



OXFORD JOURNALS
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Mastered for Life: Servant and Wife in Victorian and Edwardian England

Author(s): Leonore Davidoff

Source: *Journal of Social History*, Summer, 1974, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Summer, 1974), pp. 406-428

Published by: Oxford University Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3786464>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



Oxford University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of Social History*

JSTOR

MASTERED FOR LIFE: SERVANT AND WIFE IN VICTORIAN AND EDWARDIAN ENGLAND

During the first half of the nineteenth century, an increasing proportion of the working population was employed as factory labor. Factories and workshops were growing larger. At the same time the nature of farm labor changed as the yearly hiring was gradually replaced by a more casual monthly contract and young, unmarried farm servants no longer lived in their employer's household. Integral to this fundamental change to a more limited contract, was the long and sometimes savage conflict over the abolishing of the Law of Master and Servant and its replacement by the Employer and Workman Act of 1875.¹

At about the same time, there began a very gradual shift in the conception of the married woman's relationship to society (a process that is by no means complete even now); a move to make marriage a contract, voidable like other contracts involving two legal personalities.² This basic change, too, was reflected in some of the legislation that made inroads into the ancient common law concept of *coveture*: "the husband and wife are one and the husband is that one," *Blackstone*.

Despite all the political and social ferment these changes generated, the impassioned debates in Parliament and in the press, there were two groups who, almost unnoticed, were hardly touched by the new order. Domestic servants and working-class married women continued, up to the First World War and beyond, in their pre-industrial, almost Biblical, subordination to their masters and husbands. Regulation by Factory and Workshops Acts, Trades Boards or investigations into sweated labor passed them by. Trade Union organization proved to be unworkable for servants, unworkable for wives. Insurance schemes left them aside. Enfranchisement was not for them for they had neither domicile nor property of their own. Their legal definition and, in significant ways, their real situation was closer to the age-old common law doctrine of *potestas*: children, wives and servants are under the protection and wing of the Master.³ He is the intermediary to the

Ms. Davidoff is a research officer in the sociology department of the University of Essex. She wishes to thank Howard Newby and Paul Thompson, Department of Sociology, University of Essex, for their helpful comments on this paper.

outside world; he embodies the governing principle within the household. It is no accident that such a relationship is called paternalistic, the basic elements of which are given in Max Weber's classical description of what social and political theorists have called patriarchal domination.

Under patriarchal domination the legitimacy of the master's orders is guaranteed by his personal subjection and only the fact and the limits of his power of control are derived from the 'norms' yet these norms are not enacted but sanctified by tradition. The fact that this concrete master is indeed their ruler is always uppermost in the minds of his subjects. The master wields his power without restraints, at his own discretion and above all, unencumbered by rules insofar as it is not limited by tradition or competing powers.⁴

This term can apply to general expectations for society as a whole, for certain groups within a society or for certain relationships only within a society built on quite other norms, e.g., our attitude towards children in contemporary society. *What* (the franchise, labor relations, etc.) is being studied will determine which one of these is stressed. Here I am concerned primarily with the interpersonal relations between master and servant, husband and wife. *By definition* the subordinate group within each pair had few other links to the wider society.

I

In this paper I would like to examine this relationship in detail, looking at both the conventional expectations embodied in law and expounded by dominant groups as well as the reactions to it by those in subordinate positions. What happened to this doctrine under pressure from an increasingly cash- and market-oriented economy, where home and work place had become physically separated?⁵ What were the forces which led to its decline in service, and its attenuated survival in marriage?

In such a speculative essay, precise documentation is not possible, for necessarily the discussion covers a very long time span. Much of the argument stems from sociological concern with the nature of authority, stratification, deference and similar abstract concepts. Nevertheless, it is important to make every effort to ground such abstractions in historical time and place. It is at this point that the problems of documenting personal interaction can lead to treacherously simple generalization. Domestic service and working-class marriage are exceptionally elusive areas of study as so much of their activity took place in private homes. Surviving written evidence is overwhelmingly from the superordinates' side and from the more articulate and powerful individuals within even that stratum.⁶

Bearing these problems in mind, the first question that must be asked is how the relationship operated on a day-to-day basis.⁷ Secondly, there is the extensiveness of control through all areas of life for the subordinate. The existence of alternative loci of independence, including the *right* to be independent in any sphere, becomes crucial. For example, the assertion that,

because even living-in servants had to sell their labor in the market place, if only once a year, their relationship to their master was not patriarchal,⁸ neglects this dimension. The cash reward may be seen as an extension of bed and board⁹ regarded by the servant as a form of enforced savings for young maids and youths before marriage. The existence of cash payment *in itself* does not mean escape from paternalistic control; it only creates possibilities for an alternative way of life. This point is supported by looking at the way the wife's earnings have continued to be seen as part of the family income. The effort to maintain the paternalistic relationship within marriage by denying an *individual* wage to the wife is a thread which runs through debates on family income from the Poor Law of 1832 (which resulted in some unions paying for children to be fostered by strangers rather than pay the mother direct out relief), to the present controversy over the payment of Family Allowance directly to the mother or in the form of tax rebates to the father.¹⁰

Finally, and perhaps most important of all, is the extent of control over the life span of the subordinate. Again this can be seen as a matter of degree rather than as a polar opposition, a continuum of control. At one end the father has complete control over the child until one day, no matter what the struggle for independence involves, they both know that the subordinate will break free, if only through the death of the parent.¹¹ The servant is attached to the master for an unspecified time; often the master wished to believe that the attachment was permanent when in fact many people seem to have served only when they were young and single, causing a high turnover. The wife, on the other hand, knew it was forever. John Stuart Mill recognized the significance of this point when he said:

surely if a woman is denied any lot in life but that of being the personal body-servant of a despot, and is dependent for everything upon the chance of finding one who may be disposed to make a favourite of her instead of merely a drudge, it is a very cruel aggravation of her fate that she should be allowed to try this chance only once . . . since her all in life depends upon obtaining a good master she should be allowed to change again and again until she finds one.¹²

By looking at the context in which such relationships took place, asking basic sociological questions about the size and structure of the groups involved,¹³ it should be possible to avoid some of the pitfalls of an extreme reductionist psychology.¹⁴ What was the physical setting, how much of the individual's time was spent in this setting through the day, the week, the year? Were there alternative groups for subordinates to identify with and was this identification and interaction 'legitimate' within the system or did it have to be carried out covertly¹⁵ (e.g., was time off given to servants as a right at stated times or did it have to be taken in snatches between tasks)? Could servants see whom they wished when off duty or were their companions overlooked or even banned by the employer, (the "no followers" rule)?

