is no correct or unique distribution of a set of social statistics which exists independently of its means of production, i.e. its sets of categories. The categories used, with their corresponding instructions as to allocation into these categories, constitute a theory, i.e. an instrument for the production of knowledge. Hindess (1973), Ch. 3. However carefully collected the statistics may be, this does not remove the fact that there was a conceptual basis behind their production.
13. Passerini (1979), p. 91.

14. Bott (1957) and Edgell (1980) both approached their areas of research in a similar way, choosing to study a few families intensively rather than a more superficial study of a large number of families.
15. Thompson (1979). See Gittins in Moss and Goldstein (1979), pp. 92-3, for further debate on this subject.
16. Button (1983). For further critical discussion of interview material see Ackroyd and Hughes (1981), Ch. 4.
17. Oakley discusses the merits of the latter standpoint in Roberts (1981), whilst Gavron (1975), p. 157 and Bott (1957), pp. 20-21 advocate somewhat more detached stances.
18. Komarovsky noted a similar reticence amongst the men she interviewed, finding that husbands talked easily about jobs, but when the interviewer turned to the marriage relationship many became uncomfortable. Komarovsky (1967), p. 14. Gittins' research endorsed this. Gittins (1983).
19. Portelli (1980), p. 38.
20. This, in spite of its unsatisfactory nature, is a common approach, and was used by Goldthorpe in the Oxford mobility studies.
21. See Ackroyd and Hughes (1981), Ch. 3.

22. For example the questions 'Do you have as much free time as you would like?' and 'What would you do if you had more free time?' were approached quite differently by different women. Some women took their present situation for granted and considered the issue from their lives as they stood, feeling for example, that more free time would be of little benefit when surrounded by young children, whilst others took a different standpoint and imagined how life might be changed. Answers such as 'It would be nice to have more time so that I could do things just when I felt like it, or when I thought of them, rather than always knowing what I have to do next', reduce most unsatisfactorily to an answer which is comparable with any other.
23. For instance, when asked how they spent their free time some women proudly declared that they 'did nothing', or 'Just sat and looked out of the window', and were pleased to do so, whilst for others this was a sad admission of boredom and loneliness. The quantitative element of the survey method necessitates grouping such similar actions together.
24. Graham discusses a further aspect of the individualisation which surveys create. There is a tendency for questionnaire material to isolate individuals from the structure of their lives and obscure their relationships, thereby ignoring the various power and relational

dimensions of the social structure. Graham (1983). Ackroyd and Hughes also see this as problematic, stressing that the fact that the survey method uses individuals as sampling units leads to a possible disjunction 'between the instrumental presuppositions of the survey and the more theoretical conceptions of social science'. Ackroyd and Hughes (1981), p. 63.

25. Similar difficulty in selecting unmarried respondents has been experienced by other researchers, whose work has normally involved them in going to great lengths to contact the single and/or selecting them from within very particular sections of society. See for instance the work of Rallings (1966), Spreitzer and Riley (1974) and Baker (1968).

CHAPTER FOUR

SETTING THE CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

Buckfastleigh is a small town on the edge of Dartmoor in between Exeter and Plymouth. The present town, probably of 13th century origins, is situated about one mile north of the original settlement of Buckfast, which still exists as an adjunct to the main town. The 11th century abbey which existed in Buckfast for only one century was rebuilt by a community of French Benedictines during the 1880's, and now survives as an autonomous community and a tourist attraction. The nearest towns are Ashburton (three miles away) and Totnes (six miles away).

Ashburton was an important stannary town in the 14th century and the tin trade continued in a small way into the 19th century. The town was also important for iron mining and the cloth industry until the 19th century, when both the industry and population declined. The present population is approximately three and a half thousand. From early days Totnes was an important and wealthy cloth town, but during the 17-18th centuries Totnes failed to move into the developing serge industry and by the 1660's the industrial prominence of Totnes was almost over. Nevertheless Totnes remains as a flourishing country market town, with a number of small local industries and a growing population, from just over three thousand at the beginning of this century to approxi-

ately six thousand now.

Buckfastleigh at present has a population of almost three thousand, having shown remarkably little change in population size during this century. In 1851 the population was 2,613, reaching 2,781 by 1901, dropping by 18% in the 1920's then rising again to its present level of 2,851 in 1981⁽¹⁾.

BUCKFASTLEIGH IN THE PAST : INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

Like Ashburton and Totnes, Buckfastleigh was an industrial town. Historically the main industry was woollen manufacture, though there was also tin and copper mining in the neighbourhood, lime and limestone quarries, and later a paper mill, an iron foundry, a fellmongery and two tanneries.

The area around Buckfastleigh was different from the main weaving area in Devon. Whilst Devon had been one of the main centres of the woollen industry from the 16th century, from the 1740's onwards competition from Norwich badly affected Devon's cloth trade with Spain, Holland and Germany. By the 1780's the expanding Yorkshire trade, competition from cotton and the American War of Independence all combined virtually to flatten the serge industry in many parts of Devon. The area around the Dart Valley was one of the few regions to survive, largely due to its close proximity to Dartmoor and the ready supplies of local wool. In 1838, of three thousand looms weaving serge in Devon, 'Some 700 looms were at Buckfastleigh, another 600 in and around Ashburton, and 250

at Totnes. A half of the surviving industry thus lay in the middle of the Dart Valley' (2).

As the 19th century progressed the thirty-nine woollen mills which had existed in Devon in 1838 declined and many closed down. As they did so many of the inland towns decayed. Buckfastleigh, however, remained as a relatively successful town throughout the 19th century, due partly to its access to wool, and also because of the support given to the local mills by a wealthy family in the town. In 1806 Joseph Hamlyn, a farmer from Brent, had bought two properties - a tannery at Buckfastleigh and the site of the old abbey in Buckfast. With his three sons Hamlyn initially used the tannery for fellmongering, but later began wool-combing there, whilst a house and a woollen mill were built at Buckfast. In 1842 they rented further premises in Buckfastleigh, then in 1846 bought the former stamping mill, previously used for ores from the surrounding mines, and there they installed their first wool-combing machine. This was the beginning of the mechanisation of wool-combing in Buckfastleigh and from then on this work became increasingly orientated around the mills as the other master combers (of whom there had been eighteen employing about 300 people in 1850) were gradually forced out of the business as Hamlyn bought up their workers.

In 1890 there were still four woollen mills at work in the town, the Hamlyn's being the most successful. The Hamlyns continued to run the business until it was bought by the Co-operative Wholesale Society in 1920. As such it was one

of the few mills to survive into this century and was operative until the early 1970's.

Other work in the town during the last century centred on the fellmongery (which is still active now), the paper mill (which ceased to operate as such in 1940), and mining and quarrying. Farming was the other main alternative for men, Buckfastleigh being surrounded by good agricultural land. In 1851 18% of working men were employed on the land, and in 1871 26%. Part of the increase in agricultural labourers reflects the move from hand-combing to machine-combing of wool, as mechanisation ousted the men from their jobs and they moved to other forms of employment.

As a result of the mechanisation of the woollen industry there were increasing numbers of jobs available for women, chiefly as weavers and wool-sorters. The numbers of women recorded as being engaged in paid labour increased from 380 in 1851 to 481 in 1871, in both years 44% of these being employed in the woollen industry. The other main forms of employment for women were skilled (but poorly paid work) such as dressmaking or millinery, positions as servants, domestic workers, labourers, or shopkeepers. The mills continued to keep the town busy, so that in 1890 the railway traffic from the recently built Buckfastleigh station (the line was built in the 1870's) was third only to that from Exeter, Plymouth and Torre. Those towns which the railway bypassed were often affected badly, experiencing diminishing

trade and declining population. Ashburton was one of the towns to suffer this fate.

At the beginning of this century then, the woollen mills were still the most influential factor in the town. In 1902 the Hamlyn brothers still had two mills, employing about five hundred people, Berry & Sons employed a further four hundred in their mill, whilst a fourth wool-combing factory was owned by Churchwards. The industry was supported by the contracts it held with the Navy, supplying serge and blankets. One of the men interviewed spoke of the importance of the mills, and of the Hamlyns, in the first decades of this century.

You see Buckfastleigh was quite - quite different from normal rural places in Devon in a way, because it was so industrialised : there were three or four factories here.

So how do you think that made it different?

Well it was a different sort of community. Now I agree that the employers were pretty tough really - and they were in that generation weren't they - the Victorians you see - but on the other hand, we had here, which they gave, or fixed up, facilities which they didn't have in much bigger places. For instance, the park up there next to the car park; the swimming baths ... The Town Hall - I mean the Town Hall is probably the best one in the Teignbridge area, and the playing fields - they call that Hamlyn's fields - they fixed that up when they retired and sold out in 1920, and then the recreation ground and the YMCA ... But as I say, Buckfastleigh was, I think myself, in many ways ahead of the district because it was such an industrial place set amongst a rural area.

By the 1920's the mills still dominated the employment situation for women. The 1921 Census shows that although textile workers were not important numerically in the county as a

whole, the rate being nineteen textile workers for every thousand occupied females in Devon aged 12 and over, in Buckfastleigh there were 226 textile workers, giving a rate of 568 per thousand⁽³⁾. Opportunities for other typical forms of 'women's work' were scarce. Whilst the rate for women working in commercial and financial occupations was 122 per thousand for the county in 1921, Buckfastleigh had a rate of 70 per thousand, the second lowest recorded rate for Devon Urban Districts. Opportunities for domestic service were also comparatively scarce. As the 1921 Census says, 'A knowledge of the proportion of (indoor and domestic servants) in a community is often of service as an indication of general social conditions'⁽⁴⁾. Whereas the average rate of domestic servants for the county as a whole was 54 servants per thousand people, and 59 per thousand for Devon Urban Districts, the rate for Buckfastleigh was 30 per thousand, the lowest mentioned.

The Census gives a picture of Buckfastleigh which coincides with that described by respondents who were young at the time. As Miss H. (who was born in 1905) said:

The mill more or less saved the people of Buckfast because they earned their living there. It was very poor, of course we were all very, very poor, but, as I say, most of them worked in the mill and lived in their cottages.

Men and women both worked in the mill and some women continued to work after marriage. The majority of the women worked as weavers or wool-sorters with a male foreman in charge of them.

Whereas in Yorkshire wool-sorting was seen as a man's job, women were favoured for this in Buckfastleigh. Conversely however, there were few women woolcombers in Devon, and few involved in spinning - these were jobs chiefly done by men. Another option for women was work in the 'invisible' mending department. This was a favoured, well paid job, and like all the others, relied on family contacts. Many of the women have emphasised the importance of having members of their family already in a particular department of the mill, both to find openings for new workers, and to instruct them. In a tightly knit community family reputations were widely known and influential. Mrs. J. illustrated this:

What did most of your friends do when they left school?

Well I think, 'tis nearly all mill workers.

Yes? Were they all menders?

Oh no, no. You had a job to get in there really.

Why do you think you got in there?

Well I think me sister must have put in a word for me.

Yes? How do you think she got there?

Oh, I don't know - I mean, we were sort of respected here a lot in Buckfastleigh.

Choice of work was therefore limited not only in the sense that the mills were the most likely option for women, opportunities were further restricted by the availability of experienced workers who would be willing to teach newcomers, as Mrs. S. (born in 1903) described:

Would there be certain jobs (in the mills) that people would've preferred to do rather than others?

No, 'twasn't what they wanted to do at that time, it was what you 'ad to do. I mean to say, well you'd go warping - if you preferred blanket weaving, if you had anybody to learn you well you'd go blanket weaving.

So who did teach you?

Well, oh my sister Ivy, her was working at that time and her learn't me.

Where would she do that - at work she'd teach you?

Yes, she 'ad to teach me in the shop.

So in fact while she was teaching you she wasn't earning, was she?

O well yeah, her had to earn her living you know. You'd be with her all the time you see. You'd lose a bit on the learner, you'd bound to, because you had to be seeing to what they had to do.

Given widespread poverty, the money which the women earned in the mill was crucially important and the majority of the women recall their wages in detail. Earnings improved somewhat just before 1920 when some of the mill workers joined the Textile Workers Union and fought, successfully, to be paid on a piece work basis⁽⁵⁾.

Apart from work in the mill the majority of women saw their opportunities as being limited to domestic service or shop work. As Miss C. (born in 1912) said:

'course if you had a bit of education, I suppose you stood a better chance at different jobs then, but I mean as for just ordinary people, there was just the choice, you either worked in the factory or in service. Well there wern't much service around here, and, like I say, shop jobs ... Well there wern't no more than a dozen good shops to work in like, y'know there wern't no choice here.

Domestic service was a variable occupation. As Mrs. M. (born in 1902) said:

... if you didn't go in the mill you went in service. My mother never wanted me to be in service, 'cos she was afraid they wouldn't give me enough to eat. See, some houses weren't good in that way. Fullerford was good for that, they always had plenty of good food.

What sort of girls would go into houses like Fullerford?

'Course they know you all the years, you couldn't go wrong. They knew the parents that you was brought up from ...

Again then for domestic service, family connections were important.

CLASS DISTINCTIONS

The opportunities for middle class women were quite different.

One middle class man spoke of what his sisters did:

Did they each take a job after leaving school?

Yes, yes, clerical, banking or things like that.

Locally?

No, one went to London - Dolly did; what about Betty - Betty went away, down Torquay, in the Bank. Well, that was all there was for girls in those days, or nursing. Well, May did some nursing.

For both social classes there seem to have been little conception of what life was like for the other. This split started with schooling. Middle class children were sometimes taught at home, but normally later went to Totnes High School for Girls or Totnes Grammar School for Boys, as boarders, or to a private school for girls in Totnes. As Mr. O (who had a middle class upbringing) said of education for girls in the 1920's:

... Miss Pym's school at Totnes, and then the others went to the Totnes High School. They all went that way, you know.

For working class children there were theoretically three options: the Catholic school run by the nuns at Buckfast; ~~the Buckfastleigh Council school;~~ with the third possibility of passing the eleven plus and going on to the Grammar School. The latter, however, was not a practicable possibility for many children; the majority of parents were anxious to receive their children's incoming earnings, besides which further education was not highly valued by most. The statutory minimum leaving age was thirteen, rising to fourteen in 1926.

The two social classes therefore lived separate lives. Amongst the working class people a feeling of unity apparently existed. Whilst some families were regarded with particular respect there is no evidence of any who were outcast or who suffered particular disapprobation. Solidarity was based on common roots and shared, known background. Mrs. M's comments were typical:

Were there people who your mother thought weren't particularly good sorts of people?

No, they was all alright that way in Buckfastleigh, see, that's if they were Buckfastleigh people. If anybody came, strangers, 'course you didn't know much o' them, but there weren't many strangers here in those days.

There was a clear distinction between the 'us' of the working classes, and the 'them' of 'the gentry' or the 'people in the big houses'. These people were sometimes referred to with hostility, and sometimes with respect. The hostility was normally expressed when referring to the Hamlyns, for instance Mr. D.:

Oh well, they considered themselves a class above you, you know. They used to ride about in their carriages ...

More often the awareness of class difference was expressed in terms of awe for the way in which the 'upper classes' lived, with frequent mention of their servants, cars, food, and particularly their homes. This 'inside' information was known from women whose mothers, or they themselves, worked as cleaners or domestic servants for the wealthy. For instance Miss L.:

... there's a lane down there, and there was a lot of what we called ladies. Well, not ladies, just people that had better - oh money and all, like that. Mother used to, oh she was always asked to go over and do a little work there you know. Mother used to love it, I know she did, because they had lovely things you know, things you wouldn't see unless you went in the people's houses, you know, good stuff ...

HOUSING

Housing was one of the areas which most clearly delineated the rich from the poor. The majority of mill workers lived in terraces of back-to-back mill cottages, whilst agricultural workers tended to make frequent moves. As Mr. J. said of the beginning of this century:

... my mother and father were like a lot of people as I say, they were for ever on the move, you know. They'd leave one farm for the sake of one shilling or 1/6d a week - or a bit better cottage, you know.

For those with large families housing was inevitably cramped. Many recall sleeping three to a bed and sharing a bedroom between six brothers and sisters. Gas light was a luxury and bathrooms almost unheard of.

RESTRICTIONS

All of the working class respondents recall poverty during their childhood; the emphasis placed on food in their memories of the past is indicative of this poverty. Food always played an important part in the assessment of a position as a domestic servant. At home food was basic; almost all the families had allotments and many kept pigs and hens. Several people recall how good the home-cooked meat and vegetables were, but others remember monotony and 'making do'.

Poverty also affected the lives of the working class people in the way in which it restricted their movements out of the village. On a grand scale it meant that, unlike the position

for many of the middle classes (as exemplified by Mr. O's sisters who worked in London and Torquay) the horizons of working class people tended not to extend beyond the bounds of the nearby towns, and often not beyond Buckfastleigh itself. This severely restricted their notions of what it was feasible to expect of life in terms of work, housing and opportunities in general.

LEISURE

On a day-to-day basis the lives of working class people were equally confined to Buckfastleigh. Totnes and Ashburton were generally reached on foot, whilst outings further afield to Plymouth or Teignmouth were rare and expensive journeys travelled by train. Leisure was therefore almost entirely restricted to what the village could provide, unless a walk to Totnes could be contemplated.

Obviously there was not much money to be spent on entertainments and many evenings were spent at home. Wives were often kept busy all evening with the constant repairs necessary on the family's clothes. Many people remember card games and reading as occupying most evenings, whilst the men often worked on their allotments, or went rabbiting. Nevertheless, many men seem to have spent a lot of time in the local pubs, although wives rarely entered them. All age groups, but the young in particular, spent much time walking around the village or on the moors. Young couples spent much of their courting days in this way, but married couples and families

would also go out walking on the moors at weekends.

There was a cinema in Buckfastleigh and occasionally there would be village dances and local fetes. Families would often make outings to visit local relatives.

The Church and Chapels (Congregationalist and Methodist) played an important part in many people's lives. Sundays were special days, chiefly occupied by Church-going: even if the parents were not Church-goers the children would normally be sent to Sunday School and Church and would not be allowed to play in the streets on that day. The Church penetrated many people's lives in other ways through attendance at Bible classes, the Band of Hope, Mothers' Union and Church concerts. The annual Sunday School outing to Teignmouth by train was one of the main occasions of the year, when the three Sunday Schools joined together, along with parents and friends for what was for many people the main opportunity to get out of the town.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

The Co-operative Society also featured largely in the lives of many working class people, providing work, social functions, a means of saving money and, in times of financial stress, help. The Co-operative Retail Society in Buckfastleigh had grown rapidly from its small beginning in 1869, when it began with a rented store which opened only two evenings a week, to its position at the turn of the 19th century when it had its own large shop, a bakery, slaughter house and butchery, a

coal business and a penny bank. By then the Society already owned several properties and some farming land. During the first two decades of the 20th century it continued to expand by spreading its deliveries to many of the villages in the area and acquiring its own dairy and milk business, piggery and farm. Various schemes were operated for members, including the Collective Life Assurance providing life insurance, the Co-operative Convalescent Association for those in ill-health who were unable to afford to go away to a home or to friends, a library and children's educational classes.

The Society was managed by several committees, each of which met frequently but women were never involved in any of these in Buckfastleigh. Nor did they ever have their own 'Women's Guild' unlike the situation in many other areas where Co-operative Women's Guilds were very strong.

In 1920 the Co-operative Wholesale Society bought the woollen mill and the fellmongery from the Hamlyn brothers. They continued the same work, carrying out contracts for the Navy, but improved conditions for the workers. Union membership was compulsory for all CWS employees and this helped boost wages.

During the mid years of this century interest in the CRS declined and by the 1950's several of the businesses had been sold, leaving only the grocery business, butchery, bakery, coal round and milk delivery. Even then the CRS was employing

approximately eighty people, of whom about half were women - some in the offices but most in the shops. Gradually the businesses have closed down further, leaving only the Co-op shop currently in operation, which is now owned by the Plymouth and South Devon Co-operative Society. The CWS continued to run the woollen mill until it closed in the early 1970's, when it was one of the last remaining woollen mills in Devon.

THE CURRENT SITUATION : INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

The CWS tannery remains active. During the 1960's the Buckfast woollen factory was taken over by the Axminster Carpet Company, and this continues to operate. The former paper mill is currently used as a fish processing plant and pottery, employing mostly women, though normally on a part-time basis due to limited demand. During the 1960's ITT set up a factory in the old iron foundry in Buckfastleigh, manufacturing electrical components. This employed approximately forty women on a shift system until it closed down in 1981. One of the limestone quarries has been exhausted but the other is still in operation, employing about thirty men. Recent industrial developments in the town have included the setting up of a plating works in Buckfast over the last fifteen years, which employs about thirty men and women, and the later conversion of the former Berry's woollen mill into several industrial units, including two engineering works, a soft cheese processing plant and a wheel and hand-barrow

business.

There is little clerical work in Buckfastleigh. Although there are several local branches of national banks, these generally bring employees with them, and tend not to recruit from within the town. The fifteen or so shops provide little work, though the cafes and restaurants do provide some female employment, as do the old people's homes which employ women as cleaners. During the summer months some seasonal work is provided by the cafes and restaurants on nearby Dartmoor, all of which collect and deliver their employees.

The majority of the population do not travel outside of Buckfastleigh to work. Those who do work mostly on the industrial estate in Bovey Tracey (about ten miles away and not accessible by bus) or in Newton Abbott (also about ten miles away), but for most of those without cars the bus fare to Newton Abbott is too expensive to make work there feasible. Most people, therefore, look for work within the town and the situation with regard to employment - though less favourable than that in Totnes - is not as bad as that in Ashburton. Increasing numbers of women are looking for part-time work: the 1981 Small Area Statistics for Buckfastleigh indicate that 33.6% of all women aged sixteen and over were working, 19.8% working full-time and 2.5% registered unemployed. Of women aged sixteen and under sixty, 54.9%, were economically active, and 30.8% working full-time. Of men aged sixteen and over, 59.6% were working and 6.2% seeking work. 16.1% of

the total workforce were self-employed.

TRANSPORT

Public transport from Buckfastleigh is limited. There is no longer a railway station in the town, the nearest station being Totnes. Bus services run to Newton Abbott (eight buses daily), Plymouth (five daily) and Torquay (four daily), but the services are expensive and restrictive. The majority of households in Buckfastleigh now have cars: in 1981 only 30% of the population were living in households which did not have the use of a car (34.8% of households) and many of the women travel outside of the town regularly for shopping.

LEISURE

Many people, the young in particular, find local entertainment facilities limiting. There are seven public houses and two restaurants in Buckfastleigh, but those with transport, or access to transport often travel to pubs, restaurants or nightclubs in the nearby towns and villages, or less frequently to Torquay or Plymouth. As Miss B. (born in 1959) said:

... we usually go down to the pub, and then meet friends down there, and go off different places.

But you don't drive

No, no, but usually one of them drives. I mean Linda's got a car, and there's Sarah and Marie, they've got cars. And we have a darts team you see, and we used to meet up on a Friday night and we'd go off.

There is, however, considerable organised activity within the town for those who wish to be involved. The Church and Methodist Chapel are well supported and hold a number of extra activities such as Bible classes, fund raising events and concerts. The Church is also affiliated with several other organisations which are attended by individuals who are not necessarily involved with the Church itself: activities such as the Women's Circle and the 'Wigram Community Association' which transports the elderly from all parts of the town into the centre once a week, enabling them to spend time shopping and later to meet in the Church for coffee. The majority of the organised activities centre around children (for instance the playgroup, Brownies, Scouts, majorettes, football club, youth club); women (Women's Circle, Women's Institute, Mothers' Union); and the elderly (Over Sixties, Stitch and Chatter, British Legion and the Wigram Community Association). Some do cater for a wider range of members such as the Amateur Dramatic Society, the Philatelic Society, the Tennis Club and Gingerbread. Whilst some of the activities are well supported, generally the same sections of the community are active in several organisations and involvement does not appear to be widespread throughout the population.

HOUSING

The housing situation has altered drastically since the beginning of this century. Three council estates have been

built, providing 34% of the household spaces in Buckfastleigh, whilst only 1% of households are currently provided by virtue of people's employment. 50% of households are owner-occupied and 19% rented. The average number of people per household is now 2.5, compared with 4.3 and 4.1 in 1901 and 1911 respectively. In 1981 people in private households had 1.97 rooms per person compared with 1.21 in 1921. Housing is therefore much less cramped, with the number of dwellings rising from 611 in 1921 (with a total of 2740 rooms) to 1239 in 1981 (with 6055 rooms).

During this century the population of the town has become increasingly older. Whilst this is true of Britain as a whole, the percentage of men and women aged over 65 is particularly high in Buckfastleigh. In 1921 9.5% of the total population was aged 65 and over, rising to 11.6% then 15.9% in 1931 and 1951 respectively, reaching 22.8% in 1981. Correspondingly the percentages of the population aged under 5, 15-24, and 25-49 have dropped⁽⁶⁾.

Many of the population are newcomers to the town, particularly those on the recently built owner-occupied estate which houses largely retired people and young families. Many of the people on this estate, which is slightly removed from the town, are keen to emphasise the friendliness and community spirit which exists there. Different sections of Buckfastleigh seem to feel allegiance to particular groups of people or areas of the town, but many of the older people claim that

the community spirit which existed formerly has been lost.

As Miss C. said, speaking of the 1920's:

Well, like I say, today the neighbours is not like they used to be, down where we used to live you were all friends. First you'd get the next door neighbour come 'Oh come on, I've come to see you, how are you today, all right?' and then you'd say yes, have a few words then she was gone, then next it would be somebody else - they were all friends together ... but we were friendly; now if anybody was ill one would go and say 'Can I do this for you, can I do that for you' but, I don't know, today they don't.

CLASS DISTINCTIONS

Miss C. did feel, however, that some of the class barriers which existed previously had broken down more recently.

As she said of last year's Christmas party at the Over Sixties Club:

... well everybody there, all the - what we call the ladies, that live in the bungalows up the Grange Road - what live in all these big houses, they was all there, and they all joined in. There was no special place set for you, they were all mixed. As they came in you took your chair, you took a chair wherever one was empty you see, there was no saying 'Oh so-and-so sits here, so-and-so sits there', you just had to sit beside whoever there was to sit beside, you see.

And you don't think it would have been like that before?

Oh no. No, no, not before, no.

With the expanding of geographical and social boundaries and the improvement of material circumstances, areas of allegiance are now less clearly delineated. Whereas indicators of social class were apparent and unambiguous in Buckfastleigh earlier

this century, current social categories are now more vague and seem less well understood. Young women living in Buckfastleigh expressed confusion when asked what social class they considered themselves to be, and used varying means of assigning social class, none of which seemed definitive. One thirty-two year old woman used education and occupation as indicators of social class:

If you think of yourself what sort of social class do you think of yourself as being?

Mm - middle class.

Is that what your parents would think of themselves as being?

No - my parents would think of themselves as working class - I thought of myself as working class until I became a teacher.

So you think it was the job that made the difference?

Yes, and, I suppose, going to university.

And what do you think your brothers and sisters would think of themselves as being?

Mm - Robert's - all except the one who's the farmer, - I think he'd still consider himself working class, but the others would consider themselves middle class, I think.

Another young woman equally hesitantly used other means of class identification. When speaking of her mother she implied that a certain life-style and 'standards' were the hallmark of middle class status, but she also seemed to include some degree of ascribed status in her concept of social class.

Do you think your mother sees herself as being a certain social class?

Middle, yes.

Is that what you'd say?

Well, Mum, Mum is very good at doing anything for anybody else, and getting involved with the British Legion, and getting involved with the new vicar we've got here, and his Bible class and the lifeboat ...

When you say middle class do you think that's what makes other people see her as middle class, the sorts of things she does?

Yes, I suppose so - but she doesn't push it, you know, she doesn't get all sort of hoity-toity and 'I know it all' kind of thing. She's very good with everybody - she doesn't try the class bit, but she does have these certain standards - and I'm afraid her daughter's let her down.

So would you see yourself as being middle class?

I don't know - I've got standards. Yes, Mary and I were talking about it the other day. A friend of hers called her a snob, but Mary said 'I'm not' she said, its just the breeding I suppose - its instinct - its in you - you stay on that line.

CONCLUSION

With unclear notions of class allegiance and less need to be geographically tied to the town, the closed, tightly-knit circles which existed earlier this century are clearly disintegrating, leaving a different social context within which the inhabitants lead their lives. Normative pressures have relaxed somewhat with the loosening of social circles and codes of conduct have become more diverse. These changes, along with the material changes in the town, need consideration when looking at the lives of women in Buckfastleigh now and earlier this century.

The following three chapters discuss the findings of the research carried out in the town.

CHAPTER FOUR : NOTES

1. Population size of Buckfastleigh (Census data)

1851	2613
1901	2781
1911	2430
1921	2264
1931	2410
1951	2592
1961	2558
1971	2655
1981	2851

2. Hoskins (1972), p. 130.

3. 1921 Census, p. xxxiv.

4. 1921 Census, p. xxxvi.

5. Miss D. (born in 1898) was instrumental in this change, which she recalled as follows:

... well some of 'em used to bring in lunch - you wouldn't eat no breakfast hardly - they'd bring in lunch, and then they'd sit down - and we were day-work then - they'd have a flask and sandwiches and all sorts. They'd sit there for twenty minutes, nearly half an hour, while we was there working on ... and then the boss over the factory, he come up one day and he saw two or three of them and he said to the boss over me 'Why are they sitting down like that, why don't they have their breakfast before they come?' he said. 'It's not fair on the others what's working here' ... So after that we said - well - there was a union, so two of the girls said 'Why don't we go to the union about it, see if we can go piece work.' So we did - we had the union man down from Yorkshire, and my mother put him up for the night, and he said 'Alright' he said, 'I'll go and see the bosses tomorrow', he said 'I'll see if I can fight your case'. And he did, he got piece work.

6. The percentage of the population aged under five has dropped from 6.5% in 1921 to 5.5% in 1981; that of the age group 15-24 from 16.7% in 1921 to 12.1% in 1981; and for those aged 25-49 from 37.3% in 1921 to 29.3% in 1981. (Census figures).

CHAPTER FIVE

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH MARRIAGE AND NON-MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

The extent to which women consider marriage to be important, their expectations as to what it will provide and their likelihood of marrying or not marrying are all factors which vary with time, context, and personal circumstances. This chapter aims to investigate some of the factors associated with marriage and non-marriage during the first and second halves of this century, considering first the contextual issues which influenced women of working class origins living in Buckfastleigh, and second, the women's individual, personal circumstances which related to the likelihood of their marrying or not marrying. The present scarcity of information regarding such factors perpetrates the ideology that marriages are based entirely on romantic love and attraction, and that reasons for marriage are mysterious and inexplicable.

GENERAL FACTORS : DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

One of the few material factors which might be generally accepted as being influential in determining women's possibilities of marriage is the sex ratio of the population. A surplus of men of marriageable age would appear to imply that higher proportions of women will marry than where there is a surplus of women of marriageable age. Anderson, analysing sex ratios for a number of registration districts for England

and Wales in 1861 found striking regional variations, and claimed that restricted marriage opportunities resulting from sex imbalances in the population appear to have been a very significant source of variability in marriage patterns⁽¹⁾. Nevertheless, whilst such demographic information may be of help in identifying widespread marriage possibilities and trends, problems arise when interpreting demographic ratios over a smaller area. Definitions as to the relevant area to be incorporated in the population count vary with time and circumstances. When sex ratios become unfavourable for marriage a scarcity of suitable marriage partners may be overcome by widening the area in which potential partners are sought, suggesting that when small areas are being considered statistics indicating sex ratios become potentially arbitrary and meaningless, as border-lines between geographical areas create divisions which in real life may not exist.

Looking at the women with whom this research is concerned, it is evident that the geographical area over which prospective husbands are met has changed considerably throughout this century. Even in the 1920's and 1930's, whilst the majority of working class women married men from Buckfastleigh, others did marry men from surrounding villages, according to interviewees, normally from within a five mile radius of the town. This implies that demographic data showing sex ratios for Buckfastleigh alone are insufficient and that the surrounding area should be included. The younger group of women, however, have married men from a far wider geographical area, in fact

from all over the country, implying that a totally different population is relevant for the demographic count. The overall interpretation of this is that whilst regional demographic data showing sex ratios may be helpful for comparison on a geographical basis, as in Anderson's study, such data is impracticable for studies which incorporate a timescale - there being no permanent parameters on which to base such comparisons.

A further factor which reduces the value of demographic ratios on anything but a grand scale is that of the social conventions which prescribe who is or is not eligible for marriage. Factors such as social class, family of origin, age, marital status, appearance or occupation all constitute restricting and changing qualities which mitigate against the relevance of sex ratio counts for predicting marriage rates for specific areas. For this reason statistical information alone is inadequate, and attention must be paid to the material circumstances and normative beliefs which affected working class women at both general and individual levels.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEETING PARTNERS

The first general issue to be considered is the opportunity which women in Buckfastleigh had to meet likely partners, both earlier this century and currently. At the beginning of this century working class women rarely left the town. Consequently the range of options for potential husbands for most women was limited to the population of Buckfastleigh,

with the occasional addition of any men who might come into the town from outside, normally men from nearby towns or villages who were looking for work. Studies investigating the most common meeting places for future husbands and wives indicate dances, work and social gatherings as the three most likely activities⁽²⁾. Leonard, however, points out that whilst most studies relating to where partners met assume that this question can be answered in an unambiguous, specific way, the truth is often more complex⁽³⁾. In a small area individuals are often familiar to each other before they acknowledge each other as potential partners, and the exact time at which they do so is difficult to establish.

This was certainly the case in Buckfastleigh earlier this century. Formal opportunities for meeting new partners were rare. Dances were only an occasional feature of Buckfastleigh life; work for most women was entirely within female company, either in service or in the particular department of the mill in which they worked (there was little contact between different departments and work was basically sex specific); social gatherings and parties were rare occasions and normally only organised within families. Under these circumstances courtships normally began in a casual way between two people who already knew each other, as Mrs. V's account of meeting 'Dad' (her future husband) indicates. Mrs. V. was born in 1919, this event took place when she was nineteen:

My girlfriend and I were going for a walk one Sunday night ... We were walking along there, and these two boys were sitting on the edge of the bridge there, you know. Anyway, I hear somebody say 'Does your mother know you're out?' and, 'course we went over and had a talk with them, you know, and I talked with Dad like, and of course, I fancied him ... so anyway, he said 'Would you like to go for a walk?' so of course I said 'Yes, fair enough'.

This start of Mrs. V's courtship was typical, and fitted in with a way of life where the most frequent leisure occupation was walking around the town. Few faces could have been unfamiliar and new encounters were rare. The considerations of whether or not young men met in this way were eligible from a social point of view does not seem to have been a problem. Parental objections were sometimes raised on account of girls going out with boyfriends too often, or staying out too late, but not apparently, on any level relating to ineligibility. As mentioned in the previous chapter distinctions amongst the working class people of Buckfastleigh appear to have been relatively absent.

Given the fact that most young working class women in Buckfastleigh met their future husbands casually in the town, girls who for any reason were isolated from such encounters were at a disadvantage when it came to meeting partners. Illness, a lack of friends to go out with, confinement to the home or remoteness from the town, could all inhibit a girl's chances of meeting a future partner and reduce her chances of marriage.

