THE POLITICS OF PREPARATION FOR PARENTHOOD.

LESLEY SMITH

A thesis submitted for the degree of Ph D at the Institute of Education, University of London, November 1989.

ABSTRACT

The focus of this study is preparation for parenthood in U.K. secondary schools in the decade of the 1970s. During this period it was suggested that cycles of deprivation are set up by inadequacies in parenting, resulting in a range of social problems, and preparation for parenthood was supported as a means of breaking this cycle. The study explores relevant educational policy in the U.K. between the second world war, and the end of the 1970s, and the views of teachers and pupils involved in preparation for parenthood. Methods have involved semi-structured interviews, reviews of literature and policy, and discourse analysis. The theoretical perspective used is a feminist one. A number of questions are considered, including why preparation for parenthood became popular in the 1970s; why the call for this curriculum is sustained even though girls express knowledge and commitment in relation to future parental responsibilities; and what is the likely influence on the adult lives of girls of involvement with this aspect of schooling. In addition there is a consideration of gender divisions, how these relate to preparation for parenthood, and also how the personal views of teachers might influence this aspect of their work. The role of the state, and of educational policy, is explored and the possibility is raised that the preparation for parenthood curriculum might contribute to the creation or maintenance of the deprivation that it sets out to oppose.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDICES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very much in debt to my friend and teacher Phillida Salmon, who as supervisor, sustained me though the eight years it took to complete this study. I have gained courage from her belief in the importance and usefulness of the work. Her careful, astute and sensitive criticism and guidance were always available, and were crucial to bringing the study to a conclusion. Her unique brilliance has been a constant source of illumination.

I would like to thank teachers and pupils who have listened to my questions, have given them careful consideration, and responded. I would like to thank also senior and teaching staff who have facilitate the research in their institutions.

In 1982 I was fortunate in meeting Francoise Baret; in conversation with her I first learned of Michel Foucault's work and discovered its relevance to my study. There are more friends to thank, for talking through points and issues with me, for reading and commenting on early drafts, for advising and recommending readings, and locating keyboard errors in the text: especially Ruth Clark, Angela Hobsbaum, Elizabeth Johnson, Henry Miller, David Smith and Michael Young.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: PREPARATION FOR PARENTHOOD IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: PREPARATION FOR PARENTHOOD IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

1.1 Introduction

The focus of this research is the special emphasis given, in secondary schools in the 1970s, to the preparation of young people for parenthood. The enquiry explores educational policy, and the roles of teachers as interpreters of policy, and mediators between pupils and the education system. Of major interest during the study are the implications of preparation for parenthood policy, and teachers' interpretations of policy, in light of the long-term interests of pupils involved.

1.2 The rationale of preparation for parenthood

Childrens' problems, and problems in U.K. society, are frequently perceived to be due to lack of parental knowledge and insensitivity to the psychological needs of infants. The education of young people still at school, in matters relating to parenthood, has been put forward as a way to improve the quality of individual lives and of society. In the 1970s the call for preparation for parenthood to take place in secondary schools reached a peak. The rationale of this curriculum was to prepare future parents, and especially girls, for parenthood; to dismantle intergenerational cycles of poverty, poor living conditions, and associated infant morbidity and mortality; to benefit children by improving psycho-social experiences, developmental and educational status. Preparation for parenthood has also been seen to have other possibilities: it has been suggested as a way to prevent teenage pregnancy; to stem the increase in divorce and single parenthood; and to

stop mothers neglecting their young by going out of the home to work. Mothers are usually seen to have more responsibility for child rearing than fathers; for example Bedfordshire's chief constable spoke against working mothers during an official luncheon in 1988, attributing to them responsibility for an increase in crime committed by young people. The M.P. for North Bedfordshire was there and spoke in his support, saying "However much one tries, one cannot get away from nature. It is natural for a woman to look after children...If they are happy for their children to be out roaming the streets committing crime, that is up to them" (Bedford Express, 1988). A frequent media response to worrying social phenomena is to blame parents as when Watson (The Times, 1981) associated the Toxteth, Brixton and Southall riots with laxity in parent practices and suggested that preparation for parenthood in schools might be an answer to such problems.

1.3 Two studies of preparation for parenthood

1.3.1 The 1978 study

My interest in this area began with a study in 1978 of sixty-six girls in four schools serving working class areas in the Inner London Education Authority. In response to the call for preparation for parenthood a new O level in Child Development was under way in ILEA and there was interest in the evaluation of its effects. I set out to investigate some claims made for preparation for parenthood by comparing girls who had, and had not, taken the two-year subject in the fourth and fifth years of schooling (Smith 1978). The study was of girls' attitudes towards infants and knowledge of their psychological needs. I had taken three groups of twenty-two girls matched for designated ability, age, cultural background in terms of race, and amount of experience with younger

children. The first group was nearing the end of a two-year Child Development course. The two other groups had not taken such a course: the second group because they had not opted for it, although it had been available, the third group because it was not part of their school's curriculum. During the study, girls responded to questions in a booklet which I had designed, based on a modified Situational Resources Repertory Test (Kelly 1955), asking them to imagine themselves as parents of a young child. In this imaginative role girls wrote responses to a number of questions including "What sorts of problem situations do you think could arise involving you and your baby?" "Who would you turn to in these situations?" "What qualities would you like as an ideal mother?" Answers were analysed for their sensitivity to the psychological needs of infants. No significant differences were found between the three groups and most girls demonstrated a high degree of understanding. Understanding was not confined to those areas identified in the rationale for preparation for parenthood, or the subject matter of child development, but it extended further to include psychological implications of realities of economic life in the inner city. One girl, for example, identified as a potential problem being stuck with a baby and pushchair ten floors up in a high rise building when the lift was out of order, not knowing whom to contact for help, hoping for the ability to overcome panic and anger so as not to affect the child. On the basis of this small study it seemed that the provision of preparation for parenthood in the form of examined Child Development courses could not be justified by lack of knowledge, sensitivity or understanding of infants' needs on the part of the target group. I was left with questions: why, then, did the call for preparation for parenthood exist and why in the 1970s did it provide

such an impetus for curriculum development? I was also curious about the extent of preparation for parenthood in schools nationally, in terms of subject matter, teachers and pupils involved, and about the level of interest in official educational circles.

1.3.2 The 1979 - 83 study

I was able to explore some of these questions further when, as research fellow, I worked for three years with a team based at the University of Aston. We were funded by the Department of Education and Science to determine the extent and content of preparation for parenthood in the secondary school curriculum nationally.

This study was carried out at four levels with decreasing breadth and increasing depth:

Level 1 took the form of a postal survey of LEAs (local education authorities) in England and Wales;

Level 2 was again a postal survey involving all secondary schools in each of five LEAs;

Level 3 involved interviews with teachers in five schools, one in each of the five LEAs involved at Level 2;

Level 4 was a case study of attitudes toward parenthood, and understanding of the needs of young children, expressed by fifth formers in one school.

Level 1. At the first level all 107 LEAs in England and Wales were sent a questionnaire to enquire about preparation for parenthood in their schools. 82 (76.6%) responded. 42 mentioned Child Development (sometimes under a different name, often Child Care or Family and Child) and all

noted preparation for parenthood as present in some area, for example in Biology, in the pastoral curriculum or in programmes designed to enhance personal and social development. Although no responding Authority reported a formal policy to include preparation for parenthood in schools there was, in the main, support and enthusiasm for this curriculum.

Level 2. A second level of study surveyed all secondary schools in five authorities. These authorities were chosen on the basis of representing the country demographically. 329 schools were circulated with a questionnaire and 217 (66%) responded. At this level a total of 930 subjects, an average of 4 per school, was identified as hosting preparation for parenthood to a greater or lesser extent. Most preparation for parenthood was hosted by two subjects taught separately but found to have largely the same content: Personal and Social Education, and Health Education. It was reported also to form part of:

Home Economics	Needlework or Design
Child Development	English
Biology	Remedial Studies.
Religious Education	Group and Tutorial Work
Home and Business Maths	General Studies

Level 3. At this third level the study looked in depth at preparation for parenthood in the curriculum of five schools, one in each of the five authorities surveyed at Level 2, and one of them a girls' school. All teachers were asked whether preparation for parenthood occurred as a formal or informal part of their teaching. Across all five schools a total of 95 subjects was located, reflecting the findings of Level 2, and over 100 teachers were found to have an aim to prepare their pupils for

parenthood. All five schools included Child Development as an optional, examined, subject taken by girls who were not academically inclined.

Level 3 allowed greater depth of study and teachers were asked to identify those topics related to parenthood which they included in their teaching. These were divided into categories and included:

Aspects of society.

The home.

Health and hygiene.

Child development.

The family.

Human physiology.

Emotions and problems.

Child care.

Personal relationships.

Pregnancy and birth.

Sex and sexuality.

Family planning.

In the girl's school preparation for parenthood had the highest profile and 50% of teachers included it as one of their teaching aims. Even in the school where preparation for parenthood had the lowest profile 14% of teachers reported it as a teaching aim.

Some teachers expressed difficulties when focusing upon sexual relationships, parenthood, marriage and family life while teaching. A report focusing upon this issue explained how aspects of preparation for parenthood concerned personal issues but also reflected prevalent norms

in society. Teachers reported having experienced contradictions in their own lives and that at times these were reflected in the teaching situation (Grafton et al 1982).

Gender issues were often the subject of discussion during Level 3 interviews. Teachers were asked how many pupils experiencing preparation for parenthood in their classes were male and how many were female. They did not always answer with exact numbers but it was obvious that more girls than boys were involved. Where a subject had been compulsory in the lower school, when for example domestic science had been part of the lower school core, then boys tended to drop it when they could. Boys would take Home Economics, however, if it provided a qualification of relevance for entering the food trades. At the secondary level there was only one optional subject, Environmental Studies, which was attended by more boys than girls, and where the teacher said preparation for parenthood was one of the aims of the course.

The following subjects included preparation for parenthood, and were compulsory, so reaching pupils of both sexes: Religious Education; General Studies; Group and Tutorial Work; English; Personal, Social and Health Education. These subjects were also taught by teachers of both sexes. When preparation for parenthood occurred in an optional subject, then it attracted more girls than boys. In one school, however, a small number of boys took Child Development as an extra, one-year O level in the sixth form, and occasionally boys on remedial programmes would use part of the syllabus. Girls outnumbered boys in Sociology and Biology. In Human Biology less than 25% of pupils were boys.

While male teachers were involved, none were concerned with subjects with a high preparation for parenthood content: Home Economics, Needlework or Child Development. They were more likely to be involved in teaching Personal or Social Education or Maths in a Business Studies course.

There seemed to be a consensus among teachers committed to preparation for parenthood that boys, as well as girls, would benefit from its teaching. Similarly it was seen to be useful for pupils of all social groups and abilities from the more to the less academic. In effect it was taken up mostly by girls designated by teachers as of low to medium ability. There was resistance to it from boy pupils, from academic and career-oriented girls, from some teachers and from aspects of the school organisation.

Part of Level 3 was a case study of curriculum choice in one school and it revealed a contradiction. While choice was present at one level there was a certain lack of choice at another. Girls and boys were guided by the structure of the choice system into taking separate routes through the curriculum. Their schooling was almost bound to reflect traditional gender roles rather than the educational ideals of curriculum equality being expressed by teachers. It was clear that this school was selectively preparing girls for parenthood despite teachers' expressed views that this was not their intention (Grafton et al 1983).

Level 4. Level 4 research was a case study in one school which was based on my 1978 study but with significant changes (Smith 1982). Earlier levels of the Aston research had revealed that preparation for parenthood

saturates the curriculum, so that young people's knowledge and attitudes could not be associated with one part of it alone. It was decided to identify those different pathways that pupils take through the curriculum in one school, noting high and low parenthood content, comparing attitudes and knowledge in relation to different constellations of subjects having more or less parenthood-related content. Concentrating on the fifth form curriculum, six different pathways were identified, on the basis of gender and amount of preparation for parenthood offered to pupils.

Group 1: High parenthood content. The highest proportion of topics bearing preparation for parenthood aims and content were experienced by girls described by their teachers as being of middle to low ability. They took a core Social Education subject, Child Development, and two or more of the following (all high in preparation for parenthood content):

Life Science;

Human Biology;

Biology;

Home Economics;

Religious Education;

Needlework.

Group 2: Medium parenthood content. A middling proportion of preparation for parenthood was experienced by girls in the same ability group who took largely the same mix of subjects, listed above, but who opted for a vocational course such as Office Practice instead of Child Development.

Groups 3 to 5: Low parenthood content. Three groups experienced a relatively low proportion of preparation for parenthood in the fifth year in that they experienced it only in core Social Education:

Group 3: girls designated as of high to middle ability;

Group 4: boys designated as of high to middle ability;

Group 5: boys designated as of middle to low ability.

Group 6: No parenthood content. One group of highly academic girls experienced no preparation for parenthood at all in the fifth form because they were withdrawn from core social education to attend a period on Classical Studies.

1.3.3 The 1982 study

Level 4 of the Aston research provided what I will refer to as the 1982 study, which explored the social aspirations and parenthood-related attitudes and understandings, of sixty pupils representing the six curriculum pathways identified above. Their school was a secondary comprehensive in a close-knit, all-white, northern seaside community. During the same timetabled period they answered questions in a booklet, very similar to that used in the 1978 study, which asked them first to imagine they were a good teacher, and then a good parent. Questions were designed to explore what topics they thought would be most helpful for young people entering adult life, in general, as well as to explore their perspectives on parenthood. Questions explored perceptions of good and bad parenthood; what life changes would accompany parenthood; attitudes toward employment of parents; family structure; and knowledge seen to be relevant to young males and females as they left school. One section

asked for information on aspects of pupils' current lives: on gender; on plans for leaving school and for further or higher education; on current family membership; and school subjects currently being undertaken. As in the 1978 study the research was based on Personal Construct Theory and the unit of analysis was the psychological 'construct'.

At the request of the school participating in the 1982 study, no questions were asked upon which a formal classification of social class could be made. An ethnographic profile of class-related characteristics was developed, based on how pupils were preparing for (or preparing to avoid) participation in economic activity. Information for this was gathered from pupils' subject choice during their fifth year at secondary school and whether these were related to paid employment; examinations entered for and whether these would be helpful in gaining access to further or higher education and/or employment; the job they hoped to do after leaving school; and their ability as designated by their teachers. Details are set out in Appendix 1.

Analysis revealed that groups following different curriculum pathways were using distinctly different constructs and that within each group perspectives were similar. Gender, and class profile as inferred from expectations of economic activity, were found to relate to different perspectives.

Group 1. Those experiencing a curriculum highest in parenthood content were non-academic girls, whose aspirations suggested that to them employment was not a priority to be prepared for while at school, and was

less on their minds than marriage, parenthood and domesticity. For clarity and convenience in identifying this group in the discussion of findings below I refer to them as 'the mothers'. Lacking any more objective criteria I draw upon the information provided by the class profile to assume that these were working class girls.

Group 2. Those experiencing a middling amount of preparation for parenthood were non-academic girls who were taking a commercial subject as well as parenthood-oriented ones. Even so it was clear that parenthood and domesticity were on their minds and that work would occupy a temporary and transitional phase in their lives between school and marriage. I refer to this group as 'the clerks'. These, too were likely to be working class girls.

Of the three groups experiencing a low proportion of parenthood content:
Group 3 were academically inclined girls likely to take work as well as parenthood seriously and whose choice of subjects suggested preparation for professional occupations such as teaching. I therefore refer to this group as 'the prospective teachers';
Group 4 were non-academic boys taking subjects basic to skilled trades and manual work; they were not interested in marriage, parenthood or domesticity; these are referred to as 'the builders' and assumed to be members of the working class.
Group 5 were academic boys whose choice of subjects, and work aspirations showed that they were heading for the professions; they were not interested in marriage, parenthood or domesticity. This group is referred to as 'the managers'.

Group 6. The group who avoided preparation for parenthood altogether in the fifth form were highly academic girls, planning to enter high status professions, and who showed no current interest in marriage, parenthood or domesticity. In the overview of results given below this group are referred to as 'the doctors'.

Constructs provided by the sixty pupils involved in this study were subject to a quantitative and qualitative analysis. Individual pupils had more, or less, constructs to contribute during their responses to questions asking them to imagine they were a teacher or parent. The average overall was 33, ranging from 60 provided by a 'prospective teacher' to 15 from a 'builder'. During the quantitative analysis construct scores were related to different pupil characteristics in an analysis of variance. The following characteristics were considered and proved significant for boys but not for girls: school subjects taken; ability as designated by teachers; expected school leaving age; preferred occupation. Results suggested that although girls gave different numbers of constructs, this was not associated with subject choice, academic ability, preferred occupation or school leaving age, although with boys it was. From this it was assumed that quite different social forces are in operation, for boys and girls, highlighting the significance of gender differences both in parenthood and in education related to it.

A qualitative analysis proved helpful in the interpretation of this result. An overview of findings is provided below and the areas to which findings relate are underlined.

Educational needs of boys and girls. Across all six groups only 36% of pupils seemed to assume equality of gender roles, mentioning the same topics as useful both for boys and girls, as they left school and entered into adult life. Another 34% suggested that certain topics would be equally useful to both sexes but gave different reasons for this. For example 'knowing about employment' was on the one hand 'useful for boys' and on the other hand only 'useful for girls if they didn't marry'. 30% perceived educational needs of girls and boys to be quite different. For example two prospective teachers and one clerk wrote that it would be useful for boys to 'know how to spend their wages and how to save' while girls would find it useful to 'know how to economise and how to do housework'.

There were some striking between-group differences. Girls' groups were different from each other. Mothers, the only group taking the Child Development course, were traditional with regard to educational needs of boys and girls. No one in this group assumed identical needs and different needs were clearly gender-specific. Boys were seen to have a need to know about, for example, plugs, taxes, and rates while girls needed to know about cooking, needlework, birth and parenthood. This was in contrast i) with the clerks of whom only 37% assumed identical needs and ii) with the doctors who all assumed that the educational needs of boys and girls as they prepared to enter adult life would be the same.

Family background. Pupils were asked to describe their own background as well as to imagine with whom they would live when they themselves were parents. There was no difference between groups in relation to either current or projected relationships. Currently 83% were living in a

nuclear family with both original parents; 5% lived in an extended family group which included a grandparent; and 12% were in single parent or reconstituted families. In their imaginative lives 90% of pupils assumed that as adults they would live in a nuclear family and 93% expected to marry before they became parents. This result reflected the unusually close-knit and stable community which the school served.

Qualities of good and bad parents. When asked about this most people had a great deal to say. Everyone prioritised love, care and affection between parent and infant, but then there were between-group differences.

Both groups of boys, the managers and the builders, revealed traditional male gender orientations toward parenthood. Managers more often quoted ways not to behave toward children, for example, one should not abandon parental responsibilities; nor neglect one's wife or child; nor become violent. Builders portrayed bad fathers as those who go out with the boys every night; lose their temper; and beat their wives and children. In their definition of good fatherhood, both managers and builders stressed the need of wives for affection, and children's need for tolerance and understanding.

Both groups of professionally-oriented girls, prospective teachers and doctors, had more than the others to say about good parenthood, emphasising emotional and psychological needs of children, including the need to nurture cognitive development, positive and negative aspects of discipline, and the commitment and responsibility required of parents.

Girls who were not oriented toward the professions, the mothers and clerks, were similar in their views. Mothers, however, more often

mentioned the physical needs of children and the necessity that mothers should stay at home until the child goes to school. They prioritised maternal roles of keeping house, cooking meals and delivering and picking children up from school.

Views of good parenthood expressed across the whole group of 60 pupils suggest that different perspectives are held by i) pupils with different perspectives on employment and ii) pupils of different gender. Both boys' groups saw good fathers as responsible providers and nurturers of the family as a whole. All the girls concentrated on childrens' needs, with the more academic and achievement-oriented (in the school's terms) focusing on psychological nurturance and cognitive development, and the less academic focusing more on physical care and homemaking.

Parents in employment. Pupils were asked why they worked, in their imaginary role of father or mother, and why they did not. With the exception of those contributed by the highly academic group of girls, constructs reflected a traditional view of the male as bread-winner, and the female as homemaker.

Both boys' groups assumed that, if they were not working, then it was because work was unavailable. Two managers, however, added that they might be needed at home to look after the child.

Girls in the main assumed that they did not go out to work because they were needed to stay at home with the child although they recognised that it might be necessary for them at times to earn money. Staying at home was not viewed as a sacrifice but as a basic responsibility accompanying

parenthood. Prospective teachers indicated that they would take both career and motherhood seriously, fully accepting responsibility for the domestic role, while expecting assistance from husbands. Doctors went outside gender traditions, indicating that reasons why they would or would not go out to work as a parent were hardly relevant, since they intended to go out to work for some time to come and parenthood was not yet on their agenda.

Life change following from parenthood. Both class and gender differences were apparent in expectations of the changes expected to accompany parenthood. It was girls, rather than boys, who expected restrictions on their freedom. Managers, least of any group, expected restrictions although they did expect added responsibility and were worried about the economy and its effect on them as parents. Builders differed from managers little, although they expected restrictions to prevent them doing precisely what they would like to, especially 'going out with the boys'.

Mothers, clerks and prospective teachers (but not doctors) expressed positive expectations in gaining commitment and satisfaction from motherhood; in strengthening bonds with husbands, in having a fuller and happier life, and something to love and live for.

Among the four girls' groups, mothers recorded more on the theme of life change than any other group. They expected lack of sleep, lack of money, social isolation and problematic relationships with their husbands. Clerks were especially concerned about the work and the fatigue they associated with motherhood. Prospective teachers expected

problems with discipline and control of the child and also, but to a lesser extent than mothers, problems in marital relationships. Doctors, more than others, expected to gain in maturity as a result of parenthood, but expected inhibitions on their freedom to work.

Overview across questions. Across the range of views communicated during the 1982 study the interlinked issues of relationship to the economy and gender stand out as being in need of consideration in any further exploration of preparation for parenthood. Girls in the study, apart from the most academic, subscribed to traditional notions of greater female responsibility in parenting and traditional gender roles. Girls most consistently preparing themselves for parenthood expected strife in the home and expected to sacrifice their own satisfactions for what they felt was the good of the family. They concentrated on physical needs of children above psychological needs while these, especially the nurturance of cognitive skills, were the priority of academically-oriented girls who had experienced least preparation for parenthood. If facilitating understanding of psychological/cognitive needs of infants was an aim of Child Development in this school, it was unsuccessful. Boys in the study all assumed traditional male roles and predicted little change in their lifestyles once they became parents.

The different orientations revealed by girls and by boys are useful in throwing light on the results of the quantitative analysis: boys as a whole were far more alike in their orientation to parenthood than were girls following their four different pathways. Boys' relationship to the economy does not seem to divide them, in relation to expectations concerning parenthood, as it divides girls.