The intense privacy of the English middle-class household in individual dwellings often surrounded by gardens, in isolated settings or suburbs

separated from working-class districts, made English domestic service exceptionally confining. This was in contrast, for example, to continental cities. There the custom was to have all the maids sleep together on the top floor of blocks of flats. When flats finally began to be built in London towards the end of the century this feature was deliberately omitted for fear of losing personal control over the servant.¹⁶

As the rest of the society changed, the service relationship, always fraught with potential difficulties, came under increasing pressure. In 1908, Simmel described this transitional stage as a breakdown in the "objective idea" which occurs at either of the extremes of the service relation,

under the condition of full patriarchal subordination, where the house still has, so to speak, an absolute value which is served by the work of the housewife (though in a higher position) as well as by that of the servant; and then, under the condition of complete differentiation where service and reward are objectively pre-determined, and the personal attachment . . . has become extraneous to the relationship. The contemporary position of the servant who shares his master's house, particularly in the larger cities has lost the first of these two kinds of objectivity without having attained the second.¹⁷

That this is a transitional stage can only be revealed by hindsight. No unilinear development can be taken for granted. A political and economic regime pledged to permanent exploitative paternalism can seemingly continue the relationship indefinitely.¹⁸

In this context, the most important fact about our period is that the majority of girls moved from paternal control, in their parents' home, into service and then into their husband's home—thus experiencing a lifetime of personal subordination in private homes. This was in growing contrast to boys and to those girls who began to find other forms of work towards the end of the century.¹⁹

In the following discussion, I have no wish to strain the analogy between the situation of domestic servants, *both men and women*, and working-class married women. In certain respects, most crucially in the presence of dependent children but also in legitimate expectations for sexual relationships and affection, they differed. In other, sociologically decisive areas they were similar.

II

The image of a working woman in nineteenth-century England is that of the mill girl or possibly the milliner or seamstress. Yet it is well known that servants—in the early part of the century farm and later purely 'domestic' servants—made up by far the largest occupational group of working women, indeed the largest occupational group in the whole economy except for agricultural laborers. In 1881, servants of both sexes represented one person in every 22 of the population. In London the proportion was 1 in 15; in Bath

1 in 9, while in Lancashire it was only 1 in 30. However, the great majority of indoor residential servants was made up of girls and women.

Numerically they grew from 751,541 in 1851 to a peak of 1,386,167 in 1891 and never fell below one million until the late 1930's.²⁰ They were 34 percent of all women employed in 1891 and still 23 percent in 1930. A high proportion of female domestic servants was young: those under twenty were 39 percent of the total in 1860, 42 percent in 1880 and 31 percent in 1911. In 1881, 1 in 3.3 girls aged 15 to 20 was classified as a domestic servant (Census of Occupations, England and Wales). A minority remained as servants all their lives, some experienced 10 to 15 years of service and then married; some left after a short time. It is impossible to tell the exact proportions in each category.²¹

Whatever proportion remained as 'career' servants, a great number of working-class women must have gone through some experience of service at sometime in their lives, usually including the formative years of adolescence. At an early age, in the first half of the century as young as 9 or 10 years old, servants had left their childhood home where they had been entirely subordinated to the authority of their parents. From this household they were transferred to the household of their master, under his direct authority or that of his deputy, the mistress or upper servant. From there, in turn, the servant passed to her husband's home, where, theoretically at least, she remained under his protection and his rule.

Within this large group there was a very wide range of experience. At one extreme was found the better known form of service in a great house within a graduated hierarchy of servants, which could lead to a measure of autonomy, a high standard of living and a good deal of authority over others. At the other, and numerically more important extreme, was the less visible, less well known 'slavery' in the lower-middle-class suburban or artisan household or lodging house. Fenimore Cooper, on his arrival in Southampton in the 1830s was shocked at the treatment of the girl where he lodged "worse off than an Asiatic slave."²² The same conditions were still observed in 1897 in a lodging house where the little maid "believes she belongs body and soul to the missus."²³

Despite these vast differences, all service positions shared certain characteristics. The master was expected to provide total support: food, housing and a small cash wage.²⁴ The servant reciprocated by being entirely at the disposal of the master, to obey his personal authority including directions as to the way in which the work was to be performed. In her demeanor she was to exhibit deference to the higher position of the master and his deputies (mistress, guests; even children). The relationship was residential and located in a private home.²⁵

The wages for domestic service did vary very widely from household to household (tables of wage rates in household manuals can give a spurious uniformity) and from area to area.²⁶ Such variation increased the 'pocket money' character of the cash income because it was a private negotiation between two individuals. In fact, female kin could be and were used as

domestic servants without pay. Household service and kinship obligations overlapped to the extent that legally the payment of wages had to be explicitly stated in the contract, otherwise it could be assumed that service was being given voluntarily.²⁷

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, ruling groups perpetuated an image of society built on a hierarchy of service. As King is to God, Lord is to King, so servant is to master. All had obligations to serve those above them, to show their loyalty and devotion through service.²⁸ More prosaically a servant might comfort herself that “even gentlemen have to bow and scrape to the Royal Family.”²⁹

Such an ideal of service to a common and visible goal must be based on a society of small units, limited to a well-defined locality. (Even the great estate households with all their staff, both indoor and outdoor, seldom numbered more than 100 persons.) Such an ideal carries most credibility when the majority of other households in the locality are based on the same principles: therefore it can be as applicable to a farm community as to a castle. In such a setting, an “external and spiritual community of fate” (Weber), there were no alternatives to challenge the system and “the elision of ‘is’ in power to ‘ought’ to be in power” is much easier to sustain.³⁰ Thus employers often favored servants who had come directly from country districts over those who had had some experience of city life.

It was at about this time, however, that the domination of the older elite, whose wealth had been based on land holding, was being challenged in a fundamental way by groups whose claims to power rested on new wealth garnered from trade and industry as well as by radical forces within the lower class. A consequence of this challenge was the growing concern with stricter controls of admission into the social and political elite, including control over social and personal behavior. Those with incomes which gave them a substantial surplus were able to take part in the elaborate rituals of ‘Society’ and sport which had become formalized as part of this control.³¹

At the same time, several other factors had combined to increase both the numbers and scale of servant-employing households. Manufacturers and shopkeepers began moving their households away from mill and counting house to set up separate establishments. The creation of new professions and the expansion of old, meant that more households were established in market towns as well as in the rapidly growing cities, while the wealthier farmers banished work activities, particularly dairy work, from the house and immediately surrounding grounds.

These households were consumption units only. Even those homes where business affairs were carried on under the same roof kept both work activities and accounts separate from household affairs. The goals and activities of such households were dominated by the concern with social placement and social closure necessitating not only a great upsurge in display of material objects but elaborated rituals of etiquette. The surest way of proving social superiority was to surround oneself with “deference givers,” even specialized “deference occupations.” As J.F.C. Harrison points out: “the essence of

middle-classness was the experience of relating to other classes or orders of society. With one group, domestic servants, the middle classes stood in a very special and intimate relationship: the one fact played an essential part in defining the identity of the other."³²

Domestic servants gave the 'prompt complete respectful and easy obedience' due to their superiors apart from, or even in spite of, the moral or temperamental qualities of the individual master. The superior was thus guaranteed at least a minimum of deference even if he was 'alone' in his own home, i.e., with only his servant or servants.³³ Furthermore the bestowing of deference can be elaborated to vast proportions through ritual. Such ritual can easily become an end in itself and does not necessarily imply a belief in or even awareness of the symbolic or mystical properties of those involved, either deference givers or receivers. When the elaboration of ritual becomes a whole ceremonial performance, such as the dinner party, the private ball or the houseparty, it takes on many features of a dramatic performance.³⁴