Such a means of 'meeting' partners would however, seem to have had an age limit. Whilst walking was common to all age groups, casual invitations to walk together would appear to have been more relevant to younger men and women. As unmarried women became older and more of their friends were 'walking out' with their partners, opportunities for casual invitations such as these became less likely, depending as they did generally, on the presence of at least two unattached people of each sex. Age altered the situation in other ways too: as women became older they were more likely to consider work other than the mill or domestic service, and hence might consider working a little further afield, in one of the nearby towns or villages. The advent of the bicycle made this more feasible, and enabled some women to work in Staverton (three miles away) or Totnes, thereby introducing them to a wider population and possibly potential husbands. Nevertheless, opportunities for meeting future spouses seem to have diminished for those women who remained in Buckfastleigh as they grew older. There were few new forms of leisure to replace walking around with previously unmarried girlfriends and leisure generally became more home-based.

The current situation in Buckfastleigh is considerably different. Although there are still few forms of formal entertainment where young women might meet prospective husbands in the town, informal contact with men is far easier for women who feel able to go into public houses alone or

with friends. This provides the main form of entertainment within the town, besides which, in spite of the poor bus services, many young people manage to travel outside of Buckfastleigh at least fortnightly on average and often more frequently, depending on whether they or their friends have cars. In these instances women often visit pubs in surrounding towns or villages and some occasionally go into Torquay or Plymouth to nightclubs. A smaller percentage of women belong to sports or social clubs but these are in the minority. Women now work in a wider variety of jobs, most of which are less confining than were mill work or domestic service.

In general therefore, greatly increased geographic mobility means that the population of eligible partners is far more fluid than previously, and women's chances of meeting men from areas other than Buckfastleigh and the immediately surrounding vicinity are far higher. This is not to say, however, that all young women meet men in these ways. Personal circumstances and characteristics dictate whether or not young women engage in certain activities, and whether they define men who they meet as eligible husbands.

As in the past, the situation changes as women grow older. Whilst unmarried women may still spend some leisure time in public houses, after the age of thirty when most of their friends are married this tends to be in different bars and in different (often couple-orientated) company. Home-based

leisure equally becomes more prevalent as women get older and they spend more time either in their own homes or visiting other people's. Opportunities for meeting unmarried men then become less likely, though again this depends partly on personal circumstances.

Overall, the situation is now considerably different from earlier this century and whilst individuals tend to have a more geographically widespread circle of friends and acquaintances, their range of potential partners from within Buckfastleigh itself is generally smaller than it would previously have been, due to greater disparity and selectivity. Thus, whilst social class barriers are less specific and clear-cut now than they were at the beginning of this century, correspondingly the united all-accepting feeling which prevailed amongst the working class people of Buckfastleigh has disappeared and the town is less endogamous than previously. This has implications for those who are restricted not only to the home as in the past, but to Buckfastleigh itself. As increasing numbers of women spend their working and social life outside the town, those who cannot leave Buckfastleigh, whether because of commitments, lack of transport or financial restrictions, are surrounded by a more limited and narrowly defined number of potential partners than would previously have been the case.

REASONS FOR MARRIAGE

Besides consideration of the availability of potential partners and opportunities for meeting them, the degree to which women anticipate marriage as an inevitable step is another aspect which, though partly personal, is also influenced at a contextual level. Various rights and statuses are attained on marriage and the extent to which marriage becomes essential depends largely on the options which marriage is seen to provide and the alternative options available. Changing ideological assumptions through time on a national level are dealt with in Chapter One, but locality and social class provide further differentiation. Some of the basic assumptions underlying marriage are generally held to be the right to live away from the parental home, the right to regular sexual relations, to have children, and to be treated as a full adult in a socially acceptable role. These assumptions were, and still are, operative in Buckfastleigh, but the importance of each and the opportunity to attain any of these rights outside marriage varies, and correspondingly affects the way in which marriage is seen and the value placed on it. Investigation into the meaning of marriage for women of working class origins in Buckfastleigh during the two timespans considered is essential to an understanding of the factors which prompted women towards or against marriage.

HOUSING

At the beginning of this century life for working class women in Buckfastleigh was lived within a closed community with shared and commonly accepted norms, which were influenced by a background of restrictions and poverty. Housing and security featured highly in women's lives, and marriage was unquestioned as the solution to these needs. Mrs. W. (born in 1901) like most of the women of her age took the assumed expectation of marriage for granted, and with it the link of marriage and a home.

Do you think (your parents) brought you up expecting you to get married?

Oh, I would say most parents looked forward to the day when their children would get married, wouldn't you?

- And do you think you wanted to get married?

I wanted a home of my own - yes, certainly.

So what do you think the main differences were for you (once you were married)?

Well, to have your own home, I suppose. That would be the biggest advantage wouldn't it?

If you'd been able to have your own house while you were single, do you think you would have done that?

No, I don't think so.

No?

No.

The view of marriage as providing a home is a common feature throughout the majority of the interviews, as for instance with Mrs. P. who was born in Southern Ireland in 1898 and

came to Buckfastleigh in her late twenties, where she married a Buckfastleigh man about five years later:

Had you expected to stay single, do you think?

Well, I wouldn't have minded, I shouldn't have minded. Well, I suppose it's now that it has happened, well, it's nice to have your own home, and I don't think things are all that good out in Ireland.

What would you have done if you hadn't married your husband?

Oh, God only knows. Don't know, don't know. Well, I'd have to live somewhere wouldn't I, and have to have some house or home or something.

Such a strong emphasis on housing corresponds with Slater and Woodside's findings amongst working class women in the 1940's. To quote them: "Marriage and home are synonymous in many people's minds and the equation of the two is a characteristic feature of our sample ... Marriage is less to someone than for something ... wanting a home is the most common reason given for marriage ... one must remember the background - cramped, living in an overcrowded parental home, but rarely the possibility of any privacy, often open parental discord, the constant struggle for economic independence"⁽⁴⁾. Although Slater and Woodside's research was based in London, the inadequate housing in Buckfastleigh earlier this century has already been mentioned and this clearly created an equally strong wish for independent, improved accommodation.

Turning to the current situation the desire for a home is still a component of marriage and several of the young

women spoken to voiced a wish to escape from the parental home as their main reason for marriage. Miss B. for instance, said:

I was still going out with Bernie while all this was going on ... then Bernie asked me to marry him. I think it was just a way of getting away from home and that's why I married him at seventeen. (5)

The emphasis has altered somewhat however, and escape from the parental home is generally prompted less by physical discomfort, but more as a chance to establish independence from parents. Also, though by no means easy, increased possibilities do exist for women to establish their own homes away from their parents whilst still unmarried. The breakdown of the united working class community which existed in the town earlier this century has made for a relaxation of the powerful social norms which operated previously, as individuals relate to more disparate social groups. This makes for more divergent codes of behaviour and correspondingly greater disparity in the understanding of the meaning of marriage.

Whilst aware that they are contravening certain people's codes of behaviour, some young women in Buckfastleigh now find it possible to move out of their parental home and either live alone or live with men to whom they are not married. Earlier this century both of these moves would have been so firmly linked with marriage that to attempt them would have been to invite widespread curiosity and/or condemnation. Although,

as acknowledged earlier, the design of this research favours women who have established their own households, whilst not necessarily representative of all single women in their living arrangements, the fact that single women of working class origins have found it possible to set up a home outside marriage indicates the feasibility of such a move, unlike the situation earlier when material and normative pressures made such considerations almost unthinkable and scarcely possible.

CHILDREN

The link between marriage and children also appears to be less strong than previously. The possibility of bringing up children outside marriage seems not to have been considered by the older women, but this is no longer the case. Two of the younger women interviewed had children whilst unmarried. Mrs. A. (who married at twenty, one year after the birth of her first son), felt initial qualms at the prospect of having a child when not married, but was able to overcome these:

I think it was - having a child, you know -
I know times have changed but they haven't
really. You know, the stigma of being an
unmarried mother ... But once you face it,
and you've got the baby, and you've still got
your fella, you know, and people still talk
to you, you lose that kind of fear.

Miss B. (aged twenty-five with a five year old son), was adamant that having a child should not necessarily imply marriage:

I mean when it came to marriage, when I was pregnant, it was just out. I didn't want to get married because I was pregnant, and I looked at him (the child's father) and I thought 'God, he's nineteen years old', you know. It's just not - alright it's happened - but it's still not fair on either of us to tie ourselves down to each other.

EMOTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Nevertheless, whilst changes in the material and normative pressures operating in Buckfastleigh now permit women of working class origins to establish a home of their own and have children outside marriage, fewer women remain unmarried now than did earlier this century. Clearly marriage remains an attractive proposition in comparison with non-marriage, though the reasons have changed. None of the younger women interviewed mentioned any material reasons for marriage other than establishing their own home and it would appear that the practical considerations of marriage are now more difficult to acknowledge, but emotional aspects were more spontaneously mentioned by the younger women. Much emphasis was placed on the 'sharing' and the companionship provided through marriage, both by those who had and had not been married. For instance, Mrs. Y. who was born in 1934 and widowed twelve years ago:

So do you ever think that you'd like to re-marry?

Yes, I would, but not to be somebody's slave, somebody's other half. To be somebody's partner I would, but I wouldn't remarry to pick up somebody's socks and cook his meals and say 'Yes sir, no sir, and go out with the boys sir'. No way. I'd have an affair yes, but I wouldn't marry.

But what do you see as the advantages of marrying, if you were to marry?

A true marriage? Every advantage. It's sharing isn't it, it's companionship, it's doing things together, it's living for somebody else. 'Cos loving is giving not taking - that sounds peculiar perhaps, but that's how I look at it.

Similarly, Mrs. I., who was born in 1958, married at seventeen and divorced at twenty-two, when asked if she would consider marrying again, said:

It would have to be a different sort of relationship, you know, it would have to be a sort of sharing.

And Miss B., when asked what advantages her married friends had, said:

They've got the companionship. That is a very important thing I think.

All of the younger women seemed to endorse the ideology which upholds marriage as the area for mutuality and intimacy, and they stressed these emotional aspects rather than any material reasons for marriage. The older women rarely mentioned emotional considerations in relation to their own marriages, though they did when referring to other women. For instance Mrs. M., speaking of her contemporaries in the 1920's and 1930's who remained single said:

'Twas just 'cos they hadn't met anyone, I suppose, that they could take to. 'Cos you's no good having anybody just for marryin's sake.

Also Mrs. P., speaking of women of the same period who delayed

marriage until their thirties:

I suppose they had to wait until the right one came along.

And when asked what the problems were for women of that time who remained single, Mrs. V. said:

Oh, I don't know really - must get lonely I suppose.

In this way the older women clearly were not oblivious to the idea of romance, nor the companionship which marriage can provide, but having grown up in an atmosphere which made material reasons for marriage more obvious these factors were more readily acknowledgeable⁽⁶⁾.

For the younger women, growing up against a background less harsh than the older women did and with an ideology which presented marriage as the precaution against social and emotional isolation, the material advantages which may be gained from marriage are less apparent and less easily admitted. Thus, whilst the pressures to marry are equally, and judging by statistics, more strongly felt by younger women, it appears more difficult for them to identify the factors which influenced them - social and emotional pressures being more insidious than practical considerations. Whilst the norms which operate within the immediate groups women relate to may permit forms of behaviour outside marriage in such a way that marriage appears inessential for material reasons, the prevailing ideology which presents marriage as

the answer to emotional fulfilment is all pervasive, and, due to its intangible quality, difficult to resist. Several of the young women who married seemed to feel that they had been swept along by circumstances and were unable to identify what had prompted them to marry, or what marriage meant to them. For instance, Mrs. Y. who married at twenty-three, when asked about marrying her husband said:

I don't think I decided - it just sort of happened.

Similarly Mrs. A.:

When I sit down and think about it I - it seemed - I was taken along with the events that actually occurred at that time. The decision was taken for me really.

And Miss B., who almost married her boyfriend at the age of seventeen but later changed her mind, when asked why she and her boyfriend got engaged said:

Dunno - because everybody else was doing it I think. My age group seemed to - at sixteen get engaged, and by seventeen or eighteen they were married.

The decision as to whether to marry or not marry may be viewed as being reached by the balancing out of an equation - on the one side of which are the advantages marriage is seen to offer, and on the other, the benefits of remaining single. Whilst some of these issues may be clearly visible, known, and quantifiable, others are less easy to define, assess and evaluate. The more intangible the rewards which marriage is held to offer the less easy it is for women to consider the

issue clearly, and the more persuasive the pressure to conform. Whilst contextual matters such as the opportunities to meet potential partners and the prevailing understanding of marriage are relevant to all women living within a certain situation, individual circumstances and characteristics differ, and to come closer to an understanding of the issues which influence women towards marriage or non-marriage these issues must be seen within the context of individual women's lives.

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS : HOME, FAMILY AND HOUSING CONSIDERATIONS

Looking at women on an individual level the first factor to be considered is their home background and the ways in which home circumstances and housing considerations created situations in which either marriage or non-marriage appeared favourable. Considering first the older group of women, it can be seen that home life for them was generally cramped. Families of four children or more were not at all unusual and many of the mill cottages in which the majority of these women were brought up had only two bedrooms. As Mrs. W. (born in 1902, and the eldest child) said:

There were six children ... there were two bedrooms. My mother and father had one bedroom an' then the back bedroom - there were two double beds: the girls slept in one bed and the boys slept in the other.

These were hardly congenial settings in which to live, and children were normally aware of the pressure on them to take their share of responsibility for providing the family income. Well aware of this pressure, Mrs. W. left school at

the earliest leaving age of thirteen and went to work in the mill, where she earned about five shillings a week, all of which she gave to her mother in return for about six pence pocket money. Mrs. W. was unusual however, in that at sixteen she left Buckfastleigh and went to live with her aunt in Bristol where she trained to be a nurse. She appreciated that this was a rare privilege:

There was a lot of people didn't go away, probably because they didn't have the same opportunity as me, because girls in my young days were brought up - shall I say - in rather sheltered lives, that mothers would be afraid to let their girls go away from home. But I was fortunate, being able to live with my auntie ...

Mrs. W. was able to make this longed-for move to her aunt's home in Bristol only after younger siblings had also left school and had begun to contribute towards the family income. As she said:

Times were very hard, and money was very scarce. I would think that parents were just waiting for the children to leave school, to go to work and earn some money! Not to take up nursing where you - now what did I used to get? - I was twenty and I think I was getting thirty-five pound a year. Well, I don't think that in my young days that mothers could've - unless you were financially well off, that they could afford to let their children earn that small sum, 'cos they'd be glad of the money to come in to help raise the families.

Having escaped the crowded parental home, Mrs. W. went on to enjoy her nursing career. As already mentioned (p. 145) Mrs. W. had been brought up with the expectation that she would marry, and saw the main advantage of marrying as being the

opportunity to have her own home, but although she had several boyfriends and was engaged in her late twenties she did not marry until she was thirty-nine. Mrs. W. seems to express some ambivalence in her views towards marriage:

... the first boy I was engaged to, I remember bringing him home - oh I was well gone twenty my dear - twenty-eight I expect.

And you thought you'd marry him?

Oh, well, I got engaged to him, so I suppose I must have thought I would be getting married to him (laughter). I don't know why we broke up - I don't know why we broke up - but did a good thing by breaking up.

Why?

Well, I should never have been as happy with him as I was with my husband, I'm sure of that.

So after you'd broken up with him, did you think that you'd stay single?

No, no - I never thought that for one moment.

No, why not?

Well, I always thought that I would get married.

You wanted to get married?

I suppose I did. And yet I didn't when I was at the hospital. I didn't care whether I got married or not, I was so happy there.

In some ways Mrs. W. is typical of many of the older women. Brought up in a crowded home with a constant awareness of poverty, there was inevitable pressure to move elsewhere. The majority of the older married women married in their twenties and moved into a house with their husband. This was never luxurious and life was often hard, but it did

provide them with their own home.

Mrs. W. was atypical in that her escape from the parental home was achieved not through marriage but by means of a career. Having found comfortable surroundings in the nursing home and a fulfilling way of life which she enjoyed, Mrs. W. was able to view marriage in a somewhat different light from the majority of women with whom she grew up. Freed from the material pressures towards marriage she seems to have found the equation of whether to marry or remain single a difficult one to balance out. Ideological pressures and life-long expectations were fulfilled eventually, but this was relatively late in life. Though all brought up within the same contextual setting, women's individual situations varied in terms of the options open to them. For the majority marriage was the obvious and only solution available; for Mrs. W. alternative opportunities lessened the inevitability of marriage.

For yet other women the push towards marriage was less strong, possibly because their home surroundings were not so uncomfortable. Youngest or only children generally lived in conditions of far less material hardship than did older brothers and sisters. Mrs. M. for example, as an only child, was well aware of the benefits this brought:

I used to have two ounces of cream every morning for me breakfast. Well, you see - where there was a family they couldn't afford that.

The demands on the family budget were reduced and space was at less of a premium. Older siblings were marrying and vacating rooms leaving more comfort and privacy for those who remained. Mrs. C. for example, was the sixth of seven children. Her father worked in the mill and her family lived in the same row of mill cottages as had Mrs. W's, though their cottage had three bedrooms:

Oh yes, mum and dad in one room, then me and me sister, before she got married in the other room ... And then there was only two boys, because the other two boys were married and that just left the other two brothers and meself, you see, so we had the rooms to ourselves.

Miss H., born in 1905, was the youngest of five children, and she too lived in the mill cottages until her family moved further out of the town to a larger house.

When you were at home, did you have anywhere that you could just sit and be by yourself?

Not really, not when we were all there, you know. But when it got only me I could. I used to go in me bedroom very often and look out of the window, you know, and do a bit of sewing, or read a book or anything - just to - I really liked my home then.

For younger daughters the pressure to escape due to uncomfortable surroundings was considerably reduced: much valued home comforts and privacy could be found within the parental home. By staying on after other siblings had left the final daughters normally inherited the tenancy of the home, and thus achieved the prized 'home of their own'. Marriage, therefore, in the immediate and the long term, generally offered less in

the way of an improved lifestyle to these younger daughters than it did to their older sisters. Women who already enjoyed home comforts needed additional factors to persuade them towards marriage in preference to remaining single. In the past then, it would appear that women had three main options available to them which would help them solve their housing problems: they could leave their parental home by marrying and setting up a new home with a husband; they could find employment which offered them accommodation; or they could remain in the parental home. The relative merits of each option depended partly on the women's family circumstances, but there were problems implicit in each of them.

Looking at the first option: for all but the younger sisters, women who grew up in relatively large families normally lived in home surroundings which made them feel impatient to get away. Nevertheless, marriage was not normally acceptable before a woman was aged twenty, and even this would mean launching into married life with meagre savings and implied considerable hardship. Mrs. V., the sixth of nine children, was born in 1910 and married at twenty. She spoke of the struggle which she and her husband (her 'dad') experienced when first they married:

... should never have had anything in the house if it hadn't been for my dad. He used to go to these jumble sales - 'tis all we had, when we were married - was a bed to lie on, an' a little chair. We never had nothin' on the floor, but was boards. And candles, the place we went first, there was no - not a light nor nothing. We had candles and oil lamps.

The start to Mrs. V's married life was typical. She waited in the parental home for several years only for the opportunity to exchange the cramped, difficult surroundings of her parents' house for the increased space but physical discomfort of her own.

The second option, that of finding employment-related accommodation was most usually achieved through domestic service; opportunities to do so through middle class occupations such as nursing, as in Mrs. W's case, were rare. The standard of accommodation which the work provided was variable in the extreme, and even when comfortable, was very restricted. Mrs. P., born in Ireland in 1898, came to England in 1927 having done domestic service all of her working life, and found her most enjoyable post in Buckfastleigh:

... 'twas a marvellous house for food, marvellous! We used to have a nice cooked lunch at midday, and we always had a cooked supper - well we called it supper - they called it dinner - but in the kitchen we used to have the same as they had in the dining room. Very good.

Nevertheless, at almost thirty, Mrs. P. was still treated in the same way as a young girl would be with regard to restrictions on her free time:

How much freedom - free time did you used to have?

Oh gosh! They wouldn't do it today - once a week and every other Sunday!

One day a week?

Half a day! Half a day on.

Mrs. P. met her husband - Eric - whilst doing this job:

What would you do on your Sunday off?

Oh, used to go - but 'twas only afternoons, you know - 'twasn't a whole day, 'twas only Sunday afternoons and the evening. Oh well, used to go to Eric's mother's place, have me tea there, and then wouldn't be very long afore I had to - we had to be in at 9 o'clock you know. Yes, and if you weren't, you were asked next morning. She always stayed up.

Bed-time was at nine o'clock each night, and going out in the evening was forbidden.

Therefore, whilst domestic service offered an early and alternative means of escape from the parental home, and, if women were fortunate, it provided a higher standard of living than either parents or marriage could, the constraints involved were considerable. Besides the restrictions, as women grew older there was the added disadvantage that such dependence on work to find housing must have seemed increasingly precarious. Mrs. P's justification of marriage has already been mentioned (p. 146); her view that if she had not married she would have had to find 'some house or home or something'. Clearly, whilst employment provided a practicable solution to the housing problem in early life, eventually women felt anxiety as to what would happen later. Both their meagre earnings and their ideological linking of marriage and a home mitigated against their setting up a home whilst single, leaving marriage as the most obvious alternative.

As already discussed, the third option of remaining at home

was only attractive to daughters in situations where more space was available. When balanced against the hardship often encountered in marriage and the restrictions and insecurity of employment-related housing, staying at home (with the additional possibility of inheriting the tenancy of the house) certainly offered some advantages, although the duties incumbent on daughters in this position might make such an option appear disadvantageous. As their parents grew older remaining daughters shouldered increasing responsibility for their well-being, and at times, as will be discussed later, this could deprive the daughter of much freedom of her own. A similar option to that of living with parents was that of living with other relatives; the situation was much the same in terms of the advantages and disadvantages it provided.

For the younger group of women fifty years later the situation was much different. These women lived in vastly improved circumstances: bad housing and overcrowding were no longer prevalent, standards of living had risen and families were generally much smaller. Genuine hardship and discomfort therefore did not affect any of the younger women in the same ways as it had the older ones. Nevertheless, with improved circumstances came higher demands and physical comfort was not enough; the majority of the younger women wanted freedom from their parents' control. Non-material considerations had taken the place of material ones and none of the younger women

mentioned the practical aspects of having their own home, but rather the concurrent advantages of the freedom it brought them.

Mrs. S. (born in 1954 and married at twenty-two) claimed that marriage had made the biggest change in her life by removing the restrictions she had experienced when living at home. She now felt able to do what she wanted, go where she wanted, only do housework when she wanted - and she valued this freedom enormously. Mrs. I's marriage was less rewarding and after two years of marriage she left her husband. She then found herself homeless, which threw into relief one of the initial reasons for her marriage.

And where did you go?

Up to my parents. Very bad mistake - 'cos I'd gone back to what I was trying to escape from in the first place.

Other women managed to escape from their parents' home without marrying. Mrs. A., as already mentioned, lived with her future husband prior to marriage, but she had previously broken the parental bonds by studying and living at a foundation college in Torquay for one year when she was eighteen. On her return she lived, not with her parents, but with her grandmother. Several explanations may be given for this: she was the second of a family of seven children, so having left home space would be difficult to find again; her relationship with her mother had always been difficult; but perhaps most significant, having once proved independence and broken away from the

parental home the pressures to return - even as an unmarried daughter - were relaxed somewhat.

Miss G., born in 1949, is the oldest of four children; her father was a farm worker and her mother a dressmaker. She seems to have deliberately used education as a means of escape from her parents' home. Having left school at eighteen she went to university:

Which University?

That was Swansea.

And did you enjoy it?

Yes, yes - I chose to go there really, 'cos it's, it was too far to come home, you know, so it was really a break to go to University at that age.

How did your parents feel about it?

Well, I think they were - I think they missed me a lot to begin with, but they're very sensible. Their children have got to leave home sometime, so - they were extremely pleased that, you know, I'd managed to get to University. I suppose that helped.

Miss G. then trained to be a teacher. Her first teaching post was in North Devon but after two years she moved back to a school in Newton Abbott. Her moves with regard to housing illustrate the accepted norm whereby an unmarried daughter should live with her parents, but also the material and non-material pressures which made this seem less than ideal, and the way in which, having previously broken the ties with home, it was now feasible for Miss G. to live independently of her parents even though she lived nearby:

... when I first came down I lived at home, and I suppose I lived at home for - must have been about two years, but then I decided I'd rather have a place of my own, so I bought this house.

And how did your parents feel about your moving back and then moving out again?

I don't think they, they didn't mind too much, because I was near anyhow, and it was getting a bit cramped at home (laughter) because at that time I think all my other brothers and sisters were at home, and things were getting a bit cramped in the house, so, they thought it was a very good idea to get somewhere of my own.

And how did you feel about moving back with them?

I didn't like it very much, because I couldn't have friends, it wasn't very easy to have friends in the house. I didn't feel independent, you know, because, having your own flat, and being at University and looking after yourself, I think I wanted to be more independent - and - so I ~~felt very sort of restless (laughter) - having~~ everything done for me, you know.

Miss G. was able to achieve her independence by buying her own home. This was dependent, not only on her financial position but also on a change in the ideology relating to ways in which women might solve their housing problems. Unlike the situation in the past more varied solutions are now conceivable, not all of which need involve marriage. For more working class women than previously, educational or occupational pursuits provide the initial break from home, after which it is normally more easily accepted and often more financially viable for such women to live alone, whilst cohabitation or sharing a house with friends are other options. Nevertheless, for those women without the excuse of needing to move away for

education or work, such a move is not initially easy. Improved housing conditions and smaller families often remove the material justification for those women who wish to achieve independence from their families, even if their earnings were such that they could afford to do so. In spite of the greater acceptance of women living independently of their parents, such a move is difficult to make without some apparent necessity and marriage remains the most common escape route, providing an ideologically satisfying reason for leaving the parental home.

Whereas in the past marriage appeared to offer younger daughters fewer improvements in terms of housing than it did older ones, with the current emphasis on greater freedom rather than on physical comforts, sibling position would appear to offer no benefits in this respect. Youngest daughters who remain at home, even with more space, will still not feel they have achieved independence. The benefits which accrued to younger daughters who remained at home through inheritance have been diminished too. As Nissel points out, the steadily increasing expectation of life over the past century and the more recent falls in the average age at which mothers give birth have combined to delay the age at which inheritance takes place⁽⁷⁾. This, added to the fact that more women's parents now own their homes rather than renting them thereby implying a division of the proceeds of the house amongst all the children of the parents' death, rather than a simple

inheriting of the tenancy of a rented house, means that little is gained by the last child who stays at home. It would appear, therefore, that failing some other excuse to get away, marriage still offers most women of working class origins the most convenient solution to their current interpretation of the housing problem.

AMBITIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF MARRIAGE

Next, individual women's expectations will be examined looking at their ambitions, their perception of their parents' ambitions for them and the degree to which marriage featured in these expectations and ambitions. Such an analysis, besides indicating the degree to which expectations are influential, indicates the changing factors which are seen as a corollary of marriage or non-marriage.

The majority of the older women claim to have had few ambitions when they were young. Realism dominated and their hopes for employment were shaped by restricted job opportunities in the town. Mrs. V's views were typical:

What was thought the best jobs that a girl could do?

Well, either in the mill, or out in service, that was all.

Did no girls ever go into teaching, or nursing, or things like that?

No, never used to hear nothing of that - not then.

Such realism was perhaps largely a reflection of their parents' expectations and needs. For instance Mrs. J.:

Did they (your parents) bring you up to think that you ought to be - that they'd like you to do some job in particular?

No.

No?

No, no. 'Cept when I left school, I got the job - went saw the foreman, got the job me own self.

Yes? And that was in the mill?

Yes.

Do you think you'd grown up always expecting to work in the mill?

I didn't think I wanted to do anything else.

How old were you then?

Well, I started when I was thirteen.

Did most of your friends leave school when you were thirteen?

Yes, yes.

Did any stay on longer?

Not very many of them. I mean they never had the money.

This view was endorsed by Mrs. S.:

O yeah, your parents was glad for you to do wasn't they - waiting for you to go. They all left at that time when I - you know - when my time was. They all left at thirteen.

As previously mentioned by Mrs. W., once girls had started earning money it was common for them to give all of their wages to their mothers, receiving a small amount back as pocket money, until they reached a certain age when they would pay board, as for instance in Mrs. S's case:

I paid for me food just when I was older.
Before that I used to give it (her wages) up.

So how old were you when you stopped giving
it all to her?

Eighteen? I can't remember when I started paying
me food. I know I wasn't very young.

Besides contributing to the family income, most girls were
also expected to share in the household chores, as Mrs. J.
remembers:

Yes, we had a good bit of work to do when we
went home - that's Emily (her sister) and
meself.

How much work would you have to do in the evenings?
How long would it take you when you got home?

Oh, after we had our tea - a good hour.

Life was in no way easy for these young women. They gained
little financial advantage from working hard until they
began paying their mother a fixed amount of board, and the
age at which they began to do this varied⁽⁸⁾. They saw no
prospects of any change in their work situation, and experience
and examples indicated to them that the only factor they
could expect to change was their marital status - as, for
instance Mrs. V. indicated:

Were you brought up believing that you would
get married?

Wouldn't say that was one of the things - we all,
my brothers and sisters - they all got married,
got away and made a home, you know?

When an opportunity for marriage arose, given the meagre
alternatives most working class women could expect, it would

appear that the options marriage offered could be favourably viewed - added to which there was the additional satisfying factor that marriage generally fulfilled the women's and their parents' expectations.

At the time that these women were marrying (the 1920's and 1930's) the ideology of woman as housewife was strong and, although poor, women often stopped working after marriage and devoted their time to housework. This, again, apparently seemed a natural and right thing to do, as Mrs. V. indicated:

So you didn't work after you got married?

Oh no, no.

Were you pleased to stop working?

Well, I never used to think about it. Having said that, I don't think he would have liked me to have gone out anyway. I had enough to do.

Women thereby made their escape from the limited opportunities they faced as single women living at home and working in jobs which appeared to be leading nowhere and took the obvious and expected marital step, becoming housewives instead of employees.

Whilst marriage seemed such an inevitable and advantageous option for many women, for others there were additional factors for it to be weighed against and alternative expectations to be considered. As with housing, final or only children benefited from fewer demands on family resources: one of the ways in which this was made apparent was in terms of increased

opportunities for education and work. It is notable that of the older women interviewed the only ones to have spent an additional year at the Council school, leaving at fourteen years of age instead of the statutory thirteen, were only or last daughters. Parents often had higher expectations for these children. Mrs. M. for instance, an only child was kept on at the Council school until she was fourteen. As she said:

... my father would have paid for me to have gone to Grammar School, but I know I shouldn't have done anything ... He'd have liked (me to do) an office job or anything like that.

Whilst Miss H's three older sisters left school at thirteen, one working in domestic service and the other two working in the mill, Miss H. stayed on at school until fourteen and later did dressmaking. Miss L. also received special treatment as the last child (with a twin brother) and the only daughter:

How old were you when you left school?

Well, they took you to thirteen, then mother said 'You go on til you'm fourteen - won't do you any harm' ... but when I left you see, mother thought that instead - 'course nearly all the girls used to go in the mill you see. Mother thought - well, as I was the only girl, she went to a dressmaker and asked if she would take me in.

Additional space often became available for youngest daughters as older siblings left the home, and often parents, with their greater financial freedom moved to larger homes. Certain occupations which would previously have been impossible due to

lack of space then became feasible, as Miss L. indicated with regard to dressmaking.

Then these other houses began to go up,
and so 'course that was better for me,
because I had to have a room to do things
in, you know.

Once earning, conditions were again easier for the last daughters, and they tended to have more financial freedom.

As Mrs. M. (the only daughter) remembered:

Would you give your mother some of that money?

No, 'cos father said 'Let her know what she can do with it herself'.

Similarly Miss H.:

And so you were earning three and sixpence.
What would you do with it?

Well we weren't too bad off then. Sometimes I used to give it up, but sometimes they used to say, well you keep it you know, have it for spending money.

With fewer people in the house, these women's housework duties were less onerous and often would seem a fair contribution for the benefits they received in return, as, for instance, in the case of Miss C., who was born in 1912, and was the youngest daughter of seven children (she had one younger brother). Whereas in the past she and all of her sisters had had their housework chores allocated to them as part of a strict regime, as she reached her twenties and was the only daughter living at home, she and her mother shared the housework in a way which seemed advantageous to both of them.

And what time did you come home?

Left work again half-past five, and I got home again about six o'clock at night.

And would your mother have cooked something for you?

Oh yes! And you see, she would have a cooked meal ready for me then.

Miss C. spent part of Sunday helping her mother with housework and cooking:

But during the week you didn't have to do housework?

Oh no, well I didn't have the time you see (laughter). Well, when I used to come home, night-times, like I say, especially Monday nights, if it'd been a dry day, or - yes, might have been Tuesday - I used to stand and do all the ironing. You see, mum used to do all the washing up by day when I was away, and if it'd been a dry day ... I'd do the ironing.

When both parents and daughters were deriving benefits from the situation whereby the daughter remained at home there was less pressure to look for change. Besides, and perhaps because of this, it appears that marriage was not always seen as so inevitable for youngest or only daughters as it had been for older siblings.

Miss D., for example, was born in 1898, and was the last of four children, all of whom married. Her mother's expectations were somewhat different for her however:

Do you think your mother brought you up expecting you to be married?

No, I don't think she did. No, she used to tell me sometimes, really, not to get married. She didn't think I was strong enough, 'cos I used to get bilious attacks every weekend nearly.

Similarly, Miss H., born in 1905, was the youngest of five children. She too seems to have been influenced by the rather different expectations which surrounded her:

Do you think your mother wanted you to marry?

I don't think so, no.

What about your father?

He didn't mind, but all the rest got married.

Miss H. expressed her view of marriage as follows:

I never really wanted to get married.

How old do you think you were when you decided that?

Well, I wouldn't like to say really. I wanted - later on in life I wanted it both ways really, you see, I wanted children. I would like, I like babies and I like children, but - I think my career was for me you know. I used to be a bit of a saver, you know. I started saving money when I - as soon as I could. Thripenny bits I started saving with - little silver thripenny bits ... and started saving then, and that's what I really wanted, I wanted to be independent more or less, you know.

The circumstances surrounding these women were different from those surrounding the previously mentioned women who married (all of whom were eldest or middle daughters). As the family life cycle progressed the position became more favourable for the younger children in terms of material com-

forts, education, job opportunities and finance. Different expectations and ambitions surrounded these daughters, and they grew up in a world where escape to married life was not seen as inevitable, essential, or even desirable. Without the pressures which made older sisters leave home as soon as was reasonable, these women had the time and the opportunity to develop interests and expectations other than marriage; their work often took on more meaning, and they valued the money and independence it brought them.

Freed from the necessity to look for alternatives to their current lifestyle, these women appear to have led their lives unconcerned with thoughts of marriage. For some, like Miss H., this may have been a conscious decision, for others it seems to have been due to the absence of any feeling of urgency to consider marriage. Unlike the current situation where women are aware of a marriageable age bracket outside of which it is far less likely that a woman will marry, such a notion seemed irrelevant at the beginning of the century, and there seems to have been no particular age at which women were confronted with the possibility that if they did not marry soon they would jeopardise their later marriage chances⁽⁹⁾. Miss D. for example, lived with her brother in London from the age of thirty-four onwards. As she said:

There was a widowed man up there - they used to tell me, why didn't I hook myself onto him, but never thought of it!