1.4 Implications arising from past research.

There were clear similarities in results obtained from girls in working class areas in London in 1978, and those in the north of England in 1982. They were on the whole sensitive, knowledgeable especially of the practical needs of infants, and expected to be committed and responsible parents. Following the second study, however, the question of why this curriculum was still being emphasised remained unanswered.

The national study went some way towards answering two questions raised by the earlier research: how interested were the educational policy makers in preparation for parenthood, and what was the extent of this curriculum outside London? Official interest was confirmed by the funding of the '79 - '83 study by the DES. In contradiction to the continued call for preparation for parenthood, and the presumed neglect of it in schools, the national study revealed the secondary curriculum to be saturated with it.

Just as the small scale study of girls in London answered some questions, and raised others, so it was with the national study. New questions concerned issues of pupils' gender and relationship with the economy, and the objectives of preparation for parenthood policy and of teachers who interpreted it. Gender issues were thrown into relief a) by structural influences revealed to lie in the school's option choice system, which channelled girls into 'girls' subjects' of which preparation for parenthood was one and b) by the gender-specific attitudes expressed by most males and females during the study. Economic issues were highlighted by the differences in perceptions of non-academic girls, who

were preparing for domesticity, and girls who were preparing to enter the professions. Class issues were suggested by the overwhelming saturation of preparation for parenthood in the curriculum to which domestically and not professionally oriented girls were exposed, and indeed, into which they opted. Preparation for parenthood is clearly a political issue.

1.5 The current study

Nearing the completion of more than five years of practical research I decided to register for a higher degree in order to follow, systematically, a more theoretical enquiry into the political nature of preparation for parenthood. I was concerned to gain understanding in the following areas:

1. What are the implications for the adult lives of pupils of engagement with preparation for parenthood in the secondary school curriculum
2. How does this curriculum reflect structures which organise gender and class divisions
3. Why is the call for preparation for parenthood sustained, when girls are already knowledgeable, committed, and geared toward parental responsibility
4. What is the role of the state, and educational policy, in relation to preparation for parenthood
5. Why did preparation for parenthood provide a basis for curriculum development especially in the 1970s
6. What is the role of teachers, and how do their personal and political views influence their pupils, through their preparation for parenthood teaching?

I was concerned firstly to explore literature which informed preparation for parenthood teaching, especially ideals of parenthood communicated in family studies and child development research, but also literature arising from the critique of gender-related bias in teaching. Significant influences in the literature are the focus of the next chapter, Chapter Two.

Chapter Three is concerned with feminist theory as the political framework which informs the current study.

Chapter Four is concerned with epistemology, method, and procedures.

Chapters Five to Eight provide results of the study, focusing on the policy of preparation for parenthood; on teachers' expressed views and attitudes; and on the perspectives of girls thinking ahead to parenthood.

Chapter Nine concludes the study, drawing implications from preceding chapters, toward increasing understanding in the six areas of interest outlined above.

CHAPTER TWO

PERSPECTIVES ON MOTHERHOOD: IDEALS; REALITIES; REACTIONS.

CHAPTER TWO

PERSPECTIVES ON MOTHERHOOD: IDEALS; REALITIES; REACTIONS

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I outline literature having three different orientations. First I outline perspectives of researchers and writers who represent traditional child development which is the basis of preparation for parenthood. Next an overview of statistical evidence reveals the economic disadvantage likely to be awaiting girls who opt for child development. Finally a feminist perspective is introduced which is helpful in exploring how a gendered curriculum such as this plays a role in maintaining social divisions and the disadvantage of women who mother.

Literature on child development and the family which is drawn upon in preparation for parenthood is extensive. Explicit and examined parts of the curriculum draw upon past research and focus, for example, on the reproduction system of males and females; contraception and conception; pregnancy and birth; and norms of young childrens' cognitive, social, sex role and moral development. Texts usually deal also with atypical development, focusing on gifted children, learning problems, common disabilities and treatment. Ideals of child development are not so much explicitly listed, but inferred from stages of development which are the norm, when associated with ages of children in Western society. The explicit aspect of the curriculum which deals with child development is not the main focus of this study. The main focus is on gender and the ways in which gender-related messages are part of the implicit or hidden curriculum. The problem of racism is not treated comprehensively here; it is of such important and complexity that it requires a thesis to itself.

Messages arising from the finding that preparation for parenthood is taken up almost exclusively by working class girls, include for example, that parenthood is a girl's and not a boy's concern and that working class girls are those most in need of education in this area. Messages arise in particular from those parts of the curriculum which focus on aspects of society (eg family forms such as nuclear and extended families) the family; child care; and personal relationships. It is these topics which are imbued with the ideals of parenthood, notions of what is normal, natural and good, which manage to be both implicit and influential. It is not that teachers take up and distort the findings of 'objective' research in order to mislead their pupils...the messages and ideals are already there in research on motherhood; on the optimal pre-school environment and on the family.

2.2 Ideals of motherhood, child care environment and family life in preparation for parenthood.

2.2.1 Ideal mothers

In exploring the literature on child development research, which informs preparation for parenthood, one is confronted simultaneously with a) the huge quantity of material available and b) the selective nature of theoretical assumptions in these materials given the variety which characterises the field as a whole.

Dixon and Lerner (1984) identify five models of child development in current use:

- mechanistic models, stressing stimulation and experiences as the basis of learning and child development

- contextual models, stressing interactions between the child and the environment
- dialectic models stressing progress through grappling with and overcoming social conflict organismic models stressing the child as goal-oriented, and purposeful, progressing through levels of cognitive competence
- psychodynamic models, stressing instinctual drives.

The literature called upon most often in preparation for parenthood is based on the last model identified by Dixon and Lerner, on the psychoanalytic tradition of Freud and upon the discipline of ethology. Ethology is not a model of child development mentioned by Dixon and Lerner but it is often bolted on to the psychodynamic model by child developmentalists seeking to explain mother-infant interaction. The assumptions of these approaches have far-reaching implications.

Psychoanalysis. For Freud (1960) the development of the child proceeds upon the successful resolution of psychical conflicts. The Oedipal conflict occurs between ages 3 and 5 when the love felt by the (male) child for the parent of the opposite sex, threatens to induce the rage of the parent of the same sex, thus setting up a potential trauma which can only be resolved by identification with (taking on the persona of) the parent of the same sex (the father). Masculine, and not feminine development, is the main focus of Freud's theory. Deviancy in personality, and sexual disorders, follow from the Oedipal crisis if unresolved. An implicit and powerful message communicated by the assumptions of the psychoanalytic model is that mothers should stay at

home, should not go out to work for example, at least until their children are five and attending school. Another message warns against marriage break-up and family reformation because family relationships should remain constant for the sake of optimal child development. Yet another implicit message supports the greater importance of the male.

Ethology. Ethology is a research tradition which focuses upon instinctive responses in sub-human species. It assumes that the right environmental cue elicits appropriate behaviours in the young. There are critical periods, during which trigger-behaviours and responses are effective, while before and after they are not. Behaviours are appropriate if they facilitate nurturance in adults of the species so that the young are protected until they mature. Precepts of ethology are used in child development research by, for example, Ahrens (1954) who explores the way in which the human face seems to trigger smiling behaviour in babies and suggests that exposure to a smiling baby predisposes an adult to care for and nurture it.

Three examples of child development research, outlined below, communicate the importance of the assumptions of psychoanalysis and ethology in the preparation for parenthood curriculum.

Bowlby (1951) uses ethological and psychoanalytical formulations when he suggests that a child's attachment to his mother is triggered by instinctive mechanisms and that the quality of outcome of childhood, that is the developmental status of the child and later the adult, depends upon the quality of attention provided by the mother.

Ainsworth (1973) stresses the anthropological term 'attachment' focusing upon the quality of the child's attachment to the mother, measuring this by the amount of distress shown by the child when in a strange situation or when the mother is absent. For both Bowlby and Ainsworth, the mothers' sensitivity (defined as consistency in responding promptly and appropriately to the infant's cries) is crucial to the development of attachment, and attachment is the basis of optimal development. The work of Kennel and Klaus (1976) popularised the concept of 'critical period' in child development research. They worked with a small group of impoverished, black, single mothers in the U.S. One group experienced skin-to-skin contact with their babies upon birth while a second group did not. Follow-up studies, a year later, found that the high contact group were more attentive and sensitive mothers. The assumption made is that birth is a critical period in bonding which is crucial for later relationships between mother and child.

Ethological research on critical periods, backed up by psychoanalytic notions of the centrality of the mother (rather than the father or others) provides the theoretical background to a great deal of the research drawn upon by preparation for parenthood in the secondary school curriculum. The messages it conveys are the necessary presence of both natural parents to the normal development of the child (anti-separation and divorce); the necessity of the continual presence of the mother (anti-working mothers) and the necessity of sensitive communications between mother and child (the basis of a mysogeny which accords to women the blame for developmental failure in individual children and problems in society).

From within the child development research community conflicting evidence is offered. In their review of the literature Scarr and Dunn (1987) suggest that ethological theory neglects the importance of considering the child as an active element in his or her own life - that apparent lack of bonding may as well arise from the child resisting affection as the mother failing to offer it. Since the early research of Klaus and Kennel, Kagan et al (1978) compared babies in day care and at home and found securely attached and insecurely attached infants in both groups. Dunn and Kendrick (1982) found that young children benefit if they have several attachment figures, and not just one (the mother) for example they are less negatively affected at the time of sibling birth.

While there is a range of models of child development, the psychoanalytic and ethological models are called upon disproportionately in preparation for parenthood. From within the discipline psychologists suggest that the norms of optimal and normal parenthood and child development communicated are not acceptable. Significant questions arise for this study: why are these norms assumed in research and why are they so influential in the preparation for parenthood curriculum in schools? Recalling research reported in Chapter One, it is girls who are unlikely to occupy professional working roles who fully subscribe to the idea that mothers must stay at home full time with their children, and more especially those who have undergone a course, in Child Development. On the completion of that research it was unclear whether these views were taken up during the course or whether they were part of girls' perceptions before that part of their schooling, or whether schooling merely confirmed and consolidated them. This is a question which will be

explored later in the current study. Similar questions and concerns arise from an overview of literature on the pre-school environment.

2.2.2 Ideal environments

Literature focusing on the pre-school environment is concerned with where a child spends time during the day until he or she reaches five years of age. Interestingly, it is concerned not with privately organised child care but with those forms of care which involve state expenditure. Two basic positions are communicated, with supporters of pre-school education and campaigners for good day care on one side, and on the other, those who believe that one-to-one mother care in the private home is the sole arrangement which will provide for optimal development. Positions are not always clear cut; some believe that a few hours' day care, in a play group for example, would be beneficial but would not suggest that the mother and child be separated long enough for the mother to go out to full-time employment. Some who hold this position believe in supplementary education of the child and sometimes also of the mother; this is Compensatory Education which is provided with the aim to make up for shortcomings of mothers, cultures, communities and environments.

Pre-school environments take many forms. They can be provided by the local education authority, local government or social services, and in these cases trained and accredited nursery nurses and nursery teachers are employed. It can be provided by voluntary bodies, for example the Pre-School Playgroups Association, who involve mothers and have their own training programme. It can be provided by child minders who may or may not be trained or registered. It may involve trained nannies or untrained baby sitters who look after a child in his or her own home while parents are away. Finally it can be provided by a member of the

family, especially a grandmother, or a sister with children of her own or a child's sibling, usually a girl. Blackstone (1971) traces the development of pre-school education from charity provision in 1678, schools of industry in 1775 for working children or children of working mothers, and formal provision beginning in 1850.

Research in child development relating to pre-school provision falls largely into two categories: that recording effects of compensatory education and that evaluating benefits or problems of alternative day care environments.

Compensatory education. The Headstart compensatory programme was a major initiative in the U.S. in the 1960s and similar but smaller programmes have been put into effect in the U.K. Two papers by Woodhead, written a decade apart, summarise the effects of these programmes. Writing in 1976 Woodhead describes the aims of compensatory education as to reduce social inequality by supplementing the educational experiences of certain groups of children during the pre-school years. This supplement stresses language development and perception, in children, and parental knowledge and skills. It sometimes involves enhancing environmental conditions and increasing, for example, the number of teachers and other professionals in relation to numbers of children. In the U.S. programmes also injected money into health, diet and social care. Evaluation results suggest that no benefits to childrens' intellectual skills are brought about by supplementary education over and above any other type of pre-school education. Writing in 1985 Woodhead focuses on long-term effects of supplementary education.Benefits to the child in the long term are

related to low teacher-pupil ratios and have been identified in such terms as "achievement orientation" including staying on in education after the statutory period ends. In his critique of the concept of compensatory education Woodhead says that any benefits found could never be generalised since funding (especially for low teacher-pupil ratios) and other resources would never stretch to all those potentially at risk of educational failure, who are the majority, being the children of the working classes. He questions the way in which under-achievement, although clearly associated with socio-economic deprivation, is treated as though it were cultural deprivation. In addition he brings the concept of 'critical period' into question and asks whether the early years are necessarily the most influential in education. Research which is supportive of compensatory education often carries a view of working class aims and projects as deficient in relation to those of the middle classes. Newson and Newson follow a sample of children in Nottingham, periodically reporting on parental styles and developmental outcomes. In 1976 they report the results of research carried out when the children were seven years old. The focus is on mothers and the mothering role and the report stresses the way in which working class children seem to be vulnerable, not only from lack of money, but also because parental cultural attitudes are apparently unhelpful.

Nursery education. Barbara Tizard (1974) provides a review of research in the U.K. commissioned by the Social Sciences Research Council (SSRC) for the government who were considering increasing pre-school provision. Tizard concluded that there is not, necessarily, a long-term educational benefit from pre-school provision, but that it is important to view

provision more widely, and consider current needs of children and families for good quality alternative day care. In 1984 Tizard and Hughes carried out a detailed study of conversations of four-year-old girls at home and in nursery schools. They found that working class mothers focused on developing meanings associated with the child's future vocational role: domesticity, work and money while middle class mothers focused on a wider range of ideas, encouraging explicit references and answering questions. In nursery situations children spoke less often with teachers, than they did at home with their mothers, and working class children were especially subdued. The report offers suggestions on how nursery education might be improved in order to foster language development.

Rather than language development in relation to pre-school, Semadini (1985) suggests that play is the means by which educational gains can be promoted, especially play involving creativity, problem-solving, social awareness and self-confidence. Jowett and Silva (1986) compare the different benefits of nursery education and playgroups for the development of working class children. They found that benefits could not be assessed in IQ terms but in attitudes such as eagerness to learn and social maturity. They found relative shortcomings in playgroups in the voluntary sector but associated this with shortage of funds. Because of fund shortages, playgroups in the voluntary sector occupy temporary rented accommodation, which is time-consuming to set up and tidy away, and there is a problem with storage space for toys and equipment.

In 1986 Barbara Tizard carried out a second research review and provides an evaluation of the work and theory of John Bowlby as influential in

relation to government provision. She says:

> In this country - although not in many others - even when nursery staff or child minders are doing excellent work, they often believe that all they are doing is offering an inadequate substitute for care at home. Mothers who use their help are often made to feel correspondingly guilty. These attitudes besides being unfounded, cannot be of any benefit to any of the parties concerned, including the children.
>
> (Tizard B. 1986 p 31)

The ideas of Bowlby, with his psychoanalytic and ethological approach to child development, have strongly influenced pre-school provision and in particular, to have provided a rationale for limiting the development in the U.K. of good educational day care for the under fives. In 1976 Jack Tizard reported on child care facilities in Europe; he found provision in the U.K. lacking, showing that full day care in other countries was much more extensive:

> ...several countries have very ambitious plans for this kind of provision, even for very young children.
>
> (Tizard J. 1976 p 20)

In 1982 Van der Eyken reported his research for the NFER (National Foundation of Educational Research) into education of three to eight year olds in Europe. Like Tizard he points to a deficit in U.K. provision and concludes that if governments support equal opportunities for women, then provision must be made for adequate pre-school child care and education, and that systems must be developed with this in mind.

It is clear that pre-school environments reflect national views of ideal

motherhood and pre-school environment not necessarily held in other countries.

Blackstone (1971) provides an historical perspective and records how pre-school provision first became a political issue in the first half of the twentieth century. Special war nurseries were set up and funded by the government during the second world war when women were needed and encouraged to enter the labour force. Nursery provision declined after 1948 when work available was required for men returning from the armed forces. Scarr and Dunn (1987) comment:

> It is strange how in wartime mothers can go out to work without endangering their young childrens' psyches, but when they are not required in the labour force their employment becomes a hazard to childrens' mental health.
>
> (Scarr and Dunn 1987 p98)

In 1983 Riley wrote of protests made by women in the late 1940s who wanted to work as well as to be mothers. They wanted good alternative day care for their young children but nursery provision was being cut after the war. The government responded in an official statement:

> The Ministers concerned accept the view of medical and other authority that, in the interest of the health and development of the child no less than the benefit of the mother, the proper place for a child under two is at home with his mother. They are also of the opinion that, under normal peacetime conditions, the right policy to pursue would be positively to discourage mothers of children under two from going out to work.
>
> (Ministry of Health Circular 221/45)

However, on reviewing literature on assessments of children of working mothers, psychologists Scarr and Dunn conclude:

> ...any disadvantages attributed to the children of working mothers are mere conjecture.
>
> (Scarr and Dunn 1987 p 28)

It appears, then, that notions of optimal and normal child development, mothering and pre-school environment, inform not only the curriculum of preparation for parenthood, but also government policy, and that this has been the case at least since the end of the second world war. This may suggest an answer to the question of why these notions of normality permeate the parenthood curriculum: they may exist as a support to state aims and policies on pre-school provision and employment. Another concern arises from the literature drawn upon above: the way in which the aims and projects of working class mothers are presented as being, not only different from those of middle class mothers, but also deficient in comparison. Girls who were professionally oriented in studies reported in Chapter One, that is middle class girls, reflected an ideal in child development (and the school's) terms when they stressed the importance of nurturing cognitive development. Working class girls stressed physical care and the presence of the mother. Here are class or cultural differences in orientation towards motherhood: the one conforming to the ideal, the other not. However, in literature quoted above, the blame for social class differences is being put upon the personal deficiencies or cultural values of individuals, particularly mothers. The literature on compensatory education most clearly presents the working class as having deficient cultures, revealed by under achievement of their children in the terms of the school, while an alternative explanation is that the

basis of this problem lies within economic structures.

2.2.3 Ideal families

As with literature on mothering and pre-school environments, the range of literature on the family is vast, and as noted by Weeks (1986) it is difficult to narrow the subject area for practical research purposes. The purpose of social science data on the family is explored by Hogen-de Haart (1984) who found six ways in which data was used by central government: sensitising to needs; evaluating programmes; constructing policy; contributing to programme implementation; providing a basis of choice among a range of programmes and providing justification for policy. Some government agencies, for example the NFER, were brought into being to support and advance the institutions of marriage and the family.Census data is the main source of statistical information and this is made available by the ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) from an archive in the University of Essex. Census data poses a problem for research relating to assumptions built into the definitions of data collection. Allin and Hunt (1982) focus on the way in which, while women are typically in and out of work to manage child care responsibilities, they are classified in official statistics as housewives if not actually working when the census is returned. He also notes that women are classified by their fathers' or husbands' social class. Definitions of 'the family' in research are also misleading. Weeks (1986) shows how the General Household Survey defines the family narrowly as a co-resident nuclear unit of married couple, or single person, with never-married children.In contrast authors describe the diversity of family type: Macklin (1980) for example identifies

several types of non-traditional family forms: singlehood; non-marital cohabitation; voluntary childlessness; the binuclear family; open family; multi-adult households; and extra-marital relationships. Another definition of the family is used by economists who focus on related persons who share resources and this may or may not include children. Bernardes (1986) writes that the 'normal family' defined in statistics as first-time couples with one (male) breadwinner and dependent children made up only 18% of families in Great Britain in 1971, while in England and Wales in 1981 this type of formation accounted for only 9.8%. He adds:

> Analysis suggests that the 'normal family' is so rare as to render the whole idea of a single central type of family quite redundant in terms of academic analysis and research.
>
> (Bernardes 1986 p833)

He suggests that the myth of the family is part of the 'total structure of the mind' of contemporary society, interacting significantly with ideologies of masculinity, femininity, sexuality and gender roles. Komarovsky and Waller in 1945 wrote of the permeation of a myth of 'the family' which has its major effectivity in masking reality:

> The worker in this field is shackled by taboos and ancestral superstitions, which he has more trouble in combating because they are in his mind as well as his environment. We are able to observe only what the mores permit us to see.
>
> (Komarovsky and Waller 1945 p443)

Skolnick and Skolnick (1974) identify the components of a mythical normal family: universal; necessary for survival and social stability; elementary as a unit of society; based on biologically-determined

divisions of labour; vital to the socialisation of children; and preferable to alternative family forms which are deviant, unworkable and pathological.

Some authors are concerned with the way in which the concept of the normal family works against women in particular: Gittins (1985) for example describes how obedience to husband and father is economically based, tracing a relationship from obedience to the feudal Lord, the State, the Monarch and God. She explores historical developments leading to the present day expectation that everyone will marry and own their own immaculate home. On the notion of the family as a symbol she has this to say:

> The locus for unequal relations between men and women and adults and children is perceived as lying in 'the family'. As such the family has become a vital and central symbol to notions of authority, inequality and deference. The symbolic importance of the family cannot be underestimated, for it goes beyond political allegiances of left or right and has arguably come to be seen as the most important institution of modern society. The problem, however, is that it is seen as an institution grounded in reality rather than as a symbol-system or ideology.
>
> (Gittins 1985 pp58/9).

A critical view of family studies and statistical information based on census data focus, on the one hand, on misleading representations of women's social class and working lives and, on the other hand, on the misleading promulgation of a symbolic and mythical notion of normality in family formation which works against the interests of women.

Children living in families which do not take the form of the symbolic norm are often the focus of research. Pilling and Kellmer Pringle (1979) writing from the government-funded National Childrens' Bureau identified the following among controversial areas in child development: shared care and the role of the father. (Other controversial areas identified were class; material disadvantage and intervention; and early life experience and effects on development). Effects of divorce on children is also a popular theme. For example Wadsworth (1979) draws upon a sample of forty of the National Child Development Study cohort classified as delinquent to explore the correlates of delinquency with social class, family structure, parental separation, health and schooling. He suggests that the presence of both biological parents is necessary for optimal social development since, in his study, this does not correlate with delinquency.

A contrasting study by Eiduson (1982) considered children's mental, emotional and physical well being in four different family settings: traditional two-parent families; two parents unmarried; single mothers; and communes. Fifty children were considered in each group. This researcher did not find that those family formations, which differed from the mythical norm, raised deviant children. The developmental status of some was better than others but no one setting proved to be more beneficial than another.