In elaborated upper-class households, upper servants were crucial agents in the performance of these deference ceremonies. In order to be free to receive or give deference, to take part in activities which had symbolic importance or more prosaically to work for the surplus necessary as the basis for these activities, the master (and his family) had to be protected from the mundane pressures of life; the higher the position, the more protection was needed. Not only did servants protect the household from the external world—the kitchen staff dealt with working-class callers at the back door while the butler or parlourmaid dealt with the ritual of calls and card leaving by social equals at the front door—but within the family, the master and mistress were protected by upper servants from lower servants and children. This protective function reached a point where the most intimate human relationships were mediated through servants in order to give maximum time for preparation and minimum unpleasantness in face-to-face contacts.³⁵

Such rituals of deference could only be fully carried out in upper-class households with large specialized staffs. By and large, it is these households which have come to the notice of observers and form the basis of the stereotype of English domestic servants.³⁶ The typical middle-class family, on the other hand, aimed at having two or three servants,³⁷ only one of whom was concerned with personal service: answering the door, waiting at table, valeting the master or helping the mistress to dress. In yet less affluent families these functions had to be dispensed with or combined with "rituals of order" in the material sphere, (cleaning, cooking and child care), tasks which in wealthy households were relegated to lower servants. The underlying rationale of these activities, however, was still the protection of superiors from defiling contact with the sordid, or disordered parts of life. A scanning of household manuals and magazines shows that these cleansing rituals took on heightened significance during this period of rapid social change.³⁸

As we know, dirt is essentially disorder. It is matter out of place . . . uncleanness or dirt is that which must *not* be included if a pattern is to be maintained. In chasing dirt, cleaning and washing we are positively

re-ordering our environment, making it conform to an idea, separating, tidying and ultimately purifying.³⁹

The second factor increasing demand for servants in middle- and upper-class homes was the survival to maturity of increasing numbers of children.⁴⁰ More children meant potentially more disorder, for children were considered socially unplaced and therefore had to be kept in segregated parts of the house and fed at separate times. Young children, especially in large numbers, were also creatures of disorder in a material sense and therefore required more adults to keep them under control and to care for them. Generally, greater numbers of servants were needed to deal with the potentially disruptive and polluting fundamentals of life: birth, infancy, illness, old age and death, as well as the key sphere of food preparation. Many millions spent their working lives in this unending struggle: fetching, boiling, steeping their hands in the purifying element of water.⁴¹

Those who were closest to defiling and arduous activities were, whenever possible, to be kept out of sight. In great houses their very existence was denied. Upper servants were themselves protected from such defiling activities by having lower servants to wait upon them. As more men were defined as upper servants, especially from the 1880s onwards, this meant that the heaviest as well as the dirtiest tasks could be given either to young girls and boys or charwomen, the two groups physically least fitted for them.⁴² This does not mean that considerate men servants could not and did not help, for example, to carry coal and water, or to clean outside windows, but they could legitimately ignore this sort of work.

The Victorian preoccupation with rituals of order and cleanliness hardened the traditional division between laboring and other work. White, shapely hands free from dirt, burns or callouses were the *sine qua non* of gentility; any woman seen outside the house without gloves could not be a lady. Again and again attention is brought to the importance of *hands*. A.J. Munby, in his fascination with both sex and class differences, continually returns to the contrast between the delicate hands of the lady, encased in scented kid gloves and the “brawny, brick red, coarse grained (work-hardened) hand, with its huge clumsy thumb” that belongs to the servant girl.⁴³

The need to prove that the advantages of wealth and status were deserved and the disadvantaged were undeserving, their lowliness in some sense being their own ‘fault,’ meant that this division between dirt and cleanliness, just as the division between wealth and poverty, was cast in moral terms of good and evil: “Dirt is the natural emblem and consequence of vice. Cleanliness in house and dress and person is the proper type and visible sign of a virtuous mind and of a heart renewed by the Holy Spirit.”⁴⁴

The symbolic power of cleansing and ordering rituals in warding off the dangers of social displacement was applied with intensity to those women and girls who had no family to place them or to those who had been labelled as having fallen outside legitimate society by having (or being suspected of having) sexual relations outside marriage. Whenever possible, they were ‘placed’ in institutional substitutes for homes: Homes for Orphans, Charity

Homes, Homes for Fallen Women—or the Workhouse. Here they were considered to be safe from the dangers of public or street life. Within these institutions, anti-pollution rites combined with problems of discipline led to the use of intensive domestic work as control and as punishment: “A laundry carefully worked is a capital place for moral training and moulding of the character where sins can be washed away.”⁴⁵ Almost without exception, the aim of all these institutions was to prepare the girl or woman for domestic service. For the only legitimate and respected (or respectable) alternative to living with one’s own family was living as a servant with another family.

III

In any system of hierarchy expressed in rituals of deference, at a face-to-face level, there will be a continuing tension between identification with the superior (the giver of gifts and rewards) and social distance (protection of independence). How far the subordinate identifies with the goals of the system *and/or the personal superiors*, and by so doing accepts his or her inferior place within it, partly depends on the rewards—both psychic and material—he receives but also partly on how easy it is for him to find compensatory definitions of self-worth. Deliberate, narrow identification with the place of work, “my kitchen,” pride in the job no matter how menial, “keeping my brass taps always shiny,” or pride in the status and possessions of the employing family allowed servants a certain self-respect without total allegiance to or acceptance of the system.

Another device for maintaining dignity and a sense of worthiness was to magnify the dependence of the superior on the subordinate’s skill, strength and emotionally supportive activity, a kind of subtle inversion of the relationship. Thus servants often emphasized the ‘helplessness’ of the gentry. A tweeny in service in the early twentieth century said, “If it hadn’t been for the working class, all the folk in Ryton would have been ‘hacky dorny,’ because it took the working class to keep them clean. The majority of people didn’t know the right end of a duster.”⁴⁶

These are responses limited to what was possible within the relationship. Strength to resist its encroachments could only come from external sources. Education, especially basic literacy, for servants was important as such a factor. But education, along with the acquisition of skills outside domestic work, posed a dilemma for the master; they made the servant more useful but at the same time potentially more independent. Particularly threatening to the employer was the possibility of the servant earning extra cash, especially from others.⁴⁷ Fears of losing control over servants lie behind the master’s objections to both the practice of giving vails (gratuities) and board wages (payment in lieu of food) as such payments decreased the servants dependence: “by multiplying the hours during which they were free of supervision it increased their opportunities to live a life outside the family.”⁴⁸ Servants, on the other hand, deliberately stressed the ‘modern’ cash side of service

partly because other working-class occupations were increasingly seen in this light and partly because by stressing their monetary attachment to the household they had a defense against the persuasive paternalism of service.

Especially when residence and being on call twenty-four hours a day were required, another important device for maintaining self-respect was to accept identification with the employers' household for a time, but then to leave for another situation, apparently without "reason." This is the restlessness of servants which was so resented by employers.