You didn't want to?

I had me brother, see, and that's all I thought about. Yes, never thought about it.

Miss C. too, seemed to have been unconcerned with thoughts of marriage in her account of her younger working days:

... in they days you was goin' round with anybody and everybody, in a way of speaking y'see. Used to go Buckfastleigh dancing of the weekend. Well - used to come in with one pal this week, and next week there'd be somebody different. I never settled with anybody, at that age you see - it was anybody, y'know (laughter).

It would appear that besides feeling no urgent material pressure to marry, these women were not especially aware of any social need to do so either.

In comparison with the older group of women, the younger ones grew up with a far wider range of ambitions for their working lives, and the majority received support and encouragement from their parents. For instance, Miss G., born in 1949, first of four children:

As you were growing up, do you think your parents ever had ideas of what they'd like you to do when you grew up?

I don't think so - well, I don't think so. They were always keen for us to do well, they gave us lots of encouragement, you know, they said, well if you get on at school, you know, you'll get a good job, and so on ...

Similarly, Mrs. T., born in 1954, with two younger brothers:

I chose to be a hairdresser when I left school. I don't say that was the career my mum wanted me to do, but she helped from the minute I said that's what I wanted - must have been about thirteen I suppose it was - she helped me sort of get a Saturday morning job, got me decent shoes to wear, you know ... she said if that's what you want to do then you've got to do it properly, so I had to go to college, day-release, you know, to learn - which meant my mum and dad had to keep me then for three, well, three years while I did my apprenticeship.

Nevertheless, none of this encouragement of, and interest in employment mitigated against an expectation of marriage.

All of the younger women interviewed said that their parents expected them to marry, for instance, Mrs. T.:

Do you think they brought you up expecting you to get married?

Yes.

And did you always grow up thinking you were going to get married?

Yes, yes, - and a church wedding.

A high evaluation of the importance of work for women was therefore not seen as incompatible with an anticipation of marriage. Mrs. T. summed this up neatly later in the interview:

So if you look back over your life, what do you think were the main - the biggest decisions that you've made?

What I was going to do for a job and who I was going to marry, I suppose.

Busfield and Paddon claim that in recent times the pressure to marry in order to establish a worthwhile and reputable social

identity has increased due to the fact that marriage is now held to be compatible with most occupations. Work, therefore, is no longer an alternative to marriage for women, but is reduced to a subordinate to marriage and family life⁽¹⁰⁾.

The options for these younger women who left school in the 1960's and 1970's were very different from those affecting the older women. Later schooling and a wider range of possible jobs influenced their own and their parents' attitudes towards work, whatever their family position. Even those women who felt that they had never received sufficient help or encouragement and never found work they wanted, still expressed a greater degree of awareness regarding job choices and the right to find some satisfaction from work. As was indicated when discussing housing, higher standards of living and smaller families meant that daughters living at home paid moderate housekeeping allowances and were expected to do little or no housework. The demands on their time and money were relatively light. Compared with the situation in Buckfastleigh earlier this century then, women's chances of choosing a job, living in reasonable comfort and having some degree of freedom of time and money are considerably greater, whatever their sibling position or marital status. Such issues therefore no longer feature prominently in decisions as to whether to marry or not marry⁽¹¹⁾.

EMOTIONAL SECURITY OR INDEPENDENCE

One recurring factor in the younger women's considerations of marriage or non-marriage was the notion of emotional security. Mrs. I., for instance, who at twenty-two divorced her husband said that at that stage she was still looking for stability:

So do you think you're still looking for stability now?

I think I've found it now, on my own. Yes, I feel over the past year, I've been much more independent, self-confident, self-reliant. You know, in fact I don't think I've got a lot of time for anyone else now.

And do you think, when you look in the future, do you think you'd like to get married again?

I - not for a long time. I think I will eventually, but my way of thinking will have to change before I do, I don't want any hassle about it - I'll have to stop being so selfish (laughter).

Miss B. faced a similar dilemma. Although she felt compelled at the age of sixteen to comply with the ideology of marriage she had grown up with and became engaged to her boyfriend, she later broke this off, and now felt that marriage was becoming increasingly unlikely:

So do you think your parents brought you up expecting you to get married?

I don't know - I - I suppose it was there, yes.

And do you think you expected to get married?

Yes, I suppose we all did in a way.

So do you think now that you'd like to marry somebody?

Not yet, I'm not ready for that - in fact as the years go by I'm getting far too independent and too dominating in my own character (laughter) to be, or want to be dominated by anyone else I think ...

Miss G. also mentioned independence:

So what do you see as the advantages of being single?

I suppose being more independent.

She, however, illustrated changing views with age:

How do you feel about marrying now, do you feel it's something you want to do?

No, I don't think, well, I don't know - I suppose the only thing that worries me a bit is, when I get old (laughter), you know - after parents die and so on, there wouldn't be anybody that - you know, I don't want to be left by myself, but then on the other hand, at the moment I'm quite content with the way things are.

Yes, and do you think you've always felt like that?

No, I suppose when I was in my early twenties I thought it would be nice to get married, but, well, it's worked out quite well on it's own, you know, I'm quite contented at the moment, but what I'll feel like when I'm about sixty I don't know (laughter).

Miss B. also expressed a wish for marriage 'in the end':

I think that's what I want in the end, I mean basically everybody does, I mean old age can be very lonely if you haven't got company ...

So when you say 'In the end', how far ahead do you think you're looking?

Probably into my forties, late thirties. I think that's the time when you feel that you need that little bit extra security.

Each of these women value their independence and see it as a factor of their unmarried status. Much of the decision as to whether to marry or not marry seems to hinge around a balance between independence and security. When young women are first faced with the adult world and the general expectation that they will take their place in it through marriage, the ideology which links marriage with stability and security apparently makes marriage seem the obvious next step. It would appear, however, that once women have escaped the initial pressure to marry and have established their own identity they are free to re-assess and become reluctant to submerge their identity in marriage, seeing independence as being in firm opposition to marriage. Nevertheless, the ideology retains its powerful hold. In spite of the unmarried women's current satisfaction with their lives, the spectre of insecurity in the future again conuures up the notion of marriage to dispel it. Being presented as the antidote to loneliness and isolation the implication is that whenever life alone appears unsatisfactory and insecure, marriage will resolve the problem.

FACTORS MITIGATING AGAINST MARRIAGE

Having considered some of the issues which make marriage or non-marriage appear favourable to individual women, it must be acknowledged that others face personal circumstances which would seem to reduce their chances of marriage; these too need investigation. When considering the older women it is

clear that their parents' views were very influential. Restrictive parents could affect a daughter's chances of marriage directly or indirectly. One example of direct intervention is that of Mrs. M., who was born in 1902. Being an only child her father had great ambitions for her, but these did not appear to include marriage:

Do you think your parents wanted you to marry?

Well, I think my mother felt she would like to feel that I had someone, as I didn't have any brothers and sisters.

So did you tell your mother about your boyfriend as soon as you met him?

Well, no, because father wasn't quite agreeable ... I was afraid to take home my young man when I was twenty-one.

Following constant complaints and problems raised by Mrs. M's father, her boyfriend, Bill, eventually emigrated to Australia. During this time she made friends with another man who was in the Air Force. As she said:

So in the end I had a letter from both of them. Bill wrote and this other one, and father had to come home and saw the two letters. And father said 'This'll have to stop' - 'course I was near up to twenty-six then, and I said 'What do you mean - have to stop?'. He said 'Two letters there for you', so I said 'Two?' He said 'Yes, and I know where one comes from', 'cause was an Australian stamp. So, 'Oh', I said, 'Finish with both of 'em if its like that'.

Mrs. M. did write letters to both men ending the relationships, but some time later Bill - the original boyfriend - wrote back, returned from Australia and married her. By this time, however, Mrs. M. was thirty-three and clearly her father's

wishes had influenced and almost threatened her marriage chances.

Other parents influenced their daughters' lives in more subtle ways. Opportunities for meeting possible partners have already been discussed, but if a woman's lifestyle was such that these opportunities were minimised, marriage became less likely. Miss L. was born in 1904 and had one older and one twin brother. She grew up feeling that she was different from them and different from other girls.

I was very shy. I was a bit like that.
My brother was different - he'd go out and
make friends, and they used to like him ...

So who would you play with?

Well, I don't think, 'cause I was very shy
you know.

Miss L. appears to have spent much of her childhood with her mother, who encouraged her to stay at home:

... mother, she was always saying, now come
home - don't you be long now - you come home.

On the strength of her mother's wishes Miss L. left school at fourteen and became a dressmaker. She learnt dressmaking in Bath for a short while (with someone formerly from Buckfastleigh) but returned to Buckfastleigh after three months, largely for her mother's sake:

'Course I was the only girl you see, and then
mother was always writing (letters), but she
used to get terrible headaches. I think she was
glad when I said I was going to come home ...
'cause I knew mother wasn't too - you know - she
wasn't very well at times.

Had you made a lot of friends in Bath?

No, I didn't, I was a little bit on the - a bit like that ... I had one young man that came up and walked with me ... but you know, never made a sort of - you know - 'cause I didn't feel that I was going to stay there altogether, you see.

Having narrowed her horizons by returning to Buckfastleigh, Miss L's life was even further restricted because of her work. Not only did it keep her at home, but it also fostered her feelings of nervousness, shyness, and difference from other girls:

... of course with me and my sewing, I had to be home to do things, see.

So you wouldn't go out with the people from Buckfast in the evening?

No, I never did much. I don't know, knew them, but you see p'raps I'd be sewing in the evening. They liked to be out in the evenings.

Miss L's father encouraged her to find work in the mill, against her mother's wishes:

I went down with a friend to the mill to see it ... but I could not bear these wheels going up and over. I said I should never feel - with those wheels like that - made me nervous ... Now the girls that worked down there, 'course I was quieter in talking you see, but these girls - nice girls some of them - but they would talk so loud you know.

Later on, Miss L's protective mother exerted further influence over her life by taking over her financial affairs:

Would you give all the money to your mother or would you keep it yourself?

She didn't take much money from me at the beginning, but ... then she said, if you give me so much I'll put it back for you, not to be always spending it, you see ... I didn't used to go into Buckfastleigh like the (other) girls would go every night. Well then they'd always spend it on something and I never did because I never handled the money like they did you see. 'Cause they had the money down in the mill.

Therefore, by emphasising her own illness and fostering her daughter's feelings of shyness and nervousness, Miss L's mother restricted her daughter's life in such a way that she succeeded in keeping her at home.

Miss H's parents followed a similar pattern, as Miss H. indicated:

Some left (school) at thirteen you know, but they (her parents) more or less wanted to keep me you know, sort of home like. When I was coming up the rest of 'em was gone you see, and their idea was to keep me home I think, as long as possible. For company and that.

How did you pass your time?

Well I learned dressmaking ... But I, I wasn't fond of dressmaking at all, it was only just to, sort of keep me home I think that I went there ... Norman had left and got married and the two elder sisters got married you see, and we were a small family then - and she (her mother) was getting quite nervous then.

Illness on the part of the daughter or the parents seems to be a recurrent theme of those daughters who remained at home⁽¹²⁾. Miss C., though she 'never settled with anybody' in her early twenties did meet a man who she wanted to marry

when in her late thirties. By this stage however, she felt committed to caring for her parents, both of whom were unwell:

And I said, if I got married I shall have to go up to London to live because of his work was in London ... All the rest was married - me younger brother was in the Air Force and I was the only one home. And I thought to myself, well, if I got married, and here's mam blind and dad - oh he had to give up work through arthritis in his leg. Well then I said, I aren't going to get married, I'd stay home. I felt it my duty to stay there, you see.

All of these women were only or final daughters. Seen in this light it is evident that whilst younger daughters received more material advantages than the earlier children, they simultaneously had greater demands placed on them⁽¹³⁾. The parents' eyes were no longer focussed on the problems of survival until the children had left school, but rather on their own problems of oncoming old age with the inherent issues of poverty, illness and loneliness. The role of the youngest daughter was therefore not to solve immediate financial problems, but rather to provide companionship and care. Some daughters appear to have given this unprompted, whilst others seem to have been almost coerced into it. Whichever way it happened, it seems far more likely to have affected the youngest daughter. (Some youngest daughters who remained at home did end up supporting their parents financially, but this generally did not happen until the parents were considerably older).

The current situation is less constraining. All the young women interviewed worked outside of their homes when young and all of them had a reasonable degree of freedom in their teens and twenties to go out with other girls and boys. Even the women who claim that their parents were strict do not feel that their parents were unduly restricting, just that their parents' caution was an expression of care, as for instance in the case of Mrs. T. when she was aged sixteen to eighteen:

... it was strict - it was always - I suppose like most caring mums, 'Who are you going with? where are you going? what are you doing? where? when are you coming home? how are you getting home?' (laughter). You know, you used to have this third degree before you'd gone outside the door.

Other than the concern which parents felt for their children, none of the women's parents seem to have wished to prevent their daughters from finding their own freedom and meeting potential partners - a manifestation of their expressed desires that their daughters should marry. Old age amongst the parents is also currently faced in different ways. One of the changes is demographic: because women marry and have children at an earlier age, have smaller families and live longer, thoughts of old age are likely to be farther removed from the parents' minds when the youngest daughter is considering marriage than was the case for the older women's parents.

Other changes are significant too. Unlike the situation at the beginning of this century, old age does not bring so many financial anxieties. Even for parents who do not feel financially secure, there is reassurance in the fact that all individuals are afforded protection by the Welfare State and this frees children from total responsibility. Better health care, different housing standards, less reliance on family support and more emphasis on the freedom and opportunities of the younger generation have all created a different notion of how far daughterly duties extend. None of the women interviewed felt that they could, or should, live with their parents when they grew old, though all expressed feelings of responsibility and concern. Miss G. for example, did not feel that she would be expected to alter her housing arrangements for her parents:

I don't feel that I would ever really want to - to go and live with them again, you know, when it got to the stage perhaps when they'd got too old to look after themselves, but ... I don't think I'd want them to come and live with me. But I can see a situation where I'd go out and cook meals and - you know - cook for them and do things like that, rather than actually they live with me or I live with them.

Nevertheless, there was concensus that it is generally the youngest daughter who carries the most responsibility, as Mrs. A. indicated:

What would happen to your mother do you think?

I don't know - I think Helen, that's my youngest sister, she'd probably take the brunt of it.

Is she married?

(no) ... she's sort of the closest, being the youngest as well, I suppose - last to leave home and everything - she's been more involved with them, more intimately. I'm more on the outside of it you know.

In this respect therefore, the youngest daughter continues to play a particular role within the family, often carrying additional responsibility. Such duties however, are considerably less likely to influence the daughter's marriage chances, and this would accord with the parents' wishes. The position for the older women was different. For their parents it was advantageous to keep a daughter at home and, whether contemplated or not, the probability that this would mean a life outside marriage was more readily accepted than it would be today. The questionnaire carried out in the town supported these findings. None of the twenty-five women interviewed who were aged under forty-five had parents living with them (though three unmarried women aged over twenty-five were found living with parents) whilst five out of the ten older women who were interviewed in depth had been caring for their parents by that age, and twenty per cent of the women currently aged over forty-five on whom the questionnaire was used, either now or in the past had accommodated their parents. Those who had cared for their parents in the past often had

begun to do so well below the age of forty, demonstrating changing patterns of caring for the elderly.

Statistics from the questionnaire also indicated the relevance of sibling position for marital status, apparently confirming the notion that youngest and only daughters are less likely to marry. Of the eleven single women interviewed aged over twenty-five, two were first daughters and nine youngest daughters, whilst of those women who were, or had been married sixteen per cent were youngest daughters, twelve per cent only children, and of the remaining sixty per cent forty-two per cent were middle daughters and eighteen per cent first daughters. Figures were too small to permit any further breakdown by age, but the implications would appear to be that smaller families and higher standards of living have reduced the importance of sibling position as a factor in determining the likelihood of marriage for women.

CONCLUSION

The overall impression gained from examining these women's lives is that marriage or non-marriage is a result of a balancing out of options on either side of the marital fence. Looking at the older women, in situations where single life offered few of the factors the women considered important but marriage did, the equation was not a difficult one to balance out and marriage was anticipated and accepted as soon as was reasonable. Women were then normally in a position to establish a home of their own, give up paid employ-

ment and become a full-time housewife. For other women however, the options were more varied and single life already provided some of the aspects other women were acquiring through marriage. Married women sometimes acknowledged this when discussing single women, for instance Mrs. P.:

What about people who lived in Buckfastleigh and stayed single, did you know many single people here?

I know of two in particular - there's two young ladies in Buckfast, and I think they have been wonderful. They have been looking after their father, he's ninety something, and they've been wonderful girls. They do all their own - they have a lovely house, and they do all their own gardening themselves these two girls - they're wonderful.

Do you think it was difficult for single women to live here?

Well, it depends on their position. If they got money and - you know - that makes a lot of difference, if they got money and they're able to - well, can afford to stay single.

Freedom from financial pressure gave these women options which were not available to others like Mrs. P. In the case of these sisters, the wider range of options appears to have been a result of their privileged class position, but similar benefits did accrue to some members of the working class. Working class women who grew up in a setting otherwise similar to their contemporaries might be afforded opportunities more akin to women of middle class origins if they came at the end of the family line - either the last or only child. Certain factors normally associated with poverty did not

affect them in the same way as they had done older siblings, for instance, the urgent need to provide an income, and the cramped housing conditions which mitigated against any feeling of having one's own space. With these pressures removed non-marriage allowed some degree of comfort and the pressure towards marriage as an escape from unfavourable conditions at home and at work was lifted. Mrs. V. spoke of a friend of hers, who was the youngest of ten children:

... She used to work in the mill, then she stopped home to look after her mother and father, up to the time they died ... well I think Suzy, with her mother and father, you know, she had a little bit of money. Like what of course £50 in those days was a fortune. Like I say, if you had £50, well you were made. Is a thing I never had in me life, I never had £50 - never!

Besides being freed from the material incentive to marry many of these final daughters seem to have felt less ideologically committed to the notion of marriage, for instance Miss D. spoke of her older sister's attitude towards marriage, and how it differed from her own:

I know when my sister was courting, and all that, I used to say to her, 'Well it wouldn't be my choice!' I used to say to her. 'Oh well' she said, 'You're too fussy' she said, 'You'll never get anybody like that, you're too fussy'. 'Oh' I said, 'I'm not going to get a chap, marry a chap just for getting married' I said.

When marriage offered less in the way of material benefits and when women were less convinced of the need for marriage, it appears that they could afford to be more 'fussy' and could

consider marriage from a different perspective, placing more emphasis on the emotional side of marriage. Miss D. for example does not give the impression of a shortage of boyfriends in her youth, rather a lack of incentive to marry. As she said of her twenties:

I used to flirt about with several, see
(laughter). I never met anybody that I
really liked.

Mrs. M., whose 'Bill' went to Australia, being an only child, felt no pressure to marry anyone else. As she said:

I was quite reconciled then (to the idea of remaining single), 'cos no good marrying if you don't - 'cos like I told you, I couldn't marry anybody just for the sake of getting married.

There was, however, a corollary to the apparently favourable position which youngest daughters enjoyed. Whilst parents were willing and able to give them more material advantages than the earlier children received, youngest daughters simultaneously had greater demands placed on them, and whilst apparently being granted the material opportunities to lead a more independent life, paradoxically these daughters often faced restrictions which hindered their free choice.

Having been brought up in an atmosphere which emphasised their parents' need for care and companionship, the youngest daughters were particularly aware of their daughterly duties and the ways in which marriage would appear to be a renouncement of these. In this way another dimension was added to the

marriage versus singlehood equation. Feelings of duty and responsibility seem to have been absorbed by the younger daughters, so that their conception of themselves was more that of a caring daughter than a potential wife. Remaining single was therefore often a fulfilment of their ideological expectations and their material circumstances aided this decision by making singlehood a practicable possibility.

The changed material and ideological situation makes the options which women now face quite different. The current situation in Buckfastleigh allows most women of working class origins a reasonable degree of comfort in their parents' home, a wider range of work opportunities and, for many, a chance to set up a home outside marriage and even have children if they wish. These material benefits are no longer special concessions normally available only to youngest daughters but are generally available to most daughters. Whilst release from material discomforts previously gave women more freedom for deliberation, permitting them to delay and possibly neglect marriage, other factors have now taken precedence in women's lives.

Marriage is now widely anticipated for all women; few other roles are ideologically accepted as competing with it, not even that of a youngest daughter. The pressures to marry are now more emotional than material, and correspondingly more difficult to recognise and/or resist. Appealing as they do to women's sense of personal adequacy and the need

for emotional security, few young women are in a position to assess their situation and consciously reject marriage, particularly with the current assumption that marriage will take place before the age of thirty. The ideological emphasis on marriage and its unquestioned acceptance by the majority blurs the issues which are connected with it. The apparent inevitability of marriage (which is the hallmark of an ideology in operation) tends to make the intervening years between childhood and marriage seem only a temporary 'waiting' phase, whilst one decides who to marry, as Mrs. T. implied⁽¹⁴⁾. The combination of such a widespread acceptance of marriage and the emphasis on the less tangible advantages it brings, makes it difficult for women to see the options involved in the equation of marriage versus non-marriage.

For those young women who do delay or reject marriage however, aspects of non-marriage then become evident which have considerable appeal to them but, nevertheless, the option of marriage is rarely discarded but remains as an answer for the future when the alternatives involved in single living no longer appear attractive. Having considered some of the factors associated with marriage and non-marriage, the ways in which women's lives are affected practically by their marital status can be examined.

CHAPTER FIVE : NOTES

1. Anderson (1976).
2. For instance Gorer (1971), pp. 20, 26-8.
3. Leonard (1980), p. 91.
4. Slater and Woodside (1951), p. 117.
5. Gavron and Komarovsky's respondents expressed similar sentiments. Gavron (1966), p. 66; Komarovsky (1967), pp. 24-6.
6. This coincides with Slater and Woodside's findings of the working class couples they interviewed, where '... the emotional state of brides and bridegrooms is ... one of mutual liking canalized by prudential and social considerations'. Slater and Woodside (1951), p. 118. See also Ross (1980) for a discussion of the increasing emphasis on the romantic side of marriage.
7. Nissel, p. 113, in Rapoport, Fogarty and Rapoport (1982).
8. Millward discusses the various stages at which this change might take place and the effects such payment schemes had on work incentives. Millward (1968).
9. The Census data for Devon Urban Districts confirms this as a fact: in 1931, of those women aged between 25-29, 58.7% were married, whilst for those aged 30-34 and 35-39 the figures were 72.7% and 75.2% respectively. Alternatively this may be looked at in a longitudinal way by following the same cohort through different years:

in 1911 of the women aged 25-29 in Devon Urban Districts 50% were married, in 1931 of those aged 45-49 this had risen to 73.6%. Present day (1981) figures are markedly different with 81.1% of the female population of Buckfastleigh being married at the age of 25-29; 83% at 30-34, and 82.4% at 35-39. Research carried out by the National Children's Bureau amongst 16 year olds illustrates the current consensus amongst young people regarding 'marriageable age'. When asked what age they thought was the best to get married, 71% of the respondents gave the ages of 20-25, with only 1% giving the answer as over 30, and 3% replying that they did not wish to marry. Fogelman (1976), p. 37.

10. Busfield and Paddon (1977). They also claim that there has been a change during this century in the position of single women in society. 'For a woman never to marry and have children was not considered ideal (at the beginning of this century) but it was by no means unusual, and those who did not marry had a well defined role within the broader family which would offer them economic, social and emotional support. Here, the very reduction in the frequency of remaining single, has contributed to a change in norms and practices that make it more difficult for women to remain unmarried' (pp. 122-4).

11. In certain areas or situations this may not be the case. Whilst none of the young women spoken to for this research mentioned giving up work as a reason for marriage, Cavendish reports how young women she was working with in a car factory in 1980 looked forward to marriage as a release from work. (Cavendish (1982), p. 73.) Differences in local work opportunities and assumptions with regard to work after marriage may account for differences in the understanding of what marriage implies.
12. Miss D's mother has already been mentioned, warning Miss D. that she was too weak to marry, though she ended up caring for her brother and her mother.
13. Ankerloo's study of 19th century Massachusetts supports the notion that 'the obligations of unmarried children will increase as their parents grew older and their siblings move out to marry'. As he points out, if those who are late in the family life cycle have lost both parents, their timing of marriage can take place with less consideration of their family, having no parents or younger siblings to care for. Those, however, who are the last remaining child living with a widowed parent are the most likely to be influenced by familial restraint with regard to marriage. Age at marriage of the early children therefore tends to be less deviant than among late children. Ankerloo in Hareven (1978), pp. 123-4.

14. Gavron's quote of a working class wife who said:

'Quite frankly I got fed up not being married, I was jolly pleased to do so, and to have children'. (Gavron (1975), p. 65,) again indicates the absolute acceptance of the ideology that marriage is the only next step.

CHAPTER SIX

SOME PRACTICAL EFFECTS OF MARITAL STATUS

INTRODUCTION

The variables which are acknowledged to influence the practical aspects of women's lives are manifold, including for instance women's position in historical time, their age and social class, their geographical location, occupation and financial position. One of the factors normally taken for granted, however, is women's marital status, for after a certain age women are generally assumed to be married. This chapter aims to explore certain areas of women's lives in an attempt to discover the degree to which this assumption rightly or wrongly presumes a similarity between women's lives whatever their marital status, especially with regard to housework, housing, employment and finances.

HOUSEWORK

Beginning with the issue of housework the research aimed to explore various areas of housework and to relate the amounts of housework women do and their feelings about the subject to their marital status, whilst taking into consideration other relevant factors such as household situation, age and employment. The survey questioned women about the amounts of time they spent and their general feelings about the topic and, whilst exploratory rather than conclusive, provided information which could be classified, quantified and

analysed. The in-depth interviews permitted further investigation into women's feelings at an individual level, taking personal situations into account, in an attempt to discover the extent to which commitment to housework is a function of gender identification or actual marital status.

Questions were asked about four areas of housework; washing clothes, ironing, shopping and cleaning, for as Oakley says, housework is not a single activity but a collection of heterogeneous tasks⁽¹⁾. Some of these tasks appear to be more open to ideological influence than others. Washing clothes appeared to follow practical demands quite closely, not normally being an area which is endlessly expandable. For women under forty-five the frequency with which they did washing increased with the number of people in the household, children having the greatest influence. (Of those with children 85% of women did washing more than weekly, 60% daily). The fact that involvement with full or part-time work did not influence the frequency of washing so much as did the women's household situation suggests that washing is more a matter of practical consideration than identification with a particular role.

Older women, however, showed some deviation from this pattern. A clear difference could be seen in women aged over forty-five who lived alone, between those who had never married and those who were widowed or divorced - many of the latter doing washing more than weekly unlike the single women, none

of whom washed clothes more than weekly. This may suggest that identification with the role of a wife had ideologically influenced previously married women's patterns with regard to washing clothes whilst leaving never married women untouched, but seems more likely to reflect a continuation of washing habits learnt when women had larger households to care for, so that whilst attaching no particular significance to clothes washing they continued to wash smaller amounts of clothes more frequently than did single women⁽²⁾.

It would appear then, that women (especially those under forty-five) experience little ideological pressure to expend time on washing clothes, for whatever situation they find themselves in, women (other than those who seem to repeat previously learnt patterns) carry out the chore in accordance with practical demands.

Ironing is an area which is more prone to potential expansion. Marital status, the presence of children, and paid employment all influence the time women spend ironing. Whilst single women and full-time workers do the minimum amounts, married women who are full-time housewives invest far more time in ironing. As might be expected, the number of people in the household influences the time spent ironing. All of the never-married women, whatever their age, estimated that they spent less than one hour each week ironing - the great majority less than half an hour, whilst women living with a husband and children spent by far the greatest amount of time,

55% of them spending over two hours each week and the majority of women living with husbands and no children spent just over an hour. However, even when standardised for age and household situation, paid work influenced the time wives spent ironing to a considerable degree, full-time paid workers doing the least and full-time housewives doing the most. This would not appear to be linked with pleasure or satisfaction in any way; few women seemed to enjoy ironing, and this is in accordance with Oakley's findings where 75% of her sample expressed dislike for ironing⁽³⁾. As with washing clothes, older women showed the same split between the never-married and previously married women who lived alone, with the latter spending more time ironing.

The fact that the time spent ironing by married women is related to whether or not they are full-time housewives implies that it is a chore which proliferates with identification with the housewifely role. Looking then at never-married women, the fact that none of them, whether or not involved in paid employment spent much time ironing - particularly whilst previously married women living alone spent more time - may suggest that none of the never-married women feel any identification with the role of housewife and they therefore are free to place little importance on ironing. An alternative suggestion however, may be that ironing is not an area which immediately appears important and is not automatically incorporated into women's weekly

routines to any considerable extent. Yet, once married, and especially with children, ironing presents itself as an area for expansion, and having become accustomed to spending time ironing women continue to do this even when living alone.

Shopping is an area which, though relatively consistent in the time women spend on it (on average two to four hours each week), varies considerably in the frequency with which it is done. Women who are at home during the day are far more likely than others to shop daily or at least more than twice a week whatever their age, household situation or marital status. This difference may be attributed to a lack of time on the part of full-time workers and/or the use of shopping as a means of contact by those who spend more time at home. Oakley cites the predominantly favourable view most women in her sample had towards shopping, the majority seeing it as a relief from domestic captivity⁽⁴⁾. The survey in Buckfastleigh implied that having a car made weekly or less frequent shopping expeditions more likely, but as having transport is often associated with full-time employment the two factors are difficult to disassociate. Shopping therefore appears to be relatively untouched by ideology, but is influenced more by the practical considerations of how women's time is spent, and possibly is a reflection of a wish for contact.

Women were also questioned about the time they spent cleaning and the frequency with which they cleaned. Women with children, whether or not they had a husband, were those most likely to clean the house daily (60% cleaned daily and 85% more than weekly) and were those who spent the most time cleaning (the majority of married women with children spent over ten hours each week cleaning whilst those with children and no husband generally spent between five and nine hours cleaning). Of nine women living with a husband and no children, four cleaned daily, four more than weekly and one weekly, the majority spending between five and nine hours each week. It would appear therefore that children inevitably push house cleaning demands to a higher level, whether or not there is a husband present, but the absence of children does not necessarily imply small amounts of time spent cleaning.

The frequency of cleaning for wives and mothers was related to whether or not they were in paid employment. 90% of full-time housewives cleaned daily, 70% of them spending over ten hours each week; 67% of wives and mothers in part-time employment cleaned daily, with 50% spending over ten hours each week; whilst none of those women in full-time employment cleaned daily, the majority cleaning weekly and spending five to nine hours each week⁽⁵⁾. Wives who are at home during the day therefore spend considerably more time cleaning their homes than do wives in paid employment, even when standardised for age and familial situation, suggesting that women who feel

their role to be that of a full-time housewife feel compelled to keep busy in the home, setting and maintaining high standards.

Women who live alone exhibit considerable differences in cleaning patterns which appear to be related to age and/or participation in outside employment⁽⁶⁾. Single women aged under forty-five spent the least amount of time on housework, only cleaning once weekly, whilst older single women not in paid employment cleaned daily as did 65% of widows living alone, spending over ten hours each week cleaning. The vast difference between the cleaning patterns of young and older women living alone must be related to considerations other than purely practical ones, and would appear to suggest that older single women who are at home during the day identify with the role of a housewife, similarly feeling the need to keep busy and therefore allow household chores to proliferate. Younger single women apparently escape this pressure whatever their position with regard to employment.

Responses were gathered from the women as to whether they liked or disliked various aspects of housework. As Oakley points out, immediate reactions to this question tend to reflect what is seen as socially acceptable behaviour by the respondent⁽⁷⁾ but unlike Oakley, who found the results seemed to vary by social class and claimed that 'Discontent with the traditional role of housewife is seen as a middle class prerogative'⁽⁸⁾, the survey in Buckfastleigh found a division

by age, with women of all marital statuses under forty-five tending to claim a dislike for housework, women of forty-five to sixty-five expressing a far greater liking, and women aged sixty-five and over claiming to enjoy housework. This again supports the notion of a greater degree of acceptance of the ideology of housework amongst older women, whatever their marital status.

The general impression gained from the survey with regard to housework is that whilst shopping and washing clothes are areas which women treat on a practical basis, ironing to some extent and cleaning to a greater one are areas which are open to considerable variation in women's definitions of what is required. Whilst the composition of the household may determine the minimum amount of time which needs to be spent, cleaning is an open-ended task, and women who are at home during the day tend to allow cleaning to occupy much of their time, thereby indicating their close identification with the home and with their perceived role of housewife. Unlike young single women who feel free to do minimal amounts of housework, older unmarried women - even those who have never married - invest considerable time in their homes, apparently identifying with the housewifely role in the same way as do wives who stay at home.

Having seen the general situation in Buckfastleigh, the position of individual women with regard to housework provides further understanding on a personal level. All of the older

women grew up accepting the ideology that a woman's place was in the home. In their homes as children all the girls had chores to do inside the house whilst brothers helped in the garden, following the sex segregated distinction which their parents maintained in domestic chores. Not surprisingly, once married, women easily accepted the role of a housewife and devoted themselves to the home, never expecting nor wanting help from their husbands due to the difference in standards their sex segregated upbringing had brought about. Mrs. M. (born in 1902) illustrated this, and the way in which caring for a house for her and her husband absorbed the whole of her time:

Did your father help in the house?

No, no, men didn't in those days. I hear my mother saying 'When you - if you ever get married, your place is in the home, an' a man got his work to do, and you do yours'.

And did your husband help you in the house?

Not a lot no, only do the dishes, - wipe a dish - I never let him wash, 'cos that meant that he didn't have the water hot enough. Too fussy you know, 'twas too silly wasn't it?

How much time do you think you used to spend doing housework?

All day. Somedays when I was here, never bother to go out. No, so long as you was happy in your home, never bother to go out.

And so how would you spend your time?

Well, just got up in the mornin', got breakfast, - you was always workin' see - 'cos in those days you see, you was washin' with a copper, and for the dinners you had the black lead stove to clean and everything, see. 'Twas all work in those days ... you know what 'tis - by the time you got your dinner and had look around, was time to get tea, and then time you had your tea, 'twas time to get supper. You know, 'twas always something to do warn't there?

Mrs. W., the nurse born in 1901 who married at thirty-nine, though brought up in the same environment which stressed domesticity, had the time and the opportunity to develop an alternative notion of herself which did not readily coincide with her position as a housewife once married. Nevertheless, Mrs. W. quickly demonstrated the strength of the ideology which drew her into the role of a full-time housewife, with its accompanying high demands of time and standards:

Were you sorry to give up nursing?

Yes, there was no other life for me but nursing. I never wanted any other sort of work.

So once you married, did you find that you missed it?

Oh very much so! Oh dreadful! Not only did I miss the nursing dear, I don't know quite how to put it - well - I used to be deputy head, I never had to open a door for myself you know, somebody was always escorting me around, that when I got married, I was just an ordinary housewife that had to wash up dishes, and all - oh quite different.

Did you mind doing housework and things at first?

Yes I did at first. But then I like housework. I don't like cooking.

So how long do you think you were spending doing housework each week, or each day, do you think?

Well, being a housewife is not only housework, there's washing and ironing - you can't estimate really, as to how many hours you would put in polishing furniture, cleaning carpets, because there's so many little things you had to do in between.