Pupils in the traditional northern town, referred to in the 1982 study, reported family backgrounds which conformed to the symbolic norm, confirming that such families do exist, and that young people expect to

continue in this tradition. They were, however, still being prepared for parenthood as though they did not hold the ideals of the school.

Questionable notions considered in this chapter are concerned with optimal and normal parenting; child development and pre-school environments; and the normal family. In light of practical enquiries in preparation for parenthood and in light of the literature on child development, child care and family life which supports this teaching, I begin to develop the thesis that a) this curriculum helps to construct domestically-oriented women who will supply in some part the needs ofthe state b) this is accomplished without resistance from the women concerned and c) it works to the economic detriment of women. Before developing this thesis further it is necessary to ascertain whether women are, in fact, experiencing economic inequality as compared with men.

2.3 Socio-economic realities.

An overview of economic realities awaiting young women, such as those who were sixteen at the time of the 1982 study, can be assessed using census data gathered in 1985/6. These are the most up to date figures available at the time of writing. Only indications can be drawn, however, given problems with definitions used in the census, as outlined above.

Information in three main areas is presented below: in education; in employment; and in marital status and its effect on economic activity.

Education. In 1986 the total population of school leavers in the U.K.

included 427,000 females and 444,000 males. There was little difference between the sexes with regard to numbers or levels of qualifications gained (Social Trends 18, 1988). The suggestion of equality arising from this finding, however, is not sustained when looking at the status given to subjects selected by males and females, and at the trajectory of employment possibilities and wage levels associated with different specialisms. Males predominate in engineering and technology (82% more males); physical sciences (54% more); mathematical sciences (50% more) and architectural building and planning (47% more males). Females predominate in subjects allied to medicine (36% more females); mass communications 33% more); education (16% more); and there are 16% more females in the creative arts (Annual Abstract of Statistics 1988).

Employment. Males predominate in the two economic groups associated with high salaries: professionals and employers/managers. Here there are 36% more males than females. In the two lower economic groups, semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, there are 22% more females than males. It must be borne in mind that many women would not have been economically active during the collection of census data, and would have been classified as 'housewives', while the temporary and marginal nature of their work, when they were free to find it, would probably have added them to the list of the semi or non-skilled (General Household Survey 1985).

The economic situation of women changed little between 1977 and 1986: males continued to be 60% and women 40% of the population of adults in employment. During this period women were consistently less inclined

than men to register as unemployed when they were not in work (Annual Abstract of Statistics 1988). When in the labour force women earned substantially less than men and the difference grew between 1970 and 1986. In 1986 the average weekly wage for females in full-time employment was £137 while the average for males was £208 (Social Trends 18, 1988).

A large proportion of women of working age are employed part time and the situation changed little between 1973 and 1985. In 1985 33% of women of working age were employed full-time; 27% were employed part-time; and 11% registered unemployed (General Household Survey 1985). Apparently 29% were not economically active and were classified as housewives.

Marital status and effect on economic activity. Marital status is a very important factor in the social and economic situation of women. Married women supply the highest number of part-time workers and the lowest number of a) full-time workers and b) registered unemployed. The trend is reversed with single women. In 1985 32% of married women, and 13% of single women, worked part-time. In that year 12% single women registered unemployed and 4% of married women.

Lone motherhood and age of children has an important effect on employment patterns: lone mothers with children under five years were least likely to work either full or part-time (approximately 7% worked full-time and another 9% part-time in 1985). While lone mothers with children over five worked more often, only 22% worked full-time, and 29% worked part time in

1985 (General Household Survey 1985).

To summarise this statistical information it seems clear that the economic standing of women is not equal to that of men. The negative influence of gender is first seen in choices of subject to study, made by young people while still in education, and the way in which 'male' subjects lead to higher status and higher wages than 'female' subjects. Wage differentials are visible in the social status of the work force with more men in highly paid and professional positions. Many women do not enter the work force and do not register as unemployed. Of those women who are economically active, a substantial proportion have only part time work. Marital status of women, but not of men, affects ability to work and the stability of work available: it is largely married women, and particularly those with children under five as well as lone mothers, who either do not work or work part-time.

A number of feminist writers confront this reality.

2.4 Feminist Perspectives

It is essential to draw on feminist perspectives during an exploration of a gendered curriculum such as preparation for parenthood. Feminist theory is the focus of Chapter Three, but at this point, it is useful to draw upon research literature in the feminist tradition which locates traditional norms and ideals of child development as controlling messages, and which reveals ways in which schools both reflect gender bias and play a role in the maintenance of gender divisions.

Mackintosh et al (1977) refer to the social reality of women in terms of pressure to marry, material dependence brought about by motherhood and the long years of child care, aspects of social organisation which restrict child care to individual mothers, and personal needs and feelings, which combine to trap mothers in material dependence:

> Women are trapped into a material dependence upon a man by our lack of access to a decent wage, the absence of services to make full-time wage work and child care compatible, the ideological and social pressures to marry, and the almost complete absence of any alternative to the family as a way of life, a learned sense of inferiority, and the personal effects of isolation and overwork.
>
> (Mackintosh et al 1977)

The question of why this is so, and how it is achieved without force or coercion, concerns feminism.

2.4.1 Effects of exposure to the norms and ideals of preparation for parenthood.

It is likely that norms and ideals promoted in preparation for parenthood, even while they may exist in the perspectives of pupils prior to the school experience, have long term effects on those who are involved in this curriculum. Hutter and Williams (1980) look at the sex-specific ways in which women are controlled, finding the mainstay of control to be the image of the 'normal woman', which constantly and invisibly structures social and interpersonal relations:

> It does not merely delineate what is usual or conventionally appropriate female behaviour but also defines what is morally expected. (Hutter and Williams 1980 p9)

Perspectives in feminist literature explore a number of influences which are effective in bringing about and maintaining gender divisions. These include psycho-social processes or internal structures which may predispose males and females to adopt different social roles; social structures arising from material, economic organisation of society; and cultural and ideological processes which work subtly on attitudes and understanding. Some authors focus on ways in which all of these areas interact in the creation and maintenance of the hierarchical society.

Millett (1970) pointed to the way in which male domination is achieved through the operation of sexual politics apparent in an array of influences in science, the media, the arts and literature. The message communicated is one of the normality of feminine gender culture for girls, requiring passivity, responsiveness, sympathy, warmth and nurturance. Such messages are widely found across society. Oakley (1981)

for example reports how in her research, she found mothers described by health professionals as on the one hand childlike and immature, and on the other hand as altruistic: "...the servers of others' needs and not their own" (p84). In advice literature used during pre-natal care working mothers were presented as unnatural, while natural mothers were shown to take easily to mothering, preferring to suffer financial hardship rather than go out to work:

> There is...an unspoken equation between normal, natural and ideal in much of the advice literature. (Oakley 1981 p 84)

Rich (1976) describes how women are marginalised by motherhood as society is currently organised. She points to the way that fathering is tokenal at a real level of care, and yet fathers are privileged in the rights they receive over their children. Some writers seek to explain the higher status of fathers over mothers, men over women, and the low status of those engaged in child care. Rosaldo (1974) notes that the tasks assigned to men have always been given the greater importance, and men have been accorded the greater cultural value. In our society men on the whole keep separate from child care; child care is therefore a low-status occupation.

Kamerman (1980) describes a number of 'effective controlling messages' which associate full time employment for mothers with family stress and disintegration, disruption of family routines, inadequate support for the male (whose employment is more legitimate), and moral disintegration associated with women who gain the freedom of their own wage. The view that women are legitimate only in the home is important to the labour market, since it contributes to the creation of a 'reserve army of

labour' (Wilson 1977; Beechey 1977; Bland et al 1978). For the majority of women who both mother and go out to work, the more significant role is in the home and the role of employee is supplementary, and taken up only when alternative child care is available or when in other ways employment does not disrupt the routine of the husband.

There has been a rise across Europe of part time work taken up by women in recent years. Robinson (1988) points to the economic disadvantages of this type of work which is linked mainly to working below the minimum sixteen hours required to benefit from an employee's legal rights including maternity benefit, redundancy payments, and the right to claim against unfair dismissal. In addition, low levels of pay are the norm in part time work, while National Insurance demands are disproportionately high. While Robinson acknowledges the demand from mothers for part time work, she also lists a number of influences arising from the labour market, which benefit capital, not least the way in which employing part time labour curbs wage costs. Beechey (1977) suggests that part time employment, paid at below its value, is possible only because women are subsidised by men in the domestic situation, but this security has its own cost to women, being exchanged for the woman's labour in domestic work, sexuality, and other aspects of femininity. Mothers in part time work avoid the stigma and stress experienced by those in full time work, but they subsidise the labour market at their own cost, collaborating in the reproduction of gender divisions and their own disadvantaged place in the economy.

Smart (1980) points out that women's paid work is undervalued because it

is thought to bring in 'pin money' and housework is undervalued because it is not 'real work', and that this situation is a result of patriarchal relations in the family. The capitalist economy is dependent upon a sexually differentiated labour force:

> Patriarchy is as much a feature of the political economy as of the domestic economy or women's consciousness (p41) and
>
> ...patriarchal relations mediate the influences and development of capitalism (and vice versa) (Smart 1980 p42).

That many young women prepare to take their place, low in the economic hierarchy, well before they become mothers is clear from research reported in Chapter One. This was also McRobbie's (1978) finding when she looked at the culture of femininity which helped to deliver working class girls into domesticity and low status employment. Working with girls living on an estate in Birmingham, she was concerned to understand how they made sense of their personal relationships and institutions (home, school, the youth club), and how this related to their future role in production, their present and future role in domestic production, and economic dependence on parents. McRobbie found girls were sharing "...an ultimate if not a wholesale endorsement of the traditional female role and of femininity" (p 97) because it was perceived to be natural. Childbirth, child care and housework were all perceived to be a biologically derived, naturally destined role, for women and followed from a deep interest in romantic love. McRobbie points out a contradiction here, for on the one hand romance leads girls into domesticity and economic dependence, but on the other it makes life more dramatic and bearable.

2.4.2 Schooling for women's work.

In the feminist perspective education is one in a range of systems involved in the maintenance of gender divisions. The communication of male dominance in school is not a new phenomenon, it is found in countries outside the UK, and begins in the earliest years of schooling. Clarricoates (1980) found 'gender-appropriate' behaviour in all aspects of life in primary schools including segregation in physical situations, different forms of discipline for girls and boys, and different perspectives on what is creativity, success, deviancy and appropriate behaviour for either sex. In her research Clarricoates found that girls of nursery school age had already internalised the notion that males were superior and that they themselves were inferior.

Belotti (1975) in Italy observed a number of occasions in nursery schools where little girls were instructed to serve little boys by tying shoe laces, wiping noses, soothing hurts and performing other tasks reminiscent of services that are performed by women for men.

Davin (1972) explored stereotyped images of women in 19th century school and story books and found that the school prioritised housework over other studies for girls. In the books women were depicted as naturally unselfish, compassionate, industrious and devoted to housewifery and family duty.

Wolpe (1977) describes research in a comprehensive school in the UK where sex roles, adolescent sexuality and especially femininity seemed to be developed and guided by teachers:

> ...the staff are themselves contributing to a clarification of these roles either as agents in the presentation of the curriculum, or through their own behaviour.
>
> Wolpe 1977 p 41)

Wolpe commented on the fact that this occurred even when girls did not conform to stereotyped notions of feminine behaviour. She observes that teachers were contributing to a system which would articulate with aspects of the family and the division of labour to bring about female dependency.

Teachers' beliefs and attitudes underlie their communications with students and Pratt (1985) reports a study revealing male, more often than female teachers, to be opposed to equal opportunities practices in schools. Those most strongly opposed were teachers of science, maths, languages, and crafts related to office work, technology and domesticity.

Structures within the school are also implicated in the maintenance of gender divisions. Grafton et al (1987) describe a case study, a pilot for the 1982 research described in Chapter One, of pupils taking a child development course in the south of England. The focus was option choice and the structure of options made available to pupils at the end of their third year. Streaming by ability began at the end of the first year on the basis on primary school assessment. Curriculum differentiation was present in the first year with girls doing cookery and needlework and boys woodwork and metal craft without option, and this seemed to have a preempting effect on later options selected. Child care and other domestic courses competed in the option structure with motor mechanics

and technical drawing. The case study concluded a) that academic children were guided away from practical and domestic subjects b) a combination of science subjects and child care subjects was made difficult and c) grouping of subjects made a choice of subjects untypical for gender unlikely. Most girls following the child development course were aiming at gender-typical jobs.

Byrne (1987) refers to the way in which educationalists have accepted notions of equivalence, rather than equality, in education. This has resulted in a 'compound interest of inequality' suffered by working class women. She believes that the provision of different curricula for girls and boys, as demonstrated in the option choice system, is based on a) a continued perception of women as inferior to men and b) assumptions about 'natural', expected, adult roles.

2.4.3 Educational choice and gainful employment.

In the UK, as in other Western industrial countries, males predominate as students of educational subjects (maths, physics, engineering, technology) which lead to a professional career, status, security, and a good salary: in short, gainful employment. Feminists consider a range of influences on curriculum choice, including individual perceptions as well as aspects of school and society, which lead girls into stereotyped sectors of employment associated with low status, low pay, and a lack of social influence.

Licht and Dweck (1989) look at ways in which children in schools perceive their intellectual capability and consider how this might influence their

choice of subjects to study. In their research they found that, compared to boys, girls experience proportionally more criticism directed at the quality of their intellectual work (as opposed to criticism of their behaviour) and suggest that this influences girls to give up when faced with really challenging subjects such as mathematics. Confidence is therefore considered to be one variable in option choice.

Harding (1983) considers a wider range of phenomena, analysing past research on girls and summarising factors which contribute to their reluctance to study science. Harding suggests that girls on the whole do well in maths exams, and girls in single sex schools do even better. She therefore concludes that a fundamental ability in maths is not an essential preventative factor. While personality may influence curriculum choice, this is likely to be outweighed by bias in text books and the curriculum which presents science as a male concern. The type of science course, usually short on issues of social and other concerns that interest girls, has an effect. Teacher characteristics are important, also, and Harding recommends that we do more to involve girls actively in the course, to present an expectation of success, and to avoid domination by boys, both of teacher's time and practical equipment. The format of evaluation and assessment also has an influence on girls' success, and a range of evaluation techniques should be employed, so as to avoid developing a 'culture of failure' associated with the use of a single method.

Kelly (1984; 1985) also explores ways in which science subjects are socially created and reproduced in schools, as masculine, with the result

that girls in science are marginalised. Males make up the majority of students and teachers of science; topics which make up the curriculum are of interest to boys and not girls; and boys monopolise the classroom. Boys participate aggressively at question time while girls typically sit back; boys appropriate teachers' time and tease the girls. All this is compounded by girl's timidity, low self-confidence and concern over appearance: characteristics designated by Kelly as inappropriate to what she described as a competition for learning experiences in the science classroom.

Girls show resistance to joining male dominated areas. Cockburn (1988) says:

> The arguments of those of us who promote 'women into engineering' and 'women into manual trades' are sometimes felt to be fatally flawed by the uncomfortable fact that, on the whole, women do not want to break into non-traditional work....There is a good reason for women's reluctance...they are simply aware of the high social costs that we all pay if we disobey gender rules...if we ignore the message we are made to feel silly, pushy, unnatural - all by turns. There is a relentless low-level background noise of harassment. We become unlovable.
>
> (Cockburn 1988 pp39/40)

There is currently an emphasis in education on encouraging girls to enter school subjects involving science and technology in order to gain equality in employment (Burchell and Millman 1989). Within this development Weiner (1989) perceives an "unusual marriage" (p107) between

vocationalism, defined briefly here as gearing education to the needs of industry, and concern for equal opportunities. On the one hand, new initiatives (eg The Technical and Vocational Education Initiative) may have equal opportunities as one of their stated objectives, but on the other, the initiative is funded by the Manpower Services Agency. Weiner suggests that the 'marriage' is unusual because the target is the sex-differentiated labour market. This 'unusual marriage' may, in her view, represent an implicit contradiction, where liberal reforms in education in fact hide covert forms of social control on women.

Smart (1980) located covert controls on women which have been developing alongside apparently liberalising changes in the legal system during the post-war years. New laws which benefit women at one level (custody, tax, property and maintenance) control at another level (through social security, social work, court and police action). Smart points out that the concept and appearance of legal equality is illusory, and it is at this level that power over women is maintained.

> But treating as equal persons who are manifestly socially and economically unequal can actually operate to further discriminatory practices whilst perpetuating an ideology of total fairness and impartiality. (Smart 1980 p43)

A view of conspiracy by the state to enforce gender divisions is not an adequate explanation; enforcement is organised through consent, and the illusion of justice is instrumental in eliciting consent, and avoiding overt conflict.

Wolpe (1978) warns that it is not enough to blame pupils, schools, or the education system for continued inequalities. It is not only pupil's lack of motivation, lack of ability, or femininity which keep them from making option choices relevant to gainful employment. It is not only teacher's attitudes, school curricula and organisation, which reflect and legitimate gender bias, but also the structural influences of capitalism.

Even should it be achieved that girls leave school, as well qualified in the whole range of subjects as boys, there is evidence that the route to equality is not through education alone. Occupational choice will play a role, as demonstrated by Cockburn's work mentioned in 2.4.3 above, and there are other influences which arise. Males more often succeed in the professions which do not necessarily call upon science but call upon subjects more often favoured by females (languages, the arts, education). Men are found more often than women in places of high status in areas where women make up the majority of workers, male consultants in medicine and male heads in teaching, for example. Males predominate in trades which may not carry high status but are well paid in comparison with 'women's work' of equivalent status which includes service areas, retailing and office work. It is therefore not useful to focus only on ensuring that equal numbers of women and men leave education with qualifications of equal currency, but also on what happens in the labour market itself, which results in the marginalisation of women across the board, as well as more fundamental structures which maintain male privilege.

Until recently women could demand salaries equal to those given to men only if they were involved in the same types of work. Walby (1988) shows that the recent amendment to the Equal Pay Act makes it possible now for women to demand equal pay for work of equal value to that carried out by a man. In her view there remains no justification for women's inequality in employment. Walby refers to work carried out by Treiman and Hartmann in 1981 that shows differences between males and females in education, skills or attainment do not account for segregation at work. Why, she asks, do inequalities remain? She considers a range of possible influences: inequalities might stem from women's work in the home, from personal choice due to socialisation or to ideology or from processes in the labour market itself. Walby perceives the primary cause for the wages gap to lie within the workings of the labour market, and suggests that if wage differentials due to segregation at work were removed, then much of the oppression in the family would be removed.

2.4.3 The New Right.

A number of educationalists have written on the New Right, associated with the Thatcher and Reagan governments in the U.K. and U.S. They refer to the influence of Mary Whitehouse, and the growth of a number of movements such as The Moral Majority, the Festival of Light and the National Association of Freedom. These are associated with changes in the complexion of government in the two countries and with changes in education. ten Tusscher (1986) points to the way in which the New Right sought to 'put women back into the kitchen':

> Working women were blamed for juvenile delinquency and the rising crime rate. The media capitalised on the theme of 'latch key children', social scientists bemoaned the breakdown of the family and predicted the concomitant breakdown of order and morality.
> (ten Tusscher 1986 p75)

ten Tusscher suggests that these developments are related to a crisis in patriarchy resulting from the successful work of the women's movement. She thinks it significant that the Conservative government in the U.K. formed a Family Policy Group, initially kept secret, but leaked to the national press (The Guardian 17.2.83). David (1981) also focuses on the New Right and suggests that sex education, moral education and teaching on the family were introduced into the curriculum in schools in order to promote values associated with the ideal family and traditional notions of responsibility within marriage. This type of curriculum in the U.K. she asserts, is associated with the aim of the New Right to create a popular consensus in support of dissolving socialist advances made since world war two in education and the welfare state.

2.5 Implications for the current study.

It is clear that influential messages arise from psychoanalysis and ethology which prescribe that caring mothers should stay at home during the early years of their childrens' lives. It is clear, also, that these messages are critically influential in the organisation of women's disadvantaged position in society. Part of this influence is the assumption that the essential environment for optimal child development is the home and family complete with two biological parents. These messages seem to be everywhere in personal orientations, generalised

assumptions, the social ethos, the organisation of schools and the curriculum. These messages and assumptions apparently articulate with the needs of patriarchy to legitimate the economic marginalisation of women and maintain the privileged position of men. When these messages and assumptions were being challenged or rejected, where challenge might initiate social change, groups on the Conservative right have become engaged and have involved the state in protectionist practices. At the some time, and perhaps involving quite different aspects of the state in education, recent innovations contain the implication that equal opportunities and equal access to employment, are required to serve the needs of the economy. This type of apparent contradiction in the education system, has been observed in the legal system, and signals a site where (seen) liberal developments camouflage (unseen) covert controls.

Literature reviewed in this chapter goes some way toward answering two questions which guide this study:

- how does preparation for parenthood reflect social structures which organise gender divisions, and
- what are the implications for the adult lives of pupils of engagement with preparation for parenthood?

State involvement in the maintenance of the family and official concern with the working mother, with parental attitudes, routines and abilities, is best understood from the feminist perspective of its role in maintaining masculine domination. Similarly the emphasis in traditional child-related research during the years since the second world war, on the value of nurseries as of benefit to the child rather than as a

positive alternative to exclusive mothering, can also be viewed in the context of the maintenance of established status and privilege. Preparation for parenthood as a gendered curriculum is an obvious site of influence, especially on working class girls who are its clients but also on others who are exposed to the message, confirming the belief that exclusive mothering is the only legitimate mothering. This will crucially restrict future economic activity of girls, inserting many into part time and temporary work, as members of the reserve army of labour. Preparation for parenthood reflects and maintains gender bias and is likely to contribute to the long term social inequality of its pupils.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

3.1 Introduction

The characteristics of preparation for parenthood, its content and target group, suggest that this curriculum has a central role in the management of female oppression. Feminist theory is concerned with why and how male domination is secured, and for this reason the theoretical perspective used in this study is a feminist one. Why a male dominated society is secured relates to the benefits to men of exercising power. How it is secured is the question which more often provides a focus for feminist theory, with the aim of developing a knowledge base from which to identify relevant political practice, toward a more equal society.