Which device was used depended on the particular situation of the servant, including background, age and sex. Accommodation within the relationship might be more characteristic of younger girls under the double discipline of service and femininity. In discussing the vexed question of time off an employer in the 1890s said: "Men servants can get out for the best of all reasons, that they insist on it . . . As regards women servants, it is not a disadvantage for them, when they are young, to be under such control as admits of their having only a short time for going out. Restraint is always distasteful to the young and servants share the feelings of the daughter of the house, who would like more freedom in directions which custom deems perilous."⁴⁹ But by the turn of the century, as new leisure time activities and the possibility of increased mobility by train, omnibus or bicycle increased the expectation of a more independent life for girls, the restraints of residential service became less and less tolerable.⁵⁰

Under the constant pressure for autonomy by their subordinates it is not surprising that the qualities of the good servant extolled by masters were humility, lowliness, meekness and gentleness, fearfulness, respectfulness, loyalty and good temper. Many of these characteristics were equally part of the 'service' ethic whether it was in the armed services, church or public service. In the case of servants, however, they appeared in an exaggerated form, symbolized in behavior such as walking out of the door backwards, maintaining absolute silence while performing their duties, never sitting down in the presence of their employers and never initiating an action or a speech.

When looked at in a slightly different light, these are also the despised qualities of the menial or lackey (both synonyms for servants as well as being derogatory terms in themselves). Such qualities were considered particularly degrading in men, in an era where 'manliness' was so important, and they often were counteracted by a strained haughtiness and dignity. The relationship I have been describing may, indeed, produce such virtues on the part of the subordinate but also it often results in slyness, evasiveness, a manipulative attitude and an 'uncanny' or 'intuitive' ability to see through the master's weaknesses.⁵¹

Were these qualities a 'mask' assumed while in the front regions when interacting with the master group, to be sloughed off in private? Or had many servants internalized a belief in their own unworthiness? We do not know. After all, human beings have an infinite capacity for living on many levels at once. As Simmel says in a general discussion of super and subordination: "A highly complex interaction is hidden beneath the semblance of the pure

superiority of the one element and a purely passive being-led by the other;⁵² a dialogue between the superior constantly justifying the legitimacy of his rule, the subordinate constantly restating his self-worth, by seeking “pockets of resistance.”⁵³

Resistance could take other forms than flight or the escape into fantasy of servants’ romantic literature. The traditional weapons such as sulking, mishearing, or semi-deliberate spoiling of materials, creating disorder, wasting time, deliberate ‘impudence’ or ‘answering back’ were developed to a high art by servants and recognized by both sides. An upper-class employer:

A housemaid, butler or cook had an unequalled power of taking it out on their master or mistress in subtle ways. Orders could be received with veiled sulks, and insinuations of trouble in the background.⁵⁴

A cook:

Servants that feel they’re being put upon can make it hard in the house in various ways like not rushing to answer bells, sullen dumb insolence and petty irritations to make up for what you’re not getting.⁵⁵

The organization of a front and back stage in larger middle- and upper-class homes gave more scope for such disruptive, individualized reactions including deliberate pollution of a very crude kind.⁵⁶

By the mid-nineteenth century some of the latent hostility of servants focused on the sphere of personal behavior which symbolized lowly position.⁵⁷ The daughter of a coachman recalls,

I was once told I had to curtsy and my father said, I’ll curtsy you if you curtsy. It seemed it was a certain lady my father was coachman to and the gardener’s children used to curtsy to them. And my father said, I’ll do the curtseying but my child’s not going to curtsy. And he said if I find you curtseying I’ll give you a good thrashing. So I hadn’t to curtsy.⁵⁸

Such hostility reflected the forces which eventually were to undermine the whole fabric of hierarchy and deference. A similar etiology can be observed in the plantation system of the southern United States in the nineteenth century: the conflict between “the patriarchalism of the plantation community, and the commercial and capitalistic exploitation demanded by the exigencies of the world market.”⁵⁹ In the case of households based on consumption—or the ‘production’ of social ritual—it was the exigencies of the *labor* market which undermined their rule.

The aversion to domestic service which resulted from the growth of alternative occupations and increasing working-class political awareness first affected men servants. It was they who led the campaign against the most personal and direct effect of subordination, i.e., physical punishment. Some took an ever increasing manipulative and cynical view of their occupation; some used the contacts they had made while in service as a way out of purely domestic posts, to become shopkeepers or run commercial services. These

developments were spread over a long period with beginnings in the eighteenth century. Often there was not a complete break with service because more outdoor non-residential servants were used not only in stable and estate work, but also in the innumerable subsidiary service occupations which were (an as yet uninvestigated) feature of Victorian life. Livery stable employees, peripatetic clockwinders, couriers, private carriers, etc., all added to the amenities of middle-class life but were no longer under the close personal control of an individual master.

On the whole, employers seem to have accepted the declining use of men servants. It is difficult to find proof, but there are indications that it was not so much the increased cost of keeping men servants but the increased difficulty of controlling them within the house which led to the gradual substitution of girls for men in the 1870s and 1880s.

Girls and women did not make the transition to other occupations as easily. Socialization, the ideology which decreed that the 'natural' place for all women was a private home, and opportunity all conspired to keep them in service positions. Slowly, however, opportunities for alternative work were appearing⁶⁰ and, where available, servants were almost always more difficult to recruit.⁶¹ The 400,000 who left service during World War I were only the most striking case of what was a continuing pattern.

The second force ultimately undermining the master/servant relationship was the concept of citizenship. Once it is admitted that all are equal members of the commonwealth, then the contract must be limited; outside it master and servant meet 'man to man as two British citizens.' Servants were one of the last groups to gain this citizenship either in the form of the franchise or citizen's rights in the form of insurance.⁶²

In keeping with my original analogy, however, it is interesting that married women were the very last group of adults to participate fully in civil society; even now vestiges of their status as appendages to their husbands remain and are being debated in questions about pensions, National Insurance and married women's domicile. T.H. Marshall made this point in an aside whose importance even he underestimated: "The story of civil rights in their formative period is one of the gradual additions of new rights to a status that already existed (i.e., freedman) and was held to appertain to all adult members of the community—or perhaps one should say to all male members, since the status of women or at least of married women, was in some important respects peculiar."⁶³

Middle- and upper-class households defiantly defended themselves against the encroachments of these disruptive forces but the private drives and the gates could not completely keep out the alien influences; for by surrounding themselves with 'deference givers' the stranger was already within their doors.⁶⁴ They did everything in their power to deny this was so, stressing the organic nature of the household by devices such as family worship. The danger lurking below the surface, however, was that without the power to

enforce loyalty—the vigilant personal enforcement of deferential behavior—divergence of interest would come to the surface and threaten the whole facade.