Older women who remained unmarried had the same emphasis on housecare instilled in them when young, but were in less of a position to let housework dominate them when in their mid years due to the fact that they were normally at work during the day. Possibly this freed them from ideological identification with the role of housewife, particularly as the home was not their own at that stage and they had no breadwinner's role to complement. Certainly none of the single women discussed their mid years in terms of the housework they did, unlike several of the married women, but having left paid employment the single women appear to have transferred their feelings about work to their home and adopted a housewifely pride. Miss C., in spite of her claim not to be houseproud exhibited considerable concern over the state of her house:

... there's some people that's houseproud - they'd do a bit of dusting this morning and then they'd come and do it again this afternoon. Y'see I'm not like that. I'm clean - I've got every day for everything. Mondays I does me washing, Tuesdays is ironing day ... Wednesday upstairs ... Fridays will be me downstairs day, I give it all a good clean once a week ... like I say, if you'm houseproud they'm be doing the same thing over and over again, but I'm not like that.

It would appear that whilst single women might escape the ideological pressure to identify with the home whilst clearly playing another role (that of worker), once back within the confines of the house the ideology which associates a woman with the role of a housewife took over.

Younger women seemed more varied in their approach to housework. Unlike the older group, many of the younger ones grew up with little involvement in household chores and were more free to develop their own standards. Nevertheless, for all women some ideological association with the role of housewife seems inescapable, for all of the women who currently, or in the past, had lived with men stressed the different standards which they and the men held. As Barrett and McIntosh indicate, this creates problems with regard to sharing household chores; 'the chief immediate reason that women do most of (the housework) is that they are brought up to be more attuned to cleanliness and more anxious about dirt and mess'⁽⁹⁾.

Mrs. T., born in 1954 and married at twenty-one, illustrated how in spite of her apparently practical approach to housework, different standards mitigated against her accepting much genuine help from her husband:

Do you find that you spend a lot of time worrying about the housework?

No, I like a house fairly clean and fairly tidy, but there again, my husband has a dirty job - he'll probably come home tonight with filthy boots, overalls plastered in mud, that he's got to put somewhere. He's got to walk in the house and put them somewhere and have a wash, that if you were terribly terribly houseproud you wouldn't allow him in the door ...

And do you expect your husband to help with the housework?

I don't expect him to, but he does an awful lot ... he usually cooks Sunday dinner, he won't make the beds 'cos that makes him sneeze. Most other things he'll do ... he doesn't do them perhaps quite as I would do them - I doubt very much whether he would think about cleaning the loo, or disinfecting the bath or perhaps - those things.

So after he's done anything, which as you say is not exactly as you'd do it, would you tend to go and do it after him or not?

Not that day. I'd perhaps think I'll do it tomorrow.

Whilst acknowledging that their standards of housecare are higher than men's, almost paradoxically all of the separated, divorced and widowed younger women expressed liberation from housework since living alone (or just with children). Part of the freedom appears to arise from the ability to allow their interest in housecare to fluctuate, having no responsibility to maintain high standards as part of the battle against their husband's lower ones. Mrs. A. (born in 1953, married at twenty and separated at twenty-eight, with three children) expressed this feeling:

So do you find that you do more or less housework since you've been on your own?

I think less. I don't feel I have to maintain a standard, because the standard is my standard, and that means whatever mood I'm in that's how much housework I get done.

Do you enjoy it?

No, not really. I do it because it has to be done, but I don't get any kind of - I don't get any real surge of pleasure out of it.

Miss B. spoke of her different approach to housework when she was living with a boyfriend:

So did you find yourself doing more housework?

Yes, yes you do, because you're trying to put an impression over all the time I suppose. There was more work when he was here ... I still keep it the same as I did when he was here, but the work is different, you don't have to work so hard.

Do you think you minded - if it gets untidy now, do you feel you must tidy it up or do you leave it?

It depends on what mood I'm in ... when he went, I mean if I didn't feel like doing something I'd leave it.

Miss G. expressed her view as a single woman:

What about housework, do you find you spend more time doing housework than you'd really like to?

No, not really, 'cos I don't spend much time doing it. Cleaning the house takes about an hour I suppose, an hour and a half every week; washing I suppose takes the same time; ironing under an hour, so it doesn't take me all that long at all. I quite enjoy housework in fact, it's a change from school work.

Many younger women therefore appear to be freed from the ideological necessity to fill the day with household chores

and seem more able to treat housework as a practical necessity. Younger women do still set themselves standards however, and the presence of a man in the house appears to alter the situation for women, making housework into more of a routine as they feel the need to set constant standards to which the man can attain, as though they fear that once dropped, higher standards cannot be reinstated as they can be when women live alone.

Whilst all women apparently have the capacity to identify with the role of a housewife, all having been brought up with some awareness of the prevailing ideology which associates them with the responsibility for a home, three key factors appear to influence women's relationship to housework. The first is that of practical considerations which are influenced by the size of the home and the number of people living in it, thereby determining the minimum amounts of time and effort necessary to maintain 'reasonable' order. The second factor is that of whether or not the household includes a man, for with a man in the home women generally feel a need to maintain greater constancy in housecare standards. The third factor is that of the role a woman sees herself as playing. Married women who stay at home during the day expend considerably more time and energy on housework than married women who work outside the home, apparently attaching more importance to their role of housewife, as do all older women who stay at home, irrespective of their marital status.

Younger unmarried women (and women from the older age group when they were working) are able to maintain a relatively practical approach to housework, whether or not they have previously been married, thereby indicating minimal identification with the housewifely role so long as they live alone.

HOUSING

Moving from housework to the issue of housing, marriage was, and is acknowledged as the most common means by which working class women leave their parental home. The ways in which housing considerations featured in women's thoughts of marriage was discussed in the previous chapter, but further investigation into the matter reveals the extent to which marital status influences women's thoughts and options with regard to establishing their own home.

Women may be influenced first by the ideology which associates a home with marriage in such a way that the thought of establishing a home away from their parents may not occur to unmarried women. Second, material opportunities for single living may limit women's options due to restricted housing facilities for households other than nuclear families. Third, even if women do not accept the ideology individually and are not hindered by material constraints, other people's demands and expectations of them may prevent any move towards establishing their own home whilst unmarried. An investigation into the extent to which women considered moving away from their parents to set up their own home whilst unmarried; the

practical possibilities for such a move; and the actual occurrence of women establishing their own homes outside marriage should indicate the extent to which a home was and is linked with women's marital status.

Looking first at the general material opportunities for single women who wished to live alone, at the beginning of this century the housing situation was based almost entirely around the needs of families, and, as Lambertz says, during the 1930's to 1950's virtually all new housing provisions disregarded single women's needs for self-contained units⁽¹⁰⁾. In Buckfastleigh in 1911 only thirty-three households consisted of one person of either sex, corresponding figures for 1921 and 1931 being fifty-six and forty-eight respectively, (9% and 7% of the total number of households). In 1951 a total of nine unmarried people of either sex aged under forty were registered as head of household, although there were 192 men and women aged between twenty and thirty-nine who were unmarried. Single people thus comprised 30% of that age group, whilst only 4% of the household heads aged twenty to thirty-nine. For the same year in Buckfastleigh twenty-five single women aged sixty and over and eighty-five widowed and divorced women aged sixty and over headed households, together totalling 38% of household heads for that age group whilst comprising 35% of that age population, indicating the vastly increased chances older women have of heading a household.

Current housing provisions for one person households have improved in Buckfastleigh and in the country as a whole. 1981 Small Area Statistics for Buckfastleigh indicate that 199 women lived alone that year, though the fact that only thirty of these (15%) were economically active suggests that the majority of these women were elderly, as the head of household statistics confirm. The following table indicates that besides age, marital status also influences unmarried women's chances of heading a household, widowed and divorced women being more likely to do so than single women.

TABLE 1

BUCKFASTLEIGH FEMALE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLDS 1981

Age	Marital Status	No. of women as household heads	Women household heads as % total household heads of this age group	Women of this age group + marital status as % of age group (M + F)
16-59	Single	19	3	10
16-59	Widowed + Divorced	58	9	5
60+	Single	41	9	7
60+	Widowed + Divorced	146	32	24

Source: Small Area Statistics 1981

Women who cannot, or do not wish to live alone remain hidden within the statistics. Their options, other than living with parents or relatives, are to share a home with friends or strangers or to find accommodation through work⁽¹¹⁾. The likelihood of any of these alternatives is influenced by familial obligations, material circumstances, normative pressures and the availability of housing. Taking general contextual issues into account, the individual circumstances which prevented or permitted women from considering or establishing their own home outside marriage indicates the strength and workings of the ideology which links a home with marriage.

For women earlier this century one possible means of making the initial break from the parental home other than through marriage was by moving to another area to work and/or to live with people who were already known to them. Whilst such a move did not necessarily involve women in establishing their own home it was a sufficient first move. Mrs. W. for instance, moved to Bristol where she trained to be a nurse and lived with her aunt who was also a nurse. For her the move was facilitated by the presence of a relative elsewhere, and the reason of a job to move to. Mrs. W's younger sister also left home and became a nurse but her youngest sister, Eva, born in 1909, remained in the parental home. As Mrs. W. said:

I know it was through me becoming a nurse that my sister also became a nurse. I would think she would probably have been about eighteen, my dear. I don't remember her working in the factory. I remember my (youngest) sister, Eva, working in the factory, in fact she did nothing else, she never left home.

Mrs. W. and her younger sister bear out Mackie and Patallo's finding that girls who had vocational interests generally had mothers, or images of women committed to wider horizons than purely the home and family⁽¹²⁾. Nevertheless, in spite of the presence of an aunt in Bristol and the pattern of her aunt and older sisters to follow, the youngest daughter remained at home, playing the role of the caring daughter.

Miss D. (born in 1898) in spite of being the youngest of three children, left her mother's home at the age of thirty-six and went to live in London with her brother, but only after much heart-searching and with the justification of transferring her caring role from her mother to her brother, though she still maintained responsibility for her mother.

Miss D. explained the move as follows:

... and then Ern's wife died, and he came in after the funeral and asked me if I would come up with 'im (to London) and I said I'd think it over, see. Well we thought it over, and then I went back to keep house for him.

Had you thought of leaving before your brother asked you to go to London?

No, no.

Do you think you would have left?

No, I don't suppose so - well, wouldn't have known where to have gone really.

How did you feel, you know, when it was suggested that you go up there? How did you feel at first?

Oh, I didn't feel too good about it, you know, no - well I didn't want to leave mother, 'cos I was the one that was left with her, see, and what was going to become of mother, and she wouldn't always be with me, see. Didn't know what to do about it, but in the end any rate ... latter years she spent most of her time in London with us.

Like Miss D., Miss C. (also a youngest daughter though she did have a younger brother) felt compelled to care for her parents and never considered moving into a home of her own.

Miss C. discussed the marriage of her younger brother:

... 'twas after mum died that he got married, and like I say, that left me and dad. Well then, I lived with dad until he died in 1965, and ever since then I've been on me own.

Did you ever think of living alone before?

No, never entered me head. You'd, no, like I say, goes out to work to keep myself, and I never thought about it (laughter). I was going out to - me mind was took up in looking after dad and looking after meself then, you see ...

For Miss H., however (another youngest daughter, born in 1905) the ideology which connected a home with marriage did not prevent her wanting and considering establishing her own home, yet whilst this was a feasible possibility in material terms, the role of caring for her parents prevented this. When in her late twenties and thirties she worked in Totnes and Newton Abbott:

Did you ever think of moving to any of those places?

Yes, but you see my mother and father was getting on a bit then, and - I remember very well saying to one of the women that I worked with in Totnes, you know, that I should like to get a little cottage in Totnes or rooms or something, and live there, you know. And then I said - oh, that I couldn't. She said 'Oh, I'll get you a room, I know where I can get you rooms all right'. So I said, no, I said I can't. My mother was getting on in life you see, and I said no, it wouldn't be fair on her - to leave her, so I didn't, and I kept all the time, wherever I went I came home each night, always.

I see. Was your sister living at home all that time?

No, she went into service for a little while, then she got married ...

So do you think that if you had moved to Totnes, would you have been able to have afforded to have lived there?

Yes, I think I should, yes.

And do you think your life would have been very different then?

Yes, but I always sort of wanted to live on me own, you know. I like a little place on me own, and if I'd got this place that my friend said that she would get for me it would only be about two or three rooms, you know. 'Twould have been very small, and the rent would have been practically nothing - couple of bob or half a crown a week, or something like that, you know.

Earlier this century in Buckfastleigh few reasons other than marriage seemed sufficient to prompt working class women to consider and achieve setting up their own home whilst unmarried. Although some women might manage to move away for work or even career purposes, they generally needed the security of a known person to stay with. The limited housing

market reinforced the ideology which kept most women from such considerations, bolstered by the powerful normative forces which kept daughters - and especially the youngest ones - in the parental home even when ideological and material forces did not affect them personally.

When considering the position for the younger women the bias mentioned in the previous chapters (pp. 98, 148) must be taken into account. Because of the design of the research the questionnaire and interviews illustrate the situations and views of women who were able to set up a home apart from marriage, leaving unrepresented the situation of single women who were unwilling or unable to make this separation. Married women's accounts of their views prior to marriage go some way towards bridging this gap, reflecting the position of unmarried women living with others.

Mrs. T. (born in 1954 and married at twenty-one) indicated that for her marriage and a home were inextricably linked:

And did you ever think of leaving home during that time? (between starting work and getting married)

No, no ... we decided to get a house and we hadn't made any date to get married; but we got this house which came through fairly quickly, so we decided - right - instead of wasting money by paying out housekeeping for both parents we would get married, so we decided to get married within three months of finding a house. (13)

Clearly Mrs. T. had not thought of leaving home prior to marriage; besides the fact that marriage implied her own

home, apparently her own home implied marriage, thus completing the ideological bond between the two. Notions of sharing a house with others, finding her own accommodation, through work or living alone appear not to have occurred to her.

This was not true of all the young women. Unlike the situation earlier this century, the possibility of single women finding a home outside marriage no longer seems quite so remote. Whilst still inadequate, material factors such as the greater availability of housing suitable for one person households, and the somewhat wider opportunity for single women to support themselves have influenced and reflected ideological and normative expectations.

Miss B. (born in 1959) illustrated the need which she felt for her own home and the pride which she takes in her home, both of which are quite unconnected with marriage, and the way in which her father found it possible to accept such feelings:

And was it difficult to move away from home -
your parents didn't mind?

I think dad did in a way, but then he knew I needed my escape route, because I just couldn't handle it any more. My mother is, well, untidy ... I like a home to be neat. I'm not houseproud, but I cannot stand sitting in a room which is chock-a-block with this and that ...

Like other single women interviewed, Miss B. illustrated the fact that the conditions associated with single living are

less difficult to fulfil now for working class women than they were earlier this century. Whilst the ideological link between a home and marriage still exists for many women, the notion of establishing a home apart from marriage is currently more readily acceptable and a strong wish to do so, though by no means the norm, is generally sufficient to achieve this.

EMPLOYMENT

Paid employment is another area where women's actual experience tends to be based on the premise that they will be, or already are, wives. Despite recent legislation, job expectations, opportunities and salaries have been, and continue to be, influenced by the notion of women's familial role. Nevertheless, changes have occurred during this century. At the beginning of the century few women worked after marriage and those who did were restricted to particular jobs; in Devon as a whole only 8.8% of married women were employed whereas in 1981, 37% of married women in Devon were employed⁽¹⁴⁾. Employment opportunities for working class women in Buckfastleigh early this century were very limited, as discussed in Chapter Four. Women's expectations were influenced by the experience of those around them and few women viewed work as offering intrinsic satisfaction. When discussing work the majority of women spoken to evaluated employment in terms of the money it provided. Miss D. for example, who was born in 1898 described her feelings about

wool sorting at the mill:

I left school when I was thirteen, and went right into the factory.

Did you want to go to the factory?

I - no, hated it! ... my mother was a widow, see, and had nothin' coming in hardly ... I worked all the week for nothing, next week I had a shilling, then one and six, then two shillings, until it got up to five shilling. And then you stopped - and then it was up to the foreman. If he thought you were good at your work he'd say to the Hamlyn brother - the boss - 'She deserves a rise'. He'd say, 'Oh, give her sixpence', that's all!

About seven years later the factory went over to piece work:

... so that was better for us, 'cos the more you was doing the more money you was earning, see. And that turned out fine that did - oh, was quite happy after that.

Women who continued employment after marriage were in the minority, in spite of often severely restricted funds. Of the older women interviewed only two of those who married took up paid employment afterwards: one was a mother of three who worked during the war whilst her husband was away, the other was an Irish woman (born in 1898) who married a Buckfastleigh man when in her mid-thirties and faced extreme financial hardship. As she said about working:

... well I had to - Do you know - my first week's wages (i.e. her husband's wages), when we got married was two pound - married. That's incredible isn't it? ... so how could you expect anybody to get a home together ... well, I couldn't stay home with two pounds a week. I mean, we had to live, we had to pay our rent and our rates, and your light and your gas - so what could you do with two pounds! I used to go out to work from nine till two.

Did you mind?

No - no. Course I shouldn't - but, - no
I didn't mind - well, it was no use minding
because you had to do it.

As Mrs. M. indicated, the assumption that marriage (not even
motherhood - Mrs. M. had no children) implied full-time
housework, seems to have been well established.

So when you got married what job were you doing?

None, I was home. We didn't go out to work
when we were married.

No?

No. Never.

Would your husband have liked you to have gone
out to work?

No, I stayed home, and looked after him and the
home.

Did your mother work?

No, not after she married.

What did she do before, do you know?

In the mill - weaver - yes, weaver. 'Course
after she married you see, granny and grandpa
was there - and me - that was enough for her
to do.

Women who remained unmarried after their thirties faced a
different situation. Whilst these women had often been
materially privileged earlier in life, as they grew older
they tended to face increasing financial burdens as they
were left to support their ageing parent(s). These obliga-
tions were particularly difficult to fulfil on a woman's pay,
and clearly resentment was felt by some against married women

who could treat their pay as supplementary to their husband's 'family wage'. Miss C., born in 1912, described how she handed in her notice from her job at the mill as a warper in her late twenties:

... Well you used to have big bobbins and little bobbins ... there was another warper there - they used to work in another compartment down under us. As I say, he (the foreman) was more friendly with the ones down under, and he used to be giving her all the big bobbins and I used to get all the little ones - and I told him, I said 'Why should 'er always 'ave the big ones, and me always tyin' the little ones', I said, 'I'm here to earn my living, the same as 'er'. And she was a married woman and had a husband as well, whereas I was single you see. And anyway, 'Oh, nothing about that, anyway, I'm the boss' he said. 'Oh', I said, 'All right if that's the way you feel', I said, 'I'll give in me notice ... I'm sorry, I'm not going to stay here to be just put on like this', I said, 'I've got to work for meself, I 'aven't got no husband to bring me in another packet' I said - 'What I earn is all I get'.

Working class women who remained unmarried into their late twenties not only had a longer work record than most of their married contemporaries, they were also firmly committed to work for financial reasons if for no other. Did these, or any other factors, influence their attitudes towards work? It would appear that single women did develop a closer identity with their work. Unlike the married women who discussed work chiefly in terms of the money it brought them, the single women described their work in far greater detail and with obvious pride. For instance, Miss C., having left the mill found work in Staverton as a wood sprayer and polisher in a joinery works:

... we used to do all the spraying - spray on all the lacquers, and then of course it was, after all the lacquer was sprayed on it was finished off with wax you see, then you'd smooth it off. When you spray it on it looks smooth, but you've still got to finish it off ... Well it was the variety of things, like the furniture we made - bookcases, bedsteads, chests of drawers, big committee tables - polished committee tables - and then were writing desks with the leather tops and the wood surrounds, beading, ... and we done thousands and thousands of them - I mean, makes you wonder where they all went to!

Miss H. (born in 1905) reflects similar involvement with her work:

I was twenty-four when I started serious work ... and I finished up the manageress and used to do the books and the wages ... At first I was just the assistant in the shop, you know, there was two of us and the one that was with me - she was the book-keeper and the manageress; after three years she got married and I took her job ... Then from there I went to Newton, and I was in the offices there - no shop at all in Newton - all offices ... and then they bought this little place in Ashburton and then I went there; but I used to have to do the book-keeping and all that - keep the money all right, bank the money and all that. We had the bakers at the back then and we had men out there working - 'twas very nice too ... you get to know them (the people who came in the shop) and their families, and if their husbands were out of work, you know, they'd come and tell you or if their children were ill, and you get really interested, and I used to come home and tell mother and father about it ...

The reasons why unmarried women developed such an attachment to their employment are multifaceted and difficult to disentangle. Single women's longer working life may have increased the likelihood of their becoming personally involved with the job; without the expectation of imminent marriage,

work was possibly retrieved from its temporary status and elevated to a higher priority in single women's lives; these women had more opportunity to find work which interested them - this may be partly the reason or the result of non-marriage; and with few social outlets work provided an opportunity to make contact with others. Whatever the various combination of reasons it is clear that besides valuing - and needing - the remuneration from work and in spite of all being involved in sex specific jobs, these and other women who delayed marriage found satisfaction and value in their work in a way which women who married at a relatively early age appear not to have done.

The current position in Buckfastleigh with regard to women working is similar to that in Devon and the country as a whole where the proportion of all working women who are single has gone down, and the proportion married has gone up. In 1981, 38% of all married women in Buckfastleigh were economically active, comprising 64% of the female work force (comparable figures for Devon as a whole are 37% and 63%). Married women most likely to be economically active are those in the age group 30-45, where 63% of married women in Buckfastleigh are engaged in paid work, compared with 77% of single, widowed and divorced women, married women thus making up 80.5% of the female workforce for this age group (81% in Devon as a whole). Wives with children aged 0-4 are those least likely to be employed, only 22% of these in

Buckfastleigh are economically active (5% full-time; 17% part-time), whilst of wives with children aged 5-15, 56% are in employment (19% full-time; 37% part-time). Single, widowed and divorced women remain more likely than married women to work full-time; 71% of economically active single, widowed and divorced women are full-time workers, compared with 45% of married women, the former making up 47% of the female full-time work force⁽¹⁵⁾.

The opportunities for work for single and married women of working class origins who live in Buckfastleigh are now considerably wider than earlier this century and there is far greater availability of part-time work, though by far the greater part of it is still sex-specific. The question remains however, of whether women's attitudes to work have changed, and to what degree women's marital status influences their motives and feelings regarding employment.

Some research has already touched on this issue, noting the different ways in which married and unmarried women view their earnings. Cunnison for instance, in the 1960's found that 'Wage earning differed for married and single women. Married women thought of their paid job as an addition to their job of home-keeping and their income as a supplement to their husbands ... Most of the married women, however, had a sense of financial security that the single women lacked'⁽¹⁶⁾. Motives for work have also been discussed by others, emphasising the fact that married women work not

just to support the family income, but as a means of escaping the boredom of domestic routine, and finding company⁽¹⁷⁾.

Satisfaction gained from work may be seen as comprising three main components: financial rewards; companionship; and intrinsic satisfaction from the work itself. Whilst some single women clearly do hold different views from married women towards their earnings, for many single working class women the financial rewards to be gained from work have been eroded as the difference between low paid employment and welfare benefits becomes smaller. This is particularly true for women with children and the financial aspect of work often becomes more a matter of preserving self-esteem rather than economic gain. Miss B., a twenty-four year old single woman with a child illustrated this:

So what's your job now?

Well, I class myself as a domestic help, but basically I run the guest-house now.

And do you enjoy it?

Lately it's been getting me down, but, yes, I do ... like I say, it's the thing about coming home with that wage packet and knowing I earned it. Whatever comes into this place, I've done it for me and him (her son) - you know, I haven't had it handed out on a plate.

Mrs. A., a separated mother of three children, born in 1953, regretted stopping work, not for financial reasons but because she missed the company:

And you don't do any outside work now?

No, not since I had my bad leg ...

And are you sorry to have stopped work?

Yes! I do miss it, I miss the companionship ... when I had that job I didn't feel the need to go out in the evening, to see people, 'cos I'd been working with people during the day, and I'd also be meeting new people ... but now I haven't got a job I do feel the pressure more to go out in the evening to see people, 'cos you do, you know, you do get lonely.

Of the younger women interviewed only one seemed to find intrinsic satisfaction from the work itself. She was a single teacher and for her, financial rewards, companionship and intrinsic satisfaction are combined. As Miss G. said about her work:

... sometimes it seems to dominate completely, when you're rushed off your feet, but I enjoy it. Sometimes I think, if I could get another job for the same money I'd change ... but on the whole I enjoy it ... I just enjoy teaching the subject anyway.

And do you think you'd go on working if you didn't need the money?

Yes, I think so; I think I'd get bored. I couldn't stay at home and do nothing I don't think.

Assessing the situation as a whole, it appears that financial reasons for work have become less pressing than they were earlier this century. Whilst many single women are still struggling to survive and/or support dependants on a wage which is typical for 'women's work' - and therefore intended to supplement a man's 'family wage' - the risk of dire

poverty which threatened many single women earlier this century has been cushioned by welfare provisions. Married women also often work for less pressing financial reasons than they did earlier this century when - for many - only extreme financial hardship would justify contravening the ideal of the full-time housewife. Although many families now rely on a married woman's income, reasons other than severe need generally influence the decision to work.

Whilst companionship from work was something only mentioned in the older group by women with prolonged work records, many of the younger married and unmarried women valued this aspect of employment.

Mrs. T. (born in 1954 and married in 1975) illustrated the way in which she realised the potential conflict between her role as a housewife and as an employed woman, yet the value she placed on the companionship she found at work:

Did you carry on working (when you married)?

... I did find a job in Totnes, hairdressing - just for - I used to work three days a week I think.

Was that what you wanted, or would you have rather been full-time?

It worked very nicely; I think that working full-time plus trying to keep the house might have been too much.

Mrs. T. stopped work when she was seven months pregnant:

Were you pleased to stop - I mean, apart from the fact that you were pregnant?

I missed the company ... I found it very, very quiet ...

An element of choice (either choice of whether or not to work, or choice of where to work) appears to be an essential feature of appreciating aspects of work other than mere economic ones. Whilst women from the older group who remained unmarried had a longer time in which to find work more suited to them than did their contemporaries who married early, many currently married women and low-paid unmarried women (especially those with children) choose to work for reasons other than purely economic ones, thereby emphasising non-financial rewards⁽¹⁸⁾.

Satisfaction from the work itself is difficult to derive from many of the routine and tedious tasks which comprise women's work. The few working class women who find more middle class employment generally do derive intrinsic satisfaction - for instance, Mrs. W. the nurse and Miss G. the teacher - but for other women satisfaction may come in less direct ways, such as the feeling of self-worth which self-support brings. Whilst, unlike earlier this century all three considerations; money, companionship, and satisfaction now seem relevant (though in varying degrees) to married and unmarried women, single women do still appear to give work a higher priority in their lives, and to value its various aspects more than married women who normally have a husband's salary and a role as a housewife to fall back on. Nevertheless, in a restricted area such as Buckfastleigh, whatever a woman's orientation to work,

career opportunities for women of working class origins are scarce and single women have few chances to exploit potential commitment to work.'

FINANCE

Having discussed money as a reward for work, the ways in which women view their earnings or their share of the family income remains to be considered. The older group of women, when young, could not fail to be aware of the financial difficulties which surrounded them, and it was commonplace for daughters to give all of their earnings to their mothers from the time when they started work until the time when they were considered old enough to go 'on board' (the younger privileged daughters discussed in Chapter Five were the exceptions). Miss C. (born in 1912) illustrates the typical financial arrangements for young girls:

I don't know if I can remember really - how much it was - ten shilling a week I got? Something like that.

Would you give that money to your mother?

Oh yes, I'd give that to Mam, and then she would give me half a crown spending money.

In her late twenties Miss C. changed her job:

So do you think that was when you started keeping the money yourself?

Yes, yes, 'cos I was earning more down there - it was better pay down there - ... I was earning more money and Mam said, 'Oh well, you can look after yourself now'.

Even those daughters who were not living at home often contributed to the family income, for instance the nurse who worked in Bristol sent money home, and Mrs. V., when she was in service in her teens, still maintained financial obligations towards her family. As she said:

... mother used to like for me to do her hair, and cut her nails; her used to like for me to do the little jobs like that ... me half day - if I didn't want to go down anywhere else, that's what I used to do then. But although I wasn't getting all that (much) money, she'd expect to have a little bit of something from what I had, you know, I used to have to give her a little bit of something.

How much would you give her?

Sixpence sometimes, and sixpence was a lot of money in those days, you know.

So that money wasn't for your keep, because you were getting all your food where you were living anyway?

Oh yes, well - used to have perhaps a little bit of tea when I went home half day.

Once married, life continued to be a struggle for the majority of women. Mrs. J., who was born in 1906 and married in her twenties, related the situation when she married her husband who was a bus conductor:

... he was getting one pound one and four pence a week. He used to keep the one and four pence heself, and give the - you wouldn't credit it would you? And six shillings I think we had to pay for rent.

So what would the rest of the money go on?

Food and that ...

Did you have your own spending money?

No, he used to keep the one and fourpence
heself, but then later on in the week I used
to have it back again.

And what would you spend it on?

Food.

In conditions where mere survival absorbed all of the income, inequality between husband and wife either did not exist, or was not evident. Mrs. J's experience was consistent with Pahl's theory that when money is in very short supply, the 'whole wage system' becomes the norm, whereby one person - usually the wife - is responsible for family budgeting. Nevertheless, as Pahl points out, at this level of survival - with no room for manoeuvre - managing the budget is a chore rather than a source of power within a marriage.

Pahl goes on to note that at middle level incomes, especially where only the husband is earning, the 'whole wage system' generally gives way to some sort of 'allowance system' where the husband gives the wife a specific amount of money each week, whilst he retains control over his personal spending and also over the larger proportion of household resources⁽¹⁹⁾. Such a system gives the husband ultimate power with regard to household resources as Mrs. V's experience reflects - though it must be noted that, contrary to Pahl's theory, Mr. and Mrs. V. were operating on an 'allowance system' as opposed to a 'whole wage system' even when the incoming wages were extremely low. Mrs. V. was born in 1910 and married

her husband at twenty, when her husband was a farm labourer:

... he was only getting a pound a week
... and I was only getting ten shillings
(from him). You had to buy all - what
could you save out of that - you couldn't
save nothing! See, so, eventually my
brother got up one day, he said 'Why don't
'ee let me try and get you a job down the
quarry, where I work'. He said, 'Give up
the old farming', and that's what he done,
and we started picking up a little bit from
there ...

What used to happen about housekeeping, would
he give you all the money then?

Oh, I was never kept short, never: he never
used to give it all to me, but I was never
kept short. We never wanted for nothing,
and if I wanted, I only had to ask.

What sort of things would you spend money on?

Oh, household things, or clothes for the
children. Yes, I never used to bother about
meself ...

If you wanted to spend a lot of money on something,
who would decide about it?

Oh well, we'd decide more or less together; but
I couldn't say to my husband, 'Look, I want
this, I want that', you know, I used to have
to say to him, 'Oh, wouldn't mind having so and
so', and he wouldn't say nothing you know, then
perhaps a couple of months after he'd say, 'Look
what old so-and-so got. We'll have to get one'.
He used to like to think it was his idea.

The operation of the 'allowance system' encourages women to
exercise their budgeting skills on providing household and
family goods, and as Mrs. V. illustrates, even when money
was no longer in such short supply personal spending was
apparently not considered. The buying of joint goods was,
in fact, decided 'more or less together', but Mrs. V.,
like many wives, had to conceal her role in the decision-

making process to allow the wage earner to feel that he was in sole control.

The third budgeting system described by Pahl, that of the 'pooling system' where both spouses draw on joint resources as and when needed, was illustrated by only one older woman interviewed. This was the case of a single woman who went to care for her brother in London when she was in her mid-thirties. Pahl claims that the 'pooling system' may reflect a more egalitarian relationship, or that it may be a consequence of greater affluence and hence a lesser need to budget carefully. Middle class couples, those with higher incomes and/or situations where both partners are earning seem those most likely to adopt the 'pooling system'. In Miss D's case such a system appears to reflect the egalitarian relationship the brother and sister shared. As Miss D. (who was born in 1898) said:

... I always done what I liked, haven't I?
He would always give me his wage packet.

So did you have your own spending money?

Well, we used to put everything together.

I see, so if you wanted to buy yourself something nice?

Well, I'd go to whatever was saved up, yes ...
Well, we're doing the same now ... an' if he
wants anything he goes and picks the money
out of whatever we got there ...

The pooling system relies on each partner's assessment of their need for personal spending and for couples where the wife's interests have become totally merged with the home, equality

is no more guaranteed through this system than any other. Miss D., however, clearly felt free to spend money on herself whenever funds permitted in spite of the fact that she was not earning any money herself, being involved in full-time housecare. This raises the question of why Mr. and Miss D. were the only couple to budget in this way.

One possible explanation may be the fact that Miss D., being in her mid thirties had a longer work record than many women who married early and had developed a notion of personal funds and individual spending which she was then able to transfer to a shared budget. This however, would not account for the difference between Miss D's situation and the other women who married in their thirties, who went over to an 'allowance system'. Admittedly, the explanation could be a geographical one - the fact that this couple were living in London rather than Buckfastleigh, but both were of Buckfastleigh working class origins, the brother having lived in the town until his twenties, besides which they continued to pool resources when they returned to the town to retire. The explanation would appear to lie in the nature of the relationship, it being a sibling rather than a marital one. Unlike the married women, Miss D., by her acceptance of the fact that she deserved equal access to common funds, indicated that she viewed her role of housecarer not as her unpaid duty, but as a chosen alternative to supporting herself through paid employment. She thereby

maintained a sense of individual identity and rights, which other women seem to have lost through marriage.

Turning to the younger women, Mrs. Y., who was born in 1934 and married at twenty-three, related how she and her husband worked on a whole wage system, their funds being very limited. As she acknowledged, this was not necessarily advantageous for her:

... perhaps I was more fortunate than a lot of married women - or unfortunate - it depends on the way you look at it. Mike said he had enough trouble earning the so-and-so money, he wasn't going to have the headache of spreading it around. As long as he got some in his pocket I looked after the bills, so I knew exactly what came in - I knew exactly what went out - and I knew how tight it was.

Did you have your own money, just for spending?

No.

Mrs. T., who was born in 1954 and married at twenty-one illustrated the way in which the pooling system, whilst making money available to both partners, in no way ensures that women will spend money personally. Although as Mrs. T. admitted, she and her husband 'can comfortably afford to do most things' she feels compelled to sacrifice her needs to those of her family:

... my husband has always been very good, whatever money there is around, the one who needs it most gets it most - and I've always known how much he earns - I have got sole control over it as such. It's just this habit that you've got to get into, of knowing how much things are going to cost, shopping-wise ... Whereas you used to have your own money - 'Oh well, that's your savings for your new dress ... that's Saturday night money', - type of thing ... you've sort of got to work it out; instead of a new dress, the electricity bill money, the rates bill money.

And do you still keep some completely apart for clothes and things, or do you tend not to do that now?

No, like last week, I looked at my husband and I said 'I need a new pair of jeans', and Saturday he said, 'Well go and buy them' he says, 'Stop all this, that you've got to say' - or as if I've got to plead with him; but once you sort of have children you always think, well they must have it first ... you get out of the habit altogether of buying anything for yourself, and then you go and look at the price of things and you say, 'Oh no, I can't afford that'.