Feminist theory is in the process of development and refinement. Patriarchy, the concept used to describe the social structure associated with the domination of women by men, has been criticised from within feminism. Even so, as Joan Acker (1989) records, the situation has improved since the 1960s, before which time there was no theory to account for the experience of women:

> ...old theories of society, framed at a very abstract level, appeared to be gender neutral, with no way of conceptualising the subordination of women at that level of abstraction. Theorists understood that standing behind the gender neutral human being and gender neutral societal processes were assumptions based on men's experiences. These concepts and frameworks were deeply gendered, reflecting part of the reality of male and capitalist dominated societies, while obscuring

other important aspects, such as the realities of women and minorities. (Acker J 1989 p237)

From the 1970s a great deal of research and theoretical work has gone into refining and clarifying the concept of patriarchy. There are different and competing formulations under review, perceiving male domination to arise from different sources, and assigning a different importance to gender, class and race as they contribute to patriarchy.

On reading feminist work it becomes clear that a central concern is the need to theorise the conceptual framing of women, and especially mothers, as natural in the home and unnatural outside. In this chapter I begin by outlining contributions by some feminists who have considered this issue. I go on to describe the concept, patriarchy, which informs feminist work and contributes a sense of oppressive forces outside the control of individual people. I outline different feminist perspectives, and locate the theoretical perspective of the current study.

3.2 The concept of the 'natural' difference.

A central element in the maintenance of male dominance is the assumption - apparent in preparation for parenthood - that there are real, fundamental, natural differences between males and females which dictate social roles undertaken in life. Hester Eisenstein (1984) records that early in the feminist movement, mothering was regarded as antipathetic to self-fulfillment, but in the 1970s the role of motherhood in society became an important focus of theory. Millett (1970) finds a socialising effect in the assumption of natural difference, of such impact, that

girls opt into femininity and thus into male oppression. Ortner (1974) focuses on influences arising from the way men are assumed to be, or are constructed as cultured, while women are constructed as close to nature, with this association enabled by the physical fact of of childbirth and also by the way women's roles are seen as natural. Firestone (1970) believing that male power is located in the way in which women are made weaker and dependent on men by childbirth, suggests that natural childbirth should be replaced by artificial reproduction; child care should then be shared by fathers and other men and women, rather than be left to mothers, thus freeing women from their subordinate position in 'sex class'. She explores the concept of love and the way it camouflages power relations in sexual activity. Firestone would eliminate both the family and women's reproductive role so that the concept of nature would lose its effectivity:

> The "natural" is not necessarily a "human value". Humanity has begun to outgrow nature: we can no longer justify the maintenance of a discriminating sex class system on grounds of its origin in nature. (Firestone 1970 p10)

Feminists including Mitchell (1971) and Janeway (1971) suggest that the way women are viewed as legitimate only when they are in the home is the key to understanding how women are retained in a position subordinate to men. Mitchell focuses on the way in which women actually operate in two spheres, the private world of home and family as well as the world of production and the economy, but are seen as legitimate only at home. Janeway shows how the concept of home and nuclear family is historically fairly recent, and yet women have come to be defined by their role as homemakers, and men by their place in the economy.

Scott (1988) considers the way in which differences between males and females are seen as real, fundamental, and natural and how differences have been used to legitimate social inequality. However, if we insist that women should be the same as (equal to) men, then we lose the central concept of feminism:

> **Feminists cannot give up 'difference'; it has been our most creative analytic tool. We cannot give up equality at least as long as we want to speak to the principles and values of our political system.**
>
> (Scott 1988 p43)

Scott asserts that we should not be drawn into the dichotomy of 'equality versus difference' which we did not invent. She reveals how power relations are apparent in the very opposition of the terms: "...sameness is not the only ground upon which equality can be claimed" (p 46).

It is clear that the concept of natural difference, and its use and effects in patriarchy, concerns feminist theorists to the present day.

3.3 Defining patriarchy.

Patriarchy as a general concept refers to a social structure which organises male domination. Structure refers both to the way in which the society is organised and to the social relations which are characteristic of that society and serve to maintain it. Patriarchy is used as metaphor (Dorothy Smith 1979), referring to an impersonal apparatus, "...a characteristic relation of power..."(p 128) within which individuals in direct and personal relations are constructed.

In defining patriarchy feminists refer to systematic injustice suffered

by women because of their sex (Richards 1980; Sandra Acker 1981). Following criticism of the way in which the definition of patriarchy often ignores historical variation, and assumes the experience of white, Western women to be the norm (Carby 1982; Amos and Parmar 1984), definitions are becoming more specific and yet more comprehensive. Currently there are attempts to arrive at a definition broad enough to account for the diverse experience of women worldwide, and to account for historical changes, and yet narrow enough to be empirically useful.

Walby (1989) defines patriarchy as:

> A system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. (Walby 1989 p214)

She sees patriarchy as an abstract system of social relations which, in the West at least, articulates with racism and capitalism. Walby identifies six elements which account for patriarchy in industrial societies:

- the Patriarchal Mode of Production, where women's domestic labour is appropriated by men without payment;
- Patriarchal relations in Paid Work, where males close access by females to equal participation with them in full time, well paid and statusful employment;
- The Patriarchal State, where women are excluded by men from equal control through government, judiciary, the police and legal systems; where rules made by men prejudice women in legislation in divorce, marriage, wages, child custody, prostitution, housing, rape, violence and religion;
- Male Violence, where this may or may not be experienced by individual

women but affects them through the covert threat of it; where actual violence in many cases is officially condoned;

- Patriarchal Culture including religion, education and media discourses.

While Walby includes many components revealed by feminist research to be of importance in her definition, Waters (1989) is opposed to any further use of the term 'patriarchy' on two counts: a) the root of the word refers to primitive society characterised by the rule of the father and thus applies to few societies of our time and b) patriarchy is variously defined and inexact as a scientific concept. Waters suggests the concept is too broad as it is currently used, including as it does notions of generalised masculine domination, a dual theory of social reproduction where women reproduce the social relations in society as well as labour power, and a universal class system arising from sexuality and child-bearing. Waters describes patriarchy in its current usage as merely a "...theoretical rubric which directs attention to an arena of discourse.." (p 201) and as such has no explanatory power. He offers a new term, 'viriarchy', to be defined as a gender-system:

> By this is meant a system of social relationships in which (biological) sex is socially structured, institutionalised and reproduced into a stable pattern of differentiated masculine genders. (Waters 1989 p 201)

Central to this definition is the way in which individual achievement and accreditation is put forward as the basis of allocation of power. While women are supposed to have, but do not have, equal access with men to education, achievement and accreditation, they are hampered by an indirect gender bias. Since the system is supposed to be, but is not,

egalitarian there is a contradiction between women's potential and their economic condition.

Joan Acker (1989), reflecting on developments in theorising patriarchy, and on the contributions of Waters and Walby, says that patriarchy refers to:

> ...the identification of the theoretical object for rapidly developing innovative thinking about the subordination of women.
>
> (Acker J. 1989 p 235)

On reading Walby's paper Acker is concerned that definitions of patriarchy could become too narrow, and prefers not to set up boundaries, or put certain areas off limits. She is concerned that in her six-fold structure, Walby conceptualises gender as separate from class, and indicates that the two concepts should instead be theorised as indivisible. She finds, also, there is a subtle but still apparent assumption that class and gender are different systems in the paper by Waters. Acker locates the continuing tendency to theorise class within capitalist structure, and gender within patriarchy, in the influence of traditional, patriarchal, theories:

> ...the old patriarchal images still embedded in an apparently gender-neutral framework... (Acker 1989 p238).

Acker would prefer that, rather than seeking a definition to explain how male domination is produced, maintained and changed, we shift toward theorising gender, identifying how it is involved in aspects of society previously not associated with gender. She suggests that we look at practice and find how it produces class and gender relations, rather

than focusing on a distinct structure of patriarchy, which necessitates a need to discover how it merges or interacts with capitalism, to produce class and gender relations. In this way we would "...look at practice from one angle and see class, from another angle and see gender...neither is complete without the other" (p239).

The question of how class relates to gender is an ongoing concern of feminist theory.

3.4 What kind of feminist: locating the source of domination.

Feminists disagree on the source of women's oppression: does it arise from individuals; is it a side effect of the class system; or is it fundamental and the basis of all oppression? Sebestyn identified thirteen different feminist viewpoints in 1979.

The major categories are outlined by Hester Eisenstein (1984):

- Liberal or Bourgeois feminism, which holds that women's liberation would follow from relevant changes in attitude and procedure, requiring no fundamental changes to social structure;
- Radical feminism which holds that "...gender oppression is the oldest and most profound form of exploitation which predates and underlies all other forms including those of race and class" (p xix/xx);
- Socialist feminism which holds that "...class, race and gender oppression interact in a complex way, that class oppression stems from capitalism, and that capitalism must be eliminated for women to be liberated" (pxx).

There is some agreement on the perspectives of liberal feminists but blurring occurs in definitions of what makes a radical feminist. Middleton (1987) for example identifies differences within socialist feminism: **Marxist feminists** see male dominance as resulting from capitalist structures, following Engels' (1884) assumption that patriarchy arose as men accumulated wealth and ensured inheritance by their own children through monogamous marriage. **Socialist feminists** consider subtle interactions of class and gender, and believe that liberation depends on the elimination of institutions of class and gender. Joan Acker (1989) however, identifies two types of Marxist feminist: one equates women with the working class, with class operating as the main dynamic, and one perceives gender and class as distinct but equally important systems, working together.

Liberal feminism is criticised because it includes no notion of social structures which need to be dismantled before more superficial strategies could effect change. Middleton (1987) criticises liberal feminism since it assumes that females are victims of socialisation and discriminatory career structures, and that equality would follow if education were provided to undo sex-role stereotypes, and if these relatively superficial negative practices were abandoned. Sandra Acker (1987) shows how liberal research in education focuses on attitudes, timetables and curriculum structures and 'blame' for failure to achieve equality seems to be attributed to individual teachers, pupils and parents. On the one hand she criticises this 'equal opportunities' perspective as relatively ineffective in relation to the creation of change; on the other hand she suggests that the equal opportunities approach is the only universally

acceptable one in schools, providing effective cover for more radical approaches.

In summarising the work of radical feminists in education Sandra Acker finds socialist feminists seeking to understand how processes of oppression work to maintain gender divisions in capitalism, how the division of labour is reproduced in school practices, for example. She points to the socialist tendency to create theory, rather than to carry out detailed school-based research. She finds radical feminists exploring what is accepted as valid knowledge in curriculum matters, and also examining effects of masculine behaviours in schools.

The position taken on the source of domination has some influence on feminist research: on choice of study area, on assumptions made, on questions asked, on interpretation and validation of results. The position taken may also be influenced by theory which pre-dates feminism.

3.5 The impact of pre-feminist thought on feminist theory.

In her history of feminist ideas Hester Eisenstein (1984) shows how feminism has drawn on 17th and 18th Century ideas of the rights of man, on 19th Century Marxist socialism, and on 19th and 20th Century notions of sexual liberation. Feminist theory gains from, but also risks being diverted by, Western intellectual traditions; it gains from adapting useful conceptualisations developed in masculine theory but risks being assimilated into the masculine project. Feminists have identified a number of patriarchal processes in philosophy and science which seem to work by engulfing the concept 'woman' into the concept 'man': assumptions

about women and nature influence assumptions and work to the advantage of men; apparently objective language distorts women's experience; what counts as science is biased and male oriented; and science about men is more highly valued than science about women.

3.5.1 Western philosophical thought and the feminist critique.

Feminists including Rubin (1975), and Sydie (1987) consider implications of Western philosophy for feminist theory. Sydie looks at influential thinkers in sociology, pointing to endemic sex blindness. She finds assumptions about human nature in traditional theory to be particularly relevant to female reconstruction. For example, John Locke believed all human beings to be equal, although women's role in biological reproduction results in dependence on men, and dependence becomes associated with lack of property rights. Emile Durkheim assumed biological differences to be the basis of labour divisions, and he assumed that marriage and monogamy were essential to happiness. Durkheim found that the happiness of husbands could only be increased at the cost of unhappiness of wives, and this he explained through reference to women as different from men, more natural, and "...directly influenced by her organism" (Durkheim p385). Rubin (1975) comments on the legacies of Freud and the anthropologist Levi-Strauss, and finds women to be 'under construction' in masculine theory:

> In reading through these works one begins to have a sense of a systematic social apparatus which takes up females as raw materials and fashions domesticated women as products.
> (Rubin 1975 p158).

Some considerable bias is seen in what counts as science in the academic community. This is demonstrated by Sandra Acker (1981) in her analysis of papers accepted for publication in the British Journal of Sociology of Education, in bibliographies, readers and textbooks, between 1960 and 1979. She revealed how sociologists tend to draw on commonsense notions of females, assuming them to be closer to nature than males. Research on females was in general avoided, not least she thought, because results did not support theory. Of 184 papers received, only 5% used an all-female sample while 37% used an all-male sample. When mixed samples were used, the influence of gender was typically untheorised. No journal articles focused on the inequality of women, and in the other writings, the treatment of links between education and gender was inadequate.

Acker points out that greater prestige is associated with research which concerns males, perhaps connected with the dominance of empiricist methods, with the desire to manipulate and control behaviour, and with the prevalence of male-headed programmes of research.

A notion of the misrepresentation of women in science is communicated by Smith (1979). She identifies a 'line of fault', a disjuncture between what women actually experience, and the way they are constructed in sociological discourse:

> ...the forms of thought, the symbols, images, vocabularies, concepts, frames of reference, institutionalized structures of relevance of our culture...
>
> Smith 1979 p135)

These are all dislocated from, and yet influence, women's experience

since it is through these constructions that we think about the world. 'Doing science' requires some detachment and objectivity, and in Smith's terms, it is at this point that women scientists become "objects to ourselves" (p 159). Doing feminist science requires a critical view of the whole tradition of masculine philosophical thought. Smith points out that men attend to and take as significant what men say and have said, and that women can enter the circle of science, only by using masculine discourses. We can speak as women and be subordinate or we can speak as men and be neutered.

Marxist thought, focusing on capitalism as the basis of economic inequalities, has the benefit to feminists of a long history of theory with an egalitarian aim, but also has the problem of belonging to the tradition of masculine thought, thus being gender-blind. The work of Freud, or more particularly of post-Freudians, contributes to our understanding of the role of the unconscious in gender relations. Contributions from Marx and from Freud are outlined below in turn.

3.5.2 Developments from Marx.

Marx and his followers contribute theoretical concepts which are being adapted to the needs of some radical feminist theory, for example, the idea of social struggle against the power of an exploitative and dominant group; ideology as a means of securing dominant interests without the use of overt force; the role of the state as central in managing threats of crisis in hegemonic control; the process of social reproduction. It is necessary to introduce briefly, some of those

concepts developed in Marxist theory which have also been found useful in the development of feminist theory, and which inform the current study.

For Marx, in capitalism, material and economic conditions (the way Western society makes its living) provide the base which organises the characteristics of everything else (institutions, arts, education, etc). Dominant classes become so because they exploit those subordinate classes which provide their labour at a cost below its value. Subordinate classes are always in a state of struggle against exploitation, demanding adequate wages and social services, while capitalism can only be maintained if production costs are kept down.

In capitalism the state manages society, and in the view of Habermas (1976) this is achieved through protecting labour from the worst side-effects of the system, protecting commerce through civil law, providing for capital accumulation through banking, and maintaining the necessary forms of communications, transportation, and education. Crises in capital are always imminent. Habermas theorises three types of crisis, one resulting from a failing economy; one from a lack of motivation in the workforce; and one from a lack of labour loyalty: a 'legitimation crisis'.

Ideology and hegemony are related concepts, one referring to the way in which social control is gained and maintained through acquiring the consent of people who are being controlled, the other referring to the consensus by which control is achieved. For Althusser (1971) ideology refers to the way individuals and groups are dominated by ideas which

serve the social system; ideology is present in state institutions which manage capitalism (including the church, army, police, courts, education and the family). Larrain (1979) outlines the complex development of the notion of ideology, noting that at one level the notion represents a distorted or false consciousness concealing the contradictions of class societies, associated with individuals consenting to events and ideas that result in their own disadvantage. Kellner (1978) shows how, to be successful, ideology must articulate with personal understanding and experience:

> Ideology is not effective or credible unless it achieves resonance with people's experience. And to remain credible, it must continually incorporate the new, responding to changes in people's lives and social conditions.
>
> (Kellner 1978 p 51/9)

Hegemony is achieved through ideological processes which coopt personal needs and preferences to the needs of the dominant group. But this is not a simple or linear process, the system is always in a state of struggle, promoting imminent crises, which have to be managed if hegemony is to be maintained. For Gramsci (1971) hegemony is constructed during interactions of groups with different interests, including a dominant group which seeks to consider the needs of those over whom it has control. Hegemony is achieved when opposition is neutralised, or replaced by active consent, resulting in a new consensus.

The notion of social reproduction arises from Marx's view of a society which reproduces itself in social relationships and the process of production (Marx 1967). The concept incorporates the sociological term

socialisation, which for some implies a process with a single direction, for example in Althusser (1971) who perceives a mother engraving her children's psyche with sex roles appropriate to the needs of the state. The concept has since been developed and used in a number of ways including that of Mitchell (1971) who used it to explain women's work and child care. The notion now communicates a sense of individual agency in bringing about, changing and maintaining, social relations which benefit the dominant group. Women's role in producing and caring for children is seminal in this process, as well as processes of socialisation, which occur in the home and elsewhere in society. It might seem that here the concept of social reproduction assumes too functionalist a perspective, that is, that the masculine/feminine dichotomy is simply a function of the needs of the state or the economy. However a Marxist or socialist feminist notion of social reproduction would incorporate the view that individual struggle is an essential element both in maintaining and opposing gender roles, that apparent control is always under threat, that contradictions are always present and represent a potential for change at all times. Feminist theory is an important source of threat in observing, cataloging, and understanding the role of ideology in social reproduction, and offers a means of challenging male domination.

While offering some useful conceptual tools for analysis in feminist work, Marxist theory itself did not include a satisfactory focus on patriarchy, and harbours a worrying legacy. Stanley and Wise (1983) speak of "Marxist-feminist heavies" (p107) and dismiss them as simply Marxists who want to add women to their theories. Daly (1973) includes Marxism with other patriarchal religions, including Maoism, Christianity and

Islam. In drawing on Marxist theory an analysis of class may override an analysis of gender and McRobbie (1982) describes how, during her study of working class girls and femininity, she felt pressure to adopt a Marxist perspective. Class was not an obvious issue in relation to her research but she was forced to 'wheel it in' in order to find credibility in the academic community to which she belonged. She points out that British feminism grew out of Marxist social science in the late 70s and early 80s and academic credibility at that time meant theorising class while one was theorising gender.

3.5.3 Developments from Freud

The main usefulness of psychoanalysis stems from Freud's concept of the unconscious, and its contribution to feminist theory in making explicit aspects of life which are 'unnoticed' and the psychological processes which render them unnoticed and unnoticeable (Rappoport 1960). Drawing on Freudian theory may be helpful to those who seek to explain how individual identity is formed or who wish to theorise the basis of personal agency.

Psychological processes involved in the creation and maintenance of gender roles are a concern of Dinnerstein and Chodorow who draw upon psychoanalysis in their work. Both writers focus on internal barriers to change, while seeking to explain the way inequality persists despite increasing feminist consciousness and legislation allegedly designed to erase it. Chodorow (1978) identifies the family as the site where appropriate personalities are forged so as to produce and reproduce those social and economic relations necessary to hierarchies in terms of class

and gender. She suggests that a basic psychological orientation toward mothering is founded during the earliest interactions between infants and mothers, when people first experience intimacy and develop a need for, and expectancy of, intimacy in partnerships later in life. Chodorow suggests that, because Western society assumes the nuclear family construction, and child care is provided by the mother, women assume and then live this construction, and develop in their daughters the necessity to do the same. She suggests that the division of labour is secured in this way and made indelible during infancy. Dinnerstein (1977) also describes inner barriers to women's liberation, arising from a child's inevitable frustration in the infant-mother relationship when the mother is perceived as volatile and undependable. Dinnerstein suggests that adult men develop a need to dominate and control women as a way to minimise unpredictability; women become mothers themselves, so are more self-reliant, but still are ready to sink back into the arms of male power as a relief from the helplessness of infancy. Dinnerstein emphasises the destructive nature of male power, putting the planet at risk, so that resisting male power is a matter of survival. Neither Dinnerstein nor Chodorow completely accept Freud's legacy:

> When a woman's lone domination over the early flesh is abolished, she will no longer be peculiarly available as a dirty goddess, a scapegoat idol, a quasi-human being toward whom we have no obligation to make the painful effort to see her steadily and see her whole.
>
> (Dinnerstein 1977 p155)

Both Chodorow and Dinnerstein conclude that if males took an equal share in child care this would enable quite different economic conditions to develop.

Hester Eistenstein (1984) acknowledges insights offered by feminists who focus on psychology but is troubled by any tendency to lose sight of the way in which the psychological interacts with the social, economic and political.

Lacan (1977) is a psychoanalyst who stresses the human psyche as divided, fragmented, and concealed from consciousness. He focuses on language, on the entry of the child into language, which is a crucial development in the sense of self. Entry into language simultaneously produces a) a disjunction between lived experience and its symbolic representation and b) provides the child with a purchase on his or her own identity. For Lacan male and females 'selves' are different and dependent on having, or not having, a penis. For Lacan, 'man' has elected the penis as a symbol of 'non-lack' and he does not assume that the lack of a penis is, as Freud (1925) implies, symptomatic of a deficiency which goes beyond the physical. Lacan does, however, conceive of the father as law, a law recognised by the mother and fundamental in the family, and it is when the (male) child identifies with the father that he passes out of the Oedipal phase. In Lacan, as in Freud, the mother is essential and language develops out of the child's experience of the mother's presence and absence.

The usefulness of Freudian and Lacanian theory is debated in feminism (Feminist Review 1987) with the main criticism focusing on the contamination of post-Freudian theory with Freud's patriarchal assumptions and phallocentrism. Macey (1988) shows how feminism, and questions raised by sexual politics, are trivialised and made

pathological in the work of Lacan while "The riddle of femininity remains unsolved." (p209).

3.5.4 Structuralism and post-structuralism.

Structuralists are a widely diverging group, who do not share political perspective or area of interest, but who share the assumption that structures impinge on individual understanding. 'Structuralism' therefore assumes that the functions and nature of the phenomenon under review is given by a more fundamental structure. Structuralists in the Marxist tradition assume that the nature of the state and society are given by economic structures (the base and superstructure view of society). Structuralists in the tradition of Freud assume that the nature of the subject arises from the structure of the psyche and that unconscious motivations structure motives and perceptions. Freud views the Oedipus complex as a structure, creating the individual subject at the point of recognition of the importance of having a penis. Lacan acknowledges a debt to Saussure (1916) and draws on semiology and linguistics, as well as the structuralism of Freud, and refers to the structure of the language of the unconscious.