In 1826, as a very old and bedridden lady, the famous writer on moral affairs, Hannah Moore, was confined to an upper room alone in her home as her sisters died one by one. The large staff of servants, who had always hitherto been under the rule of the most practical of her sisters, now had such a gay life at her expense that she exceeded her income by £300 in one year and was powerless to stop it; a victim in her own house. At last her friends stepped in and carried her off to lodgings, fired the servants, lamenting that “the poor old lady had to be made aware that these dishonest and vicious servants were making her appear to tolerate the sins she had testified against through life.”⁶⁵

IV

I have argued elsewhere that the isolation of working-class girls in middle-class homes during the course of their service put them at a disadvantage in the marriage market compared to their less restricted working contemporaries.⁶⁶ Under the strict regulations imposed on girls in service, courting had to be done in snatches of time: on their afternoon off, which early in the century could be only once a month, “at the area steps” or with boys from home who they might see only once a year.

Once married, whatever the personal qualities and occupations of their husbands, they shared the basic precariousness of all working-class families dependent, at least theoretically, for support solely on the husband’s wage, an expectation peculiar to this period of economic development.⁶⁷ Married women quickly became absorbed in the arduous battle of housekeeping where purifying rituals had to be carried out by one person in the restricted confines of a working-class home. The content of their work, as in service, was creating order in the house, preparing food and generally dealing with the detritus of personal life. As in service, also, these activities could fill up all the day and some of the night as well—there was no definite time off or time of one’s own. Their material equipment was very often makeshift leftovers from middle-class households where ‘rational’ use of labor was the last consideration; just as working-class homes were often ‘rooms’ in converted middle- or upper-class houses.

By the latter part of the nineteenth century, the customary division of labor within the household laid most managerial responsibility for household organization as well as the majority of manual tasks upon the wife. Often she had little knowledge of her husband’s work or he of hers. Unlike, therefore, an enterprise where the subordinate may defer to the *technical* expertise of the superior, her deference was to his paternalistic status; hers was a subordination of a more pervasive personal kind. Little attention, for example, has been paid to the use (or even more the threat) of physical coercion as a source of the husband’s control.⁶⁸

There was undoubtedly great satisfaction to the wife in the knowledge of her power to run the household and control the family’s affairs, of her

importance as the mainstay of family life. This knowledge, however, increased the pressures on her to protect her husband (and older children who were earning) from knowing how the household was managed to produce meals, clean clothes and rent, much less extras. Such protection from mundane matters paralleled that given by servants to the master or mistress. The husband was freed from “bother” that he might engage in higher level affairs, (after his often monotonous and arduous work was done), be it the masculine culture of the pub, solitary hobbies like pigeon racing or above all, politics. The women themselves summed up their task of constant figuring and planning in such expressive phrases as: “to contrive and consider,” to “make do and mend.” These decisions had to be made under emotional pressure from the competing demands of husband and children (and possibly elderly parents). Such constraints were compounded by the women’s ill-health due to poverty, multiple pregnancies and self-neglect. The price paid was the narrowness of horizons, the closing in of the woman’s world.⁶⁹

In both service and marriage, master (mistress) or husband did not see what was happening. This unthinking blindness to what was going on within their own household was not usually the result of deliberate malice or even unkindness; rather *it was built into* the relationship. It was the essence of mastery that the lives of subordinates did not matter, that their concerns were, on the whole, of no interest or importance and were even faintly ridiculous. When the husband gave his wife money over and above the basic housekeeping allowance or other ‘treats,’ or if he helped with heavy washing or took the children out on a Sunday, it was much in the same tradition as the “kindly” squire and his lady who gave charitable extras to their retainers and villagers. Very close ties and great mutual affection often existed in such a situation but having either a good husband or “a real bad ‘un” was, in a sense, to be accepted as a stroke of fate in just the same way as the wife accepted the goal of family survival over her individual interests.

If, for any reason, the wife did not receive support and help from her husband, the only alternative recourse for her was to seek help from her family or from her neighbors whose own resources might be limited. But very little is really known about the support available to wives through the network of female neighbors and kin.⁷⁰ More attention should be given to the conventions of close-knit communities, such as “rough music,” which were used to control excessive wife abuse or neglect. (See Weber’s ‘restraint on personal subjection through tradition,’ page 2.)⁷¹

The other source of independence I have described for servants, e.g. outside earnings, was vitiated, for the most part, in the case of wives. This was partly because the women’s wages were so low and were counter-balanced both by problems of child care and loss of social status, and partly because all of what was earned almost invariably went into the family budget. If extra money was needed, one of the most frequently used sources was taking in lodgers. Although it solved the child care problems, it also created more overcrowding and more *work of the same kind* for the housewife while introducing a new, potentially disruptive set of personal relationships into the household.⁷² The only possible exception to this pattern was where the wife

was highly skilled in a trade which offered work near to where she lived (therefore *not* including many ex-domestic servants) or in textile districts where married women's work was accepted, with consequently higher earnings.⁷³ But behind the objective problem of low wages lay the basic dilemma of reconciling paternalistic relationships with a market economy nowhere better illustrated than in the legal ruling which required that a married woman who wanted to hire herself out to service must obtain the permission of her husband. An employer who did not gain this permission when hiring her could be sued for 'loss of services,' in exactly the same way as an employer could be sued for enticing away a servant. In lay terms, a woman could not serve two masters.

The wife's isolation in a separate household and without colleagues or a work group to enforce expectations of 'fair play' or 'justice' of reward was an extension of the single servant's isolation.⁷⁴ Indeed, Marx's well-known metaphor describing the peasants of France is applicable to married women and servants alike.

The small-holding peasants form a vast mass, the members of which live in similar conditions but without entering into manifold relations with one another . . . in this way the great mass is formed by simple addition of homologous magnitudes such as potatoes in a sack form a sack of potatoes. The identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organization, among them they do not form a class.⁷⁵

Few sources of political education or experience existed for the working-class girl or woman. The slow permeation of individualistic values to their ranks was rather due to increased education, more opportunity for varied work and higher earnings and, above all, to the fall in the birth rate and the accompanying belief that it was possible to control their own fertility.

Given this basic pattern of working-class family life from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, what were the effects of having been in service? One of the stock defences of domestic service for working-class girls had been the belief that it gave a training for married life, for the girl's natural transition to wife and motherhood. The fact that the key to efficient household management, the budgeting of money and materials, was usually not part of the servant's responsibility was overlooked, nor was it appreciated that the most overwhelming priority for wives was managing on an insufficient or, even more hazardous, a fluctuating income.⁷⁶

The budgeting of time is more problematical. This was less directly taught to the girls than an attitude which they absorbed while in service, for in middle- and upper-class households by the first quarter of the nineteenth century, housework and childcare had been systematically allocated separate units of time. This change from a task-oriented to a time-oriented outlook as applied to personal and home life is one of the most important (and least explored) aspects of Victorian social life. Servants were instrumental to this

development. "As soon as actual hands are employed the shift from task orientation to timed labor is marked,"⁷⁷ and this applied within the home as well as the workshop. Women who had had some experience of domestic service, particularly in larger households, undoubtedly absorbed at least part of this attitude. However, in their own home, it was the external time constraints of the husband's work, particularly shift work and, later in the century, the school, which created fixed time points in their day, not social ritual. In the limited framework of their lives, their singlehanded efforts to impose strictly fixed times to family life could be not only inappropriate but even counter-productive.