And if you do go and buy yourself something, how do you feel after you've bought it?

Well, like on Saturday, he said 'Go and buy it', then I go and buy it and think, 'Great, I've got it'. Occasionally I sort of go out and see something and think, 'That's different, that's a good bargain, I'll have that', and I'll come home - not that I'll hide it - not hide it - that's silly, I'll put it on the bed in its bag and wait for him to say 'What have you got in the bag then?' ... I think it is that somewhere, sort of inside me, I think, well it's not my money, I didn't earn it.

So did you feel different when you were earning?

Yes, yes, especially with hairdressing, 'cos you have the tips, and I used to keep the tips ... that was all that was mine.

So what sort of things would you spend that on?

Oh, silly things really - perhaps a bottle of wine - a piece of steak or a new pair of tights ... it's just that I knew that it was mine and I could spend it on what I liked so it never bothered me. When it's anybody else's money I always think I should buy sensible things.

So you wouldn't buy those sorts of frivolous things now?

Not as such - we do occasionally if we're together ...

This discussion with Mrs. T. raises several pertinent points. First, the question arises as to how different the 'pooling system' actually is from the 'whole wage system' unless both partners assess their need to spend money on themselves equally. Clearly Mrs. T. felt her position to be little different from that of Mrs. Y. who was operating on a 'whole wage system'. The second point is the way in which having 'sole control' of the household budget put Mrs. T. (as it did Mrs. Y.) at a disadvantage. By fully absorbing the notion of budgeting so that cost accounting and balancing needs became an over-riding habit, Mrs. T. always lost out, never feeling that her needs were the greatest. The only grounds on which Mrs. T. felt able to justify expenditure on herself was if she could identify the purchase as a 'good bargain'. In this way, despite ample resources, Mrs. T. remained at a level of personal spending which resembled one where finances are considerably restricted. The third point is the emphasis Mrs. T. placed on earning money. Clearly for her, the notion of a 'family wage' extended only to

necessities and she viewed her husband's income as being essentially his own money, feeling that she needed his instructions or his accompaniment before she could spend it on anything other than what she could sensibly justify⁽²⁰⁾.

Whilst Mrs. T. emphasised her feelings that by earning the money her husband won the right to control the spending of it, Mrs. A. placed importance on another aspect of the marital relationship connected with money: the notion that by sharing his earnings her husband bought the right to her devotion. Mrs. A. described how her fading feelings towards her husband whilst he was in the Navy altered her feelings towards his salary:

... I got sort of, well, totally neutral about him - I couldn't care less whether he was here or not - in fact I started to get to feel guilty about taking his money, you know, he'd send money home through the bank every week, and I started to feel guilty about this, because I thought, 'Well, I don't care about him any more, so it's wrong for me to be living off him when I don't - I can't respond to him the way he wants me to respond to him'.

Mrs. T's husband had not voiced any link between his money and her affections just as Mrs. T's husband had never apparently restricted her spending, but clearly these were feelings which were real to the women and practical in their effects.

Even while Mrs. A's marriage was going smoothly she found difficulty in spending money on herself. In spite of earning her own money and attempting to spend it personally

she soon reverted to the role of housewife and mother,
fully merging her identity with the home and the family:

... I went through a thing a couple of years ago, when I was working, and I had my own money coming in - of improving my wardrobe - but that didn't last long.

Why not?

Because other things were more important ... you know, people would say, 'There's no point in giving you money for your birthday to go and spend it on yourself, because you won't, you'll go and spend it on the kids, or Dave, or buy something for the house -

you won't ever seem to buy anything for yourself'. But I used to feel I was buying it for myself, because it gave me pleasure, to see my kids in something that I might not normally buy them, or something in the house - as far as I was concerned I was spending it on myself.

And do you feel differently now, now that you're on your own - that you'd be more likely to spend money on yourself now?

Yes, yes, I would now.

So why do you think that is?

Because I feel I've spent so many years working for other people. I've got to have some kind of pleasure, I mean ... there's nobody else, I do everything in the house ... whatever I've got to do, I do it by myself ...

And how do you feel after you've spent money on yourself?

I enjoy it thoroughly, I really do ... I've got that I do enjoy it now, I used to feel terribly guilty at first, but I'm overcoming this little problem (laughter).

Mrs. A. now feels that she deserves, or has earned the right to spend money on herself, despite the fact that she now survives on limited welfare benefits (as opposed to her own

and her husband's wages), and the fact that she still has her home and three children to care for. The main difference in her situation is her separation from her husband so that she now lives alone with her three children.

Whilst single women's opportunities for personal spending vary with their income and commitments, none expressed anxiety over their right to spend money. For instance Miss G., the teacher:

... I must admit when I feel fed up I go and spend - I don't spend vast amounts really, but there always seems to be money around: if I want to go out and buy something then I can buy it.

And how do you feel after you've just gone out and spent some money on yourself?

Quite pleased ! (laughter). Yes, I don't feel guilty about it, no.

Miss B., who operates on a far smaller budget and has a young son still feels able to spend money on herself:

... do you feel okay about spending money on yourself, or do you feel that you have to spend the money on Martin as well?

I don't compromise on that; as long as he's got what he wants, then if I see something I fancy, then I'll have it.

With regard to attitudes towards money amongst women of working class origins, little seems to have changed during this century. Whilst single women's incomes are often small, married women are generally left in relatively greater deprivation with regard to personal spending, either through

their husband's direct intervention, their own interpretation of the situation, or some combination of the two. Whilst single women feel at ease to allocate their money as they choose - enjoying spending on themselves when they can afford to do so - married women generally feel obliged to sacrifice their wants to those of the family, thereby never feeling that they can afford to please themselves. Whilst married women stress the importance attached to earning wages, clearly this is not the sum of it for them. Even earning money through employment does not seem to wholly alleviate the anxiety married women feel with regard to personal spending, so long as they retain and identify with their conception of their role as housekeeper and wife. In this role women apparently feel obliged to earn their share of the family wage in ways other than mere economic or physical contributions: one of these aspects is that of caring; another is that of budgeting - both of which make personal spending appear 'selfish' to the wife.

Unmarried women both now and earlier this century reflect none of these conflicts, whether they have earned their money through paid employment, welfare benefits, or, as in the case of Miss D., through housekeeping. They thereby appear to indicate that anxiety over spending money is not necessarily associated with whether or not they earned it personally, but more with identification with the wifely role of sacrificing and budgeting - something which never-married women

escape and previously-married women can learn to forget.

CONCLUSION

Summing up the situation for women in Buckfastleigh, it would appear that the degree to which women inside and outside marriage relate to the expected behaviour of wives is uneven, depending on the issue discussed, the women's age and various other personal circumstances. With regard to housework, cleaning is the area most prone to proliferation and, whilst younger never-married women living alone show little identification with the housewifely role, older women outside marriage, whether previously married or not, seem to spend considerable amounts of time cleaning. Apart from age, the presence of a man in the household, the presence of children and the absence of paid employment all appear to increase the time women spend cleaning their homes. Whilst some of the increased effort is clearly related to practical demands, the differences in time spent appear to indicate more than just material factors but a striving for higher standards of housecare, thereby indicating association with the ideological role of woman as housewife. Factors relieving women from this identification appear to be youth, single living and/or employment.

The situation with regard to housing has changed during this century in both practical and ideological terms. Whilst the link between a home and marriage was, and still is

accepted as the norm, the increased housing stock, higher incomes for unmarried working class women and somewhat relaxed normative pressures encouraging unmarried women to live with their parents have together increased the possibility for women to free themselves from the ideological assumption that 'a home of one's own' necessarily implies marriage, and permits more women to turn this notion into a practical possibility.

Employment patterns for women have changed during this century too, and whilst still generally limited to sex-specific work, married and unmarried women can now hope for a wider range of job choices than was the case at the beginning of the century. Previously, single women differed from their married contemporaries by continuing to work when most married women stayed at home after marriage. Most single women apparently identified considerably with their role as a paid worker. In the current situation many women work at least part-time, but women outside marriage still appear to relate differently to their work. Although the reasons for work amongst married and unmarried women may be similar (women working for money, companionship or intrinsic satisfaction - none of these being mutually exclusive) single women generally appear to place greater importance on their work.

Finally, women outside marriage show the greatest dissimilarity from wives with regard to their approach towards money.

Whilst married women of all ages, whether working or not, appear to find difficulty in spending money on themselves guiltlessly, women outside marriage indicate no identification with this notion of the budgeting, sacrificing housewife and appear to spend their money as they please.

Having considered the practical effects of marital status on women's approach to the issues of housework, housing, employment and finance, the less tangible aspects of women's lives will be examined in the following chapter

CHAPTER SIX : NOTES

1. Oakley (1974), p. 48.
2. As Leslie and Leslie suggest, the performing of familiar tasks after their husbands' death may provide comfort for widows, helping re-install order in their lives. Leslie and Leslie (1980), p. 426.
3. Oakley (1974), p. 49.
4. Oakley (1974), p. 52.
5. Cunnison reports that, regardless of their position as wage earners, wives with whom she worked continued to view the work of cleaning and running the home as their responsibility, and carried it out with little help from their husbands. Cunnison (1968), p. 84. This suggests that the smaller amounts of time spent on cleaning by working wives and mothers is due, not to additional work being carried out by spouses, but to a different definition of what is necessary.
6. Unfortunately the relatively small survey size did not permit the impacts of age and employment to be dis-associated from each other for the older single women, none of them being in paid employment.
7. Oakley (1974), pp. 65-70.
8. Oakley (1974), p. 61.

9. Barrett and McIntosh (1982), p. 63. Both the survey and the in-depth interviews bore out the fact that however 'good' some husbands might be at 'sharing' household chores, the wives inevitably shouldered the responsibility.
10. Lambertz (1983).
11. As Williams notes, the characteristics of residential staff throughout the country are indicative of single women's limited access to the housing market, both now and in the past. In 1963 Williams found that 80% of resident care in children's homes were women, two thirds of whom were single, whilst in old people's homes 62% of the staff were single women. Williams (1967).
12. Mackie and Patallo (1977), Ch. 2.
13. Busfield and Paddon's research amongst married women found that for many the timing of marriage had been directly related to the issue of housing. As one of their respondent's said: 'I think the most important thing these days is trying to find somewhere to live before you can get married. If you can't find anywhere to live, well it's no good getting married'. Busfield and Paddon (1977), p. 127.
14. Census data. For further discussion regarding the changing attitudes and opportunities relating to women's work see Mackie and Patallo (1977) and Gavron (1975), Ch. 4.

15. All of these figures come from Small Area Statistics 1981, which provides no figures for single women alone. Data acquired from the questionnaire carried out in the town reflect a similar pattern, but figures are too small to provide any accurate breakdown of single, widowed and divorced women.
16. Cunnison (1966), pp. 83-5. Lupton (1963), p. 31 and Young and Wilmott (1973), p. 115 confirm differences between married and single women with regard to the value they place on their earnings.
17. Lupton (1963), p. 91; Young and Wilmott (1973), p. 103; Cunnison (1967), p. 85; Komarovsky (1967), p. 69.
18. Nevertheless, many young women currently still work only for money and, feeling that they have no choice of any alternative other than marriage, correspondingly view work as an unwelcome stop-gap. See for instance Cavendish (1982), p. 73.
19. Pahl (1980).
20. It is interesting to note that even when earning money herself, Mrs. T. did not count all of her wages as her own money - only the tips.

CHAPTER SEVEN

LESS TANGIBLE EFFECTS OF MARITAL STATUS

INTRODUCTION

Besides the ways in which women's lives may show practical similarities or differences depending on their marital status there are other issues which, though less apparent, are equally relevant when assessing women's identification with the wife/mother stereotype. The ways in which women spend their time, who they spend it with and their feelings about their lives and themselves are elusive and fluctuating matters, and such information is therefore difficult to gather and describe precisely; nevertheless some exploration of these areas is essential to any research which aims to question the notion that all women necessarily behave and feel in the same way as wives and mothers do.

LEISURE

The area of leisure is one which is difficult to describe, largely because of the inapplicability of the man-made category of 'leisure' to women's lives. Using the male-orientated definitions of leisure many married women would appear to have no leisure time at all, whilst the situation for unmarried women is rarely discussed. The questionnaire schedule therefore aimed to discover more about the ways in which women spent their time and what they enjoyed doing, and to relate this to their age, familial situations and

other material circumstances, whilst in-depth interviews explored women's leisure as it had changed throughout their lives and within the context of their personal circumstances.

Questions were also asked about the people with whom women spent their leisure time, now and in the past, in an attempt to assess who women identified with, for whilst notions of the 'family life cycle' seem relevant to women who marry and have children at the expected time, for women who deviate from the 'standard' pattern, stages and changes remain largely unexplored. As Elder notes, 'very little is known about the role of age criteria in structuring life patterns in the middle years, a period characterised by substantial variations among age rates in social roles and accomplishments⁽¹⁾.

Looking first at the older women's leisure patterns in their youth, at the beginning of this century leisure opportunities for working class women in Buckfastleigh were very limited. As already discussed, leisure for young people consisted chiefly of walks around the town with friends and occasional trips to the cinema, or dances. Mrs. V's account of leisure activities and whom she spent her time with is typical. (Mrs. V. was born in 1910):

Who did you used to play with when you were at school?

Oh, lots of girls. In fact I know them all now - all go to Over Sixties. 'Tis funny, because I'm meeting them all again, you know, all the ones you used to go to school with - 'tis funny isn't it really?

... I had a girlfriend, she was called Lil, same as me, and we was always called the inseparable twins ... we used to be a gang of us, we used to be half boys, and girls, all together. We used to come up around the bridges, up on the hill top, the top of this road ... oh there used to be crowds of us go there of a Sunday night, and then we'd used to have some fun.

It was whilst she was out walking with Lil that Mrs. V. met her future husband, who was with a friend of his:

... and of course Lil was left with this other young chap and 'er didn't like him. Was from then on you see, I more or less lost touch with Lil.

Did you see any other girlfriends?

Not really, I used to pass them in the town and just say hello to them, 'cos they were all getting married as well, about that time you see.

So where could you go when you were courting?

Oh, there was a little picture place ... we used to go for lovely little walks you know, in fact since we was married we walked miles and miles together.

Were you involved in the Church at that time?

No, I never used to leave him. 'Tis only now, since he died, that my friend and I - up the road - we go to Chapel, Sunday mornings, but I would never, I wouldn't think of going to Chapel when (my husband) and me were home.

So after you were married, did you see any friends then?

No, not really, no, used just to be together like.

Mrs. M. (born 1902) indicated a similar pattern whereby girlhood friendships were dropped at marriage, but re-established after widowhood.

... Now this one that was called Bessie, she's still living and her husband's still living, and when my husband died she came up to see me, ... you went to see each other when you was in trouble - didn't visit when we was all right - but anything wrong see, you must go and see 'em.

When did you stop seeing much of her?

When she was married. 'Course she didn't want the boy, the lad with him (Mrs. M's future husband when first she met him) - She said 'If you want Bill, you'll have to go off with him yourself'.

It would appear therefore, that after a certain age (normally by their mid-twenties) most women were finding boyfriends and spending their time with them, dropping former girlhood acquaintances. Once married, leisure became almost entirely home centred; couples rarely went to the cinema and never went to dances and there was little acknowledgement of former friendships until much later in life, or until trouble struck. The family life cycle took over: those who had children became absorbed with family concerns; those who remained childless spent their time entirely with their husbands. This raises the question of what became of those women who remained unmarried. Miss C. (born in 1912) speaking of her teens said:

Our money went on going to the cinema or going to the dance at the weekend. But in the week there was nothing else you could do. Well, in the week I used to go to me girlfriend's one evening and she used to come down to me one evening, and we used to play cards, or something like that you know.

So you stuck most of the time to that girl?

... until she got married. Well then, we're still friends now. She lives in Buckfastleigh, I still see her.

How old was she when she got married?

Oh, be about twenty-five, twenty-six, I should think.

And did you go on going out with her after she got married?

Oh no! Well, we was still friends, but then, when she married you see, she went to Buckfastleigh to live.

So after Vera was married how would you spend your weekends then?

I used to go to Newton Abbott then for a Saturday afternoon ... have a look around the shops, I used to go in and have a cup of tea ... I used to go to a cinema ... I used to go in the fish and chip shop and have a fish and chip supper, and then I'd catch the last - the ten o'clock bus from Newton Abbott home again.

So would you do that by yourself?

Oh yes, that would be my Saturday afternoon out.

How did you spend your (weekday) evenings?

I used to do a lot of knitting and sewing. I used to make all me own clothes in they days. Knitting, always knitting, 'cos I had brothers, like I used to knit pullovers for them ... I couldn't afford to be late, to have to be up again next morning by half past five.

So even when you were going out with Vera, you'd still spend your evenings during the week at home?

Oh yes, but we used to go out weekends ... me and Vera, we used to go dances together, like I say, we used to go to Church together Sunday evenings.

So after she was married how often did you used to see her do you think?

Well, not very often, 'cos like I say, she used to live up Buckfastleigh then, I lived out here y'see, and I suppose she had her husband to look after then, that she didn't have the time to spare ...

So you didn't really make new friends to replace Vera?

No, no.

Other women who remained unmarried did find friends to replace those who married. For instance, Mrs. M., mentioned earlier, whose boyfriend went abroad when she was twenty-two:

When you were that age, were most of your friends getting married?

Yes, they was, while he was away - Gladys, and Beatt, and Annie, that's three got married.

... I mated in with, well you saw Miss Lee - she lived next door. She said to me one day, 'Will 'ee go pictures with me?' And then she had another friend in the mill, and she said, 'Do you mind if she comes?' I said no, and we got friends after.

Miss H. (born in 1905) also found replacement friends for a while, as former friends married. Her first friend was called Florence:

And so how long did you go on going out with Florence?

Well, I don't know, oh she got a boyfriend I think.

What age?

About seventeen or eighteen I think.

Later, in her early twenties, Miss H. worked in a shop in Totnes and made new friends there:

I used to go out sometimes with a girl that I worked with ... she lived in Totnes. We used to go out to Berry Pomeroy sometimes, to a dance out there, or a whist drive and dance you know ... I was her bridesmaid eventually. She was younger than me but I was her bridesmaid.

Did you go on seeing her after she was married?

Oh yes, I used to go up there very often. They'd say, come up and have a cup of tea ...

Did you carry on going to dances once she got married?

No, no, because the girls (who worked in the shop) - well I don't know that they went out very much, anyhow, they had more or less their own friends.

These four women were absolutely typical of the other older working class women with regard to leisure patterns. Whilst young the three most frequent leisure activities of walking, dancing and picture-going had common meaning for all the women, being seen as an opportunity to meet with other young people of both sexes⁽²⁾. As the majority of young women began courting and later married, dancing and picture-going stopped, and walking took on a different meaning, becoming a shared leisure activity with husbands and later with children too. Same-sex friendships were discontinued by married women who clearly had little time or inclination to look for alternative forms of leisure, being fully absorbed in their role as a mother and/or wife.

As married women followed the family life cycle and changed their leisure styles accordingly, unmarried women were left outside of the couple orientated leisure patterns. Some,

like Mrs. M. and Miss H. found replacement networks and continued former activities, but often these new friends married too and in such a small community opportunities for updating networks were limited and as the age gap between them grew wider, new unmarried friends became increasingly difficult to find. Unmarried women were then unable to participate in former leisure patterns, but were also excluded from the home-based activities of former friends - apart from occasional visits to their homes which inevitably grew more infrequent.

Given that the preoccupations of this stage of life are generally acknowledged to be home-making and the establishment of a place in society⁽³⁾ the ways in which the married women spent their time appears to be related to their needs but leaves the meaning of leisure for the unmarried unclear. The timing of the change in leisure patterns for the married also appears self-explanatory, happening immediately after marriage, but the stage at which the unmarried underwent a change in leisure patterns is not obviously related to any particular event. There is no evidence to suggest that unmarried women wished to identify with married women, or that their concept of themselves had changed or was in any way related to the way in which they spent much of their time, merely that they had exhausted the possibilities of outward going leisure.

For their married contemporaries evenings were spent at home, much of the time being occupied with knitting and sewing. As Slater and Woodside said of working class married women in London 'energy and interest are absorbed by the home, and there is lack of real leisure or any prolonged periods of time free from interference. The position is accepted as inevitable and there is no striving after wider contacts' (4). Unmarried women meanwhile, were more free to look outside the home for leisure pursuits, but these proved difficult to find as several of the women acknowledged. The single women mentioned the restrictiveness of Buckfastleigh far more frequently than did those who married, apparently being less ready to accept the imposed home-centredness than married women were. For instance Miss C.:

The only thing that was going in the old days was the Girl Guides, but I never joined that. You see that's what happens when you be in a village, ... in a little village like this one there was nothing you see, it all happens in towns.

Those women who remained unmarried but were surrounded by options for further non-home centred leisure seem to have maintained alternative leisure patterns. Mrs. W. (born in 1901) who lived in Bristol as a nurse until she married at thirty-nine described her leisure prior to marriage, when she lived in a nursing home:

Oh yes, we'd go to dances together ... then used to go to the pictures every Wednesday ... we didn't go out an awful lot, perhaps twice a week.

Obviously, for the continuation of outward directed leisure like-minded company and the availability of such options is essential. In the absence of these, unmarried women were forced to comply with patterns of leisure which did not necessarily bear any relationship to their needs, spending more time at home knitting or sewing in the same way as married women did, though these activities may have had quite different meanings for them. Women's handicrafts - mainly sewing and knitting - are difficult activities to define, sometimes being undertaken as a result of personal inclination and sometimes through financial need⁽⁵⁾. In the case of single women, though undoubtedly an aid to their budgeting sewing and knitting do not seem to have been carried out with this as a main aim, unlike the case for many married women.

Whilst therefore giving the appearance of adhering to age-related patterns, for many single women this was more often due to a lack of alternatives. It would appear that the change in leisure patterns for unmarried women in small areas was not necessarily motivated by any changes in attitudes or needs, but more by externally imposed restrictions due to a paucity of suitable companions and activities. In this way, though uninvolved in the life cycle pattern which the majority of women were following, the unmarried women were influenced by it to some considerable degree.

Interviews with the younger women illustrate some similarities to the situation earlier this century, but some differences

too. Marriage still precipitates a change in leisure activities and all of the women interviewed had become more home-based following marriage and less close to former women friends. Mrs. T. (born in 1954 and married at twenty-one), was a typical example. Discussing her leisure in her late teens she said:

... we used to go to places like Castle Marina, which is a club ... And I had one big friend that I'd had from a baby, we'd sort of grown up very much together, so we used to do a lot of things together ... we always used to have our Thursday night chatter, used to go out to perhaps a pub or a club or somewhere for a cup of coffee ... and general chit-chat of what she'd done during the week and what I'd done during the week.

And you went on doing that all the time?

Till she got married, yes.

So how old were you when you met (your future husband)?

Nineteen.

And how did you meet him?

At a club in Paignton.

So in the years between nineteen to twenty-one, say, how were you spending most of your evenings?

Pubs, clubs, pictures.

So you'd go out most nights would you?

We went out about four nights a week.

And was that just you and your husband?

Mostly, yes, mostly.

And would you meet other people when you were out?

Saturdays usually, yes, Saturdays and Sundays we sort of used to meet up with somebody.

So would it be old friends of yours, or friends of your husband?

Mostly old friends of my husband.

And how would you spend your evenings (after marriage)?

Reading, watching the telly.

So you hardly went out?

We used to go out two or three nights, but never anything very exciting. Perhaps we'd go for a drink, or Mike used to play a game of darts on a Sunday night ...

So did you lose contact with the friends who you'd been seeing before you were married?

Yes, very much so.

Mr. and Mrs. T. now have two children, and after her husband changed his job they found that they had more time for leisure. Mr. T's mother is always available for babysitting:

So what sort of things did you start doing then?

Well, sort of going out for meals, and just general catching up with a few friends - oh and generally pictures, this type of thing, but - you make the effort, then its very easy not to ever go out. We've got a little bit like it again now. We go through stages where we don't seem to make the effort to do anything. My husband works quite hard anyway and he often wants to come home and sit in the chair ...

So if you think of most evenings how do you think that you do spend your time?

Very boringly really. By the time I've got them to bed ... I then usually come down and finish off anything I've not done during the day - ironing, perhaps dishes, my husband's lunch for the next day to get, I read the paper. Usually then my husband comes home yet again - he comes home for his tea and then he goes again - then it's sort of getting up to date with the day's news ... well it's getting on for ten o'clock anyway. So we don't do an awful lot.

Mrs. T's leisure patterns, once married, illustrate several points. First, marriage brought about a considerable reduction in evenings spent away from home and ended club-going. Married couples - if they 'make the effort' - are less likely now than in the past to be hindered by constraints of time, money and social pressure from spending evenings out, but nevertheless they still tend towards home-centred leisure. Mrs. T. reflects another leisure-related aspect of courtship and marriage: not only did she lose contact with her closest friend, she also changed her circle of acquaintances from her own friends to those of her husband's. With the greater potential for outward going leisure for married couples this highlights the power which the husband maintains over leisure patterns. The wife thus becomes dependent on the husband to organise leisure activities outside the home, and as Mrs. T. indicated, the husband having been at work all day is quite often contented to remain at home in the evening. As Hunt points out, whereas an evening at home may be a comfortable change of scene for the husband, for the wife it is more likely to be a continuation of the working day⁽⁶⁾.

Mrs. B., born in 1959, illustrates the leisure of an unmarried woman:

... there was a group of us, who used to meet in one of the pubs, and I mean most of the blokes were, say, two or three years older than the girls, so all the girls were around the same age (about sixteen) and all the men were around the same age, and of course we were all just one big group of friends, and slowly all married off.

So those are the ones you say you still see about, but you're not close friends with any more?

They're not, no, they're not close friends any more. I mean they are friends but they're not as close to me as we used to be.

So when you do go out, who do you tend to go out with mostly?

Linda most of the time, and usually we go down to the pub and then meet friends down there and go off different places.

Miss G., born in 1949, trained as a teacher then moved back to Devon when she was aged about twenty-five and taught in a local school:

When I started at the school there were quite a few of us which all started at the same time. Most of them have got married now, but we used to go out quite a lot together at that time.

What sort of things would you do?

Well, some weekends we used to take the children out for walks, like all day Sundays and things like that, or we'd go to pubs for a drink, or we'd go to different people's houses just for the evenings - things like that.

And how many of them are married now?

Some of them got married to each other so, in fact, yes, all of them are married now.

And so does that mean that you don't see much of them?

I don't see as much of them as I did, but I still go and see them, and visit them ... I still do the sort of things we used to do before they got married, and they're a bit more restricted.

So does it mean you found new friends?

Yes, I think since I met David, I spend a lot more time with him ... and other friends as well.

And where did you meet them?

I suppose they're mainly David's friends.

So what sort of things do you tend to do with your new friends?

Well we go caving, we go away camping for weekends, we usually meet up twice a week and go out for a drink.

Whilst Miss B. and Miss G. still see their old friends this is on a different basis from when they were all unmarried, and they no longer share previous leisure pursuits with them. Miss B. and Miss G. however, both demonstrate a continuation of outward-going leisure patterns beyond the age at which their former friends married and became home-centred. This was made possible partly by creating new networks, but also because of the existence of activities in which it is socially acceptable for unmarried women to be involved beyond the age at which the majority of their contemporaries had married. It would appear that when unmarried women are given the opportunity to remain part of a circle of non-home based friends, or find it possible to achieve this by updating networks, and when they have a range of suitable leisure options available, unmarried women now and in the past show no indication of feeling any need to comply with the expected life-cycle changes appropriate to their chronological age.

Other differences in the way women view leisure became evident from the questionnaire. One of these differences was that of the understanding women had of leisure. Women were

asked how often they had free days. Whilst many women's response to this question was 'never', and others responded with the relevant frequency, for some women (38% of the total) this was clearly a meaningless question. The implication of such a response is that for some women free time is indistinguishable from work, thereby indicating that they had little concept of leisure.

Further analysis of the respondents to whom the concept of free days was meaningless indicated that such women were those who had little or no contact with the world of waged labour. None of the women who had a paid job themselves and only one out of ten women living with a working husband found the question meaningless, whilst 74% of those women aged 65 and over gave this response, those living with a husband being those least likely to reply in this way (40% of married women aged 65 and over had free days at least weekly). It would appear that the concept of free time is closely related to that of routine work outside the home. Women involved in full-time housework without the regulating factor of someone else in the house by whom to fix a routine seemed far less able to maintain a notion of leisure. Sixty per cent of women aged under sixty-five who were full-time house workers but who had no husband found the question meaningless as opposed to just 10% of married women of this age, although widowed women of all ages maintained more notion of free days than those women without husbands who had never

married, generally as a result of visits to and from relatives which denoted days as being free.

Some contact with outside employment, whether direct or indirect therefore appears to be important for defining the notion of leisure for women. Without such contact, as in the case of full-time houseworkers who live alone, work often becomes indistinguishable from leisure. Even with some concept of leisure however, certain circumstances mitigate against the opportunity to obtain it in sizeable blocks. The presence of children, particularly young children, virtually eliminates the possibility of taking free days, especially if combined with full-time paid work or with full-time housework, part-time work offering mothers the greatest likelihood of obtaining free days. Married women without children followed a similar pattern, whereby they were most likely to take free days if working part-time, whilst unmarried women in full or part-time work all took regular free days.

The actual frequency with which women take free days is therefore related less to a woman's waged work than to her marital status and familial situation. Of women in full-time work those living alone took free days monthly or more, unlike most married women; all women in part-time work except those with children took free days at least monthly. But four out of five mothers who worked part-time never had free days. In all, 77% of married women never had days off,

though the vast majority of these (11 out of 13) were women with children of school age or younger (85% of women with young children never had free days). As Hunt found in her survey, 'the arrival of children represents for most women a total commitment: the overall responsibility for the child's welfare is her's, not her husband's. If the mother is to have time away from her children, in almost every case she has to make the arrangements which permit her absence⁽⁷⁾.

Considering personal factors which may influence leisure, other research indicates that the availability of transport is important⁽⁸⁾. Whilst evidence from the questionnaire supports the notion that transport is a related factor in making free days possible, the availability of transport does not ensure free days for marital status remains a more influential factor. Of those women with their own car, whilst all of the never-married women and the majority of other unmarried women took free days at least monthly, half of the married women with cars said that they never had free days, as did half of the women who shared a car with their husband. Of the eleven women who had no driving licence but whose husbands had cars, seven never took breaks and three found the question meaningless. Women without any transport at all very rarely took free days whilst many others found the question meaningless. The only women without transport who took frequent free days were widows, again, mostly due to outings to and with relatives⁽⁹⁾.

Clearly free time also consists of units smaller than whole days, but the individual nature of leisure renders such units incomparable. Mothers, for instance, often described their favourite free-time activity as playing with their children, whilst other women named cooking, or 'doing nothing'. Such a variety of activities denies categorisation, quantification or analysis, and for this reason only two of the ways in which women spend their time will be discussed, that of television viewing and club membership.

Much emphasis has been placed on television viewing as the most popular form of leisure⁽¹⁰⁾. In 1981 over 40% of the adults in the U.K. were watching television on each night between seven and ten o'clock⁽¹¹⁾. The questionnaire in Buckfastleigh asked people to estimate the number of hours they normally spent each week watching television. 22% of married women and 65% of widowed women claimed to watch television for over twenty-five hours each week. Television viewing would appear to be dependent on marital status and on age. Amongst the age groups of up to 30, and 30 to 45, married women spent far more time watching television than single women, but amongst the older age groups widowed women's viewing exceeded that of all other categories of marital status, with 73% of widowed women aged 65 and over watching well over 25 hours of television each week, whilst all the single women watched less than 20 hours. Even when standardised for work (full-time, part-time and full-time housework) the pattern remained the same. Married women with

children spent far more time watching television than those without (43% of those with children watched over 25 hours each week and 67% watched over 15 hours, whilst only 33% of married women without children watched over 15 hours a week)⁽¹²⁾.

The motivations for watching television are difficult to assess. Whether it is the highly valued form of family centred leisure for women which Roberts claims it to be for men, being popular, 'not so much amongst individuals bereft of alternative ideas and experience, as amongst individuals preoccupied with the demands of family life'⁽¹³⁾ or whether it is just a palliative to pass the time away whilst mothers are housebound, is unclear. Comments made by some women suggest a considerable degree of the latter.

The small amount of television watched by the younger women who live alone supports Roberts' claim that television viewing is rarely a lone pursuit amongst the young⁽¹⁴⁾. Of older women who live alone, widows spent a considerably greater number of hours watching television than single women. One possible explanation of this fact is that single women have never developed television viewing patterns in the same way as have women who spent much time watching television whilst married. An alternative or complementary explanation may be that women who have been used to living alone are more practiced at finding other ways of passing the time and do not experience loneliness or boredom to the same degree as women

who have been accustomed to living with a husband, and therefore the never-married are less dependent on television for entertainment.

Questions related to attendance at clubs and societies indicated that this too was related to age and marital status. For all age groups under 65 club membership was low (32%), with married women being the least involved. Of those women aged 65 and over however, 65% attended at least one club with widowed women showing the greatest degree of involvement, followed by married then single women. Church-going was minimal, only becoming at all significant amongst the older age group, of whom 22% attended weekly, 75% of these church-goers being widows. This adds further evidence to the notion of single women's self-sufficiency whilst widows seek company and entertainment⁽¹⁵⁾.

Reassessing women's leisure, it would appear that whilst leisure activities may reflect pre-occupations and self-images, they are very much modified by the opportunities and restrictions of the place and time, and these restrictions should be clearly identified and choices considered in the light of these. For many women a lack of alternatives necessitates conformity and may preclude the option of individually meaningful leisure. The restraints which operate within one town vary with time, age and marital status.

On marriage now and in the past women almost invariably

undergo a considerable change in leisure patterns, becoming more home-orientated and rarely engaging in outside leisure. The change becomes even more complete if and when they have children. Several explanations may be found for this change, none of which are mutually exclusive. Much of the pull towards the home may be a deliberate matter of choice, reflecting the preoccupations of the 'establishment' phase which gives new meaning to home-centred leisure. Besides choice however, the pull towards the home may be influenced by a lack of opportunities. One important factor for many women now and earlier this century is the reluctance of many husbands to engage in joint leisure pursuits outside the home most evenings, and the fact that the husbands' wishes are normally dominant⁽¹⁶⁾.

Pursuing the notion of a lack of opportunity for wives' leisure, earlier this century in Buckfastleigh the only regular leisure pursuit was the public house which was seen almost entirely as a male domain, so that even if a husband had permitted his wife to go out alone her only option would have been to visit the house of a neighbour, relative, or friend. Whilst 'dropping in' on relatives and neighbours was accepted during the day, for working class women evening visits were generally pre-planned and carried out as family outings, leaving wives little option but to stay at home.