Post-structuralists in any tradition are less likely than structuralists to see a straightforward relationship between structure and experience. The work of Foucault (1970) prioritises the importance of meaning in language which is socially created and transient, and which is not locked into words alone. Foucault investigates (deconstructs) language to find 'the moment', meanings that construct contemporary society. Foucault is identified as a post-structuralist because of this, although he rejects

Marxism, and structural linguistics.

Stanley and Wise (1983) refuse, on the one hand, to see structures as "more than people" (p107):

> Sexism isn't discriminating practices, contextually located and daily enacted, which fix us within them.
>
> (Stanley and Wise 1983 p183)

On the other hand they make a statement which could be described as post-structuralist in intent:

> Social reality is constructed by and through sexism. If all aspects of sexism could be immediately destroyed, this would also destroy the social world and us with it.
>
> (Stanley and Wise 1983 p186)

Post-structuralist theory, which deals primarily with the observation and deconstruction of language, has developed contemporaneously with feminism and a post-structuralist feminist position is discernable. For example McRobbie (1978) is involved in deconstruction when she analyses romantic images in a schoolgirl magazine and finds these images influential in the construction of the needs and preferences of girls. Walkerdine (1984) examines the development of child-centred pedagogy and finds it to contain and obscure repressive elements. Walkerdine (1986) explores concepts used in child care and teaching, and the complex processes whereby these come to represent power, and are influential in securing social organisation.

Also using a post-structuralist approach Scott (1988) finds that the way

in which masculine/feminine is contrasted in language establishes a 'difference' which also brings about the social relations and conditions for difference. Many women as well as men accept this difference and accept ideas and conditions which maintain gendered inequality. She shows how the meaning of 'worker' has been created in history on the basis of 'natural' qualities of men and women and suggests that we must not uncritically accept male categories, especially the category of 'the woman worker' but investigate its meaning and how the meaning has been constructed in discourses through history.

Klein (1989) focuses on constructions of women as lesser beings in structuralist theory. She reflects on the work of Marx and Freud and the effects of the link they both make between the concept 'mother/woman' and 'nature':

> "Woman and nature" as a single category signifying that which is other-than-the-phallus, and yet the matter upon which the phallus works must be exposed as both the foundations for and the construction of, abstract masculine thought, of which the Marxian category of labour and the Freudian phallus are prime specimens.
>
> (Klein 1989 p272)

For Marx, nature is a force to be overcome by men in the creation of use-value; resources are wrested from nature, and created by man in his own image. For Freud and Lacan the penis and the law of the father have central importance, and the creation of the individual is only possible upon separation from the mother. For Klein, woman and nature is the matter upon which the phallus works in the structuralism of Marx and Freud. She finds this a "...fecund theoretical and material resource"

(p274) in the subjugation of women and insists that we trace just how such discourses have had effectivity in creating women.

3.5.5 The personal and political

Feminist methodology associated most strongly with the attempt to avoid pre-feminist theory is working with woman's groups and a concern to discover and name personal experiences of oppression. This aspect of feminist work, encapsulated in the term The Personal is Political, was first publicised in the 1960s. Hester Eisenstein (1984) links this development with the development of the New Left and its exploration of interpersonal power and its links with economic structure. Shulman (1980) was involved in early feminist group work and describes concern with raising into consciousness, previously unconscious or repressed, experiences involving oppression. The project was to make a connection between personal experiences and political processes in order to identify crucial areas for public action. Feminism has at its root, therefore, not only the identification of oppression experienced in personal lives, but also with connecting these to the family, economy and social institutions. Thus Hutter and Williams (1980) found controls over the supposed private areas of women's lives, finding experiences of personal failure, to be expressions of covert control, arising from the public sphere.

Stanley and Wise (1983) are concerned that feminist methodology should not go from personal feelings and experiences to abstract theories and concepts of structure. There are questions, however, concerning the status of the results of research which focuses on individual

experiences. This theme is taken up by Ramazanoglu (1989) who reflects on the dilemma for scientists who wish to opt out of masculine ideas. She describes her 1960 research on married women working as full-time shift workers, which used a positivist, empiricist, methodology based on traditional (masculine) theory. That view of science obliged her to view mothers in full-time work as deviant and to conclude that they should not work shifts:

> I did not want to be dragged to this conclusion. From its start the thesis had to be geared toward concealment and, as the work progressed, my problems and guilty secrets multiplied. As I could neither articulate these problems nor reveal the secrets, I refused to register for a PhD and left academic life.
>
> (Ramazanoglu 1989 p 429).

She would now focus on power relations in the work place, rather than assuming these do not exist as before, and also focus on women and their expressions of their own experience, rather than maintain a stance of objectivity. But she would expect philosophical and methodological problems of another kind, related to some lack of conceptual clarity in "visions of liberation" (p 432) in feminist theory, and resulting in lack of direction for the validation and evaluation of feminist knowledge.

3.6 Feminist insights and the current study.

During the 1970s and early 1980s preparation for parenthood was found to saturate the school curriculum, involving all but exceptional female pupils, and especially non-academic girls. Teachers had developed new courses, and broadened existing ones, supporting the ideals of traditional mothering. 'Cultured men' and 'natural women' are being

positioned, the former to be legitimated at work, earning money and exercising agency; the latter to be legitimated in the home, their labour appropriated, equal participation in the workforce closed off, individual achievement denied. Current and forthcoming economic differences between men and women are being validated by the discourses of preparation for parenthood.

During the same period as the parenthood curriculum was expanding, feminist theorists were concerned to understand the role, in the domination of women, played by the positioning of women in the home. Feminist theory reveals preparation for parenthood to be a deeply gendered curriculum, and a point in education where patriarchal influences can clearly be seen.

The term patriarchy is used here to denote power relations permeating all aspects of society, which serve to maintain and legitimate the disadvantage of women, and in so doing disadvantage a range of groups including some men. Using Eisenstein's (1984) classification of feminist perspectives, a radical feminist perspective is adopted, with a shading of socialist feminism due to the use of concepts initially developed with a class, rather than gender, analysis in view.

It would appear that the continued call for preparation for parenthood, despite the commitment of girls to any future babies and family life, can best be explained in terms the state's need to maintain credibility at a time of threatened social unrest. The preparation for parenthood movement of the 1970s can be seen as an ideological response, a restatement of

traditional values, aimed at the management of potential disequilibrium on several fronts, including problems in the economy, and feminist and socialist advances.

We find the adult lives of pupils being prepared for parenthood, under construction in the discourse of the curriculum, drawing as it does on patriarchal theory. This study seeks to explore the potential impact of state messages in relevant educational policy; to trace elements in the perspectives of teachers and pupils which might transmit or absorb these messages; and identify where they recognise, oppose or reject them.

The study is located in the developing post structuralist feminist tradition, following Foucault rather than Lacan. I assume that the state as an agency of male power, draws on patriarchal discourses and the constructed dependency of women, to enable and validate the near exclusion of women from certain areas of the workforce, and manage/maintain male dominance in society.

CHAPTER FOUR

EPISTEMOLOGY, METHODS AND PROCEDURES.

CHAPTER FOUR

EPISTEMOLOGY, METHODS AND PROCEDURES

4.1 Introduction

Epistemology is philosophical perspective: the theory of knowledge which dictates methods of investigation and means of judging the status of results. The choice of method reflects what counts as evidence in an enquiry and what range of phenomena are seen to be relevant. Procedures are those concrete events which mark the enquirer's progress through time, from initial data gathering, to interpretation of results.

In the present enquiry I explore complex events, not seeking to partial out the social or political from the psychological, and not seeking 'truth' but illumination. Preparation for parenthood contains contradictions and oppositional viewpoints which are not always communicated in cognitively accessible terms. Images of parenthood are not associated with identifiable truths but with subjective assumptions which change over time. The politics of preparation for parenthood are complex: one would not argue, for example, that policy-makers or teachers set out to frame girls or women as scapegoats for a failing economy, nor that they seek to influence curriculum in order to create a reserve army of labour. Neither would one argue that girls connive with the state to their own detriment. Child developmentalists design and write up their research with no plan to contribute to the domination of working class mothers. The epistemological position adopted for this study must accommodate this complexity along with the social dimensions of class and gender.

4.2 Epistemology

The two dominant epistemologies in social science research are a) empiricist theory and b) phenomenology. Neither tradition is ideal as a basis of feminist methodology.

The empiricist tradition was developed with an aim to uncover existing laws of nature and forces in operation in any given sphere of interest. The emphasis is upon the adoption or formulation of a theory; on the isolation of events to be explored from surrounding events which might contaminate findings; on careful and precise definitions; and on observation and measurement designed to produce information against which the theory or hypothesis could be tested. Empiricist researchers seek to avoid subjectivity; they avoid imposing their own values and interpretations upon what is observed and use mathematical formulae to assess to what extent findings could be found true or representative of reality.

Empiricist epistemology is dominant in psychology and the problems this poses for studies in psychology is outlined by Handy (1987):

- it overlooks the way in which humans construct their environment and give it meaning;
- it excludes consideration of the complex interrelationships of social and structural influences and the psyche;
- it looks only for aspects of the individual and therefore finds only aspects of the individual;
- it seeks for universal laws of behaviour while observed human behaviour is caught at a particular historical moment and would be different before

or afterwards;

- it assumes that the psychologist as observer is value free while values inevitably influence the choice of study area, the selection of participants, the identification of useful data, and the meanings of interpretation;

- it assumes that the political milieu is essentially benign and that if social problems occur, they are the fault of individuals or aggregates of individuals, and not of society and its structures.

The framework offered by empiricist epistemology does not lend itself to the exploration of a complex social situation such as that which is the focus of the current study. Here, values cannot be avoided but provide instead a major focus of the enquiry. Another significant focus is the articulation between individual psyches, political forces, social structures and cultural norms which help to construct and exploit the individual. Patriarchal effects, observed in education for example, are here not assumed to be essentially benign but essentially problematic. An epistemological perspective accommodating this range of phenomena must go beyond the traditional boundaries of social science; it must be able to underpin methodologies which explore how assumptions inherent in the rationale of preparation for parenthood seem to help in the construction of the very problems this curriculum seeks to avoid.

A framework offered by phenomenology is more fruitful in light of the objectives of the current study. In phenomenology there is no assumption that laws or truths exist to be discovered, but that a multitude of overlapping, antagonistic, negotiated meanings exist which can,

nevertheless, be revealed and explored, and their effects illuminated by systematic enquiry. While the beliefs, and certainly the political perspective of the researcher, are ideally removed in studies based in empiricist epistemology, in ethnographic studies based in phenomenology these are a legitimate focus, and the aim is not to find truth, but to broaden understanding.

Although seen to be more useful than empiricist epistemology, phenomenology is not acceptable to all feminist researchers because it, along with Western philosophy in general, is historically associated with masculine ideas. As shown in Chapter Three, a number of feminists review the work of philosophers whose assumptions influence the tenets which today guide social science research. Similarly Lange (1983) shows how, from Aristotle, Plato, through Descartes, Hobbes and Rousseau, masculine assumptions have provided tenets of enquiry which are antagonistic to womens' mode of thought and of being.

It is acknowledged that it is in women's lived experience that patriarchal processes can most clearly be seen but epistemology as 'knowing how to know' aspects of womens' experience is not, as yet, commonly associated with well-defined methods of investigation. Bartky (1981) however, suggests that although it has been introduced by men, phenomenology accords with feminist needs since it draws upon aspects of lived experience, laying them open to analysis, in ways which facilitate observation of how personal experience links with structural influences.

Flax (1983) outlines what is required of an epistemology which adequately theorises the experience of women:

> The task of feminist epistemology is to uncover how patriarchy has permeated both our concept of knowledge and the concrete content of bodies of knowledge, even that claiming to be emancipatory. Without adequate knowledge of the world and our history within it (and this includes knowing how to know) we cannot develop a more adequate social practice. A feminist epistemology is thus both an aspect of feminist theory and a preparation for and a central element of a more adequate theory of human nature and politics.
>
> (Flax 1983 p 269)

Giroux (1983) speaks of the need to "critically decode" aspects of schooling and in particular those which clearly interact ideologically with pupil's perspectives. He refers to class, here, but may as well refer to gender:

> ...it is necessary to critically decode those elements of the hidden curriculum that speak to working class needs and desires but in so doing limit their radical potential.
>
> (Giroux 1983 p68)

An epistemological perspective providing a method for decoding, or deconstructing the hidden curriculum, and one that recognises that epistemology is political, is offered by Michel Foucault. The view taken by Foucault is that those discourses and practices which constitute education, psychology and other social sciences, are so enmeshed with

social interactions including politics and social regulation, that research should not attempt to isolate and observe any one aspect of the whole system. In research we may in the Foucauldian tradition, identify salient discourses relevant to a field of enquiry, with an aim to discover the norms which are created and supported within these discourses, and reveal mutualities between discourses and practices which govern or regulate society.

Foucault investigates systems of discourse about dementia, madness and sexuality. His work reveals contradictions within discourse which he suggests represent contestation between forces in opposition. He locates 'codes of knowledge' which operate in different historical periods. He identifies an 'archeological base' underlying rules which are apparent across a range of disciplines including economics, natural history, biology and literature from the classical period. Foucault locates three eras, each distinguishable by a different mode of thought, finding that, unknown to themselves,

> the naturalists, economists, and grammarians employed the same rules to define the objects proper to their own study, to form their concepts, to build their theories
>
> (Foucault 1970 p pxi).

On the one hand Foucault's 'Archeology of Knowledge' offers a useful epistemology for the current study since it brings together psychology and politics. On the other hand it poses two problems. The first problem is that Foucault's theory is highly abstract and his method separated from the lived experiences of contemporary girls and women. The second problem is that Foucault, although developing from the work of Marx,

opposes the basic tenet of Marxism that exploitation occurs through the domination of less powerful, by more powerful groups, in society. Sheridan puts Foucault's case when he says that, for Foucault, power is a multitude of micromechanisms at work:

> ...not through a code of law but through a technology of normalisation, not by punishment, but by levels and forms which go beyond the state and its machinery.
>
> (Sheridan 1980 p 183)

My position in this study is that power is exercised not so much by dominant social groups but to their advantage and this signals a departure from Foucauldian theory.

I draw upon Foucault, therefore, primarily in the development of a method for analysing an influential policy document: Sir Keith Joseph's Cycles of Deprivation (1972). I use the analysis to clarify meanings communicated in the document, and to explore ways in which it may have influenced the school curriculum. The method is explained in 4.3.4 below.

4.3 Method The focus of enquiry in this study ranges widely, looking into the effects of educational policy on preparation for parenthood, the views and aims of teachers who provide a link between policy, curriculum and pupils, and the perspectives of girls who are affected by this aspect of educational provision. The methods of the study are correspondingly diverse involving analyses of policy and texts influencing policy; semi-structured interviews with teachers in schools; and a questionnaire followed by informal discussions with fourth form girls in school.

4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

During Level 3 of the Aston study teachers in five schools were asked about their aims for preparation for parenthood. This involved semi-structured interviews in that researchers worked from the same set of questions with each respondent, but were able to divert from these, to follow other areas of interest raised during the process of the interview. Interviews were designed and carried out by four members of the project team, and as research fellow, I carried out 25 of the 60 interviews in four schools which are analysed for the purposes of the current study. Transcripts of interviews were made, but drawn upon only superficially during the life of the project, which aimed primarily to describe the curriculum content of preparation for parenthood and its extent in secondary schools. This left a large amount of unanalysed data on teacher aims and attitudes to be drawn upon in the current study.

4.3.2 Questionnaire

I based the questionnaire used with pupils during my 1978 study on Kelly's Situational Resources Repertory Test (1955 p313). A modified version of this was used again, during the Aston study, with fifth formers in one school in a northern LEA. This questionnaire, entitled 'Just Imagine...' was also used in 1988 during the current study, to provide an initial way in, to informal discussions with a group of fourth form girls, in a school in the south midlands.

4.3.3 Small group discussion

Four girls were withdrawn from the larger group who had completed the 1988 'Just Imagine...' questionnaire. A discussion took place in school,

but in an informal atmosphere, exploring some of the issues arising from girls' responses to the questionnaire. The discussion was recorded on audio tape and provided an example of expectations and perspectives in relation to future lives, work and domesticity.

4.3.4 Discourse analysis

The fourth and final method employed in the current study was discourse analysis. This method goes outside those readily associated with psychology and sociology, but has a place within feminist post-structural analyses, as described in Chapter Three. It does not correspond with feminist methods associated with consciousness raising, although it seeks to clarify links between lived experience and influential discourse. It is necessary, therefore, to describe in detail the theoretical basis of the method and reasons for its use.

Two levels of discourse analysis are used. At the first level, reported in Chapter Five, ten texts influencing the policy of preparation for parenthood are searched for their positions in relation to the debate outlined in Chapter Two. At this first level the historical position of texts was also explored and this revealed that economic events in the U.K. had an influence on educational policy concerned with preparation for parenthood. One of the ten texts proved to be of particular historical importance to the new emphasis on preparation for parenthood in the 1970s: this was Sir Keith Joseph's 'Cycles of Deprivation' (1972). It proved to be of such ideological complexity, that analysis at the level of readily perceived meanings was impossible, and a second level of discourse analysis was required. A semiological method of discourse

analysis was developed in order to locate and explore the elusive meanings and the likely effects of this document: results of analysis are reported in Chapter Six.

The method of discourse analysis designed for the purposes of this study draws upon semiology, on literature focusing on analysis of political communications, and on the work of Foucault. Each of these are considered below in turn.

Discourse theory: semiology. Saussure (1916) originated semiology and his work has since been developed by Barthes (1967) among others focusing upon meanings in a range of communications: advertising; film; music; fashion; and food as well as language. In semiology the method seeks to go beyond visible and tangible aspects of communication, which are known as 'the signifiers' to scrutinise the meanings they generate, meanings known in semiology as 'the signified'. Language is the major focus of analysis in that part of this study which explores effects of policy in preparation for parenthood. Semiology suggests that, although language appears to be linear, and appears to draw mainly upon cognitive understanding, the understanding of language is paradynamic and involves a wide range of non-cognitive as well as cognitive processes. Unconscious characteristics which influence both the generator and the consumer of a discourse include values and conventions: these both hamper and facilitate communication. The setting of the discourse has importance as does the status of the speaker and the historical moment within which the discourse takes place.

> What quantity of idea or phonic matter the sign contains is of less import than what is around it in other signs.
> (Barthes 1967 p 166)

Discourse theory: political communication. Ambiguity, vagueness and metaphor are often perceived to be deviations from precise communications but Scheffler (1979) shows they have more positive functions. Ambiguous terms are not merely terms used imprecisely, or words standing for a range of ideas, or words having different dictionary meanings; ambiguity signifies meanings while at the same time concealing meanings. Similarly, vagueness does not arise simply from limitations of speakers, but from "a particular indecision" (Scheffler p 78). A particular indecision is apparent in Sir Keith Joseph's 'Cycles of Deprivation', for example, when he refers to inter-generational deficits affecting all levels of society but also a special concern of the working class. The listener or reader is unlikely to question this reference as vague; he or she is more likely to be influenced by a 'particular indecision' written into the speech at this point which introduces the issue of working class deficiency. In the current study, the effects of ambiguity and vagueness as components of educational policy, are a focus of analysis.

Studies of political communication carried out by Edelman in 1964 reveal that it takes a unique form, involving special languages, symbols and subtleties which have significance for the present study. He identifies four types of language, each having a different function:

1. Hortatory language: emotively weighted, heavy in ambiguous slogans, used when there is an aim to convince or urge toward some desired action.

2. Legalistic language: inaccessible and acting to obscure issues.

3. Administrative, or ambiguous language: obscuring unfairness in particular.

4. Bargaining, or negotiating language: for use with the politically initiated.

In the study of policy in the current study, hortatory and ambiguous language in particular, are to be found.

Symbols are effective in bridging gaps between interpretations of any given statement by different groups. Within a group sharing a particular view, a symbol is likely to be interpreted in the same way, but differently between different groups. For example, the phrase 'a Greenham woman' can symbolise different types of woman, depending on the persuasions of the generator and consumer of the communication, ranging from a latter day suffragette to a virago. One reference to a Greenham woman will key into the preconceptions of groups who do, and groups who do not, identify with the Greenham movement. During propaganda symbols are essentially manipulative; they are vague enough so that individuals can take from them their own meaning while the generator need not be held responsible for their effects. The more highly abstract the symbol the more effective the political impact. In the study of policy in the current study symbols are found often to be in use.

If an influential person generates a new discourse, or presents an old one in a new context, he or she can be seen as a 'stimulator' in the terms of Rogers and Shoemaker (1972). There are also 'consumers', 'legitimators' and 'implementors' of the ideas communicated. Individuals

may consume, legitimate or implement because they feel they have something to learn from the stimulator of the discourse, or they may have something to lose by not following the ideas. They may gain in symbolic terms, for example by having beliefs confirmed, or in practical terms in career advancement. All of these agents are involved in preparation for parenthood policy.

What is avoided during communication has force at the level of meaning. Bachrach and Baratz (1970) suggest that certain topics never arise for public discussion and these are associated with social and economic considerations. Foucault (1976) also suggests that we should look critically into things which are left unsaid, as well as those which are said, in relation to the power of the speaker and his or her institutional situation. There are influential silences in preparation for parenthood policy.

Discourse theory: Foucault. The view taken by Michel Foucault is that those discourses and practices which constitute education, psychology and other social sciences, are so enmeshed with social interactions including politics and social regulation, that research should not attempt to isolate and observe any one aspect of the whole system. In research we may, in the Foucauldian tradition, identify salient discourse relevant to a field of enquiry, with an aim to discover the norms which are created and supported within these discourses, and reveal mutualities between discourses and practices which govern or regulate society.

Foucault's method scrutinises a system by means of firstly deconstructing, and then reconstructing its discourses, in such a way that oppositional forces are revealed, as are the forces of social regulation. His method is similar to semiological method: again the 'statement' is the focus of research and it is not the words (the signs) which carry most importance, it is the act of speaking or writing; the site in which statements are made; and the position of the discourse among discourses that contribute most to understanding.

The framework for discourse analysis. From a reading of semiology, of texts concerned with analysis of political communications, and of Foucault's method and theory, I have developed a framework for discourse analysis. This framework is new and devised by me for use in exploring the underlying meanings and likely influences of the document found to be central to the policy for preparation for parenthood: Sir Keith Joseph's 'Cycles of Disadvantage' (1972). The framework enables a deconstruction of the text in such a way that the mechanics of persuasion and implication, which are influential at an unconscious level, are revealed. The framework guides the scrutiny of the text at a number of levels, beginning with an overview of its content revealed at first reading, followed by the identification of language which connotes more subtle inference.