A few ex-servants were able to save money to use as a dowry or set up with their husbands in trade.⁷⁸ A few girls must have married into the master class, or more likely into the lower middle class; some may have been kept as mistresses by upper-class men. For the majority, however, who married into the working class, there must have been very great variations due not only to the diversity of households but to the length of time the girl stayed in service and her experience, if any, of other jobs. If she had accepted some of the preoccupations of order and social ritual already discussed but was not able fully to carry them out because of lack of money, time and space, she had to make do with what meagre external symbols she could, constantly striving to make up deficiencies with her own labor. The whitened doorsteps and net curtains, the struggle to keep children in clean clothes, the whole distinction between 'rough' and 'respectable' can partly be seen in these terms ("Pollution beliefs can be used in a dialogue of claims and counter claims for status." Mary Douglas). Other working-class women with factory or shop experience were also caught up in the struggle against dirt and disorder but it is possible that these distinctions had particular saliency for ex-servants.

Many former servants had very ambivalent attitudes towards their past employers. A few probably maintained personal ties with them, or even more likely with their children with whom they may have had a special relationship. Some found their horizons widened by their experience of service, by having witnessed new ways of living, by having been introduced to new tastes, new forms of beauty in the furnishing, decorations, flowers and gardens of the houses where they worked.⁷⁹ Some of these ideas could in turn be passed on to their children along with ambitions for individual advancement.⁸⁰ It is even possible that here may be one of the sources of working-class conservatism.⁸¹ It should be remembered, though, that others were deeply ashamed of their servile past: "How could we have allowed ourselves to be ordered about so, and for that wage?"⁸²

Such aspirations tended to be expressed in personal and individual terms for all their experience from early childhood had been of the same personal subordination.⁸³ "They are confined within the limits of their imagination of the possible, the relationship is habitual. Insubordination must have not only alternative means of support but an alternative language."⁸⁴ Whereas working-class men were beginning to find a tongue for their wrongs, there

were few places where working-class wives could learn to speak of theirs; the Workingman's Club and the Public House were often not for them.

In weighing up the relative positions within a paternalistic relationship, the decisive point is what happens when the relationship is broken, given the fact that in theory it should last for life. Only when the servant or wife is abruptly removed from the household and the well-oiled wheels of domestic machinery grind to a halt does the superior realize just how important such services really are.⁸⁵ For the master/husband, the first reaction to the loss of the subordinate is outrage at both the inconvenience caused and the disloyalty implied. The depth of this outrage will partly depend on the ease of replacing lost services and this in turn will depend not only on his money resources but also the state of the domestic labor (and marriage) market, both in quantity and quality.

On the other side, the overwhelming fact is that the whole of life of the servant and wife, from material support to human surroundings, depends on the household of which she happens to be a member: its resources, physical setting, technical equipment and above all the temperament and tastes of the master (mistress)/husband. These resources determine the standard of living, the work load, the food and other rewards and even help to define the identity of the dependent. When this relationship is broken it is, therefore, bound to be more traumatic and to require greater adjustments for the subordinate.

For in the last analysis, in an industrializing society, particularly a capitalist society at the high tide of liberal economic doctrine, there was no place for those whose social identity was defined primarily in terms of personal relationships, neither servants nor wives. They had no roles to play in the great drama of market forces. In theory they did not exist or at most were residual categories. In reality they had to struggle for survival in whatever way they could, for in such a society, "he who pays the piper calls the tune."⁸⁶

The majority of such positions have been filled by women, although I have deliberately stressed the fact that *both* men and women servants came into this category in order to demonstrate that this type of relationship is not necessarily linked to sex differences. The fact remains, however, that by and large submission to personal and unlimited authority has been the fate of a majority of women during the stormy history of industrialization.

Recently there have been renewed efforts to find women's place in that history. It is rightly felt that "a people without a history is a dispossessed people." Those who wish to seek out heroines, to make us aware that "female hands ripped coal, dug roads, worked looms . . . that female will and courage helped to push the working class towards whatever deficiencies of life it has now"⁸⁷ are more than justified in doing so. But the heroines must be seen in context. Otherwise there is a danger that they will be frozen forever in the amber of a new feminist hagiology rather than taking their rightful place in the mainstream of human history.

FOOTNOTES

1. D. Simon, "Master and Servant" in J.D. Saville, *Democracy and the Labour Movement* (London, 1954).
2. L.T. Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution: A Study in Comparative Ethics* (London, 1951), 231.
3. The point has been made in connection with slavery, that it is a mistake to make legal definitions and codes the basis of analysis. David Brion Davis's critique of Tannenbaum and Elkins "points to the possibility of large gaps between the legal status of the slave and the actual working of the institution," Anne Lane, *The Debate Over Slavery: Stanley Elkins and His Critics* (Urbana, Illinois, 1971), 8. This is an important warning against sociological naivety but should not push us to the other extreme of discounting legal conventions, especially court rulings, as historical sources.
4. Max Weber, (edited by G. Roth and C.W. Wittich), *Economy and Society*, Vol. 3 (New York, 1968), 1066.
5. Note that during this period Britain had neither an indigenous nor imported ethnically nor religiously disadvantaged population (with the possible exception of the Irish). Such groups often make up the majority of domestic servants and thus blur the effects of the master/servant relationship. Contrast with the American experience: Lucy Salmon, *Domestic Service* (New York, 1911).
6. In order to supplement the usual documentary sources, in my present research, I have used 200 employer and 75 servant 'autobiographies' both written and oral, including material from Paul and Thea Thompson's "Family Life and Work Experience Before 1918," Social Science Research Project, University of Essex.
7. Akin to Genovese's basic meaning of 'treatment' in various slave societies. E. Genovese, "The Treatment of Slaves in Different Countries: Problems in the Applications of the Comparative Method" in Laura Foner and E. Genovese, *Slavery in the New World: A Reader in Comparative History* (New Jersey, 1969).
8. C.B. MacPherson, "Servants and Labourers in Seventeenth Century England", *Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval* (Oxford, 1973), 217.
9. It is also part of the 'pre-industrial' attitude to the use of cash as a work incentive; the belief on the part of employers that servants were only looking for a minimum subsistence income and once given that income, any amount of work could be required in return. Sidney Pollard, "The Creation of the New Work Discipline" in *The Genesis of Modern Management* (London, 1965), 190.
10. Part of the problem of the decline of family-based domestic and rural employment; see Ivy Pinchbeck, *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850*, Chap. V (London, 1969).
11. For a discussion of the same question at a time when industrialization began to provide alternative means of support for adolescents, boys and girls, see: Michael Anderson, "The Phenomenal Level: Environmental Sanctions, Ideologies and Socialization" in *Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1972).
12. J.S. Mill, *On the Subjection of Women* (Everyman, London, 1965) 249. Logically, then, there should be no surprise at the discovery of 'serial marriage' in the 1970s.