The options for women now appear to be greater. Prior to marriage many women spend time in public houses, and after

marriage occasionally frequent them with their husbands, so there is no apparent reason why they should not continue pub-going once married. However, having relinquished old networks of friends and replaced them with those of their husband's, women have little opportunity to organise leisure activities if their husband does not wish to participate, having few companions of their own to go out with. Similarly, having lost contact with old friends, wives are deprived of the opportunity to go visiting as they might have done when single. Other options which do not need companions include attendance at society meetings, clubs or evening classes, but married women rarely engage in these. Possibly such activities do not provide wives with the fulfilment they are looking for in leisure outside the home: Sillitoe found that women engage in leisure pursuits more for social reasons than any other⁽¹⁷⁾ and lone attendance at societies or other formal organisations may not provide this. Visiting relatives may be another possible option, but again, this is not a frequent evening activity amongst married women, perhaps because it does not provide them with the company they want, with the additional factor that many wives do not have relatives living nearby.

The issue of proximity leads on to the area of restrictions, the majority of which have been mentioned already. For many women a lack of transport prohibits activities which they might otherwise become involved in, for instance the nearest

evening classes are four miles away, and there are few clubs or societies which are of interest to those under sixty-five within Buckfastleigh itself. Without their own networks of friends who might have cars, and with poor public transport facilities, women are only mobile if they have their own transport. Economic resources are another relevant factor, as is that of time. As discussed earlier, time for leisure is dependent not only on a woman's workload as viewed objectively, but also on her perception of her obligations, which is influenced by whether she is engaged in full-time or part-time paid work, or full-time housework. Deem also mentions the way in which the husband's work normally dominates the household routine, often precluding women's attendance at certain activities in cases where the husband works unsocial or irregular hours. Other constraints which Deem mentions are the reluctance of many husbands to care for children whilst their wives are out, and husbands' unwillingness for their wives to attend certain activities, particularly those involving mixed sex groups⁽¹⁸⁾.

Little complaint was voiced by the currently married women in Buckfastleigh or the older women, with regard to their husband's attitude towards their leisure time or the lack of outside activity. Earlier this century the societal expectation that a wife should spend the majority of her time at home was absorbed by all, and though held less dogmatically now, such a belief apparently remains influential amongst

married women of working class origins, adding ideological weight to the material constraints.

Opportunities for leisure are related to mass demand, and as Hart says, after the age of twenty-five marriage is the experience of the vast majority of the population, therefore adult society tends to be geared to the needs of the couple rather than the individual⁽¹⁹⁾. The restrictions which operate for married women thereby influence the opportunities available for women outside marriage, and other than in areas where there are considerable numbers of unmarried people, leisure activities catering for their needs are rare. The situation in Buckfastleigh earlier this century offered few opportunities for unmarried women aged over twenty-five to satisfy any wish to find company, being totally influenced by the home-centred leisure patterns of the married. Women who live in Buckfastleigh now do have more options for outward directed leisure, particularly if they have their own transport, but they are still faced with the problem of finding alternative leisure companions as former networks are disbanded due to the new allegiances created by marriage.

Therefore, in spite of the fact that the majority of women outside marriage are unaffected by the specific material restrictions which confine many married women to the home (for instance they have fewer domestic responsibilities, no husband to prevent them from going out, and they have their own money) leisure opportunities for unmarried women are

largely shaped by those restraints which operate for their married contemporaries.

Whilst marriage influences unmarried women's leisure opportunities in material ways by reducing the demand for outside leisure activities it may also influence them ideologically. The familial ideology which places wives in the home may also affect unmarried women, thereby influencing their leisure activities in non-material ways. Such an influence was difficult to identify in the case of the older women for whom there was little opportunity to display non-allegiance to the ideology of 'the woman in the home', but circumstances have changed somewhat for younger unmarried women in Buckfastleigh who, as discussed, have more opportunity to maintain separate lifestyles from their married contemporaries. Women who have been married but later are separated, divorced or widowed most clearly demonstrate the strength of the ideological pressure which encourages all women to act as wives, by the difficulty they find in re-establishing single leisure patterns⁽²⁰⁾. Mrs. W., who was widowed in 1969, illustrated that this still was a problem for her:

Do you think you made friends differently by being on your own to the way you'd have made friends - to the way you used to make friends, with your husband?

Well, you meet them differently, don't you?
In fact I would probably have made more friends if my husband were alive. I do not like walking in a pub alone - though I like going into a pub for a drink, but not alone ... Now, I have friends I made at Willacombe ... they come down here to see me sometimes, and we always used to go up to

the Globe for a drink, and it reached the point where we'd go in and the landlady'd say 'Oh you're down again!. You never come in when they're not here' I says, 'Well, Megan, I don't like to come in on my own. Either people look at you a bit peculiar or they think you're a woman on the make'. She said, 'I'm always here after seven dear', so I took to dropping in the Globe on Fridays but Megan and Tony retired last November.

So you don't go now?

So I don't go.

Unlike Mrs. W., whose leisure remains under the influence of the ideology which keeps wives at home, other previously married women in the younger group soon discarded the ideology and regained single lifestyles. Women's leisure habits therefore appear not to be directly related to their age for, unlike age, leisure patterns are reversible and are dependent in the first instance on women's marital status; in the second on their general surrounding opportunities and individual circumstances, such as the presence of children, employment and transport; and in the third, on the extent to which women identify with wives.

INTIMACY, LONELINESS AND SELF IDENTITY

Besides consideration of how women spend time and who they spend it with, the nature of their relationships is also of relevance, particularly in order to examine the notion that intimacy is found chiefly through marriage. Using Weiss' definition of intimacy, which involves trust, effective understanding and ready access (see Chapter Two, p. 64) it was

difficult to assess the extent to which married or unmarried women in the older group experienced this either with husbands or relatives, for older women were usually less at ease with discussion of such matters. It was similarly difficult to assess the degree of intimacy which currently married young women share with their husbands, but unmarried women were more forthcoming.

Mrs. A., who was born in 1953 and married at twenty, expressed her feelings that marriage and intimacy were not connected, neither were sex and intimacy. As she said, relating her experience after approximately seven years of marriage:

I used to feel I got more warmth and friendliness from my friends, and Dave (her husband) just wanted me for sex - that's the way he used to make me feel. He'd come through (the door), and that'd be the first thing he'd want to do, would be to go to bed and have sex, and I'd think - well, I've got too much to do!

Since separating from her husband Mrs. A. admits to feeling lonely at times, but also has ways of dealing with such loneliness:

Does it make you feel lonely at times?

Sometimes, sometimes. I'm very lucky in the sense that I can pick up that 'phone - I've got a male friend - who is a friend, a genuine friend. I can pick up that 'phone, I can ring him up, and I can say, 'Look I'm feeling really fed up. Come down, and let's go out for a drink, or have a chat, or something'. And he'll sit and chat all night. And we might even have a cuddle, but that's as far as it goes. And I'll feel a lot better, and he'll go home, and there's no problem - and I might not see him again for another month, you know.

Other single women mentioned friends with whom they shared their thoughts - some male and some female, whilst others relied on their family, for instance Miss B., born in 1959:

So if you've got something that, for instance, you want to talk to somebody about, about something important that you feel - you're trying to make a decision or something like that - who would you talk to about it?

Linda (her sister) usually, or father. See, I've got a deeper - I go more to the family than I do to friends ...

At least some single women appear to fulfil the need for intimacy in ways other than marriage, either through friendships (female or male) or through close relationships with siblings or parents. Without a husband they may lack the constant presence of an intimate, but - as Mrs. A. indicated - having a husband is no guarantee of finding intimacy.

Whilst friends are obviously of importance to some unmarried women, further investigation is required into the extent to which this applies to most unmarried women and whether it is also true for married women. Questions were asked on this topic in the questionnaire, but in spite of attempts to distinguish between acquaintances and close friends, the replies were difficult to interpret. About one quarter of the total sample said that they had no close friends, this response being evenly distributed throughout the various marital statuses, though somewhat more prevalent among the age group 45-60 than for the other age groups (under 30, 30-44 and over 60). All of the marital statuses had predominantly

female friends, though 27% of the total had female and male friends, no-one claiming to have male friends only. The main difference which arose between married and single women concerned the locality of their close friends: when 'local' was defined as living within a ten mile radius of Buckfastleigh 62% of married women had friends living non-locally, the average for the total sample being 42%, and the highest percentage of women with no local friends were also the married women. Though insufficient evidence in itself, this finding may suggest that married women continue to consider previous relationships as friendships, but fail to make new close friends subsequent to marriage. The frequency with which women saw their friends showed no significant variation with marital status, age or employment. Clearly the whole area is fraught with problems of definition. Many of the older women in particular seemed to have little concept of a deeper understanding of friendship, as displayed in the interview with Mrs. J. (born in 1906):

So did you make friends with people in other departments (in the mill)?

Oh yes, we had to go through weaving shed, like, to go to the toilets and that. And we always used to stop and have a laugh together ...

But did you make friends with people in the other departments?

Oh yes, we were all friendly. I don't think I had a bad friend.

For Mrs. S. (born in 1903), the notion of friends was clearly

inextricable from that of relatives:

... Me oldest brother Jack, he got married, well he had two daughters - well they used to come and visit mother, in and out, but - well I never had no family. And me brother that died of cancer - they didn't have no family. So that you see, if you didn't - if the children don't have no families you don't have what I call a circle of friends.

Younger women, as already illustrated, often rely on sisters and parents for close relationships but some also enjoy close relationships with men and/or women friends, clearly differentiating between acquaintances and close friends, as Mrs. A. (born in 1953) indicated:

... I suppose if it really came down to the crunch, they are my real friends and understand - ... I say hello to stacks of people, you know; I've had some very amusing evenings with other people - but I don't feel close to them.

So how important would you say friends are to you?

Sometimes very important, sometimes not important at all ... I don't want to sound conceited (laughter) - I've never really had a problem about making friends - I think this is the first time I've ever had close close friends ...

Mrs. A. made an interesting distinction between her relationship with friends in the past and friends now, which coincided with her separation from her husband. Mrs. T. (born in 1954 and married at twenty-one) had a close girlfriend prior to her marriage:

So if there was anything at that time that was worrying you, something personal you wanted to talk to somebody about, who would you have been most likely to talk to?

When my friend - who's not a friend any more - (laughter) used to be about, then that was sort of our Thursday - would be when you'd thrash out anything that was bothering you ...

However, when discussing friendships since being married,

Mrs. T. felt that her situation had changed:

I think there's two or three that I sort of class as friends, and I've got a very good friend up the road here - we've got a sort of friendship that - our children have got (to become) friends, and we sort of now are quite friendly. People that if you were stuck for - like going to pick my daughter up from school, or going and getting some shopping for you if you were poorly, they would do for you, and you know that they wouldn't mind you asking.

But you wouldn't sort of call them close friends?

No, no. I don't think you get close friends after you get married, to that extent. You perhaps keep the ones you had before, but you can't confide in them like you used to confide before you were married - because you should do that to your husband, so I think perhaps you lose out on a best friend, because you don't share all the - ... whereas with a best friend before you got married you used to tell everything to them, you know - anything that you knew about a person - you'd go right down to the nitty-gritty type of thing, whereas now there's got to be a little bit of - well there's a line or a border that you just don't go over. So I think perhaps that a best friend isn't the thing to have after you are married.

Mrs. T. implied that friendships become useful for fulfilling other functions after marriage, but that intimacy with friends is incompatible with a good intimate relationship with a husband. More research is needed before making widespread claims for this notion but the evidence so far would support it. It appears that of the working class women

interviewed in Buckfastleigh, some women find intimacy with friends, or with relatives, or with husbands, but that an intimate relationship with a husband mitigates against other close relationships. Marriage does not, however, always provide an intimate relationship, and similarly, women outside marriage may lack intimates.

Whilst friendships may help combat loneliness, they rarely eliminate it, and whether or not women outside marriage have someone with whom they feel intimate, most appear to experience feelings of loneliness at times, lacking the constant presence of a spouse. Hart reports that this solitary living is what divorcees find the most difficult to adjust to, feeling isolated and alone in making decisions and having no-one with whom to discuss things, to share things, and to face the world with⁽²¹⁾. Widows experience similar feelings of displacement and aloneness, as Mrs. M. (born in 1902, married at thirty-three and widowed at sixty-six) described:

... so I've been here nearly thirteen year now, by myself - yes. I ain't never got over it - but you're here, and you got to make the best of it ... But you can't say you're living, you know, you're just here - nothing matters.

Not even your friends - I mean, when you say you have friends who come to visit you?

Yes, but nothing, nothing matters ... you can lose a mother, and father, and all - but when 'tis your husband it's the lot.

Mrs. M. clearly is suffering more than a lack of companionship,

but is experiencing a loss of identity. As Berger says, couples tend to define the world together, creating a shared reality which is lost when the link with the spouse is broken⁽²²⁾. Whilst such a partnership provides comfort, companionship and support, its corollary can be a loss of a sense of self. Mrs. A. (born in 1953) expressed how helpful she found her shared world *with* her husband (Dave) and her family, when at the age of twenty-six she went to study at an art college:

... I needed that reality at home, because I tell you, X is a dream place. You totally lose contact with reality in that place, it's a world apart ... it's a really special place, but I think you do need a foot outside somewhere - and that's what Dave and this house and the children was for me ... people used to say to me 'You're so together, you're so cool', and I used to think - oh, thank Christ for Dave and the children!

Nevertheless, Mrs. A. simultaneously felt claustrophobic in her relationship with her husband:

... I think I resented Dave a lot sometimes, but I don't think that was because I was married to him - I think it was because he was always there, I couldn't escape him, he was always there.

One of the reasons for which Mrs. A. valued her time at art college was the chance it gave her to regain her identity, which she felt she had lost:

... people found out that I was married with two children eventually, but it was so nice to be able to go in there as a person, rather than as his wife, or a mother. You know, you go to play school - it's 'Here's Jamie's mother', or 'There's Matthew's mother' ... you lose your identity as such, you know, apart from being a mum.

A short while later Mrs. A's husband joined the Navy and she had to readjust to dealing with the world alone:

So did you find it difficult getting used to being on your own again?

Well, what happened really was, the first nine months were horrible, I hated it.

What did you find the most difficult bits of being on your own?

I think what it was - it was making decisions. I could cope with the everyday shopping, cleaning - and then when a decision had to be made over something or another like - I can't remember what it was, but it was something I wanted, I could have handled it on my own - well I did handle it on my own in the end, but I wanted Dave's opinion, you know. I wanted him to say 'Do it', or 'Not to do it', but by the time you write to him, you'd have to wait for the next three weeks before you'd get an answer, well, 'tis too long - so I found I had to start making these decisions. So I did, and then I'd write him a letter afterwards saying, 'I have done this, and I have done that, and it's too late now baby, 'cos I've done it!' (laughter). ... when he came home for his month's leave, ... I'd be so efficient you see, he'd just be sort of stood there - it got so that he disrupted my routine.

So did you feel by then that you were almost single?

Yes! Yes, yes, in a lot of ways.

And did you find advantages in that? I mean, what did you see as the good bits in that and what did you see as the bad bits?

Well, it's good that I could cope. I discovered that I could cope on my own with three children and a dog and two cats.

And do you feel different as a person - about yourself?

I feel strong. I feel that I don't need a man. (23)

Whilst life with a spouse is helpful for combatting loneliness and for sharing a world view, apparently the constant compan-

ionship and 'togetherness' can sap the wife's notion of her identity, creating dependence and a lack of ability to deal with the world in her own right.

Mrs. W., who was born in 1934 and widowed in 1969, expressed her feelings about being widowed and alone:

... sometimes I think I'm better off, and sometimes I feel pretty lonely.

What sort of times do you think you feel lonely - what sort of things make you feel lonely?

Two o'clock in the morning when you can't sleep; and worries - the water rates come in, and just after them come the general rates ... well you got no-one to talk to about that, no-one to sort of - you know, that there's nothing to do to change it - you know that there's nothing to do to change it - you know that its got to be found but you've got to sit here with it all inside ...

So, when you think of living alone, do you see any advantages in that?

Independence, yes. I can come in and shut the door and have a tantrum if I want to, without hurting anybody ... I can sulk if I want to and nobody would ever know ... I can come home absolutely tired, and I can look at the floor and say 'That's going to stay like that' ...

Miss B. also found loneliness to be the corollary of independence:

And do you think its more lonely, being by yourself?

It's terribly lonely, terribly lonely. During the day you cope, because I mean, there's people around you. There's some evenings - not very often now, because I just accept it - but there's certainly things where you can cry, you can just sit here and cry because you are basically so low, and you just feel like someone maybe to shout at, somebody to argue with, someone to sit and cuddle with; you miss it, yes you do, but you learn to live with it because you can't have it - it's as simple as that.

I mean, you've either got to live in hell to enjoy those few little comforts, or live alone and know where you are in your own mind - and, I miss those few little comforts and I took that choice of being on my own again, so I knew where I stood with my own life.

Older single women expressed very similar sentiments, for example Miss C. who was born in 1912, when asked what she saw as the disadvantages of being single:

It's wintertime, it's when you're here on your own, you've got nobody to talk to. There's always somebody to talk to (if you're married). I know I got the telly, but then you can't talk to - 'tis company - but I mean you can't sit and have a conversation with it, can ye?

Do you think there's advantages in being single?

Well there is, because I can go where I like, do what I like, go out when I like, and nobody to say when I come in 'Where've you been?', or 'What've you been doing?' ... I've got everything to please myself, see.

Women outside marriage, lacking the accompaniment of a permanent partner, are left to define their own lives and cope with them alone. For some women, especially those who have been married and who have been totally absorbed in their shared world with their husband, life alone feels incomplete and meaningless. Other women however, whilst they experience loneliness - particularly at times when they feel depressed or insecure - value the freedom which single living gives them, and they retain or regain a sense of independence.

Women outside marriage often express a pride in their ability to cope with the world on their own terms, though by doing

so they often appear more assertive than their married contemporaries, thus contravening the norm of the dependent female, adhering rather to the stereotype of the aggressive 'unfeminine' single woman. Distaste for such a breach of 'femininity' was experienced by Miss C. in the 1930's when, in an incident mentioned previously, she objected to the foreman of the mill giving a married woman work for which it was more easy to earn a higher wage. As she said:

... either you like a person or you don't like a person you see, and apparently he (the foreman) didn't like me. I ain't going to say - well, she (the married woman) was treated differently in one way - but I think it was through the liking of a person ... I think I must have been a little bit too outspoken, in sticking up for myself - whereas I had to because I was single, whereas the other one didn't care, she was married, and well, 'course she had her pay packet and her husband's coming in as well - whereas my pay packet was, what I had was what I earned myself ... He didn't like me 'cos I was always speaking up for myself and all, like that, and the other one just carried on.

Assertion and protection of one's rights are qualities which are now ostensibly appreciated and valued, nevertheless, in many quarters there remains hostility and suspicion of women without a male partner who are felt to develop aggressive qualities, thereby becoming 'unfeminine' (24).

The notion of femininity is based largely on the dependence a wife is assumed to have on her husband, not only materially but emotionally. In many ways wives do develop such dependence and the intimacy between a wife and her husband, involving shared definitions and clearly established roles

and statuses, often appears to diminish a woman's self-sufficiency. Whilst intimacy with another person is valuable for preventing loneliness, when the 'significant other' occupies a more powerful position, as husbands generally do by virtue of their gender⁽²⁵⁾ wives' ability to cope alone is often lost. Women outside marriage meanwhile, whilst often forming intimate relationships with others are usually denied the ready access to a 'significant other' which marriage provides, and are therefore forced to become more self-reliant.

Not only does marriage have implications for women's ability to deal with the world but also for a woman's status in the world. This involves the way in which other people see women and their expectations of them, and also the way in which a woman views herself. The importance and the implications of bearing the status of a married or unmarried woman depend largely on the context within which the women live and the expectations which accompany each status at that time. Earlier this century, living in a more enclosed and united community, societal expectations appear to have been more unified and more pervasive, most individuals being known to a wide number of people in the local area, and allocated roles and normative expectations were therefore powerful.

During the first half of this century in Buckfastleigh, whereas the primary role of a wife was to care for her husband, the role of a daughter was to care for her parents. Until a

woman married it was difficult for her to establish her identity as an adult in her own right as opposed to being a daughter of her parents, and it would appear that all of the older women felt their role to be that of a daughter until they married or their parents died. The status of a single woman does not seem to have been problematic however, and none of the married or unmarried older women spoken to expressed any ambiguity or confusion about the role of unmarried women.

With the increase in the number of women who marry and the emphasis on marriage and the family, unmarried women have become less visible, and their role has become less clear. Although more diverse codes of conduct now operate in Buckfastleigh and the community is less tightly knit, once married, women acquire a readily recognisable status in other people's eyes as a wife or mother. Whilst this is an acknowledgement of a woman's adult status and breaks the tie with parents, as Mrs. A. experienced (p. 286) the readily defined fact of being 'someone's wife' or 'someone's mother' demands little or no self-definition, and being so easily acknowledged by others, women often lose their own self-identity. The situation is particularly precarious for women who have been absorbed within the ready defined status of wife when this role is threatened or disappears, as they can be left with no meaningful self concept. Widows, divorcees and separated women display varying degrees of speed and

adaptation to a single life, some quickly regaining roles other than that of a wife whilst others (for instance Mrs. M., p. 285) appear unable to establish an independent world view and find life alone meaningless. Single women, without any ready-made role to slip into, have to establish an identity for themselves, and this necessity for self-projection and self-definition is clearly linked with assertiveness and self esteem.

SELF ESTEEM

Unlike single women whose sense of identity is less likely to be mediated through only one 'significant other', women who have become absorbed into the well defined role of a mother and/or wife have a tendency to have relatively few sources of self esteem, and so great importance is placed on the evaluations of the few 'significant others'. Similarly, for these women the range of available social roles is often very limited and those that do exist are highly inter-related and inter-dependent. In this way, whilst the companionship which marriage can provide may prevent isolation and promote emotional wellbeing, if a woman's sense of self is submerged within the marital relationship, the woman's self esteem is then jeopardised if or when the support of the 'significant other' is removed.

Opportunities to develop a variety of spheres in which self esteem may be assessed are open to women who have a notion of

themselves which is wider than that of purely a wife and mother but is one which involves other concepts of self. Women with a more diverse range of social roles are therefore less dependent on the positive evaluation of one person and, with a wider range of sources of self esteem, are less likely to generalise negative assessment from one area of their life to their whole identity and therefore are less prone to depression. Married women may obtain a sense of personal worth by retaining their self identity within the marriage relationship, but self esteem is often increased through employment outside the home⁽²⁶⁾. Women outside marriage, with the lack of an obvious role to fulfil, are more likely to have varied sources of self esteem and to maintain a feeling of mastery over their lives.

The ability with which women make decisions is indicative of their self esteem, and as Mrs. A. illustrated (p. 287), after seven years of marriage she felt unable to take decisions alone, wanting her husband's approval, but once adjusted to the notion of single living she felt proud of her ability to cope alone and enjoyed the process of self determination. It is precisely this notion of self-determination and control which many women outside marriage value, and for which they are willing to sacrifice companionship. In this way the presence or absence of a husband, women's assertiveness, their role identity and self esteem all appear to be linked.

SEXUALITY

Moving to consider the area of sexuality for married and unmarried women, two main questions arise, the first being the importance of sex for women and the second the degree to which married and unmarried women's experiences differ. Discussion with the older women in Buckfastleigh implies that not only does society influence the ways in which sexuality is expressed, but also the importance placed on it, for many women earlier this century apparently expected little, and show no evidence of gaining much from their sexual relationships - though it must be acknowledged that this may be due to their reticence to discuss sexual issues. Nevertheless, in a climate where sexuality certainly was not generally emphasised, whatever the experience of women outside marriage, they could rarely have been confronted with a blatant assumption that they were 'missing out' on sexual activity. Mrs. M., for instance, who was born in 1902 and married at thirty-three said:

... I couldn't have anybody near to me if I didn't want them - it never appealed to me. You see you was shy when you were married - if you know my meaning - you still had that pride in yourself, you was never - I don't suppose me husband ever saw me chest ...

Lacking evidence either way, it is probably fair to guess that in Buckfastleigh earlier this century few women outside marriage had much sexual experience, but, given the similar lack of information regarding the satisfaction which married women gained from their sexual experiences it is unclear to

what extent single women were deprived in comparison with their married contemporaries.

The greater emphasis on sexuality during the latter half of this century has influenced women outside marriage in two opposing ways. In one sense it has increased the likelihood of their being viewed with pity or suspicion for failing to have the right to a regular sexual partner, whilst simultaneously making sex outside marriage more widely acknowledged, if not accepted. Miss G. who was born in 1949, expressed this as follows, regarding her relationship with her boyfriend David:

... I suppose people think it's more normal, you know, to have a man around this place ... because David stays some nights on weekends when he comes up, and he parks his car outside, so you know, they (the neighbours) must think 'Oh' - (laughter) - they do notice what's going on.

And do you think that other people treat you differently - for instance, do you think that male friends treat you differently if they think that you're attached to a man?

Yes, I think so ... I suppose they think I'm the same - it's more normal for somebody of my age, really, to, you know, be attached to a man.

There is a sense in which it has become almost obligatory for women to be known to have sexual relationships with men in order to prove their acceptability and 'normality', and in this way at least, sexual experience has become more important for women. All of the younger unmarried women interviewed had at least occasional sexual partners, although had it been possible to interview single women of similar

ages living with their parents or relatives the results may have been different. As Miss B. indicated, sex outside marriage still provokes mixed reactions from others. Miss B. was born in 1959 and has a five year old son. As she said of her mother:

... and the thought (to her mother) of me going to bed with someone is disgusting, absolutely disgusting.

So does it mean that you have to be secret about what you're doing, or do you not bother?

I don't deceive her - if she doesn't like it then that's tough. ... the club lady the other day said something about new sheets - I said 'Well I've got to have flannelette for winter, because sometimes it gets very cold'. I said, 'Occasionally it's alright, when you've got company!' 'Course, my mother went 'Oh go on, let me down, show me up!' ... Of course the woman just turned around and said, 'My God, she's a woman, she's a mother'. You know, it's a case of what you don't know you don't miss, but when you do have it, it's very difficult to give it up - and everybody gets frustrated and low sometimes, but Mum finds it bad, naughty.

The role of sex in the single woman's life as seen by others is apparently ambiguous. In one sense it is seen as unnatural not to have a sexual relationship with a man, yet sex outside marriage is still viewed with disapproval by some.

The single women spoken to found sex important at times, whilst at others they felt differently, for instance, Mrs. I., who was born in 1958, married at seventeen and divorced at twenty-two. Although she has had a boyfriend for the last year she said:

... it's me that's gone off sex now - I really have, I mean even with Pete ...

Miss B., mentioned earlier, whilst valuing sex, claimed:

... I think companionship is more important than sex, because if you haven't got the companionship, and the communication between each other - that you can talk, you haven't got a relationship.

Some of the previously married women expressed dissatisfaction with their sexual relationships whilst they were married, though none of those currently married did. Thornes and Collard found a similar difference in their research, and note that the admission of sexual problems often occurs only after much discussion with people about general marital problems⁽²⁷⁾. Because of this reticence it is difficult to compare the role which sex plays, and the satisfaction it provides for married and single women, apart from the more superficial validating function which the assumption of a sexual relationship provides in affirming a woman's desirability to the world, in which case social pressures have increased the importance of sex.

CONCLUSION

In most of the areas discussed in this chapter the differences between married and unmarried women are more difficult to substantiate than are direct behavioural matters, being less tangible and therefore less readily available for analysis. Nevertheless, whilst the material circumstances within which women live may restrict their actual behaviour, women's

feelings about themselves and their lives are apparently influenced considerably by their marital status. Whilst single women's behaviour might compromise with that of their married contemporaries, their identity does so less.

This appears to be particularly the case with regard to women's leisure patterns, where notions of free time and opportunities for obtaining it depend on women's household situation and their employment position - the presence of children and a husband and full-time employment or full-time housework being the circumstances most conducive to reducing women's free time. Women who remain unmarried experience no sudden change of circumstances with regard to demands on their free time, and whilst their contemporaries are marrying and becoming more home-centred, women outside marriage appear only to curtail their leisure activities when they experience a dearth of material options, this having little to do with any internal change of their own. In this way, women outside marriage indicate the irrelevance of the notion of life cycle stages when remaining outside of the family, as do women who are divorced or widowed at a relatively early age who then re-adopt single lifestyles when circumstances permit.

Whilst the current notion of women presents them as being emotionally dependent on men and seeking marriage for emotional security, it proved difficult to assess the accuracy of this assumption for currently married women.

Women outside marriage, however, appeared to be relatively self-sufficient emotionally. Many, both young and older, admitted to experiencing loneliness at times, but they accepted this as the corollary of the independence they enjoyed. Also, many of the younger women outside marriage did experience intimacy with others, often having close friendships with women or men and obtaining satisfaction and closeness from such relationships. Married women, on the other hand, appeared to find that marriage mitigated against intimate relationships with friends.

Besides being more self-reliant emotionally, women outside marriage also appear to be more independent in their role identity. Without one person to relate to, and with no obvious role to play, unmarried women define their own identity to themselves and to the world, thereby apparently breaking from the notion of dependency. By establishing their own role in life women often simultaneously protect their self esteem, diminishing the likelihood that they will become over-reliant on one person's assessment of their performance in one particular role. Previously married women show varying speeds of adaptation to the self-reliance demanded by single living, indicating the loss of self identity which they had experienced through the intimacy enjoyed in marriage.

Women's sexuality demands consideration from two angles, the first being that of satisfaction and the second that of confirming women's femininity. The former is more difficult to

discuss, particularly with older and married women, although unmarried younger women appear to accord it fluctuating importance. Marriage is automatically assumed to confirm women's feminine sexuality and whilst unmarried women may have prompted speculation in the past, the current emphasis on sexuality as an important aspect of femininity makes this more of an issue for younger unmarried women. The young women outside marriage indicated an awareness of the conflicting demands on them whereby sexual experience should be confined to marriage, yet to deny sexuality appears suspect, and all the younger women spoken to chose to take at least occasional sexual partners and indicated little embarrassment about this, but rather an awareness that this was 'natural'.

In general then, changes have occurred during this century in the opportunities women have for expressing and fulfilling needs for friendship, sex and leisure whilst unmarried, and the lives of women outside marriage are now less restricted materially than they were earlier this century. Both now and previously however, single women's need to deal with the world for themselves invalidates the notion of the dependent female, and never-married women generally cope with their own identity and emotional needs in ways which maintain their own individuality. Previously married women, by their ability or inability to regain such individuality display their relegation of - or continuing allegiance to - the

accepted role of a married woman.

CHAPTER SEVEN : NOTES

1. Elder in Haraven (1978), p. 22.
2. This is in accordance with the Rapoport's' notion of adolescence as the stage when the major concerns are the development of identity and the achievement of psychological severence from one's parents.
3. Kelly (1983), pp. 68-79; Edgell (1980), pp. 75-85.
4. Slater and Woodside (1951), p. 87.
5. Sillitoe (1969), p. 36.
6. Hunt (1980), p. 49. This coincides with Edgell's research of middle class couples who also found that husbands tended to be dominant in joint leisure activities. Edgell (1980), pp. 86-88.
7. Hunt (1980), p. 54. Deem and Komarovsky also found that women who were engaged in full-time housework and who had young children, found the greatest difficulty in taking time off. Deem (1982), p. 36; Komarovsky (1967), p. 58.
8. See for instance Young and Wilmott (1973), p. 224; Sillitoe (1969); Deem (1982), p. 43.
9. The factor of whether or not women own transport appears to be related to their age. The highest percentage of women with their own cars are those in the age group 30-45 (50% of that age group) whilst the lowest percentage without cars are those women aged 65 and over (13% of

that age group). Age apart, car ownership appears to be spread quite evenly throughout the various marital statuses, but one obvious point may need emphasis: only those women with husbands can have a husband with a car. Whilst a shared car (and even less - a husband with a car when the wife has no license) does not appear to enhance most women's options for taking free days to any great degree, when, as in the case of older women, car ownership becomes less likely, any car in the household must be better than none. In this way at least, transport is dependent on marital status.

10. See for instance Gavron (1967), p. 111; Sillitoe (1969); Roberts (1976).
11. Social Trends (1983), p. 134.
12. Sillitoe similarly found a considerable increase in television viewing amongst young women as they married and had children. He reported single women aged 23-30 spending 11% of their leisure time watching television whilst married women of this age group with and without children spent 24% and 16% respectively of their leisure time watching television. Sillitoe (1969), Table 10. Typically, however, Sillitoe reports no information on single women aged over 30, and likewise, nothing about married women without children in the age group 31-45.
13. Roberts (1976), p. 11.
14. Roberts (1976).

15. The findings in Buckfastleigh coincide in many ways with those of Deem's survey carried out in Milton Keynes, where those women who were least involved in leisure activities were those who were married, with children under 17, and who had no full driving license or no car for their extensive use. Deem also found that the least active women were those who had left school at the minimum leaving age, and who had not subsequently attended any full-time or further education course, and those who were neither engaged in paid work nor had sufficient household income to permit much expenditure on leisure activities. Unlike the situation in Buckfastleigh, however, Deem found little activity amongst women aged over sixty in Milton Keynes (Deem 1982), which apparently reflects the difference in available activities and the fact that Buckfastleigh supports a wide range of organisations for the elderly.
16. Gavron's research also found little outward-directed leisure amongst working class wives. 44% of the wives in her sample never went out in the evening, and of the 56% who did, only 11% went out without their husbands. Of those women who did go out with their husbands, only just over a quarter of the total sample went out once a week. Gavron (1966), p. 109.
17. Sillitoe (1969).
18. Deem (1982), pp. 35-6.

19. Hart (1976), p. 40.
20. Kelly reports that a survey in the United States indicates that separated people are less likely than any other group to engage in most forms of leisure activities, and suggests that this indicates that 'there is a process of adaptation to singleness that has profound effects on what people do, whom they are with, and where and why they engage in leisure. The family context may gradually be replaced with new relationships of companionship, communication and even intimacy; but it takes time and the learning of new behaviours and role identities'. Kelly (1983), p. 143.
21. Hart (1976), pp. 172-5.
22. Berger and Kellner (1964).
23. Mrs. A's experience of learning to cope alone coincides with Finch's research into the influence of men's work on their wives' lives. As she says, wives whose husband's work takes them away from home for periods of time are freer to devise strategies to meet the needs of their children and themselves, generally finding means which exclude the husband altogether, so that they come to regard him as something external. Finch (1983), p. 67.
24. Fogarty, Rapoport and Rapoport for instance, reporting on women with careers say: 'Past views on this have been biased by the fact not only that those women *who fought* their way through the barriers of discrimination to reach

top positions had often to be exceptionally tough - but also that so many of the women who reached these positions hitherto have been single. Women and men who remain single after usual marriage age tend, as will be shown, to diverge from the attitudes of their own sex towards those of the other'. M. Fogarty, R. Rapoport and R. Rapoport (1971).

25. See Gillespie in Dreitzel (1972), pp. 146-7.
26. See Brown and Harris (1978), pp. 236-9; Hunt (1980), p. 154; Komarovsky (1967), p. 68.
27. Thornes and Collard (1979), p. 105.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Having set out to discover more about marriage and non-marriage - the meaning of each and their effects on women's lives - this research brings into question the accuracy of several generalisations made about women. The female identity is characterised by the notion of a wife and/or mother and little attention is paid to unmarried women's relationship to this concept. The meaning of marriage and the importance of it to married and unmarried women in its relevance for their lives has changed in certain ways throughout this century.