The framework has four levels with Level One providing a summary of the overall communication. Levels Two to Four focus on connoted meanings and effects. Level Two of the framework draws upon the work of Scheffler, Edelman, and Bachrach and Baratz, who write on the devices of political

communication. Level Three draws upon the work of Rogers and Shoemaker, the semiologists Saussure and Barthes, and upon Foucault, all of whom have explored the importance of influences arising from outside the discourse itself, but which nevertheless affect the ways in which the discourse is interpreted. Level Four draws upon Foucault's consideration of power as it infuses discourse and is identifiable within it.

Level One

Describe surface meaning.

Level Two Locate and explore:

* ambiguity
* vagueness
* symbols
* hortatory (emotively weighted) language
* what is not spoken
* the promulgation of norms.
* legitimating references

Level Three Explore:

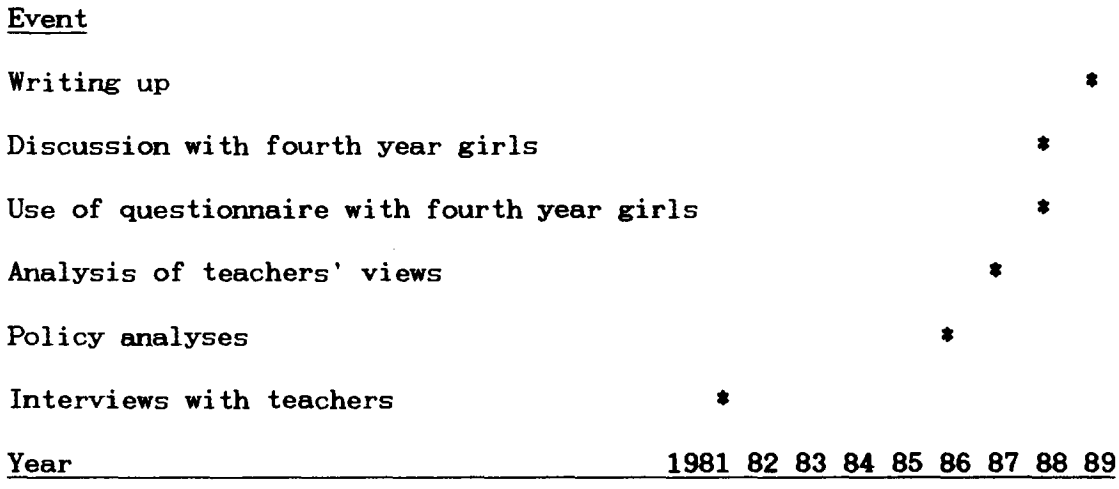
* how the discourse came into being
* who are the stimulators, legitimators and implementors
* what is the immediate context
* what is the status of the speaker
* what is to be implemented
* who are to be the consumers of what is to be implemented.

Level Four Consider:

* what are the power relations revealed in norms and symbols communicated by the discourse
* what tactics and strategies have arisen out of components of power
* how have power relations given rise to discourse and what resistance is apparent
* how does the discourse transmit, produce, and reinforce power.

A major problem for this study has been how to identify and explore ideological meanings present in policy in such a way as to aid understanding of points of contact between a) policy and b) aspects of lived experience in the various communities which make up the world of preparation for parenthood: especially teachers, pupils and women who mother. This semiological analysis is helpful in that it provides for the scrutiny of discourse revealed to be ideological.

4.4 Procedures Research for the current study involved looking at preparation for parenthood policy; teachers' views; and the views of fourth year pupils. The major events of this study took place during nine years between 1981 and 1989. The point of data collection did not always coincide with the time that data was used in analysis. Timings of data collection and analysis are shown below.



The years between 1982 and 85 were concerned with reading for chapters two and three, with the development of political and epistemological perspectives, and the development of appropriate methodology.

4.4.1 Interviews with teachers

Selection of schools: LEAs were classified by Webber and Craig (1978) in terms of their demographic characteristics. Six 'families' of LEAs ranging from the more to the less affluent in socio-economic terms were revealed. With the exception of ILEA, one authority from each of the five remaining families was selected for research during level two of the Aston study. At this level every secondary school in the five authorities received a questionnaire designed to assess the presence of preparation for parenthood. One school in each of these authorities was then selected for study in greater depth; the choice was made on the basis of a) type of preparation for parenthood provision (the aim was to include a range of different approaches across LEAs) and b) acceptance of research in the school. One school collaborated in the pilot study; here we were asked to contact interested teachers in the staff room; teachers in this school are not included in the current study. In subsequent schools we used an

amended interview schedule; we also sent a letter to every teacher and found a far greater proportion of interested teachers. Teachers in one school in the following authorities are included in the current study: Leicestershire; Northamptonshire; Knowsley and Lancashire.

Interviews: A letter sent to teachers in each of the four schools asked them to contact us if preparation for parenthood formed part of their teaching. Appointments were then made with those who replied. Four members of the research team shared the interviews which took place in 1981. Structured interviews focused on the preparation for parenthood curriculum. If there was time a less structured approach was used to record teacher's perceptions on the family and parenthood and their personal aims for preparing their pupils for parenthood. 60 teachers were involved in these interviews and their characteristics, in terms of school, sex, marital status and subject taught, are recorded in Appendices 2 and 3. The list of questions used during these interviews is provided in Appendix 4. Interviews took place in a room provided by the school and took an average of 40 minutes each. Interviews were recorded on audio-tape and later transcribed. Information gathered in this way was not organised or analysed systematically during the life of the project and is drawn upon comprehensively, here, for the first time.

4.4.2 Analysis of policy

Selection of policy texts for stage one. The period of interest in this study is between the second world war and the end of the 1970s. Ten texts published during this period were found to contain, or influence, policy on preparation for parenthood and all were used in stage one of the

policy analysis.

Development of structure for analysis at stage one. Four questions for policy were suggested by the debate recorded in Chapter Two of this study:

- who is seen to be responsible for children in the society of the time
- what is seen to be natural: how flexible are behaviours associated with child care
- what are presented as the characteristics of good parents - what is presented as worthwhile parental knowledge?

The ten texts were read with these questions in mind and the perspectives of the various authors, on each of these questions, identified.

Stage two of policy analysis. During the review of policy, one particular text appeared to mark the beginning of a different and more intensive official interest in preparation for parenthood policy. This was Sir Keith Joseph's address to the Pre-School Playgroup Association which took place in 1972. It was clearly the beginning of a new era in policy and it coincided with a new emphasis on curriculum development, and so required detailed analysis. It was deeply ambiguous and resistant to clarification by means of the surface-level analysis which had been effective at stage one. In order to assess the likely influences of this document it was necessary to develop the method for semiological analysis described above in 4.3.4. This resulted in the identification of twenty statements (listed in Appendix 5) which provide a framework for the analysis of teachers views reported in Chapter Seven.

4.4.3 Analysis of teacher's views

A detailed procedure was developed for the analysis of information contributed by teachers. This enabled all of the views, of all teachers interviewed, to be identified in relation to the twenty areas of interest.

The classification of teachers. An index system was used to identify each of the sixty teachers who contributed to the current study. The personal and professional characteristics of each teacher were recorded on an index card in the following way:

Characteristics		Form of identification
Name:		real name and code name (numbers 1 to 60)
School/LEA:		real name and code name
Marital status:	married:	gold dot (transfer)
	parent:	two gold dots
	single parent:	three gold dots
Sex:	female:	yellow index card
	male:	green index card
Subject:		transfer stars: different colours for each subject taught.

This system allowed easy location of information in relation to any one, or group of, characteristics. For example, to locate views contributed by all married, childless, female Biology teachers, it was necessary to pick out all yellow cards bearing one gold dot and a red star.

The organisation of unstructured data. Transcripts of interviews were photocopied. All sixty copied transcripts were searched for views

relating to the twenty statements of interest. These were cut out and pasted on a compilation sheet which recorded that teacher's views; each of these sheets held the teacher's code number and name. A summary of teacher's views were recorded on their index cards. During analysis it was possible to draw upon a) the index card which provided the teacher's characteristics and overview of perspectives b) quotations relevant to each area of interest and c) the original interview transcript. A great deal of initially unstructured data was contributed by all sixty teachers. This system structured data so that all the information contained in it could be drawn upon.

4.4.4 Use of questionnaire with fourth formers:

A school was located in Buckinghamshire where teachers of fourth formers welcomed my enquiry. Home economics and child care were supplied alongside design and technology in a unit entitled 'Design for Living'. Options existed within the unit which meant that most girls took domestic subjects and most boys took technology subjects. During a timetabled home economics session the 'Just Imagine...' questionnaire was used in February 1988 with 33 pupils (30 girls and 3 boys). Boy's contributions were not used since the focus was on girls at this time. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix 6. Girl's responses were searched for perspectives relating to plans for employment; family structures and relationships; and parental responsibilities. Responses were used to identify a small group of girls with whom to work in greater depth.

4.4.5 Interview and discussion with fourth form girls:

Four girls expressed views on the questionnaire which suggested they would a) prepare quite seriously for employment outside the home; b) be employed for some time; c) feel deprived if they did not one day have an established relationship and later become a parent; and d) try to combine domesticity with employment outside the home. A 90-minute period in school was spent discussing these areas with the girls in March 1988. The list used to guide the discussion is provided in Appendix 7. The discussion was recorded on audio-tape and drawn upon during the overall analysis of findings of this study.

4.5 Summary

This research focuses on data relating to the preparation for parenthood curriculum collected during a review of policy, interviews with teachers, and a discussion with fourth form girls. A method of discourse analysis was developed in order to locate and explore the likely effects of influential messages present in this aspect of education in the 1970s. The aim of the research is not to test theory, but to further understanding in a complex area, which involves social and political influences and personal choice.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS:

EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PREPARATION FOR PARENTHOOD.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS: EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PREPARATION FOR PARENTHOOD

5. 1 Introduction

Earlier chapters have gone some way toward exploring preparation for parenthood as a political phenomenon. A discussion of relevant literature in Chapter Two suggests that the preparation for parenthood curriculum carries ideological messages which are supportive of social structures and which work to keep women, especially working class women, in a state of economic dependence. It is clear that preparation for parenthood and domesticity takes time from alternative studies which would give girls access to a greater range of vocations. Because it is aimed at, and taken up by females, the preparation for parenthood curriculum also confirms the ideology that they are exclusively responsible, as individuals, for home and child care.

Chapter Three explores these issues in the context of feminist theory. Preparation for parenthood, through its confirmation of feminine roles and neglect of alternatives in terms of career development, may be useful to patriarchal state systems. Current inequalities are 'explained', maintained and legitimated by the recurring message that it is natural for women to adopt domesticity. In addition, at a time of economic recession, preparation for parenthood seems to work ideologically, providing a public relations service for the state by alleging that inadequate mothers and not state policies, are the cause of problems in society.

Mothers, and young girls who are oriented toward domesticity, are less

than sanguine about their responsibilities. While committed to the welfare of their children, their anxieties correspond so well with ideological state messages, that they do not militate against ideological framing. On the contrary committed women seem to collude with state ideology in that they accept exclusive responsibility for their children and do not expect or demand economic reward or recognition in terms of status or power. If women who mother become alert to feminist developments, they may be seen as a threat to the economy, not because they are inadequate as mothers and therefore nurture social deviants of the future, but because they could justifiably demand economic equality. They may, in the 1970s, have become the focus of a dimension of state control, in which the call for preparation for parenthood played a part. While the state works structurally through, for example, lack of provision for alternative pre-school child care, preparation for parenthood may work ideologically by confirming women's anxiety, by diminishing their confidence, and in this way ensuring against consciousness raising or militant action.

This chapter, Chapter Five, focuses upon ten policy documents, produced from the second world war to the end of the 1970s, and what they reveal in relation to the official position on preparation for parenthood.

5. 2 The policy of preparation for parenthood.

Between the second world war and the end of the 1970s ten documents or texts were published, which either contained preparation for parenthood policy, or were influential and drawn upon in policy. Publications which were explored for the purposes of this study, and the economic period in

which they appeared, are shown in the diagramme below. Shifts in policy can be seen to coincide with shifts in the economy. Three periods can be identified in the U. K. economy during these thirty-five years: the post-war re-building period; a period of growth in the 1950s and 60s; and the period of economic crisis and contraction which followed.

ECONOMIC PERIOD	DATE OF PUBLICATION	PUBLICATION	
Postwar rebuilding period.	1943	1. The Norwood Report.	HMSO
	1948	2. Newsom's Education for Girls.	Faber
	1951	3. Bowlby's Maternal Care & Mental Health.	WHO
Economic expansion.	1959	4. The Crowther Report.	HMSO
	1963	5. The Newsom Report.	HMSO
	1972	6. Sir Keith Joseph's Cycle of Deprivation speech.	PPA
Economic contraction.	1974a	7. The Family in Society: Preparation for Parenthood.	DHSS/HMSO
----------The '1974 divide'----------			
	1974b	8. The Family in Society: Dimensions of Parenthood.	DHSS/HMSO
	1976	9. The Court Report.	HMSO
	1977	10 . Violence to Children.	HMSO

The postwar re-building period ran from the second world war until the end of the 1950s. During the second world war R. A. Butler set up a committee to consider the future of secondary education resulting in The Norwood Report of 1943. Later during this period John Newsom's Education for Girls (1948) was recommended by Butler for its wise and humorous recommendations. In 1948 the World Health Organisation appointed the psychiatrist John Bowlby of the Tavistock Clinic to consider the needs of children institutionalised as orphans of the war. His work resulted in Maternal Care and Mental Health (1951).

The expanding economy ran from approximately late 1950s to late 1960s. This period produced two relevant documents: The Crowther Report (1959) considered education for 15 to 18 year olds and the Newsom Report (1963) made recommendations for the education of 13 to 16 year olds who were designated to be of average, or less than average, ability.

During the period of economic contraction which followed there were five relevant publications, four of which were initiated by Sir Keith Joseph. As Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, Sir Keith addressed the Pre-School Playgroups Association (PPA) in June 1972. In the text of his speech, entitled Cycles of Deprivation, are crystalised many of the assumptions underlying the rationale of preparation for parenthood provision.

Two DHSS documents followed in 1974 which were intended to explore or confirm Sir Keith's recommendations for parenthood education: The Family in Society: Preparation for Parenthood and The Family in Society:

Dimensions of Parenthood. An interesting change in philosophical stance which I refer to as 'the 1974 divide' occurs between these two documents. The first reports consultations with educational and other organisations; in his introduction Sir Keith seems to answer critics whose views are not included in the document. Those consulted, and whose views are included, are on the whole supportive of the notions of cycles of deprivation and preparation for parenthood. The second document does include the views of critics: academics who found the cycle notion to be unfounded and to have little explanatory power.

The next document of relevance in that period was produced by a committee on child health, set up by Sir Keith in 1973 under Professor Donald Court, where the task was to review current health services for children. The final document considered is Violence to Children (1977) prepared by a Parliamentary Select Committee which focused on injury and neglect suffered by children at the hands of caregivers.

A number of inter-related philosophical assumptions underpin the rationale of preparation for parenthood policy and four were used as a framework for the exploration of policy reported in this chapter:

1. Individuals rather than social groups are responsible for child care, and through that, for the quality of social life.
2. Certain aspects of the mothering role are biologically based and inflexible.
3. Good parenthood is associated with carrying out traditional gender roles and the maintenance of traditional family forms.

4. Only middle class ways of knowing are valid in areas related to parenthood.

The remainder of this chapter is concerned with clarifying these assumptions and identifying the extent to which they influence preparation for parenthood policy.

When tracing the official stance in relation to the four assumptions outlined above a divide can be identified between the two documents published in 1974. Sir Keith's 1972 speech marks the point in policy when it was most directly centred on preparation for parenthood. Following this the first 1974 document reports some support among representatives of official bodies and societies who were consulted on Sir Keith's position, while the second 1974 document reports dissenting views. The remaining policy documents suggest a new direction in policy, away from what was becoming an increasingly traditional and conservative stance, toward a more progressive and radical one. I first describe how this divide is communicated through assumptions made about parental responsibility.

5. 2. 1 Responsibility for children

The quality of children's lives, and the type of person they grow into, is traditionally seen in the U. K. to be the responsibility of parents, especially mothers. In extreme cases this view is extended so that parents are assumed to be responsible for the psychological welfare of the nation or the economic stability of the nation. An alternative assumption would be that the structures and organisation of the state,

and not individuals, are responsible for the welfare of children and the quality of life.

Assumptions to do with responsibility in parenthood are closely tied to assumptions to do with natural gender roles. In early policy, the education of girls for domesticity is assumed to draw on their natural interests, but education for parenthood is not yet specifically proposed; this first occurs in the 1970s and was a central concern of Sir Keith Joseph.

The Norwood Report assumes that girls, and not boys, would be responsible for home care but does not refer to parenthood:

> . . . we take the view that every girl before she leaves school should have the opportunity to take a minimum course which would give her the essential elements of Needlework, Cookery and Laundrywork. (p127)

Newsom's Education for Girls communicates essentially conservative assumptions to do with 'who is responsible' in parenthood as well as within other assumptions of interest here. The document points to a contemporary tendency to provide identical curricula for both sexes and describes this as "a modern perversion" (p110). Motherhood but not fatherhood is referred to, for example, as follows:

> . . . no amount of equal education and minimum wage levels will, of themselves, produce the qualities to make good mothers. . . (p 28)

Education for Girls assigns a significant responsibility to women as homemakers. The homes of England, it asserts, are stuffed with horrors:

. . . ninety-five percent of these objects were bought by women, and a great number within ten years or so of finishing education which has largely ignored the whole question. . . in the long run our standards of industrial design, and therefore our continuance as a great commercial nation, will depend on our education of the consumer to the point where she rejects the functionally futile and the aesthetically inept and demands what is fitting and beautiful. . . (pp102/3)

Responsibility for the economic welfare of the nation is here put on the shoulders of individual female consumers.

In Maternal Care and Mental Health the focus is on the responsibility of mothers, but not on their education. Bowlby associates the development of a balanced human being with a mother's continual care:

The provision of constant attention, day and night, seven days a week and 365 in the year, is possible only for a women who derives profound satisfaction from seeing her child grow from babyhood, throughout the many phases of childhood, to become an independent man or woman, and knows that it is her care which has made this possible. (p67)

Here, individual mothers are clearly seen to have responsibility for the well being of their children. A responsibility for the mental health of the nation, is implied in the following:

It is now demonstrated that maternal care in infancy and early childhood is essential for mental health. This is a discovery comparable in magnitude to that of the role of vitamins in physical health, and of far reaching significance for programmes of preventative mental hygiene. On this new understanding social measures of great consequence for the future will be based. (p 59)

The Crowther Report, written during a period of labour shortage, assumes that women (especially the academically inclined) can do men's jobs, but makes no suggestion that men could do womens' jobs. The assumption that females and not males are domestically oriented is made fairly explicit, as follows:

> At this time, therefore, the prospect of courtship and marriage should rightly influence the education of the adolescent girl. (p34)

but the assumption that women are responsible for the outcomes of childhood are again buried within assumptions relating to gender roles. Assumptions to do with responsibility are more clearly seen in The Newsom Report. The standards of the home and children's educational attainment is presented as the responsibility of girls:

> . . . the older girls can be brought to see there is more to marriage than feeding the family and bathing the baby and that they will themselves have a key role in establishing the standards of the home and in educating their children. (p137)

Cycles of Deprivation brings together assumptions to do with the education of girls for domesticity and parenthood and the primary importance of mothers for the psychological welfare of children and the nation. For the first time in policy, preparation for parenthood becomes the focus of curriculum development, and this is suggested not by the Secretary of State for Education (then Margaret Thatcher) but by Sir Keith Joseph as Secretary of State for Health and Social Security. Sir Keith suggests that family circumstances and inadequate care during infancy propel individuals into depression and despair associated with emotional instability and educational failure:

> . . . children will find school unrewarding - because they are unprepared for it; (they) will carry into adolescence and adult life an inability to form trusting and stable relationships - because they have never experienced them; and will become in their turn the parents of the next generation of children who are deprived emotionally and intellectually. (p8)

Sir Keith suggests that cycles of deprivation set up in this way by individuals are almost indelible; they resist ameliorative action by social agencies who:

> . . . work with the most difficult casualties of society - the problem families, the vagrants, the alcoholics, the drug addicts, the disturbed, the delinquent, and the criminal. . . cyclical processes are at work. (pp 4/5)

Two years later, in Preparation for Parenthood, the view that parents carry responsibility for child care, and through that, responsibility for the quality of society, is somewhat diluted. Dimensions of Parenthood then reports the idea to be under critical scrutiny. In this second 1974 document Rutter identifies seven myths to be involved in the cycle of deprivation notion including genetics as a primary influence in child development; inheritance of social disadvantage; the concept of critical periods; mothers as being more important than fathers; and the family, rather than the state, being responsible for any cycle which may be imagined.

The Court Report then consolidates this change, referring to a holocaust

and saying that

> . . . children still die in our time of nineteenth century reasons. (p6) not because of inadequate mothering but because of the unequal distribution of social resources.

Violence to Children reflects a partnership model of responsibility, assuming that abusing parents are on the one hand victims of social and economic circumstances especially demonstrated by poor housing, and on the other, victims of their own abusing parents.

5. 2. 2. Nature and child care

Early policy assumes it is natural for a girl to be interested in romance, marriage, domesticity and child care. The Norwood Report states:

> . . . we do not ourselves contemplate a state of affairs in which every boys' school should have a kitchen for teaching cookery and every girls' school a workshop. . . (p129/30)

Education for Girls identifies assumed gender roles:

> . . . for the vast majority of women, the business of home making and the early nurture of children is a dominant theme in their lives, while for men the equivalent dominant is to earn enough to support their wives and families. (p12)

In this document there is a clear indication that mothering skills are natural:

> able to attend to their infant's needs without attending any courses of instruction and are frequently all the better mothers.(p12)

In **Maternal Care and Mental Health** Bowlby sees mothers as having instinctive feelings for their children; even when children are suspected of being at risk in their own homes Bowlby prefers they stay there rather than being taken into care. Other care givers are poor substitutes:

> . . . **what is believed to be essential for mental health is that the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with his mother (or permanent mother-substitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment.** (p11)

Bowlby suggests that a mother's instinctive feelings for her child would be disturbed if her own childhood had been disturbed by maternal deprivation. If the continuity of the mother-child relationship is broken then a child experiences Partial Deprivation; this results in anxiety, indiscriminate affection seeking, guilt and depression, and a need for revenge. If institutionalisation occurs, this results in Total Deprivation and the child loses the ability to form personal relationships which are the basis for mental health.