13. Georg Simmel, translated by Kurt H. Wolff, "Quantitative Aspects of the Group," *The Sociology of Georg Simmel* (Glencoe, Illinois, 1950).
14. A problem which has bedevilled the Elkins debate. Anne Lane, *op. cit.*, Introduction.
15. Hence the importance of servants quarters and kitchens separate from the house in colonial India and Africa. Aban B. Mheta, *The Domestic Servant Class* (Bombay, 1960). Large English houses did have a front and back stage divided by the "green baize door," but in smaller houses physical separation was much more difficult. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1972).
16. Mrs. Loftie, "Living in Flats," *Social Twitters* (London, 1879).
17. Georg Simmel, *op. cit.*, 266.
18. M.G. Whisson and William Weil, *Domestic Servants: A Microcosm of "the race problem"* (South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1971).
19. Peter Stearns, "Working Class Women in Britain 1890-1914" in Martha Vicinus, *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age* (Indiana University Press, 1972).
20. In 1871, there were 68,369 male indoor residential servants.
21. C. Collett, *Money Wages of Domestic Servants*, Report of Board of Trade (Labor Department), PPXCLL, Cmd. 9346, 1899.
22. Walter Allen, *Transatlantic Crossing: American Visitors to Britain and British Visitors to America* (London, 1971).
23. *Toilers in London*, British Weekly Survey, 1897.
24. The meaning of this dependency is described in Vilhelm Aubert, "On the Social Structure of the Ship," *The Hidden Society* (Totowa, N.J., 1965).
25. In weighing up the relative importance of cash versus food, clothes and 'extras,' note that domestic servants were specifically excluded from the Truck Acts of 1831 through 1887.
26. C. Collett, *op. cit.*, 1899. Wage data from my 275 "memories."
27. "In England the rule is that the mere fact of service does not of itself ground a claim for remuneration, unless there be either an express bargain as to wages, or circumstances showing an understanding on both sides that there should be payment." P. Fraser, *Treatise on Master and Servant*, 3rd Ed. (London, 1875).
28. Harold Perkin, *The Origins of Modern English Society 1780-1880*, Chap. II (London, 1969).
29. Dereck Hudson, *Munby, Man of Two Worlds: The Life and Diaries of A.J. Munby 1828-1910* (London, 1972) 310. Booth, in discussing the nature of domestic service in the 1890s, says that it is "a relationship very similar in some respects to that subsisting between sovereign and subject . . . there is demanded an all-pervading attitude of watchful respect, accompanied by a readiness to respond at once to any gracious advance that may be made without ever presuming or for a moment 'forgetting themselves.'" C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People*, Vol. 4, (1903), 225.
30. Howard Newby, "The Deferential Dialectic," unpublished typescript, 24, to be published in 1975.

31. L. Davidoff, *The Best Circles: 'Society', Etiquette and the Season*, Chap. II (London, 1973).
32. J.F.C. Harrison, *The Early Victorians 1832-51* (London, 1971) 110. He notes that Rowntree in his study of York took the keeping of servants (or a servant) as the attribute for inclusion in the middle class.
33. "Deference must actively be sought, it cannot be given to oneself," Erving Goffman, "The Nature of Deference and Demeanor," *Interaction Ritual* (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1967).
34. John Beattie, "Ritual and Social Change," *Man*, No. 1, 60-74.
35. An emancipated middle-class girl who married into the aristocracy about 1914 was appalled to find that her lady's maid, after helping her into her nightgown, asked permission to go and tell her husband's valet to announce that her ladyship was ready. Ursula Bloom, *A Roof and Four Walls* (London, 1967).
36. A. DeTocqueville, "How Democracy Effects the Relations of Master and Servants," *Democracy in America*, Vol. II (New York, 1955).
37. J.A. Banks, *Prosperity and Parenthood* Chap. V (London, 1954).
38. This is not to overlook purely physical problems of dirt control, e.g., new conditions produced by factory chimneys and urban living. Nor to deny the importance of the discovery of the germ theory of disease and related public health developments or even the connection of religious beliefs with ideas of purity. These all must be taken into account when discussing the history of the period but they are analytically separate from the above.
39. Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (Pelican Books, London, 1970), 12.
40. H.J. Habakkuk, *Population Growth and Economic Development Since 1750*, Chap. III (Leicester, 1971).
41. Servants, and almost always female servants, dealt with the recurring by-products of daily life: excrement, ashes, grease, garbage, rubbish, blood, vomit. Such tasks are almost always also allocated to wives. "Protection of the purity of upper strata is an important feature of caste societies." Louis Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications* (London, 1970).
42. At the Duke of Richmond's castle in Scotland, despite the number of men servants kept, "on Friday morning an army of charwomen bore down on the place to assist staff with the 'rough.'" M. Beckwith, *When I Remember* (London, 1936), 73.
43. A.J. Munby, *Diary*, Vol. 7 (1860) 79, Trinity College Library. Munby's fixation extended to glorying in seeing his servant (whom he married in 1874) Hannah "in her dirt" filthy from scrubbing; the dirtier her hands, the more smudged her face the more he valued her. His fascination with the 'degraded' seems to have included a strong sexual element centred around the themes of mastery and submission. I have deliberately avoided any discussion of servants and sexuality in this paper but this is not to deny its importance as an element in the relationship. See L. Davidoff, "Above and Below Stairs," *New Society*, April 26, 1973.
44. *The Servant's Magazine or Female Domestic Instructor, 1839*.
45. Rev. A.J. Maddison, *Hints on Rescue Work: A Handbook for Missionaries*,

Superintendents of Homes, Clergy and Others (Reformatory and Refuge Union, 1898).

46. Barbara Rowlands, "Memories of a Domestic Servant in the First World War," *North East Group for the Study of Labour History* (Bulletin, Number 5, October, 1971).

47. "I am of the opinion that a man cannot be the servant of several persons at the same time but is rather in the character of an agent," (Rev. V. Goodbody [1838], 8 ct. 665).

48. J. Jean Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth Century England* (London, 1956), 155.

49. Lady Jeune, "Domestic Servants" in *Lesser Questions* (London, 1894), 265.

50. Some mistresses feared losing control of the servant if they did not constantly find her 'something-to-do,' i.e., to show that they owned all of the servant's time. Even on the eve of World War II the attitude was: "with regard to industrial workers the problem is always how many hours they should work; with domestic servants it is how much time they should have off." Minister of Labour, *Evening Standard*, February 14, 1938; Viola Frith, *The Psychology of the Servant Problem: A Study in Social Relationship* (London, 1925).

51. These have also been both the virtues and vices attributed to wives and slaves. Orlando Patterson, "An Analysis of Quashee," *The Sociology of Slavery* (London, 1967).

52. Georg Simmel, *op. cit.*, 186.

53. This ambivalence is even clearer under slavery. George M. Fredrickson and Christopher Lasch, "Resistance to Slavery" in Anne Lane, *op. cit.*; George P. Rawick, *From Sundown to Sunup, The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*, Vol. 1 (Westport, Conn., 1972), 95-7.

54. Lady Tweedsmuir, *The Lilac and the Rose* (London, 1952), 94.

55. Margaret Powell, *Below Stairs* (London, 1968), 156.

56. In a doctor's family where the two maids felt that they were over-worked and never given sufficient food, the master had accused them of stealing the kidney gravy at breakfast. Back in the kitchen, to spite him, one of the maids lifted her skirt and pissed in the gravy pan saying 'she'd see he had plenty o' kidney gravy.' Sybil Marshall, *Fenland Chronicle* (Cambridge, 1967), 240.