Looking at the situation for working class women in Buckfastleigh at the beginning of this century, the hardship which many of the older sample of women grew up with influenced their outlook on life, including their approach towards marriage and its meaning for them. Living, as the majority of working class daughters did, in cramped surroundings with all the restrictions of time, money, work and leisure opportunities inherent in working class life in a small town, women's ambitions rarely stretched farther than marriage, which offered them a home of their own and an opportunity to stop work and establish their own way of life. Faced with the material insecurity and discomforts of single living, marriage appeared to be the solution to many of the problems women faced, providing them with material advantages

which single living could not. The majority of women had grown up anticipating marriage, having seen the obvious advantages it offered them.

For some women, however, life was less threatened by material hardships and therefore the immediate pressure towards marriage as an escape from home and work was removed. Where home life offered relative comforts and advantages and when work provided reasonable interest and/or money, single living appeared feasible and acceptable. Women brought up in middle class families often lived under such circumstances, but so too did many youngest and only daughters in working class families. From this privileged position marriage could be postponed until the benefits it offered outweighed those provided by single living. Persuading factors might include changed material circumstances or emotional considerations, but until such a reversal of the situation occurred women could afford to delay marriage, and often did so permanently. The additional pressure on youngest daughters to care for their parents increased the likelihood of their non-marriage as they grew older.

The current situation for working class women has changed. Whilst the whole population has moved towards the position of greater security which was previously afforded only to privileged last daughters, the relief from material pressure which made single life feasible for such women earlier this century does little to delay marriage now. Whilst material

comforts remain as one aspect of marriage, these are rarely acknowledged as significant and emotional considerations are now paramount, marriage being portrayed as the best solution to individuals' problems of insecurity and isolation. Seen in this way, improved material standards for single women do little to allay pressure towards marriage, added to which the increased societal awareness of the 'marriageable age bracket' and the more widespread assumption that all women will marry encourages marriage to be seen as an obvious step for all women - and normally before the age of thirty. Parents rarely expect daughters to remain at home to care for them, thereby removing another barrier from marriage and for the majority of women non-marriage is never considered as an option. In this way the previous significance of sibling position for working class daughters appears to have been removed.

Some women however, do remain unmarried and for them, as for some divorced and widowed women, the independence they enjoy apparently outweighs the emotional security they feel marriage promises. Nevertheless, the intangible quality of the ideological pressure towards marriage is powerful and persuasive, and the majority of younger women interviewed anticipated the likelihood of marriage 'eventually'.

Meanings of marriage and non-marriage have therefore changed, but the image of a married woman remains as the symbol of femininity. Women are generally believed to be home-based,

sharing, caring and dependent, all of these issues being based on the notion of a woman who lives with a husband and/or children. Having explored the lives of married and unmarried women living under similar circumstances such notions appear to be of varying relevance for women during the course of this century.

Considering housework, the ideological pressure on women to perform household chores is most persuasive when women share a house with a man, remain at home all day and have children. All the older working class women spoken to - whether married or not - possibly because they were at home during the day, allowed housework to proliferate. Marital status alone is therefore not a determining factor with regard to women's relationship to housework, but neither is gender. Whilst all women apparently have the capacity to identify with the role of a housewife, certain situations provoke this identification whilst others encourage women to view housework from a practical standpoint. Women who are young and live without a male partner appear to be those least likely to identify with the role of housewife and for such women the assumption that being female necessarily implies commitment to the home would appear to be meaningless.

The notion of the woman in the home is linked with marriage in other ways. Marriage is generally associated with a move away from the parental home into an independent dwelling. Earlier this century such a move appeared to be important for

many working class women due to the severe restrictions of space in their parental home, but whilst, with less cramped surroundings this pressure is now often removed, the move remains of equal importance for reasons of establishing independence from parents.

The extent to which women maintain the notion that an independent home implies marriage is reflected not merely in their ability to obtain their own home, but by the degree to which they consider such a move. It would appear that the ideological link between a home and marriage was, and remains strong for many women, but that considerations of a home alone were, and are, a possibility for unmarried women in the past and now. Nevertheless, material and normative considerations at the beginning of this century made such a move very difficult and few unmarried women obtained their own homes until after the death of their parents. The situation has now relaxed somewhat and, whilst in the minority, working class women do indicate their ability to break from the dependence on marriage to provide them with a home and it is currently not only possible to consider such a move, but also to achieve it.

A further implication of the home-based image of women relates to their supposed attitudes towards employment, which is assumed to be of secondary importance to women's home life. Earlier this century in Buckfastleigh the normal pattern of behaviour for women was to marry, give up work and

stay at home. Only married women for whom dire financial need necessitated otherwise seem to have broken this pattern, and unmarried women were therefore unusual in their continued work record beyond the age at which most of their contemporaries were immersed in home life. Unmarried women differed from most married women in that, not only could they not afford to stay at home, the majority of those spoken to appear to feel that they would not have wished to. Unlike those married women who did feel compelled to work to earn money, unmarried women earlier this century seem to have valued their work, not only for the money but also for the interest it provided.

The current increase in employment amongst married women has made unmarried women's position in the labour market less remarkable. Whilst earnings are still an important motive in encouraging women to work, companionship and satisfaction from the job are other relevant factors shared, apparently, by women inside and outside marriage. The general impression gained however, is that women outside marriage possibly value their work more than married women do, being more reluctant to consider giving up work even when financial considerations are removed.

Thus, whilst employment is assumed to be relegated to a low position in women's lives with the belief that women are generally willing to give up paid work and absorb themselves in the home, this is a notion which is based on factors which

are by no means relevant to all. Certain factors make this assumption more likely, these being a lack of choice with regard to employment, the presence of children and a husband, and - as in the past - a strong domestic ideology. Under such circumstances married women earlier this century appear to have viewed work as unimportant and unwelcome, but this is less true of married women now, and inaccurate for many women outside marriage both now and previously, despite the fact that few opportunities exist for working class women to find work which offers intrinsic satisfaction.

One aspect of womanhood which has changed little in its portrayal and apparently in its relevance for married women, is that of the 'caring, sharing' woman, when this is taken to imply sacrificing individual needs to those of the family. All the married women spoken to, whether or not they earned their own money apparently identified with the role of the budgetting housekeeper and were therefore unable to indulge their own wishes guiltlessly. Women outside marriage on the other hand, whatever their material situation (whether earning their own money or not; living with relatives or not) appeared to feel free of the preoccupation with budgetting and sacrifice, suggesting that women adopt this quality as part of the wifely role. Not only do never-married women escape this concept of themselves, but previously married women are able to drop it when they no longer identify with the role of a wife.

The issue of leisure is one which presents particular problems with regard to the distinction between ideological influence and material compromise. On marriage women were, and are, acknowledged to undergo a change in leisure patterns, dropping former women friends and becoming more home-centred. This is a change which is more readily understandable when women have children, but nevertheless appears to affect all women who marry. Because of the predictability of such a pattern and the convenient way in which marriage and the appearance of children generally occurs at a particular time in women's lives, the notion of the family life cycle has evolved, predicting women's life stages at certain ages, and leisure patterns have subsequently been linked with this. Whilst normally accurate for women who conform with the life cycle stages, this pattern has less relevance for women outside the family.

Besides linking actual leisure patterns with the family life cycle however, theories have gone further, implying that leisure activities reflect individuals' preoccupations. Again, this may be the case for many women but for others circumstances dominate. Where local restrictions provide no opportunity for alternative behaviour, women who do not conform with the life cycle patterns of the majority are left with little outlet to express their individual preoccupations through leisure. In this way unmarried women living in Buckfastleigh earlier this century had no option except to

conform with their married contemporaries where leisure was concerned and, due to the home-based preoccupations of their married former friends, single women were often left - sometimes after attempts to update single networks and leisure patterns - with no option other than to become home-based themselves. Nevertheless, such apparent similarity in leisure styles does not necessarily indicate similar preoccupations.

Younger women currently have more opportunity to continue to follow single life styles even when their contemporaries are married, due to changed leisure patterns and fewer restrictions. Under such circumstances women display less identification with the home-based leisure patterns which wives of their age follow. This therefore casts doubt on any assumption that women's leisure patterns are necessarily an indication of their preoccupations, or that changes are necessarily linked with age. Furthermore, all women clearly are not constrained to the same extent by the gender-based assumption that women remain in the home, for never-married and some previously married women are clearly able to enjoy outward-going leisure pursuits. The limited opportunities for leisure in Buckfastleigh, however, prevent further analysis of the extent to which unmarried women might continue to follow single leisure patterns in the absence of any material restraints.

When considering women's feelings about their lives material

circumstances intervene less than they do in behavioural aspects. Women's attitudes therefore display more directly the degree to which the ideology which assumes all women to be wives, rightly or wrongly assumes a similarity in attitudes amongst married and unmarried women. Probably one of the most characteristic qualities of the 'feminine' stereotype is assumed to be women's emphasis on 'emotional' matters and their emotional dependence on men. By virtue of this fact marriage is portrayed as being of considerable importance for women's emotional well-being, and the lives of women outside marriage tend to appear emotionally sparse.

Currently married women and older widows and wives offered little information regarding the emotional satisfaction they in fact gained from their marriages, though some previously married women indicated that marriage by no means always provides emotional fulfilment. The experience of younger women outside marriage demonstrated that unmarried life need not imply a life led with no emotional outlets. Friendships are often of considerable value to unmarried women, though whether this was the case for women outside marriage in the older sample was not clear. Younger women, however, often experienced intimacy through close friendships with women or men, whilst married women, though often having friends, tended to relax the closeness of such relationships after marriage.

Most of the unmarried women of both age groups admitted to feelings of loneliness at times, but some were more adept at

dealing with such feelings than others. Older widows in particular demonstrated the greatest problem in adapting to a life alone, whilst women who had never married appeared well practiced at coping with such emotions. Women who had been separated, divorced or widowed displayed varying degrees of adaptation to single living and the potential loneliness it involved, and as they learnt to adapt to this they generally claimed a feeling of satisfaction in their ability to cope alone. Women thereby indicated that dependence is by no means inevitable or irreversible, and that whilst women outside marriage were not incapable of valuing or experiencing intimacy, they were also able to deal with their lives without the permanent presence of a partner.

The necessity to cope alone implies a degree of self-sufficiency which, in many ways apparently conflicts with the accepted notion of femininity. Though rarely expressed directly, it would appear that single women at times felt that they contravened other people's expectations of femininity by their assertiveness. Not only is assertiveness occasionally necessary for women outside marriage in order to survive materially, but also to clarify their place in the world. Whilst marriage establishes a woman's position in society, transforming her into someone's wife, unmarried women are seen as being in the uncertain position of being someone's daughter, or are left with an undefined role. This role has become even more unclear as marriage rates have escalated and

women need a considerable degree of self-identity to determine their notion of the world for themselves and to project their own identity onto the world. Women clearly do this to varying degrees, but women who were previously married indicate, by their initial struggle and later pride, the necessity and ability of women outside marriage to achieve this. Widows who were unable to regain their sense of self obviously were continuing to evaluate the world from a joint position with their husband, and as such the world appears empty and meaningless.

Due to the readily visible and easily accepted nature of the role of a wife, women often lose their identity whilst within this role, becoming fully dependent on the status-confirming nature of it and the approval of one or a few 'significant others'. In this position women's emotional security is subject to sudden swings if the role changes or the support of the significant other(s) is removed. Women outside marriage, however, having established an identity for themselves, are better equipped to deal with negative assessment from others, rarely having placed total emphasis on one role, the position of an unmarried woman being less clearly defined and therefore consisting of more disparate notions. In this way women outside marriage not only indicate their ability to cope with the world alone, but the paradoxical nature of the emotional security which marriage apparently offers.

Women's sexuality is another area to which marriage appears to supply a ready answer. On marriage it is assumed that women simultaneously confirm and provide for their sexuality in ways in which society can approve. Unmarried women, by contrast, prompt questions as to both of these aspects. These questions have become more relevant to women's apparent femininity during the latter part of this century with the more open discussion of sexuality, and it is difficult to assess how aware older unmarried women were of feelings of curiosity on behalf of those around them in relation to this, sexuality not being an area which older women appeared keen to discuss. Married women of both age groups similarly did not enter into discussion about their views on sexuality but unmarried women in the younger group clearly acknowledged this as an issue, perhaps because for them the validating function of sexuality appears most crucial.

Unmarried women in the younger age group, though at times acknowledging that they were broaching social conventions in the eyes of some, generally appeared to feel that they gained approval by confirming their sexuality. The link between women's sexuality and their marital status seems to be of less importance now than it was earlier this century, but further information regarding women's feelings about their sexual experience inside or outside marriage remains unexplored.

Whilst, therefore, less information than might have been hoped

for was collected regarding married and older women's sexual and emotional experiences, the overall conclusion resulting from this research is that women outside marriage, both now and earlier this century indicate the considerable degree to which assumptions made about women are based only on the experience of women living with husbands. For wives earlier this century, conformity with the wifely image seemed widespread, these women appearing to be committed to housework, the home and their husbands. Single women at that time were considerably restricted by material circumstances from displaying non-identification with the female role as based on married women's behaviour in terms of the way they spent their time, and other behavioural aspects. Nevertheless, in the area of feelings and attitudes, which are less restricted by circumstances and normative pressures, single women indicated considerable differences from the stereotypical womanly approach.

The younger women studied live in surroundings which permit a somewhat wider range of opportunities and behaviour patterns. Married women in this group illustrated more variation in their approach towards housework and employment, but the majority maintained considerable identification with the notion of a home-based, sharing, husband-orientated wife, particularly with regard to budgetting, leisure patterns and networks of friends. Younger women outside marriage indicated that, as material restrictions on behaviour relax, the ideo-

logy which encourages conformity with the married woman's role appears to become less effective, and unmarried women demonstrated less conformity with their married contemporaries by both their behaviour and their attitudes.

Whilst therefore, material opportunities often influence the ways in which women lead their lives, never-married women - whatever their age - and also many previously married women, appear to flout the wifely image in more basic ways with regard to their approach to life. Certain of the presumed 'feminine' qualities which are based on a wife's dependence on her husband, thereby implying a woman's non-assertive, self-sacrificing behaviour and attitudes, are irrelevant for women living a single life. In this way unmarried women may appear to broach 'feminine' norms, although this does not necessarily prevent them from exhibiting other 'feminine' qualities such as maintaining caring relationships with friends and family, having sexual relationships with men, nor apparently does it permanently free them from a propensity to identify with domestic chores or the ideology which proposes marriage as an answer to insecurity.

During this research certain issues which had been anticipated as relevant remained relatively unexplored. These included areas where reticence to create embarrassment prevented further probing, particularly with regard to emotional and sexual matters. Various aspects of leisure proved too complex to analyse satisfactorily and much information gathered from the

questionnaire remained as thought-provoking pointers which were developed no further. Besides attitudes and ways of behaving, other information from the questionnaire including the influence of variables such as family of origin, education and social class on women's lives remained under-explored, again due to the complexity of categorising and analysing them. One more basic gap in the study was the inability to find respondents in the younger age group representative of unmarried women of working class origins currently living with their parents.

Further research would hopefully remedy this latter problem by basing the study in a larger community which, though lacking the advantages of a small town in terms of the accessibility of data regarding context, would offer a wider range of respondents, though ways of selecting them would vary little. A larger town however, might provide more opportunity to distinguish the relative influence of material and ideological factors. Within a small town, where opportunities for deviations from the norm were, and to some considerable extent still are, very limited, the degree to which unmarried women compromise due to ideological conformity or material restrictions remains largely undetermined. Whilst no definitive division between material and ideological factors had been anticipated, the two being closely inter-related, a study in a larger town with more opportunity for 'un-wifely' behaviour may carry a distinction between the two a little farther. A larger sample, a comparison with another town and/

or with women of different class origins would also be of value.

One issue which is closely related to this study but was left largely unexplored is that of the influence of children on women's lives. The distinction is rarely made between wives who are or are not mothers, though many assumptions appear to be based on the premise that all wives have children. Issues of remarriage and cohabitation also demand consideration and comparison between the lives of unmarried women and unmarried men might prove illuminating.

This research therefore only goes some way towards examining the importance of marital status on women's lives, having explored only the experience of two small samples of working class women living in one small town at a particular time. The implication of the study however, is the need to reassess the current notion of femininity, for if women outside marriage appear to be unfeminine this may well imply that the notion of women is marriage-based. It would appear therefore, that generalisations made from the lives of married women cannot necessarily be assumed to cover the range of female experience or be applicable to women outside marriage.

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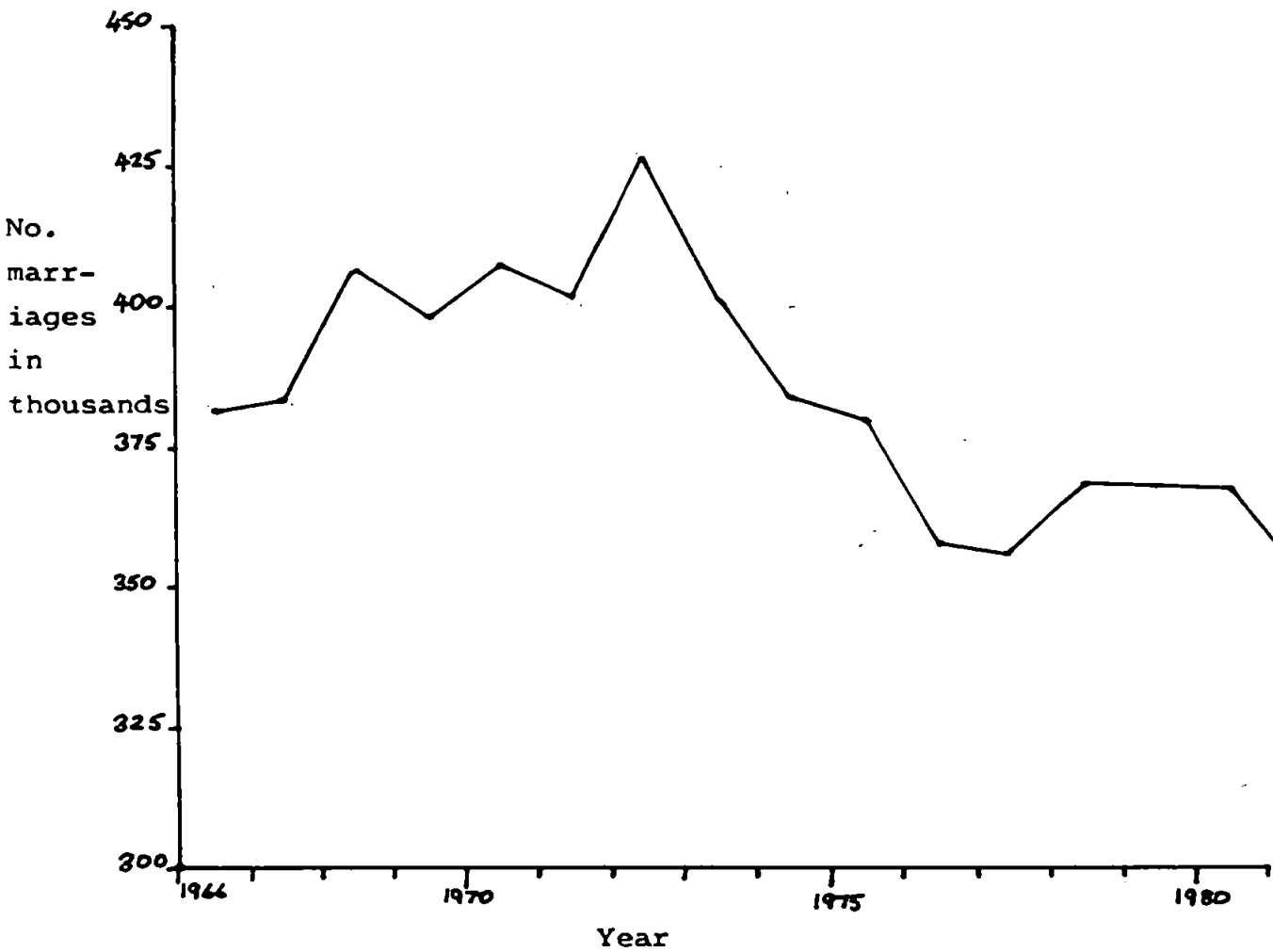
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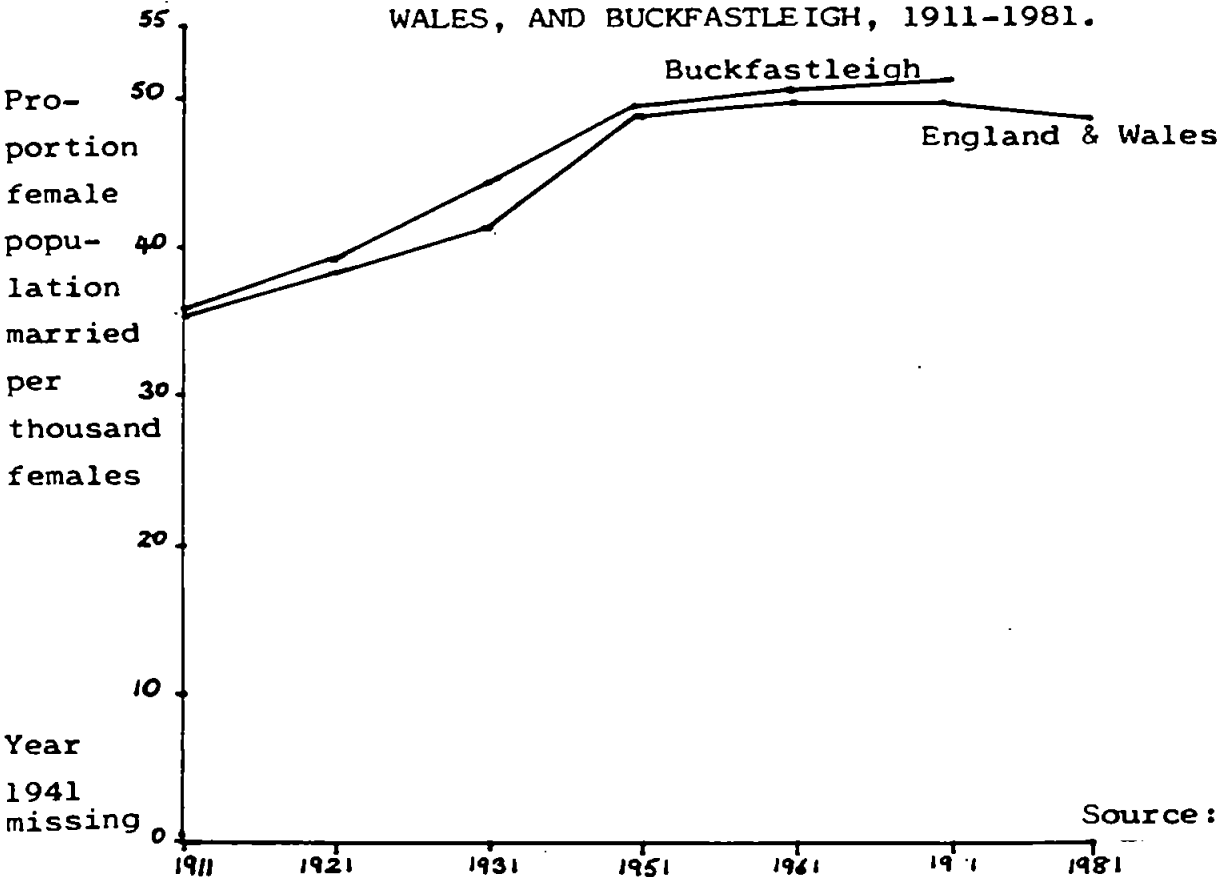
A P P E N D I X I

TABLE A - TOTAL NUMBER OF MARRIAGES ENGLAND & WALES 1966-1981



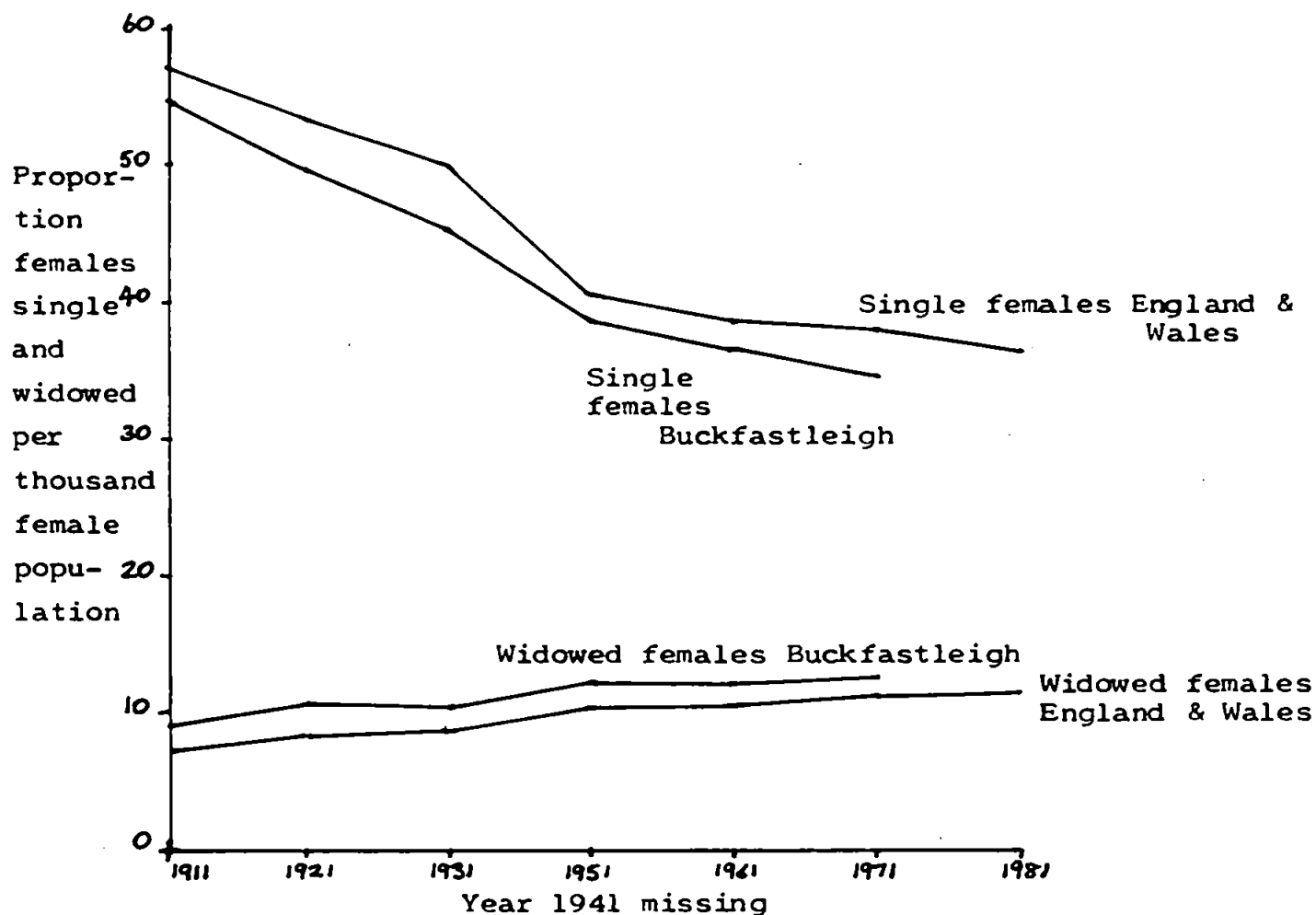
Source: Birth Statistics 1980

TABLE B - PROPORTION FEMALE POPULATION MARRIED, ENGLAND & WALES, AND BUCKFASTLEIGH, 1911-1981.



Source: Census Data

TABLE C - PROPORTION FEMALE POPULATION SINGLE, AND WIDOWED, ENGLAND & WALES, AND BUCKFASTLEIGH 1911-1981



Source: Census Data

TABLE D - FEMALE POPULATION STRUCTURE BUCKFASTLEIGH AND ENGLAND & WALES 1981

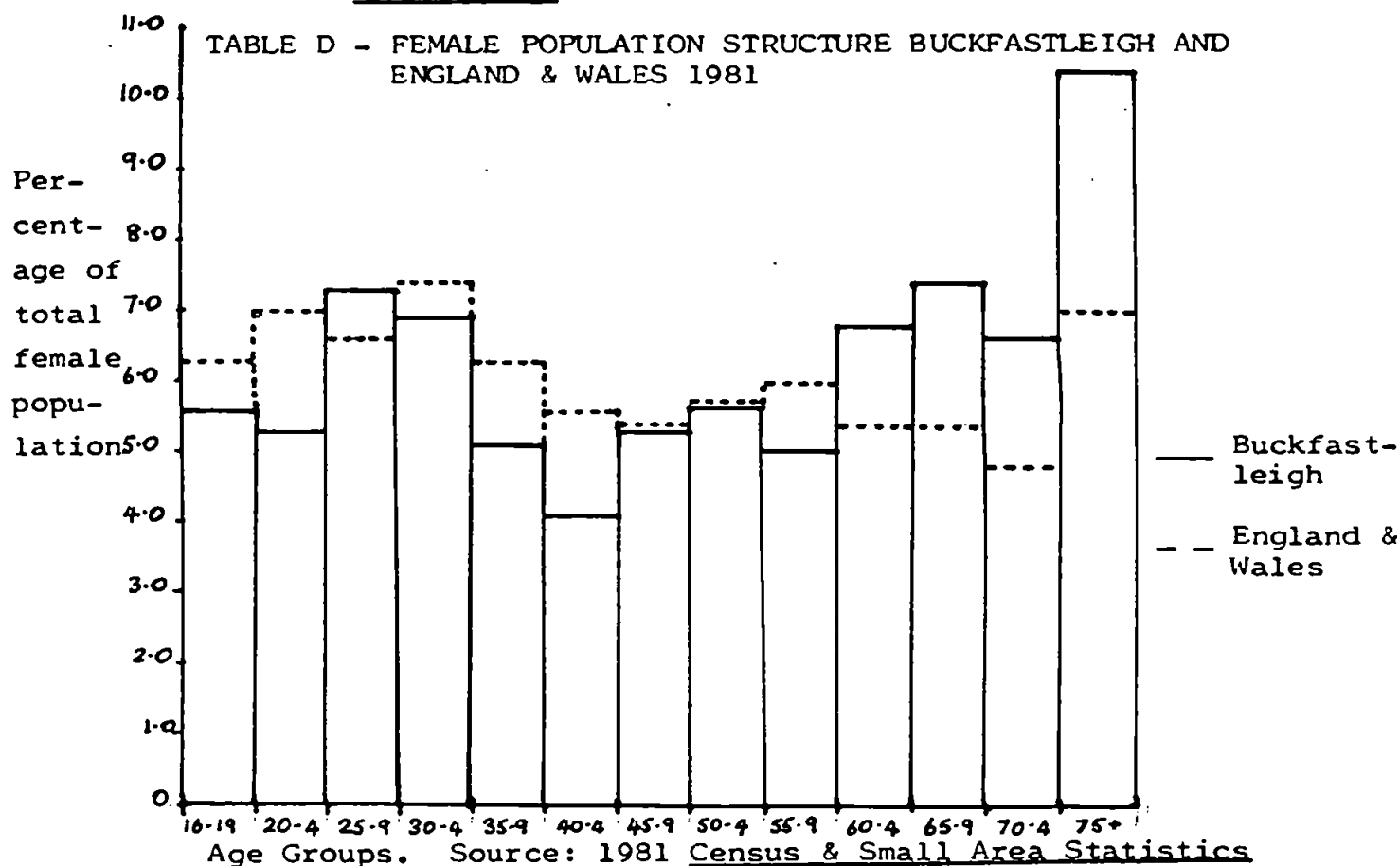


TABLE E - PROPORTION OF WOMEN MARRIED PER THOUSAND
POPULATION BUCKFASTLEIGH, ENGLAND & WALES
(of each group)

AGE GROUP		1931	1951	1961	1971	1981
15-19	B	45	43	56	111	31
	E&W	18	44	66	87	45
20-24	B	214	529	714	643	494
	E&W	257	481	578	597	453
25-34	B	607	809	877	783	820
	E&W	658	798	855	869	804
35-44	B	729	808	793	897	837
	E&W	752	823	867	888	860
45-54	B	726	768	763	788	817
	E&W	720	763	803	836	834
55-64	B	628	618	681	674	711
	E&W	619	622	661	699	728
65+	B	407	332	395	435	440
	E&W	341	351	343	355	393
Overall Rate	B	536	601	621	611	616
	E&W	534	618	636	643	672

TABLE F - PROPORTION WOMEN MARRIED PER THOUSAND POPULATION
1981 (of each group)

Age Group	England & Wales	Devon	Buckfastleigh
16-19	56	57	37
20-24	453	480	494
25-29	757	768	811
30-34	845	848	830
35-39	861	858	824
40-44	859	853	852
45-49	848	836	883
50-54	820	813	753
55-59	767	758	726
60-64	686	694	700
65-69	571	591	556
70-74	439	462	567
75+	223	235	276
TOTAL	492	495	501
TOTAL NOS.	24,513,646	392,490	1,185

Sources: 1981 Census, Small Area Statistics

A P P E N D I X 2

OLDER WOMEN

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	FAMILY POSITION	MARITAL STATUS	EMPLOYMENT
Miss C.	1912	5th child of 6 (younger brother)	Single	Mill
Miss D.	1898	Youngest of 4	Single	Mill
Miss H.	1905	Youngest of 5	Single	Shop work
Miss J.	1906	7th of 9	Married at 22	Mill
Miss L.	1904	Youngest of 3 (with twin brother)	Single	Dressmaker
Mrs. M.	1902	Only child	Widowed Married at 33	Domestic service
Mrs. P.	1898	2nd of 4	Widowed Married at 34	Domestic service
Mrs. S.	1903	3rd of 4	Widowed Married mid 20's	Mill
Mrs. V.	1910	6th of 9	Widowed married at 20	Domestic service
Mrs. W.	1901	Oldest of 6	Widowed married at 39	Mill, then nurse

YOUNGER WOMEN

Mrs. A.	1953	Second of 7	Separated married at 20	Odd jobs
Miss B.	1959	Youngest of 5	Single (with son)	Hotel work
Miss G.	1949	Oldest of 4	Single	Teacher
Mrs. I.	1958	3rd of 4	Divorced	Odd jobs
Mrs. T.	1954	Oldest of 3	Married at 21	Hairdresser
Mrs. Y.	1934	Oldest of 3	Widowed married at 23	Secretary

Further information from Mrs. N. (aged 30, married),
Mrs. E. (aged 35, separated), Miss F. (aged 30, single),
and Mrs. K. (aged 34, divorced)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FROM:

Mr. D.	Previously keen trade unionist
Mr. F.	Ex manager of Co-op.
Mr. J.	Local historian, ex mill worker
Mr. N.	Ex mill worker
Mr. O.	Ex mill manager
Mrs. O.	Mill manager's wife
Mr. S.	Ex mill worker
Mr. T.	Local historian

A P P E N D I X 3

QUESTIONNAIRE SCHEDULE (administered to 62 women)

1. Could you tell me how long you've lived in Buckfastleigh?
2. Where were you living before?
3. (a) And have you lived in any other places?
(b) Where was that?
4. How many other people live here with you?
(a) Could you tell me what relation to you they are,
and what they do?