The Crowther Report assumes that girls are naturally interested in domesticity and marriage:

> . . . **it is sound educational policy to take account of natural interests, there is a clear case for a curriculum which respects the different roles they play. . . At this time, therefore, the prospect of courtship and marriage should rightly influence the education of the adolescent girl.** (pp 33/4)

The Newsom Report suggests, at one level, an acceptance of new trends in gender roles:

> Girls themselves need to be made aware of the new opportunities which may be open to them, and both boys and girls will be faced with evolving a new concept of partnership in their personal relations, work and marriage. (p 28)

At a deeper level, different assumptions are revealed as different curricula are related to the interests of boys and girls:

> . . . engineering, building and other 'technical' courses for boys aiming subsequently at skilled apprenticeships in industry; catering, nursing, dressmaking and needlecraft, retail distribution and commerce especially for girls. (p 36)

In Cycles of Deprivation Sir Keith assumes the existence of ecological, biological critical periods, and builds upon Bowlby's influence:

> . . . the capacity to develop intellectually and to form and maintain emotional and social relationships is established so early that it soon becomes increasingly difficult to put things right. The basis of future behaviour patterns is laid when an infant experiences a rewarding relationship with his mother. . . (p 8)

Following this, Preparation for Parenthood reports that a strong theme to arise during consultations was that

> ... mothers of young children in particular should stay at home. (p64)

The assumption that motherhood is natural gives way at the 1974 divide. Dimensions of Parenthood presents mothers and fathers as of equal

importance to children. The Court Report reflects the view that mother care is both natural and influenced by the economic environment. It does not support the notion of critical periods in child development:

> As the human child grows he is in so many important ways literally being created by the slowly forming imprint of experience. . . (p 2)

Violence to Children reflects no notion that abuse is related to natural tendencies, or lack of natural tendencies, in individuals. Instead it recommends that family stress should be avoided:

> . . . whether these are related to economic deprivation, financial difficulties, immaturity or coping with a 'difficult' child. (p xviii)

Assumptions relating to gender roles influence all other assumptions so that these also change at the 1974 divide. Traditional views assume the female to be best adapted to the domestic sphere and the male to protecting and providing for the family through paid employment. At a time of labour shortages Crowther saw no reason to keep women at home but Newsom reasserts the traditional view which was then heavily endorsed by Sir Keith as the economy went into decline. Again reflecting Bowlby, Sir Keith in 1972 emphasises rewarding mother-infant relationships. Preparation for Parenthood still assumes traditional gender roles but Dimensions of Childhood does not. In The Court Report there is a change of perspective, with Court actively pointing out the benefits of mothers going out to work, and regretting the lack of adequate child care facilities:

> The sad truth is that our society has in no way come to terms with this social fact, nor tried to use the opportunity to improve the quality of services for children. (p 13)

Violence to Children makes no assumptions to do with gender roles.

5. 2. 3 Good parents

The Norwood Report does not communicate assumptions to do with the characteristics of good parents but Education for Girls has a great deal to say about good women, who must reflect the traditional female virtues of patience, humour, courage, and resilience. Women are most valuable when they work through others to

> . . . civilise men and therefore preserve civilisation . . . To work through others is not derogatory to human nature. . . (p 109).

Mothers cannot accomplish this work, through others, unless they are married:

> The mother who has made a failure of her own marriage has no good example to give and little that is useful to teach. (p 148)

Women who remain single and who choose to become educated and to work, but not through others, could never become good parents:

> . . . educationalists, doctors, and teachers have sufficient experience to know that this adjustment to the single life is not easy and frequently produces a narrow, envious and embittered woman some of whom are almost neurotically afraid of any manifestation of feminine characteristics. (p 147)

Single and academically inclined women should not be allowed to teach in girls' schools because they seek to infect their pupils and:

> . . . the more docile girls will follow their example. . . they fit themselves. . . for a communal woman-ridden world and develop qualities which are often the antithesis of those needed for a wife and mother. (p 147)

Good housewives are expected to be skilled at household tasks such as getting clinker out of the boiler, getting beer stains out of the carpet, and leaving a tidy sink, tasks described elsewhere as "an indignity" (p 48) brought about by the shortage of domestic labour. Good housewives and mothers should obtain a qualification in basic domestic skills designed to satisfy the comfort of husbands and children:

> Here indeed is a most profitable field of propaganda for the anti-vivisectionists, who, in their laudable if misguided efforts to allay the sufferings of brute creation, ignore the tortures inflicted on husbands and children by inexpert wives. . . Let me list those things 'which every wife should know'. (p127)

The text goes on to outline a list of domestic and mothering skills required for the good wife and mother, to be taught in County Colleges, or night schools.

Maternal Care and Mental Health focuses not on good parents but more specifically on good mothers who stay attentive to their infants and young children "day and night, seven days a week, 365 in the year" (p67). The Crowther Report has nothing to communicate on the qualities of good parents except the view that it is permissable for mothers to return to employment after a period at home with their young children.

The Newsom Report notes that head teachers were concerned that some

children go home to empty houses and good parents are those who ensure someone is home at the end of the school day, although it is long before the end of the day for those in regular employment.

Good parents do things with their children:

> Sometimes there is no tradition in the area of family life, in the sense of parents and children doing things together. (p 62)

Good parents make a contribution to society by making a success of their own lives and providing a good example to their children.

Cycles of Deprivation identifies a number of correlates with poor parenthood. Poverty, poor housing, early marriage, large families and marriage breakdown are presented as related to a child's delinquency, low intelligence, poor reading skills and entry into a cycle of deprivation from which it difficult to escape. Constant attention to the child, by the mother, is essential and must include consistent love and warmth, guidance, understanding, firmness and support. Good parents are married and family-based:

> The family is the basis sanctified by the main sources of our Western religious traditions. . .

At the point of the 1974 divide the views of those consulted, which were reported in Preparation for Parenthood, suggest that little is known in the general population about child development, and that particular groups are especially in need of preparation for parenthood. "Immigrant groups" (p 13) in particular need help, but some would be difficult to reach and some would find it difficult to learn. In this way,

amenability to programmes of social engineering, and acceptance of western concepts of child development, are put forward as criteria of good parenting.

Following the 1974 divide **Dimensions of Parenthood** assumes the concept of good parenthood to be more problematic; for example good parents are those strong enough to withstand a hostile environment and ". . . the provisions which help parents to be their emotional best need spelling out" (p114).

The Court Report also comments on the complexity of parenthood, saying that the quality of relationships within the family create or deny a sense of security and that this quality is affected by social and economic conditions:

> There are problems in determining how information and advice should be presented to ensure that it is helpful and educative without being necessarily prescriptive, and in deciding just how far it is justifiable to promulgate a particular set of values and attitudes about what constitutes good parenting. (p 152)

In Violence to Children good parents are presented as those who are married, but do not marry too early, want their children, and are able to cope with life. Violent parents are those who are dissatisfied, isolated, frustrated, lonely, and unable to cope with the realities of parenthood.

5. 2. 4 Valid knowledge

It has traditionally been the working class girl who undergoes

preparation for domesticity in schools; her cultural perspectives, and her experiences outside school, and knowledge which arises from the occupation of a particular social niche, are not taken into account in early policy.

The Norwood Report identifies a tri-partate system, identifying three types of pupil, suggesting three types of educational provision. Grammar schools would not be concerned with their pupil's future occupations but with study "for its own sake" (p4). Here pupils would learn to grasp an argument, follow reasoning, grasp causal inference, and take a long term view. Secondary Technical schools would focus on skills for a particular occupation in industry, trades and commerce. Here ". . . where intelligence is not great, a feeling of purpose and relevance may enable the pupil to make the most of it" (p 3). Secondary Modern schools would provide a "practical and concrete" (p 21) education for those whose "horizon is near" and where "movement may be generally slow" (pviii). Within this selection on the basis of perceived ability, there is a form of selection on the basis of gender, with males the focus of technical education, and females the focus of education for domesticity.

Education for Girls does not echo Norwood's belief in 'education for its own sake' for academic girls; instead the report condemns academic women unless they are in a traditional nurturing role. Professional qualifications for women, recognised as acceptable in this report, are in nursing and teaching which are:

> . . . variations on those required for home-making and the rearing of children. (p 33)

Maternal Care and Mental Health is not directly concerned with education but it served to validate social policy, which worked to keep mothers at home, and educational policy which continued to educate girls for domesticity. It follows that, for Bowlby, a mother's knowledge or skills useful in employment must be set aside, especially while her children are young.

The Crowther Report suggests that married women be drawn upon at a time of labour shortage. Since the second world war their recognised contribution to the economy had been minimal, unless as consumers, or mothers. Here the concept of the reserve army of labour is useful in that it highlights the way in which the potential of women as workers is recognised mainly when the existing pool of labour is insufficient to meet needs. (This type of recognition was observed during wartime when men were not available for industrial work and repeated in 1988 when there was concern that the lowered birth rate of the 1970s would provide too few adolescent workers for future needs.) In terms of education (unlike Norwood) Crowther encourages a similar curriculum for academic young men and women. His perspective on non-academic young women is different:

> . . . schools can, and should, make more adjustments (more than all but a handful have yet done) to the fact that marriage now looms much larger and nearer in the eyes of pupils than it ever has before. Their needs are much more sharply differentiated from those of boys of the same age than this is true of the academically abler groups. (p 33/4)

The Newsom Report focuses on education for the non-academic child and it

communicates the belief that few children in this group come from middle class homes.

> It is difficult to believe that a good many children in middle class homes, where educational sights are set on a reasonably high standard of attainment, would not have done much worse at school if they had been born in homes where there were no tradition of homework and where the social and marketable value of education was not fully realised. (p185)

As well as education for domesticity, the non-academic group of girls, along with boys, should have religious instruction necessary as a:

> . . . basis for sexual morality based on chastity before marriage and fidelity within it. (p 58)

It is suggested that the teaching of non-academic girls should be arranged around home-making as a broad theme in order to provide a basis of relevance:

> The domestic crafts start with a built-in advantage - they are a recogniseable part of adult living. Girls know that whether they marry early or not, they are likely to be running a home. (p135)

Homemaking and parentcraft are recommended by Newsom as a substantial part of a working class girl's schooling even though he perceives through their essays that they are already experienced in this subject. He records this written account by a fourteen-year-old:

> At half past four every morning the alarm clock goes off. Then I know its time to get up. I get dressed and then I go downstairs into the cold. First of all I put on the kettle. While that is boiling I make the fire. I make my father's porridge and shout him up for work. When he's gone I clean up and then get ready for school. After that I shout

my brother up and help get him ready for school. Then I call my mother up. (p 63)

Despite this girl's lived experience of preparation for parenthood in the working class reality of her time and place Newsom wants to give her more. Although his intention may be of a pedagogic nature, having the aim of basing academic gains in relevance, his view of relevance is less than emancipatory for girls. His stated principle in planning a curriculum for a girl who would leave school at 15 or 16 is to enable her to ". . . endure the frustrations of her temporary work while at the same time to prepare her for marriage" (p120).

Cycles of Deprivation reflects the extreme views of Bowlby and Newsom. Sir Keith recognises that schools are already engaged in preparing pupils for parenthood but wants a greater commitment:

> . . . inadequate people tend to be inadequate parents and. . . inadequate parents tend to rear inadequate children. . . This is the reason why I am looking for means of helping parents who either out of ignorance or for some other reason do not give their children consistent love and guidance, understanding and firmness. I am thinking here of what some have called preparation for parenthood. (p8)

Sir Keith draws upon earlier policy while extending it's focus to specifically include preparation for parenthood. He stresses the inadequacy of parents who find themselves in difficulties which could as well be located in the social and economic context as in the context of personal adequacy.

Preparation for Parenthood was on the whole supportive of this initiative although there was a debate on possible dangers of asserting there is one "code of good parenthood" (p 17). There was a question from some on whether it was advisable to inform deprived children that their parents were inadequate, but it was asserted that:

> . . . deprived children know deep inside themselves that their own parents were inadequate. (p 19)

Dimensions of Parenthood was much more critical in relation to these issues and also to the class and gender assumptions behind support for Sir Keith's proposals.

The Court Report locates the understandings of working class mothers in a social and economic context. He relates, for example, how services in inner city areas are less numerous and of poorer quality than in other areas. He notes that, while 1 in 6 mothers in urban areas suffer psychiatric disorder:

> Many parents have to contend with circumstances which grossly hamper their natural and acquired ability to be good parents. (p 3)

Court recognises the validity of that parenthood-related knowledge which arises out of the experience of social deprivation. He recognises that social and economic circumstances make a difference to knowledge which is useful to survival in difficult circumstances. Court sees some potential in preparation for parenthood but stresses the need to remove social differences before any real change would be possible.

Violence to Children recommends fifty-eight measures required to eradicate child abuse, of which preparation for parenthood is one, here stressing the need to teach the realities of parenthood. Many of the remaining measures are concerned with support and services for parents including the provision of more day care facilities and better housing.

5. 3 The politics of preparation for parenthood policy

This reading of policy adds to an understanding of the politics of preparation for parenthood. It is with Sir Keith Joseph's involvement, at a time of growing crisis in the economy of the U. K. , that policy began to reflect support for notions of critical periods for child development and the importance of the fully sensitive and fully available mother. Much is revealed about the influence of policy in nurturing a climate wherein girls, and especially non-academic girls, spend time in school preparing for parenthood. This reading of policy provides evidence also to support the suggestion that preparation for parenthood contributes to the regulation and control of women who mother.

Support for critical periods and the centrality of the mother. Prior to Sir Keith Joseph's **Cycles of Deprivation** speech in 1972, policy supports chastity, marriage and family, but does not specifically recommend preparation for parenthood. There is no mention of critical periods for child development and no explicit reference to the need of young children for continual mother care. Bowlby's **Maternal Care and Mental Health** is a seminal text, drawn upon by Sir Keith, adding weight to his cycle of deprivation hypothesis and legitimating his stimulation of preparation for parenthood in secondary schools. Bowlby's work also legitimates Sir

Keith's lack of support for initiatives in health and social security.

Class, gender, and preparation for parenthood. In policy it can be seen that children are allocated to a position on a hierarchy in terms of class and gender. In most of the policy reviewed, there is an emphasis on education for domesticity for working class girls. When policy becomes specifically concerned with preparation for parenthood, demographic phenomena associated with the working class are related to deprivation, despair, and deviancy. Pupils presented as most at risk of propelling their children into disadvantage, and those for whom preparation for parenthood is recommended, are those who live in bleak urban areas or who are economically insecure. Paradoxically the parenthood curriculum is not one which will help young people avoid economic instability. An assumption is made that the traditional family is still the normal and optimal context for parenthood, and part of the preparation for parenthood curriculum reinforces this, however reality in inner cities is different and many mothers are sole wage earners. Even when both original parents live with their children it should not be assumed that the mother can stay at home and remain unemployed; if the father is unemployed, or earns a very low wage, then economic problems must exist unless the mother is in adequately paid employment. It would seem that Sir Keith's initiative, in reinforcing a situation where girls do not prepare for employment, would result in the economic deprivation his policy is supposed to avoid. A more logical policy would be that suggested by Professor Court: one designed to relieve economic pressures on parents, ensuring parity in the distribution of health and social services, and providing good day care facilities for young children to

release both parents for employment.

The policy under review is imbricated with traditional gender role assumptions to such an extent that it is not surprising schools structure gender-related option choices, and that some girls follow a domestic curriculum. It would rather be surprising if this did not happen. The upward rise in the number of preparation for parenthood initiatives in schools in the 1970s corresponds with Sir Keith's initiatives, and it is possible that these were less concerned with the quality of children's lives than they were with avoiding a legitimation crisis.

Policy and the regulation of women who mother. Educational policy which has a bearing on preparation for parenthood is not produced outside of the economic context. For example, pressures on women who mother to stay at home abate when an emergency (war, a suddenly thriving economy, a low birth rate) results in a labour shortage. When the emergency is over, mothers are urged in moral tones to return to the home for the sake of their infants and families. While educational policy is so often presented as geared toward the welfare of pupils, it is just as likely to be geared more toward state management of the economy, or legitimation of state practices.

The assumption of feminine roles as a natural concern and interest of girls is political in that it leaves unnecessary any further rationale for curriculum initiatives. A curriculum which takes school time away from preparation for vocations other than domesticity can in this way, be presented as 'child-centred' as well as socially responsible, while in

fact it legitimates an ideology which leaves women disadvantaged in society.

When recommendations are made in policy, which do not support the current policy of the state, they are not put into practice. Of the recommendations made by The Court Report and Violence to Children the majority required expenditure from the social services budget or (in the case of Court) more fundamental social reform and were made welcome neither by Conservatives nor the Labour party when in power, and not put into practice. Rogers (1980) recalls that The Court Report, although initiated by Sir Keith as Conservative Secretary of State for Health and Social Security and received in 1976 by David Ennals then Labour Secretary of State, was never debated in the House of Commons. It elicited no response until a year after its publication when the government merely accepted the report's 'overall philosophy' of a need for an integrated child health service.

To summarise results of the analysis in relation to the questions set out at the conclusion of Chapter One, there is evidence that the role of the state and educational policy in the U. K. in relation to preparation for domesticity and parenthood, has been to assure the continuity of existing gender, and to some extent class, divisions. Girls who prepare for parenthood will, more often than those who do not, join the ranks of the socially disadvantaged. The call for preparation for parenthood is ideologically useful to the state; it is this call, and not the usefulness of the curriculum for girls or for society which lies behind preparation for parenthood policy, and for this reason it is irrelevant

how knowledgeable girls may already be. The departure in policy from a general view of a female curriculum as natural and relevant, to active initiatives in curriculum development and the preparation of girls for parenthood, occurred in the mid-1970s following Sir Keith Joseph's Cycle of Deprivation speech: the speech took place during an unsettled period in the economy which was accompanied by growing unemployment in the U. K. The explosion of curriculum development, and the saturation of the secondary school curriculum with preparation for parenthood which followed, was a result of Sir Keith's initiative; it may be that his initiative was associated with the need to counteract the impact of the womens' movement which encouraged women to go out to work, and assure the presence of a docile, cheap, reserve army of female labour.

While policy revealed a reaction to Sir Keith's initiative, at the 1974 divide, this was not reflected in schools. The preparation for parenthood curriculum, and indeed the perspectives of pupils as reported in Chapter One, reflect Sir Keith's views. This issue is explored in the two following chapters on the influences of Sir Keith's Cycles of Deprivation speech, and the perspectives of teachers.

CHAPTER SIX

RESULTS:

MEANINGS IN 'CYCLES OF DEPRIVATION'.

CHAPTER SIX

RESULTS: MEANINGS IN 'CYCLES OF DEPRIVATION'

6. 1 Introduction

Sir Keith's 'Cycles of Deprivation' speech, given to the Pre-School Play Groups Association in 1972, attracted a great deal of opposition. It was nevertheless so influential in stimulating preparation for parenthood that by the end of the decade this curriculum was found to saturate secondary schooling. In order to understand the influence of this speech it has been necessary to look into it more closely, going beyond the surface level of meaning, to explore its persuasive subtleties.

The method of analysis and its relationship to semiology is outlined above in 4. 3. 4. It involved analysis of the Cycles of Deprivation discourse at four levels. At Level One the surface meaning was outlined. At Level Two effects of 'political language' were assessed through observation, where they occurred, of ambiguity, vagueness, symbols, emotively weighted (hortatory) language and the promulgation of norms. At this level claims for legitimation were identified and there was also an exploration of what might have been, but was not, spoken. Level Three explored how the discourse came into being, who were the people initiating and supporting it, the context of the discourse and the status of the speaker, and the implications of all this. Level Four drew on results of the first three levels of analysis to reveal and explore the influences of power within this discourse.

6. 2 Analysis of the Cycles of Deprivation discourse

6. 2. 1 Analysis at Levels One and Two

The text of the speech is divided into several sections. The first nine bear the main features of the discourse, and these are entitled: Introduction; Needs of the Under-Fives; The Family; The Paradox; The Cycle of Deprivation; Examples of the Cycle and Parental Involvement with Children; Research on the Cycle; What Can be done before Results of Research are Known; and Next Steps. A summary of the surface meaning, followed by analysis at Level Two, is given below for each of these nine sections in turn.

Introduction. The introduction stresses the serious nature of the information to come and identifies it as an area of current government concern and forthcoming official action. We are told of intractable problems in society and their bearing upon the future of family life. Sir Keith says that intractable problems, and the future of family life, are his own personal concern and the source of general concern in many private homes.

There is extensive use of emotively weighted words, or hortatory language, in the introduction; anxiety is conjured in relation to troubling problems, threats to family life, and official concern. In addition the use of symbols, and vagueness, create effects which go beyond the meanings of the words alone. Family life symbolises tradition, protection, warmth and other positive connotations to people generally, and even those with no experience or expectation of positive effects of family life still know what the term symbolises. The privacy

of home suggests the inviolate nature of private life and the autonomy of families. Problems in society suggests a host of ills, perhaps violence or poverty, and is a phrase likely to conjure the most recent problem which has been a focus of the media or a matter of personal concern to the listener. In the introduction the relationship between these three ideas, underlined above, is left vague so that the mind is emotively focused upon, as yet unspecified, worries.

A norm is communicated through references to anxious thought and discussion currently going on in many homes: the inference is that the listener must be unusual if not similarly occupied. Important information is hinted at but not spoken. Listeners are left wondering: what are the intractable social problems and how do they connect with and threaten family life? Meanwhile legitimation for the forthcoming information is inferred through reference to general concern and also to government concern and action.

The Needs of the Under-Fives. This section focuses a) on provision for children under five, in particular state provision of day nurseries, and provision by voluntary organisations and b) on those who consume this provision: that is those who live in bleak urban conditions where play areas are missing. The social and emotional needs of the young are described as a major concern and at a surface level this seems to include all parents who consider the social and emotional welfare of their children to be important. Considerable emotively weighted language is used. For example: - But what about the social and emotional needs of young children, which are of such concern to you?

- You understand well the stresses and strains on parents today at all levels of society. Some emotive language also ambiguously raises a question about the qualities of parents who live in bleak areas:

- The strain is worse on those young children and their parents destined to live in bleak urban areas. . . Of course, many of these families are happy and well-adjusted with much love and pride and warmth.

The concept of destiny is the most noticeable symbol used in this section. It suggests mechanisms of fate, perhaps related to genetics or divine will, and the impossibility of changing the bleakness of urban environments or the lives of people who inhabit them.

The Family. This section begins with an affirmation of the family, locating it within religious traditions and associating with it the healthy development of children. It goes on to reveal the source of concern which was hinted at in the introduction: the family is under attack from within. . . while many parents show consistent love, guidance, understanding and firmness, good parents should not be taken for granted, especially if they were themselves unhappy as children.

Again there is a great deal of emotive language, for example:

- The family, the basis sanctified by the main sources of our western religious traditions, of the healthy development of children

- many forces at work to discourage and distort priorities and attitudes

- profound issue.

The symbol of the sanctified western family, connotes holiness and purity, and the iniquity of any threat to it. It also signals a lack of

authorisation for families which do not follow western religions. It is presented as inherent to the human condition that families which do not function properly, do harm, and this is the profound issue to which Sir Keith refers. Ambiguity in this section conceals the way in which the source of the attack on the family is being identified as individual parents, especially those who were themselves unhappy, and not for example poverty as related to the management of the economy, notably shortcomings in the provision of social security.