57. "Lower class compliance might be more convincingly explained by their pragmatic acceptance of specific roles than by a positive normative commitment to society." Mann also stresses the role of "manipulative socialization;" in our case through agencies such as Sunday Schools. Michael Mann, "The Social Cohesion of Liberal Democracy," *American Sociological Review*, June, 1970, 435.

58. P. and T. Thompson, Interview 115.

59. Eugene Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made* (London, 1970) 98 quoted in C. Bell and H. Newby, "The Sources of Variation in Agricultural Workers' Images of Society," *Sociological Review*, May, 1973.

60. P. Stearns, *op. cit.*. L. Papworth and D. Zimmern, *The Occupations of Women* (Women's Industrial Council, 1914), 23.

61. Doreen Watson, "The Problem of Domestic Work," typescript, University of Leicester, M.A. thesis, 1944.

62. K. Oliver, *Domestic Servants and Citizenship* (The People's Suffrage Federation, 1911).
63. T.H. Marshall, "Citizenship and Social Class," *Sociology at the Crossroads* (London, 1963) 79. Paternalistic domination has always been given as a reason for denying the franchise; it was feared that total dependency would influence the vote. As long as slaves, servants and women were regarded as permanent 'gray-haired children' they could never be citizens.
64. Barbara Frankle, "The Genteel Family: High Victorian Conceptions of Domesticity and Good Behavior," University of Wisconsin, Ph.D. thesis, 1969.
65. Charlotte M. Yonge, *Hannah Moore* (London, 1888).
66. L. Davidoff, "Domestic Service in the Working Class Life Cycle," *Society for the Study of Labor History*, Bulletin 26, Spring 1973.
67. In this section I am speaking in the most general terms. There were variations in husband-wife relationships based on region, types of men's work, opportunity for women's work, degree of urbanization, level of income as well as over time. There were also working-class families with kinship ties to the lower-middle class as well as former members of the lower-middle class living on working-class incomes in working-class areas. Ex-servants would be represented in all these groups.
68. It was noted that servants won freedom from physical punishment by about mid-century. Who can *legitimately* beat whom is a social norm, and not based primarily on physical strength. This aspect of working-class marriage in contemporary America is discussed in Mirra Komarovsky, *Blue Collar Marriage* (New York, 1967), 227.
69. P. Reeves, *Round About A Pound A Week*, (London, 1913); Alexander Paterson, *Across the Bridge or Life by the South London Riverside* (London, 1911); M.L. Eyles, *The Woman in the Little House* (London, 1922); N. Dennis, F. Henriques and C. Slaughter, "The Family," *Coal is Our Life, An Analysis of a Yorkshire Mining Community* (London, 1956).
70. C. Rosser and C. Harris, *The Family and Social Change: A Study of Family and Kinship in a South Wales Town* (London, 1965); P. Wilmott and M. Young, *Family and Kinship in East London* (London, 1957); W. Greenwood, *There was a Time*, (London, 1967).
71. E.P. Thompson, "Le Charivari," *Annales: Economies, Societies et Civilizations*, March-April, 1972.
72. P. Stearns, *op. cit.*
73. C.J. Collett, *Women's Industrial News*, February 1896. For a discussion on this point including family relationships seen as a system of exchange see: Michael Anderson, *op. cit.*, 1972.
74. This isolation was growing towards the end of the century as improvements in transport and housing led to the growth of working-class suburbs. D.A. Reeder, "A Theatre of Suburbs: Some Patterns of Development in West London, 1801-1911" in H.J. Dyos, *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968).
75. Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" in Lewis S. Feuer, *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy; Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels* (New York, 1959), 338.
76. "The fluctuation of income makes the problem of housekeeping impossibly difficult for most of the women and the consequent discomfort and privations of the home drive

the man to the public house, wear out the health, the spirit and self respect of the women." Liverpool Joint Research, *How the Causal Labourer Lives* (1909), xxvi.

77. E.P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present*, No. 38, 61.

78. Mayhew, quoted in Gareth Stedman-Jones, *Out Cast London: A Study in the Relationship Between Classes in Victorian Society* (Oxford, 1971), 29.

79. Arthur Barton, *Two Lamps in Our Street*, London, 1967, *The Penny World: A Boyhood Recalled* (London, 1969). Barton's mother had been nursemaid in Lord Tennyson's family. She read poetry to her children and had his portrait on the wall. Richard Hillyer, *Country Boy: An Autobiography* (1966).

80. The importance of *mother's* aspirations in the achievements of children in the educational system is now being recognized. Frank Musgrove, *The Family, Education and Society* (London, 1966) 76-82. A parlormaid who had worked in some of the large houses in Kensington during the 1890s described by her niece as 'quite the lady,' sent her only son to Eton. Personal interview, Mrs. K.

81. Servants as "culture carriers" is an intriguing idea. It is particularly important in areas of private life, e.g., the adoption of ideal family size. The generation who were young servants in middle- and upper-class households in the late nineteenth century, where completed family size was declining, were the generation of working-class married women whose own family size fell in the beginning of the twentieth century. Of course no *direct* connection can be drawn between these two sets of facts. J.A. Banks, "Population Change and the Victorian City," *Victorian Studies*, March 1968, 287. For the eighteenth century see: "The Servant Class as a Cultural Nexus," J.J. Hecht, *op. cit.*

82. Personal interview, Mrs. F.

83. A striking contrast to the "almost masculine" mateyness of the factory girl. C. Black, *Sweated Industry and the Minimum Wage* (London, 1907), 134-35.

84. Sheila Rowbotham, "Woman's Liberation and the New Politics," M. Wandor, ed., *The Body Politic: Women's Liberation in Britain, 1969-1972* (London, 1972), 4. The relations of working-class married women with middle- and upper-class women were almost invariably in terms of patronage or charity. The employment of charwomen was often seen in this light. The contrast in attitudes to relations between men across class lines, who faced each other as employer and workman is brought out in James Littlejohn, *Westrigg: the Sociology of a Cheviot Parish* (London, 1963), 131-32.

85. When their old cook suddenly died, two grown-up sisters living with their father realized just how helpless they were, both practically and in that "the 'heart' had gone out of the house," Mrs. Josiah Lockwood, *An Ordinary Life 1861-1924* (privately published in London, 1932).

86. Many Victorians were troubled by the results of the new system. Some of their reactions are discussed in Reinhard Bendix, "Traditionalism and the Management of Labor," *Work and Authority in Industry* (New York, 1956). The creation of corporate schemes like Port Sunlight or hierarchical 'paternalistic' institutions like the railway companies whose 'servants' were given security of employment, pensions, bonus schemes was partly an attempt to mitigate the harsh effects of early individualistic capitalism.

87. Jo O'Brien, *Women's Liberation in Labor History: A Case Study from Nottingham*, Spokesman Pamphlet No. 24 (1972), 15.