RELATION

AGE IF CHILD

OCCUPATION

5. (a) Do you do any paid work?
(b) What do you do?
(c) Where do you work?
(d) How many days a week do you do that?
(e) What hours do you work?
(f) How long have you been doing that job?
6. (a) What was your last job?
(b) Was that full-time?
(c) When did you stop doing that?
7. Can I talk first about housework, if I go through the basic household chores, could you tell me roughly how many hours each week you spend on them?
(a) washing (b) ironing (c) cleaning.
(is that with a machine)
Do you have any particular routine?
(d) cooking and preparing meals (e) shopping
8. (a) Do you enjoy of those? (b) Which?
9. (a) Do you get help with any of those chores?
(b) With which ones?
(c) Who from?
(d) How much help?
10. (a) Besides housework (and your paid work) do you have any other commitments which take up your time or make you less free than you would otherwise be?
(b) What are they?
(c) How much time do they take up?
11. (a) If you have a short spell of time free from your chores during the day how do you spend your time?
(b) Would that be the same in the winter as the summer?

12. About how much free time do you have each day?
13. How often do you have evenings completely free to do what you like?
14. And when you do have a free evening how are you most likely to spend it?
15. If you have a day completely free how are you most likely to spend it?
16. About how often would you say that happened?
17. Which of the things in your daily routine would you say gave you the most pleasure?
18. Why do you think that is?

I'd like to ask you about transport:

19. (a) Do you have a driving licence?
(b) Do you have any means of transport of your own?
(c) Do you ever have access to any means of transport?
20. (a) About how often do you go to places outside of Buckfastleigh?
(b) Where do you go?
(c) What do you do there?
21. (a) Would you like to go outside of Buckfastleigh more often?
(b) Where would you like to go?
(c) Why would you like to go there?

Can I ask you now about what activities you're involved in, or have been in the past?

22. (a) Do you go to any club or any other sort of organisation?
PRESENT (b) Which ones?
(c) About how often do you do that?
PAST
23. (a) Have you belonged to any (others) in the past?
(b) Which ones?
(c) When was it?
(d) And how often did you go?
(e) Why did you stop going?

24. (a) Are you involved with any of the Church or Chapel activities?
(b) Which ones?
(c) How often do you do it?

IF NO:

25. (a) Were you ever involved in the past?
(b) When was that?
(c) What did you do?
(d) How often did you do that?
(e) Why did you stop?
26. (a) Do you take any interest in games or sports or keep fit of any sort?
(b) What do you do?
(c) How often do you do that?

IF NO:

27. (a) Have you ever done in the past?
(b) What did you do?
(c) When was that?
(d) How often did you do that?
(e) Why did you stop?
28. (a) Do you go to any other activities such as evening classes or political or union meetings?
(b) Which ones?
(c) How often do you go?

IF NO:

29. (a) Did you ever in the past?
(b) When was that?
(c) What did you do?
(d) How often did you do that?
(e) Why did you stop?
30. (a) Do you ever go out for a drink?
(b) Where do you go?
(c) About how often do you do that?

IF NO:

31. (a) Did you used to in the past?
(b) When was that?
(c) About how often did you do that?
(d) Why do you think you stopped?

32. (a) And do you have a television?
(b) About how many hours each week do you think you spend watching television?
(c) Are you generally doing anything else whilst you're watching television?
33. (a) Do you spend much time reading?
(b) About how much time do you think you spend each week?
(c) What do you read mostly?
34. (a) Do you read any magazines regularly?
(b) Which ones?
35. (a) Can you think of anything else that you spend your time doing which I haven't mentioned?
(b) What?
(c) How much time do you think that takes up?
36. (a) Of all the things which you spend your time doing are there any which you'd sooner spend less time doing?
(b) Which ones?
37. (a) If you didn't have to consider money at all, do you think you'd change the way you spend your free time in any way?
(b) What do you think you'd do differently?
38. (a) Did you have a holiday last year?
(b) What did you do?
(c) Who was that with?
39. (a) When was your last holiday before that/When did you last have a holiday?
(b) What did you do then?
40. What sort of holiday would you ideally like?
41. (a) Would you say that the way you spend your time has changed much over the last 2 or 3 years?
(b) In what ways has it changed?
(c) What do you think has caused those changes?
42. (a) Looking back farther over your life, would you say there have been any (other) things in your life which have caused change in the way you spend your time?
(b) What were they?
(c) How did that affect the way you spend your time?

Can I ask you now about who you spend your time with?

43. (a) Would you say that you had any close friends?
(b) Are they mostly men or women friends?
(c) About how many/Who are they?
(d) Where do they live?
(e) About how often do you see them?
(f) What do you do when you see them?
44. Of the things you've said that you spend most of your free time doing, could you tell me who you normally do these things with or whether you do them by yourself: what about:
- | | WHO WITH | ALONE |
|--------------------------|----------|-------|
| going to club meetings | | |
| Church activities | | |
| games/sports/keep fit | | |
| evening classes | | |
| political meetings | | |
| going out for a drink | | |
| watching television | | |
| child related activities | | |
| other | | |
45. Of the things you've said you do, which do you think are your favourite ways of spending time?
(a) Why do you think that is?
46. Of the things you do at home, which would you say are the most enjoyable?
47. (a) Do you have as much free time as you would like?
IF NO
(b) What would you do if you had more free time?
- IF LIVING WITH MAN
48. (a) Would you say that you had more, less, or about the same amount of free time as your husband/brother/boyfriend ...
(b) What are the main ways in which he spends his free time?
49. Can I ask you roughly what age you are?
50. (a) Do you have any brothers or sisters?
(b) Are they older or younger than you?
51. (a) Do any of your family live in Buckfastleigh or nearby?
(b) Who is that?
(c) Where do they live?

52. How often do you see any members of your family?
53. What job did your father do?
54. What job did your mother do?
55. Which was the last school you went to?
56. And how old were you when you left there?
57. And what did you do next?
58. Did you do any further education?
59. And you're married/Are you married or single?
60. Have you ever been married/How long have you been widowed/divorced?
61. What age were you when you married?
62. And you have x children/Do you have any children?
63. What are their ages?

That's all; thank you very much for your help.

SCHEDULE FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH OLDER WOMEN

(not necessarily administered in this order)

PART I CHILDHOOD - WORK

1. Basic Information

- (a) Year of birth
- (b) Marital status
- (c) Year of marriage

2. Family of origin

- (a) Birthplace
- (b) How long lived there
- (c) Where did you live then
- (d) Do you know why your family moved
- (e) Where next - and for further moves
- (f) How many brothers and sisters did you have
- (g) Spacing, order

3. Father

- (a) Can you tell me about your father, was he from a big family
- (b) How many brothers and sisters did he have
- (c) Did any of them live near you
- (d) Where was he from
- (e) What was his job
- (f) And before that
- (g) How long did he live
- (h) When did he die

4. Mother

- (a) What about your mother, how many brothers and sisters did she have
- (b) What was her maiden name
- (c) Where did her family come from
- (d) Did any of her brothers and sisters live near you
- (e) Did she work before she was married
- (f) What did she do
- (g) Did she go on doing that after she was married
- (h) Do you know about how old your parents were when they married
- (i) And did she work after she had children
- (j) Doing what
- (k) Who looked after the children whilst she was at work

5. Housing and household routine

- (a) Can you tell me about the house where you grew up
- (b) How many rooms were there
- (c) Sleeping arrangements, bathroom
- (d) Did anyone else besides your parents and your brothers and sisters ever live there - relatives - did your parents ever take in any lodgers
- (e) Who, why, for how long
- (f) Who would do the cleaning in the house, and the laundry, cooking, washing-up, making fires, repairs, gardening
- (g) Did you help
- (h) Did you have any regular chores to do in the house
- (i) How long did you continue to do these
- (j) What did your sisters do in the house
- (k) What did your brothers do
- (l) What did your father do in the house
- (m) Were there things he wouldn't do

6. Childcare

- (a) Did your father ever look after you
- (b) Did he ever take you out without your mother
- (c) Who used to dress you when you were very young
- (d) And who would bath you, tell you stories, put you to bed
- (e) Were you expected to go to bed at a certain time
- (f) Can you remember your mother ever being ill. What would happen then

7. Mealtimes

- (a) Where did your family eat their meals
- (b) Did you all eat together
- (c) When would you have breakfast
- (d) What would you normally eat
- (e) And would you all have dinner and tea together
- (f) Did your mother make her own bread, jam, etc.
- (g) Did you have anything special to eat on special days, like Sundays
- (h) Were you allowed to talk during meals
- (i) Did you say grace before meals
- (j) Were your parents strict about when you could leave the table
- (k) Did people other than your family ever eat with you
- (l) Who, on what occasions

8. Clothing, housekeeping

- (a) How often did you have new clothes
- (b) Did your mother make most of your clothes
- (c) Do you know what happened about housekeeping, did your father give all of his wages to your mother. What would he get back

9. Relationship with parents

- (a) Was your mother an easy person to talk to

- (b) Did she cuddle you, comfort you when you were upset, tuck you into bed
- (c) If you had any worries could you share them with her. Were there things you couldn't talk to her about
- (d) Was your father easy to talk to
- (e) Would he cuddle you
- (f) Could you talk to him about any worries you had
- (g) Were there things you felt you couldn't talk to him about
- (h) Was there anyone else you could talk to if you were worried or upset
- (i) Who. Why do you think they were more easy to talk to than your parents
- (j) Do you think your parents brought you up to consider certain things particularly important in life
- (k) What were they
- (l) What sort of person do you think they hoped you'd grow up to be
- (m) What sort of things would make your father angry
- (n) Can you remember ever being punished by him
- (o) What for. How.
- (p) What sort of thing would make your mother angry
- (q) Can you remember ever being punished by her
- (r) What for. How.
- (s) Was one parent more strict than the other
- (t) In what way
- (u) Did your father ever play games with you
- (v) Did your mother ever play games with you.

10. Special occasions and outings

- (a) When you had a birthday would it be different from any other day
- (b) Would you have presents. What sort of things
- (c) Would you have special food, guests
- (d) What would happen at Christmas
- (e) Were you taken out visiting neighbours or friends or relatives
- (f) Who with
- (g) Did you go on any outings as a family
- (h) Did you ever go away for a holiday

Sundays and religion

- (i) What would happen on Sundays, would you wear special clothes
- (j) Could you play games
- (k) Did you go to Church or Sunday School
- (l) Which Church
- (m) Did your mother go to Church
- (n) Was she involved in the Church in any other way
- (o) Did your father go
- (p) Was he involved in the Church in any other way
- (q) Were you taught to say prayers as a child
- (r) Did religion mean much to you as a child
- (s) Why

11. Politics - Did your father seem to take much interest in politics

- (a) Do you know what his views were
- (b) Did he belong to a trade union
- (c) Did your mother take much interest in politics
- (d) Do you know what her views were
- (e) Did she ever belong to a trade union
- (f) Do you remember anything about the General Strike
- (g) Did your mother ever talk about the Suffragette movement
- (h) Can you remember anything about the First World War
- (i) Was your father involved
- (j) Did your mother work then
- (k) What about the Depression in the 20's and 30's, did it affect your family. How.
- (l) Was your father ever out of work
- (m) Do you remember your father ever being ill
- (n) What would happen then

12. Parents' leisure, friends, networks

- (a) Did your parents ever go out together
- (b) Where would they go - walking, dancing, cinema
- (c) Did your mother ever go out alone, without your father
- (d) Where, who with
- (e) Who were her friends, names. How did she know them
- (f) Did they come to visit her at home
- (g) Did she visit theirs
- (h) Do you think your father minded her going out
- (i) Who would look after you whilst she was out
- (j) How did she spend her time at home. Did she read, play instruments, games
- (k) How about your father, how many evenings a week did he spend at home
- (l) What time did he get home from work
- (m) How would he spend his time at home
- (n) When he wasn't at home what would he be doing
- (o) Who with. Names of friends
- (p) How did he know them
- (q) Did they visit your home
- (r) Did he visit theirs
- (s) Do you think your mother minded him going out
- (t) Did your parents have any shared friends who they'd go out together with
- (u) Would they visit them at home
- (v) Did people call in without an invitation
- (w) How often did your mother see her relatives
- (x) Did they visit you
- (y) Did you visit them
- (z) Where did they live
- (A) Did you ever go to stay with them. Why
- (B) Do you think they influenced you in any way
- (C) How often did your father see his relatives

- (D) Did they visit you, you visit them, stay with them
- (E) Where did they live
- (F) Did they influence you in any way
- (G) Did your mother see much of your neighbours
- (H) How often, in what way
- (I) Did she get much help from the neighbours
- (J) What sort of help, baby sitting, during illness
- (K) Did she ever help them
- (L) Would they come into your house
- (M) Did your father ever help the neighbours
- (N) In what way

13. Local and national events

- (a) Who do you think were considered the important people in Buckfastleigh in those days
- (b) Why
- (c) Did you come into contact with them in any way
- (d) What did your parents think of them
- (e) Were there any people who were disapproved of
- (f) Who, why
- (g) Did you take any newspapers at home
- (h) Which ones
- (i) Did you ever read them

14. Own friends, leisure, pre-school

- (a) As a small child who did you play with
- (b) Did you play with your brothers
- (c) Did you ever fight with them
- (d) Over what sort of thing
- (e) Which one particularly
- (f) Did you play with your sisters
- (g) Did you ever fight with them
- (h) Over what sort of thing
- (i) Which one particularly
- (j) Who were your other friends before you went to school
- (k) Names. How did you know them

15. School

- (a) How old were you when you started school
- (b) Which school was that
- (c) Was it mixed
- (d) About how many children were in each class, were they mixed ages
- (e) Did you have all your lessons together
- (f) Were the teachers male or female
- (g) Were you frightened of the teachers
- (h) What would happen if you did anything they disapproved of
- (i) Do you remember the teachers ever doing anything you thought was unfair
- (j) What did you like about school
- (k) What didn't you like
- (l) Did the teachers encourage you to work hard at school
- (m) Did your parents encourage you to work hard

- (n) Do you remember them hoping that you would have any particular job when you left school
- (o) Did you hope for any particular job
- (p) What were considered to be the best jobs a girl could do
- (q) Didn't girls go into teaching or nursing or anything like that
- (r) Did you know any women doing that sort of job

Friends, leisure, school age

- (s) Who were your friends when you were at school
- (t) Names
- (u) Did they live near you, go to the same school as you
- (v) Did it matter whether or not they went to the Catholic school
- (w) Did your parents ever say there were certain children you shouldn't play with
- (x) Why
- (y) Were there certain children they particularly liked you to play with
- (z) Did girls and boys play together
- (A) Was there any age when you stopped playing with boys. Why.
- (B) What games did you play
- (C) Did you ever run errands for money
- (D) For whom. How often
- (E) Would that money be yours or would you give it to your parents
- (F) Were you given pocket money
- (G) What would you spend it on

16. Leaving school

- (a) How old were you when you left school
- (b) Did you want to leave then
- (c) Why
- (d) Would you have stayed on longer/left earlier if you'd had the choice
- (e) Did any of your friends stay on longer/leave earlier
- (f) Were you doing any part-time work whilst you were still at school

17. Knowledge of facts of life

- (a) By the time you left school did you understand about the facts of life
- (b) How had you learnt about them. Parents. Teachers. Friends
- (c) At about what age
- (d) Had your mother explained to you what would happen to you when you had your periods
- (e) Were you able to talk to her about that sort of thing

PART II EARLY WORK EXPERIENCE - MARRIAGE (Late 20's)

18. First job

- (a) What was your first job
- (b) Was that what you wanted to do
- (c) Was it what your mother wanted you to do
- (d) Why
- (e) Was it what your father wanted you to do
- (f) Why
- (g) When you started it, did you think you'd be there for long
- (h) How did you learn the job
- (i) About how many people were you working with
- (j) Men or women
- (k) What ages were they
- (l) Did any of your friends do the same job
- (m) Was anyone else you knew working there
- (n) What exactly were you doing
- (o) Was it only women who did that job. Did men earn the same money
- (p) Who was in charge of you
- (q) What other jobs were done by women. What by men.
- (r) Which jobs were considered the best jobs
- (s) What sort of girls would do those jobs
- (t) Were there other jobs which people didn't want to do
- (u) Were there some departments which didn't get on well with others. Why

19. Wages

- (a) What were you paid
- (b) Did you give that all to your mother. Did your brothers do the same
- (c) How much did you get back
- (d) What did you spend it on
- (e) How long did you go on giving your wages to your mother

20. Friends and leisure, whilst at work

- (a) Did you make new friends at work
- (b) Did you see them outside of work
- (c) Where were they from
- (d) Did you go on seeing your old school friends (names)
- (e) Did you feel that your life changed much when you started work
- (f) Did you begin to go out more
- (g) Where, cinema, dancing
- (h) How often
- (i) Who with, with new friends
- (j) How did your mother feel about that
- (k) Did she ever try to interfere with your choice of friends
- (l) Did she ever try to interfere with where you went
- (m) Did your father try to interfere with your choice of friends
- (n) Or where you went
- (o) Did you have to be at home by a certain time

- (p) What time
- (q) What would happen if you weren't
- (r) How would you spend your time when you weren't going out
- (s) Were there boys with whom you were friendly

21. Boyfriends; own and parents' attitudes towards marriage

- (a) Can you remember your first proper boyfriend
- (b) How did you meet him
- (c) What was his job
- (d) Where did he live
- (e) Where would you go courting
- (f) Was that what your friends would do
- (g) Did your parents know about him
- (h) What did your mother say about that
- (i) What did your father say
- (j) What happened to him
- (k) Did you have any other boyfriends after him
- (l) Did you grow up expecting to be married
- (m) Do you think your parents wanted you to be married
- (n) Could you talk about your boyfriends with your mother
- (o) Could you talk about your boyfriends with your father
- (p) Did you bring them home to meet your parents

22. Later on; thoughts of leaving home; politics

- (a) How soon did you start earning more money
- (b) Did you ever consider leaving your parents and living on your own
- (c) Or living with a friend
- (d) Why/why not/with whom
- (e) If you had wanted to would you have been able to manage to do that on your wages
- (f) Did you belong to a trade union
- (g) Were you interested in politics

PART III (a) MARRIAGE

23. Wedding

- (a) What age were you when you married
- (b) How old was your husband
- (c) How long had you known your husband then
- (d) How did you meet him
- (e) Where did he come from
- (f) What was his job
- (g) Did you get engaged first
- (h) Can you tell me about your wedding
- (i) Did you have a honeymoon

24. First home

- (a) Where did you live after you were married
- (b) What was your first house like
- (c) How many rooms did you have

Relationship with parents after marriage

- (d) Did your parents help you to set up a house
- (e) In what ways
- (f) Did they help you later on
- (g) In what ways
- (h) Or were you helping them at all
- (i) Do you think your mother was pleased you were marrying
- (j) Do you think your father was pleased you were marrying
- (k) Did you ever consider moving away from the area
- (l) Why/why not

25. Work after marriage

- (a) Did you go on working after you were married (IF YES)
- (b) Did you want to go on working
- (c) Why/why not
- (d) Did your husband want you to go on working. Why/why not
- (e) Did you go on doing the same job
- (f) Did you feel differently about work after you were married
- (g) In what way, why
- (h) About how much time did you spend doing housework
- (i) What did your husband do in the house
- (j) What wouldn't he do
- (k) Did you ever find it difficult looking after the house whilst still doing a job
- (l) How did you spend your wages

Not working after marriage

- (m) Did you want to stop work
- (n) What did your husband think about your stopping work
- (o) Did you ever feel lonely being at home whilst he was at work
- (p) How did you spend your time

26. Both - Housekeeping

- (a) Did you know how much money your husband earned
- (b) How much money would he give to you from his wages
- (c) Did he pay any of the bills himself
- (d) If you wanted to buy something special who would decide about it
- (e) Did you have your own spending money
- (f) What sort of things would you buy

27. Friends, leisure

- (a) Did you go on seeing your friends once you were married (names)
- (b) How often
- (c) What would you do with them
- (d) Would you go out with them without your husband
- (e) Would you go out with them with your husband
- (f) Did they come to your home
- (g) Did you go to their home
- (h) Would your husband come

- (i) Did your husband go out with his friends
- (j) Who were they
- (k) Where did they live
- (l) What would he do with them
- (m) How often
- (n) Did you ever go out with them
- (o) How often
- (p) Did they come to your home
- (q) Did you make new friends after you were married
- (r) Who
- (s) Where did you meet them
- (t) Did you and your husband go out together
- (u) Where, cinema, dancing, walking
- (v) Who would you go with
- (w) How often
- (x) Did you miss any of your old friends
- (y) Did you see much of your neighbours
- (z) Did you help them in any way
- (A) What ways
- (B) Did they help you
- (C) Did your husband make friends with any of the neighbours
- (D) Would he help them
- (E) How
- (F) Did they come into your house
- (G) Did you go into theirs
- (H) Did your husband see his parents much after he was married
- (I) How often
- (J) Where
- (K) Did they come to your house
- (L) Did you go to theirs
- (M) What about the rest of his family - did he see them often.
- (N) When, where
- (O) Did you see them often
- (P) How often did you see your parents after you were married
- (Q) Where
- (R) Did your husband see them often
- (S) Did they come to your house
- (T) Did you go to theirs
- (U) Did your husband come
- (V) What about the rest of your family
- (W) Whose family did you see the most of
- (X) Why

28. Attitudes towards marriage - single people

- (a) Did you have any friends who stayed unmarried
- (b) What sort of a life do you think they had
- (c) In what way do you think their life was different to yours
- (d) What problems do you think they had
- (e) Do you think there were certain places they couldn't go alone
- (f) Did you ever consider staying unmarried
- (g) What do you think were the advantages of marrying

- (h) If you hadn't married would it have affected your working life
- (i) Could you have managed to have lived on just your wages if you had been single
- (j) Were there ever times when you envied people who were single
- (k) Why
- (l) If you had your life again, would you marry again

29. If children

- (a) When did you have your first child
- (b) Did you go on working after
- (c) If yes - who looked after the baby
- (d) Did you want to go on/stop working
- (e) How many more children did you have
- (f) Order, spacing
- (g) Did you and your husband discuss how many children you wanted
- (h) Did you want to have x children
- (i) What did your husband do to look after the children
- (j) Did you have help from anyone else
- (k) Did your life change very much after the children arrived
- (l) Did you see less of your friends
- (m) Did you see more of your family
- (n) Did you see more of your neighbours
- (o) Did you still go out with your friends
- (p) Who would look after the children
- (q) Did your husband still go out with his friends

30. Both - Illness

- (a) What would happen if you were ill, who would look after you (and the children)
- (b) Were you ill very often

31. Special occasions

- (a) How did you spend Christmas
- (b) Did you have holidays
- (c) How often
- (d) What would you do

PART III (b) SINGLE

32.

- (a) How long did you go on going out to dances with friends (if relevant)
- (b) Did many of your friends marry
- (c) At what age
- (d) Did that mean that you saw less of them
- (e) Did you have many friends who stayed single
- (f) Women friends
- (g) And men
- (h) What do you think were the advantages of staying single

33. Own home

- (a) When did you start living on your own
- (b) Where was that
- (c) How many rooms did you have
- (d) Did you find it difficult to manage on your wages
- (e) At any time in particular

34. Friends, leisure, networks

- (a) Who were the friends you saw most of then
- (b) Did you still see your old friends (names)
Where, when. Did you go to their homes, did they
come to yours
- (c) How often did you see your parents/brothers, sisters
- (d) Where
- (e) Did they come to your home
- (f) Did you go to theirs
- (g) Did you see your neighbours often
- (h) Did you help them at all
- (i) In what ways
- (j) Did they help you
- (k) In what ways
- (l) Did you make any new friends when you started living on
your own. Who
- (m) How did you meet them
- (n) Did you ever feel lonely
- (o) At any times in particular

35. Housework

- (a) About how much time do you think you used to spend
doing housework
- (b) Did your friends used to visit you at home
- (c) Did your relatives used to visit you at home

36. Illness

- (a) What would happen if you were ill
- (b) Were you ill very often

37. Special occasions

- (a) How did you spend Christmas
- (b) Did you have holidays
- (c) What would you do
- (d) How often

38. Attitudes towards marriage, and being single

- (a) Do you think your mother was pleased that you stayed single
- (b) Do you think your father was pleased
- (c) Did many of your brothers and sisters stay single
- (d) What do you think are the advantages of being single
- (e) What do you think are the disadvantages
- (f) Were there certain occasions when you felt you would have
liked to have done things, but felt you couldn't because
you weren't married

- (g) Were there places you felt you couldn't go because you weren't married
- (h) Do you think you made a conscious decision to stay unmarried or do you think it just happened that way
- (i) If you had your life again, would you stay single again
- (j) Why

SCHEDULE FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH YOUNGER WOMEN
(not necessarily administered in this order)

BASIC INFORMATION

Year of birth
Marital status
Year of marriage
Number of children
Age of children
Year marriage ended

FAMILY OF ORIGIN

Birthplace
How long lived there
Where next
Further moves. What prompted moves
How many brothers and sisters
Spacing, order
Father's job
Mother's job
Mother - work after having children
What social class would you say your family was
What social class would you say you were now
Why do you think you've changed

RELATIONSHIP WITH FAMILY

Do you think of your childhood as having been happy
Did you feel close to either of your parents
Which one
Did you feel close to any of your brothers and sisters
Which one
How did you get on with the others
Was there anyone else you could confide in
How close do you feel to your family now
Do you feel close to anyone of your family in particular
Do you think there has been any change over time
What prompted the change
Where do your family live now
Where do your parents live now
Where do your brothers and sisters live
Do any of your family live locally
How often do you see any members of your family
How do you feel at the prospect of your parents ageing
Would you consider having them to live with you
(If dead) How did you feel about your parents ageing
Did you feel responsible for them

LEAVING SCHOOL

How old were you when you left school
Did you want to leave then
What did you do next
What sort of job do you think your parents wanted you to do

What did you want to do
Why did you do what you ended up doing
Was there anything else you would have rather done
What did most of your friends do
When you were young how did you see yourself as growing up
Do you think your parents had any particular ambitions
for you
Do you think you grew up expecting to be married

BOYFRIENDS

Can you remember your first real boyfriend
How old were you then
Did you tell your parents about your boyfriends
How did they react
Would you bring boyfriends home
Were you happy about bringing them home
Do you think that as an adolescent you ever felt anxious
about meeting a future husband
Did you feel that your parents wanted you to marry
Did any of your relatives encourage you to start keeping a
bottom drawer
At what age

SINGLE

BOYFRIENDS

Did you ever consider marrying any of your boyfriends
What do you feel about marrying, is it something you'd like to
do some time in the future
Have you always felt like that
Why do you feel like that
What do you see as the advantages of being single
What do you see as the disadvantages of being single
Are there things you feel you miss out on by not being married

FRIENDS

Have many of the friends you knew in your early 20's married
Do you still see them
What did you used to do together before they were married
What do you do now
Do you think that your relationship with them has changed
since they married
How do you get on with their husbands
Did you make new friends after they married
Did you go on doing what you used to do with your old friends
How did you meet your new friends
How often do you see them
What sort of things do you do together
Do you feel as close to them as you did to your old friends
Do you ever know if they're going through a bad time
If you think of your friends, would you say that most of them
are married or single
Roughly how many are men and how many women
Do you think that men treat you differently to the way they would
if you were married

If you have something personal you want to tell someone
about who would you be most likely to tell
How important would you say your friends are to you

CHILDREN

Do you ever think you'd have liked to have children

HOUSING

When did you first start living alone
Why did you decide to leave home
What did your parents feel about that
Was it a difficult decision to make
Was it ever difficult to find somewhere to live
Do you feel that people locally see you as being strange for
living alone
Where did you live when you first left home
Why did you decide to live there
Why did you come to live in Buckfastleigh

DECISION MAKING

What would you see as having been the main decisions in your
life
What do you think influenced you when you were making those
decisions
If you're making what seems to be an important decision do
you normally talk to anyone about it
Who do you talk to

FINANCE

Do you find you spend much time worrying about money
Do you think your financial position has changed much over
the last four or five years
In what way
Do you ever go out and buy something frivolous
What sort of thing
How do you feel after you've done that

WORK

How important a part of your life would you say your work is
What are the things you most enjoy about work
What are the things you least enjoy about work
Would you say that your attitudes towards work have changed
at all during the last few years
Do you ever feel overworked
On what occasions
Would you give up work if you could

MARRIED

How old were you when you met your husband
Had you had many boyfriends before
How did you meet most of your boyfriends
Was that how you met your husband
What job was he doing
How soon after starting to go out with him did you start
thinking of getting married
Did you ever consider marrying any of your other boyfriends
What do you think were the reasons you wanted to get married
How old were you when you married
Did most of your friends marry
Did you know any who didn't
What sort of a life do you think they had
What sort of problems do you think they face
Do you see any advantages in not marrying
Did you feel very different after marrying
In what ways
Are there things you feel you miss out on by being married

FRIENDS

Before you married who were your main friends
How long had you known them
What jobs did they do
How often did you see them
What did you do together
Do you still see them now
When did you stop seeing them
Why
How does your husband get on with them
Did they marry
At what age
Do you feel that your friendship with them has changed at all
in the last few years
In what ways
Why do you think that is
Have you made any new friends since being married
How did you meet them
How often do you see them
What sort of things do you do together
Do you feel as close to them as you did to your old friends
Does your husband have any friends of his own
Do you ever meet them
How often
On what occasions
Do you like them
Would you consider them friends of your own
How close would you say you feel to your friends
Do you ever know if they're going through a bad time
If you have something personal you want to discuss with
someone who would you be most likely to tell

How important would you say your friends are to you
How many of your friends are men
Do you find it more or less easy to have men as friends
since you've married
Do you think men treat you differently since you've married

CHILDREN

Had you always thought you'd like to have children
How important a part of marrying was that to you

HOUSING

When did you first leave home
Did you ever consider leaving home before you married
Why/Why not
Where did you live when you first left home
Why did you decide to live there
Was it ever difficult to find somewhere to live
Why do you think you came to live in Buckfastleigh

DECISION MAKING

What would you see as having been the main decisions you've
made in your life
What do you think influenced you when you were making these
decisions
If you're making what seems to be an important decision do
you normally talk to anyone about it
Who do you talk to

FINANCE

Do you ever find you spend much time worrying about money
When first you married do you think you were worse or better
off than when you were single
Has there been any change since then
How do/did you organise your finances with your husband
Do you have your own spending money
What sort of things do you spend it on
Do you ever go out and buy yourself something frivolous
What sort of things
How do you feel after you've done that
If you need to spend a lot of money who decides about it
Do you often have disagreements about money
(If not working) Do you feel differently about money since
giving up your job
In what ways

WORK

How important a part of your life would you say your work
is/was
What are/were the things you most enjoy about work
What are the things you least enjoy

Do you think you felt differently about work once you married
What does your husband feel about you working
Do you ever feel overworked
On what occasions
Would you give up work if you could
(Not working) When did you decide to stop work
Why did you decide to do that
What did your husband think about you stopping work
Do you feel different since you stopped
In what ways

WIDOWED, DIVORCED, SEPARATED

How old were you when you met your husband
Had you had many boyfriends before
How did you meet most of your boyfriends
Was that how you met your husband
What job was he doing
How soon after starting to go out with him did you start
thinking of getting married
Did you ever consider marrying any of your other boyfriends
What do you think were the reasons you wanted to get married
How old were you when you married

(Divorced, separated)

How long were you married before you felt things started to
go wrong
What do you think went wrong with your marriage

(Widowed)

How old were you when your husband died
Did you find it difficult to get used to being on your own again
What were the most difficult things
Were there any advantages
What were they
Would you like to think that you'd marry again some time in
the future
For what reasons
Are there things you feel you're missing out on by not being
married

FRIENDS

Before you married who were your main friends
How long had you known them
What jobs did they do
How often did you see them
What did you do together
Did you go on seeing them after you married
How did your husband get on with them
Did they marry
At what age
Do you still see them now

Do you feel closer to them or less close than you did when
you were married
Why do you think that is
Did you make new friends after you married
How did you meet them
What sort of things did you used to do together
Do you still see them now
After you separated/your husband died, did you see more or
less of your friends
Do you feel that your friendship with them has changed in
any way
In what way
Did your husband have any friends of his own
Do you ever see them now
Have you made any new friends since you've been on your own
How did you meet them
What sort of things do you do together
How often do you see them
If you have something personal you want to discuss with
someone who would you be most likely to tell
How important would you say your friends are to you
Have they become more or less important since you've been
on your own
If you think of your friends would you say that most of them
are married or single
Roughly how many are men and how many women
Do you feel that men treat you differently to the way they
did when you were married

HOUSING

When did you first leave home
Did you ever consider leaving home before you married
Why/why not
Where did you live when you first left home
Why did you decide to live there
Was it ever difficult to find somewhere to live
Why do you think you came to live in Buckfastleigh

DECISION MAKING

What would you see as having been the main decisions in your
life
What do you think influenced you when you were making those
decisions
If you're making what seems to be an important decision do
you normally talk to anyone about it
Who do you talk to
Do you find it more or less easy making decisions now than
when you were married

FINANCE

Do you find you spend much time worrying about money
When you first married do you think you were worse or better
off than when you were single

How did you organise your finances with your husband
Did you have your own spending money
What sort of things did you spend it on
Did you ever go out and buy yourself something frivolous
What sort of things
How did you feel after you'd done that
Did you go on working after you married
Did you feel differently about money after giving up your job
How has your financial position changed since you've been on
your own
Do you think you feel differently about money since being on
your own
Do you spend more or less money on yourself
Do you feel guilty if you buy yourself something as a treat

WORK

How important a part of your life would you say work is
What are the things you most enjoy about work
What are the things you least enjoy
Do you feel differently about work to how you did when you
were married
Can you remember if your feelings about work changed when
first you married
What did your husband think about you working
Do you ever feel overworked
On what occasions
Would you give up work if you could

ALL

LEISURE

What do you think are your favourite ways of spending your time
How often do you do that
How much time do you spend doing that
Has the way you spend your time changed much over the last
4 or 5 years/since you married
What was your favourite way of spending your time when you
were in your early 20's
Why do you think you've changed
If you had an extra 2 hours a day how do you think you'd
spend it
Is there anything you'd like to spend more time doing
What stops you from doing that
How do you spend most of your free time
Do you ever feel that you can't go out in the evenings as
much as you'd like to
What stops you from doing that

(Married, Widowed, Divorced)

Do/Did you ever go out without your husband
How often
What do/did you do

Does/did your husband mind
Does/did he ever go out alone
How often
What does/did he do
Do you mind
Do the two of you have any interests in common
What
How often do/did you go out together
What do/did you do

(Single, Widowed, Divorced)

Do you ever find that you'd like to go out but found it
difficult because you didn't have a man to go with

(All)

Would you say that you ever feel lonely
On what sort of occasions

(Divorced, Widowed)

Has the way you spend your time changed much since you were
married

In what ways

Do you prefer it that way or not

How often do you have holidays

What do you normally do for holidays

Would you like more holidays

What stops you from having more

HOUSEWORK

Do you feel that you spend much time doing housework

Do you feel you spend more time doing housework than you'd
really like to

Do you ever enjoy doing it

How important do you think housework is

How do you feel when the house is untidy

(Married, Widowed, Divorced)

How do/did you and your husband divide up the housework
between you

How much help do/did you expect from your husband

How much help do/did you get

(Widowed, Divorced, Separated)

Do you think you spend more or less time doing housework now
than when you were married

Why do you think that is

ALL

If there was anything you could change about your life what
would it be