The Paradox. A paradoxical event is one which does not correspond with expectations. Sir Keith describes as paradoxical the continuation or increase of deprivation in light of full employment, prosperity, and improvements in community services since the second world war. Deprivation is described as circumstances which prevent people developing to their full potential. Deprivation shows itself in economic circumstances, and in psychological states in a range from educational impoverishment, to despair. Causes of deprivation can be poverty, illness, accident or genetic endowment. Emotive language is used:

- Why is it that. . . deprivation and problems of maladjustment so conspicuously persist
- . . . the most vulnerable are those already at the bottom of the economic and social ladder
- When a child is deprived of consistent love and guidance he is deprived of that background most likely to lead to stability and maturity
- . . . despite all our advances. . .

This section starts by introducing a paradox and continues by asking a question about why deprivation should continue to exist. It goes on, not

to discuss the paradox, but to discuss deprivation and its causes. Causes are introduced as both personal and economic. Economic causes seem at first to be distinct from personal ones, but through vagueness and ambiguity connote personal failings, as the section progresses. For example, references to persistant unemployment, within a society described as having full employment, connotes personal inadequacy. Ambiguity is also demonstrated when Sir Keith refers once in the text to deprivation being found at all levels of society, but then makes several references to poverty, unemployment, and poor housing conditions which together, connote the working, and not the middle or upper classes. Symbols relating to biological, genetic factors, occur twice in this section: genetic endowment and the potential of individuals. These echo a reference to destiny made above in the section of the needs of the under fives.

Normal people are presented as employed, economically secure, well educated, well housed, and content. Those who are not like this are unlikely to love and guide their children. They are abnormal and present a hazard to the family as an institution.

Much is not said that might be: about the existence of an unemployed and underprivileged social group as inevitable under capitalism; about the responsibility of the education service as well as parental guidance for educational success; about state responsibility for bleak inner city areas.

The Cycle of Deprivation. In this section Sir Keith wonders whether

there may be a process at work by which problems reproduce themselves from generation to generation. He proposes a 'cycle' which causes problems to be reproduced down through the generations; children who are deprived are more likely themselves to have deprived children, despite the efforts of the social services, resulting in a cycle which should be an area of further investigation. Using emotively weighted language, Sir Keith says:

- . . . social workers, teachers, and others know only too well. . .
- . . . doomed to an uphill struggle
- . . . services struggling. . .
- . . . they work with the most difficult casualties of society
- the problem families, the vagrants, the alcoholics, the drug addicts, the disturbed, the delinquent, and the criminal. Behind many of these lie a deprived childhood
- . . . objective studies bear out the subjective belief of many practitioners that cyclical processes are at work.

An urging toward particular actions or attitudes can be seen in the unequal balance between a) tentatively phrased statements reflecting Sir Keith's 'wondering' about whether a cycle of deprivation might exist, and b) assertions which connote that a cycle does exist, of which there are more:

Tentative statements	Assertive statements
1. Perhaps there is at work here.	1. . . . the blindingly obvious.
2. . . . problems of one generation appear to reproduce themselves	2. Do we not know only too certainly that. . .
3. . . . the cycle is not a process we fully understand.	3. Do we not know. . . parents of deprived families?

4. Behind many of these conditions lies a deprived childhood.

5. It is not something new. . .

6. It has become more apparent. . .

7. A number of objective studies do bear out the belief that cyclical processes are at work.

Symbols of biological inevitability are again used when it is suggested that problems reproduce themselves from generation to generation, and also to deprivation as transmitted. There is also a reference to doomed children.

Norms are communicated when Sir Keith asks, rhetorically but several times: Do we not know. . . ? Legitimation of his hypothesis that a cycle of deprivation exists, is achieved not only by assuming that his audience agrees, but also by reference to support via objective studies which have already been carried out. In sections which follow this one, the cycle is rarely treated as an hypothesis, it is treated more as fact, with a focus on ways of dealing with or breaking it.

Examples of the Cycle and Parental Involvement with Children. A range of different research projects are cited as evidence for the existence of a cycle of deprivation. The selection of research supports the cycle hypothesis; references are not provided. Included are a focus on large families in Sheffield who require a great deal of help from social services; a study carried out in the Cambridge Institute of Criminology into parental pathology; a National Child Development study showing that

children in the working class, particularly those with unskilled fathers, are particularly at risk; and a study of child abuse which emphasises lack of mothering abilities. Symbols are again biological, with reference to pedigree and large families rapidly multiplying. While these terms are more usually associated with non-human animals, in this case they are associated with membership of the working class, and those who function precariously in terms of work. A norm is in this way communicated that membership of the middle or upper classes is somehow more human than membership of the working classes, which is pathological, and subhuman.

Research on the Cycle. Three sections of Sir Keith's address focus on the purpose of planned research into poverty and the cycle of deprivation. Results of analysis of these three sections are presented together. At a surface level Sir Keith proposes to commission a new study to coordinate existing research into cycles of deprivation so as to locate a point of access for the purpose of breaking it. He plans also to combat poverty by publicizing existing social security benefits, proposing new ones, and making them readily accessible. The following are mentioned: Family Income Supplement; Rent Rebate; and Family Allowances which would in the future be free of taxation.

There is ambiguity in the way Sir Keith refers, in the same breath so to speak, to deprivation as it affects society generally, and to deprivation as a special concern of the working class. Ambiguity continues to arise, as in the previous section, from assertions that a cycle exists alongside assertions that it is still only an hypothesis. The result of these

ambiguous references, is that the speaker connotes that the working class is at fault in maintaining cycles of deprivation within a prospering society, while he avoids the necessity of taking responsibility for this connotation. The cycle of deprivation is emerging as a symbol in its own right.

Sir Keith asserts that benefits combat poverty; what he does not say is that benefits serve to bring income up to the poverty level; they combat starvation, and in some cases homelessness and hypothermia, but they do nothing to remove poverty from society.

This section seems mainly to be about legitimation of the cycle notion by reference to academic research to investigate or confirm the cycle notion and to the availability of government resources for this.

What can be done before results of research are known. At a surface level the focus of the address is on what can be achieved (before research reveals a means of breaking the cycle) through family planning and education for parenthood. Family planning is suggested because large families - while they may have their strengths - are associated with delinquency, low intelligence, and poor reading skills. Parents of large families are often immature, the marriage may be insecure, and the family may be badly housed. Preparation for parenthood is proposed because problems arise when parents do not understand childrens' emotional and intellectual needs; their children become the parents of another generation of deprived children. The importance of rewarding relationships between mothers and infants is stressed here. Preparation

for parenthood should be part of the work of voluntary agencies, health and social work; schools and continuing education with adults.

At a deeper level a rationale for preparation for parenthood is provided: the pathology of large families can be avoided by teaching family planning; consistent love of mothers for their young children can be ensured by teaching about the stresses of parenthood and the decline of moral values; and cycles of disadvantage will then dissolve and disappear. Two norms are communicated in this section: large families are presented as abnormal and family planning is recommended without reference to cultural and religious beliefs which limit access to it. A norm of scrupulous attention being available to all pregnant woman is assumed, while in practice there are regional differences in its availability and quality.

A new symbol is being contrived: preparation for parenthood. By the conclusion of this section an unspoken curriculum for preparation for parenthood has been communicated and a client group has been identified: working class girls. All of the negative assumptions about the working class, and the biological basis of deviance implied in the deeper meanings of Sir Keith's discourse, are included in this new symbol.

Next steps. Here, Sir Keith focuses on plans for widespread discussions, consultations with professional bodies and a study of the needs of children. He says that future emphasis on preparation for parenthood will depend on social attitudes, because central government can do little.

This section communicates a) that a great deal of officially-supported activity in support of the cycle notion and preparation for parenthood was already under way and b) that further action was needed to effect curriculum change. Both cycle and preparation for parenthood symbols are fully established, containing many-layered meanings, implicating the poor and working class as a threat to their children, to the family as a sacred structure, and to the well being of the nation.

Remaining sections in this address reassert points made earlier and are not analysed here in depth.

6. 2. 2 Analysis at Level Three

At Level Three the Cycle of Deprivation discourse was analysed in terms of its location relative to other discourses. According to the framework it was necessary to explore the status of the speaker; the way in which the discourse had come into being; who were to be the implementors of what was being put forward; who were being put forward as consumers of what was to be implemented; and the relationship this discourse had to related discourses of the time.

The status of the speaker. A charismatic figure, Secretary of State Sir Keith Joseph carried high status in the U. K. of the 1970s, and he had considerable power.

How the discourse came into being. The preparation for domesticity discourse had been in existence since 1878 when the Education Code made domesticity a compulsory subject for girls in state schools. Because of

assumptions made in education policy in general, for example the historical acceptance of gender-specific roles and association of femininity with domesticity, teachers would already have been familiar with the class and gender-related values that Sir Keith draws upon, for these were already structuring schooling in the U. K.

Stimulators, legitimators and implementors. While Sir Keith was not the stimulator of the education for domesticity discourse, he was the stimulator of the cycle of deprivation and preparation for parenthood discourses. Legitimators of these discourses included: earlier policy and the work of Newson and Bowlby in particular; the research community who were called upon for their objectivity; members of the DES and members of professional bodies who gave the cycle discourse their support; and also LEAs and examining bodies who provided resources for curriculum development. The implementors of the discourse were to be teachers who devised new child development, or personal, social and health education courses; and those who wove parenthood-related topics into existing courses.

Recipients. At deeper levels, Sir Keith's discourse communicated that it was working class girls who were in need of preparation for parenthood, and this deeper level was the one which was 'heard'. It was not teachers of academic, or 'boys' subjects, who chose to implement preparation for parenthood, but teachers of 'girls' and non-academic subjects. Aston-based research found that it was girls whose class profile suggested that they were members of, or who would join, the working classes who were exposed to preparation for parenthood.

What was to be implemented. What was to be implemented is communicated in the curriculum outline woven into Sir Keith's text and this seems to have guided the preparation for parenthood curriculum which came into being. Assumptions underlying this curriculum, as made clear in the analysis of the Cycles of Deprivation discourse, supported ideological notions of the ideal mother, family, and pre-school environment, which are discussed above in Chapter Two. These curriculum messages reached teachers, as illustrated by research carried out by Cox, in 1976. He contacted every secondary school in three counties and found that, of the 84% who replied, half were running a child development course and these had been developed within the last five years. Cox found that, for the majority, reasons for initiating courses were related to a need to avoid transmissions of experiential deficits from one generation to another. He quotes a teacher who was head of home economics in an educational priority area:

> Well, I wouldn't dare to allow myself to think we weren't having more influence, otherwise what's the point of putting all this effort and enthusiasm into it? And what hope is there?To me its the only hope of our ever breaking this cycle of deprivation.
>
> (Cox 1976 p 63)

Related discourses. In the educational context of the discourse, there was much that contributed to its success. Because of the raising of the school leaving age which took effect in 1973, and comprehensivisation, schools had suddenly found themselves with many more pupils following non-academic courses. Another related discourse concerned the 'educability' of the working class, with working class failure being related to deficiencies in culture and background, and divorced from

issues of ownership, class structures and relations. A concern for eliminating class differences through education was an ongoing theme and in 1972 teachers would have been familiar with its terms and inferences. It provided a simple, though ideological and mystifying, explanation for poverty to which teachers, such as the head of home economics interviewed by Cox, were witness. Wallace (1980) demonstrated how middle school teachers were influenced by this discourse. They were coping with contradictory pressures: shrinking resources; demands from achievement-oriented pupils and their parents; and debates in education about accountability. Wallace found that teachers coped with these pressures by perceiving problems in schools, as caused by family problems, and not as educational problems which required personalised teaching. Similarly the ideological messages of the Cycles discourse allows displacement of the responsibility for class structures and working class failure, away from state management of the economy, to the family.

In the wider social and economic context there were further relevant discourses, including the debates on increasing unemployment, and child care. In 1976 the Department of the Environment Gazette announced that jobs in production were down by 17% of the 1966 level and in manufacturing they were down by 14%. By 1980 three million were unemployed. The one expansion area was in part-time jobs for women, largely in service industries, and in clerical and unskilled manual occupations (Breugal 1979).

The provision of day care for young children had long been an issue.

Provision had been gradually increasing, in line with growing acceptance of women in employment which accompanied economic expansion, but in 1960 a government circular (8/60) reported a forthcoming cut in public day care provision. Provision was an issue in Labour and Conservative manifestos in 1974: Conservatives promised a gradual extension of nursery places, to all three and four year-olds whose parents wanted them, and Labour proposed a national scheme of nursery places. The Conservative manifesto of 1976 did not promise more nursery places, while Labour pledged a network of places to be provided by the DES, DHSS, LEA and local social services. Some employers wishing to encourage women with young children to join them have in the past provided on site day care, but this initiative received a set back in 1984 when the Inland Revenue taxed employer's contributions to nurseries in places of work. Circular 8/60 remains in effect today; there are less than half the public nursery places that were available in 1945 and only 1% of children under five attend. However demographic change may reverse this situation. The Financial Times reports: "The number of 16 - 19 year olds will fall from a peak of 3. 7m in 1983 to 2. 6m in 1994. . . the race is on to make employers attractive to mothers who want to get back to work". The Midland Bank is planning to provide day care for children of 'women returners' (Smith 1988).

6. 2. 3 Results of analysis at Level Four

At this level of analysis the focus is on the political effects of the Cycles of Deprivation discourse. The concept of power is used here, not in the Foucauldian sense of non-directional power, but as a term representing those forces inherent in patriarchy which work against the

interests of those affected by the Cycles of Deprivation discourse: working class girls and women who mother. The framework for analysis at Level Four requires a consideration of the effect of norms and symbols found to permeate the discourse; of the tactics of persuasion and the directives they suggest; of power relationships revealed; and finally of those mutualities apparent between intentions in the discourse and regulation in society.

Norms and symbols. Norms and symbols in the Cycle of Deprivation discourse work in concert to create an ambience of complicity between Sir Keith and those listening (or reading the text later). This ambience communicates that, together, we are well meaning, understanding, righteous, knowledgeable and united in our concern. The family is a symbol, precious and sanctified, but even so it is not inviolable. The family is under threat and the source of the threat lies within the family itself. Some families of uncertain pedigree, of the impoverished kind, turn their backs on a humane destiny offered by a thriving economy and a benign state, dismantle the family by parenting outside marriage, and/or cast their children into everlasting cycles of deprivation. The situation is serious and some children are already doomed.

Tactics of persuasion. A number of tactics can be observed in the discourse, which connote this powerfully troubling situation, and encourage us to take up the remedy offered. Tactics include the use of emotively loaded language, rhetoric and ambiguity. The remedy is preparation for parenthood.

The central symbols of the discourse are emotively loaded and conjure the sweetness and vulnerability of little children, the warmth and spiritual nourishment of the family, which are universally acknowledged and protected. Adults who threaten these are feared or despised.

Rhetorical questions are continually asked, consolidating mutuality between speaker and listener: why is it that. . . do we not know. . . have we not seen. . . ? Sir Keith also 'mulls' rhetorically, wondering if a cycle of deprivation might exist, while simultaneously asserting that it does. The rhetoric urges the listener to agree that a problem exists, and agree as to who are responsible, and to bask in good feelings to do with a) being at one with the Secretary of State and b) not being one of those at risk of falling into a cycle of deprivation.

Ambiguity is another tactic of persuasion, seen where in one sentence, an assertion is made and nearly retrieved: those who live in bleak conditions are described as destined by their own failures to have children similarly afflicted, and yet, some still manage to love and care for their children. The personal qualities of love and good mothering are the redeeming feature here; social inequality is not allowed to be an issue. An imbalance can be seen between repeated assertions that faulty phenomena such as living in bleak inner city areas (ergo not being a member of the middle class) are the cause of concern on the one hand, and on the other, a fleeting suggestion that lack of love and mothering ability might exist at all levels of society.

Power. A network of power relationships can be observed in this

discourse. There is a continued cross-referencing between Sir Keith Joseph, as Secretary of State for Health and Social Services, and his neighbour in government the Secretary of State for Education and Science, and colleagues in the DES. There is continual reference to science and objectivity in research to confirm the validity of assertions being made. Truth, goodness and the objectives of the state are called upon, and are then used to discredit the working class and women.

Oppositional forces can also be identified. The women's movement was active at the time (resulting in the Sex Discrimination Act in 1975) and, judging by the way traditional gender roles had become an issue at least implicitly, feminists' voices were having some influence. Until recently, the education of girls for domesticity had been a taken-for-granted assumption; by 1972 it was an issue. In addition, some members of the research community were not inclined to have their work used to corroborate notions of working class deviance, they dissented publicly; government-funded research did not always support the cycle of deprivation or preparation for parenthood - then or later.

Intention in the discourse and social regulation. Foucault's method requires the identification of intentions, visible in the now deconstructed discourse, which seem to align themselves with aspects of social regulation. Intentions seem to be directed at teachers, to motivate them to tackle problems of neglected children, the threatened family, and cycles of deprivation, through preparation for parenthood. In this study, it is suggested that these issues are essentially ideological so that teachers' energies, motivated in this way by Sir Keith, were misplaced. Social equality is not achievable through the

preparation of pupils for parenthood. What teachers may have achieved, along with Sir Keith, was a diversion of attention away from state management of the unequal society.

6. 3 Influential meanings and points of opposition

Analysis of preparation for parenthood policy in general, reported in Chapter Five, and the deeper analysis of Sir Keith's Cycles of Deprivation speech reported above, reveal a number of meanings which were likely to be influential in the promotion of curriculum development and preparation for parenthood in the 1970s. The following stand out as potentially influential: the notion of an authorised traditional Western family; the suggestion that mothers are biologically conditioned for child care; the notions that some people threaten the whole of society through inadequate parenting; that a cycle of deprivation exists, or at least warrants further research; that preparation for parenthood can be developed by teachers and successfully taught in schools in order to erode cycles of deprivation; and that the government already provides sufficient support for parents through the social security network.

Points of opposition to meanings in policy arise from womens' studies and the research community, as well as from the analysis of policy, reported above. These are summarised in the following statements: traditions of non-Western families are ignored or marginalised in the cycles of deprivation discourse; there is a confusion between the terms 'mothering' and 'parenting' in policy which works against women; parental adequacy does not depend solely upon knowledge but also upon economic stability; boys and girls should equally be educated for economic independence; 'motherhood' as a concept is caught up in ideals of femininity and

romance; girls' opportunities are limited through educational structures; certain aspects of personal life cannot effectively be taught in school; the mothering role is inadequately supported; and the cycle of deprivation and preparation for parenthood notions are ideological.

The extent of influence on teachers of preparation for parenthood policy, can only be assessed by reference to teachers themselves, and this is the focus of the chapter which follows.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RESULTS:

THE VIEWS OF TEACHERS.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RESULTS: TEACHERS' VIEWS

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I look at the way in which the personal and political views of teachers support or oppose assumptions, meaning and directives, in educational policy.

In Chapters Five and Six above, analysis of policy documents relevant to preparation for parenthood reveals an intensive official interest in this part of the curriculum, an interest which seems to be related to the management of society. The discourse of preparation for parenthood apparently changes with the economic climate, as for example, reflected in changing positions on the employment of women. Preparation for parenthood policy seems to incorporate ideological strategies aimed at continuing the inequalities of women, and especially of women who mother.

Gender domination is visible in the way in which educational policy has, since state education came into being, assumed that the woman's place is in the home. It is suggested by state support for the 'ideal' family within which the mother plays a central role. Gender domination is suggested by the way in which the term 'parent' often connotes 'mother' and the way in which mothers are assumed to have the responsibility for children and hence national well being. Attempts at domination in terms of class as well as gender are especially demonstrated in the 'Cycles of Deprivation' notion, introduced by Sir Keith Joseph in 1972, which asserts that preparation for parenthood can resolve social problems such as poverty, unemployment, housing shortages, and school failure. This

notion, in providing the rationale for preparation for parenthood, implied that social problems, actually more likely to be related to state management of the economy, instead were related to the failure of individual mothers, and especially mothers who were members of the working class.

Policy supported the education of working class girls for domesticity until 'the 1974 divide', when at a crucial point during Sir Keith Joseph's involvement in policy, he lost the support of the academic community. After this point the two policy documents considered, The Court Report and Violence to Children, no longer so clearly reflected assumptions associated with class and gender domination. It would appear, however, that the preparation for parenthood discourse was so much in accord with the views of teachers, that the potential setback to ideological forces arising from academic opposition was overcome. Preparation for parenthood flourished until, by the end of the 1970s, it was found in many parts of the school curriculum, especially that experienced by girls who were already domestically inclined.

It would appear that the discourse of preparation for parenthood had considerable appeal for the motives, feelings and prejudices of teachers. This was explored through analysis of transcripts of interviews with sixty teachers. Transcripts were searched for perspectives which were in support of, or in opposition to, ideological messages accompanying preparation for parenthood policy (these are summarised in the form of twenty statements in Appendix 6). In this chapter I first outline the range of views in relation to each statement; I then summarise the range

of perspectives communicated by outlining comments contributed by three teachers with contrasting positions; and finally I compare the perspectives of male and female teachers, those in different schools, and those with different subject specialisms. My purpose is to explore the extent to which the motives, feelings, and prejudices of teachers involved in preparation for parenthood, coincided with policy.

7.2 The views of teachers

7.2.1 Views on the authorised family

In preparation for parenthood policy the ideal family is presented as small, well regulated, law abiding and consisting of two married parents and children. This definition excludes single sex partners, marginalises single parents, ignores unconventional units such as communes and community homes, and rejects large families. The opening question during the interview focused on what the family meant to the teacher being interviewed. If no spontaneous reference was made to marriage, in the teacher's reply, a question followed which was designed to clarify whether marriage was seen to be necessary prior to parenthood. Most teachers responded readily, some briefly and some at great length, speaking of unity, stability, mutual support and warmth. Some also mentioned family structure in sociological terms, referring to nuclear or extended families. Few mentioned different family forms in cultural terms.

Miss Kretch, a careers teacher in Westward Green, was typical in her response:

> I suppose traditionally, two people with children, and to a great extent that's still what I see as a family. But I appreciate there is another type of family emerging which is often one person with children. But I suppose to my mind an ideal family is going to have two parents in it who care about each other and care about the children.

When she was asked whether the two parents should be married she responded:

> No, but I think it does assume two people having a good personal relationship, and for very selfish reasons usually, wanting to have children as an extension of that relationship.

Almost half of the teachers interviewed did not see marriage as a necessity before parenthood. More than half did, either because it suggested greater stability, or because of the stigma attaching to a child if parents are unmarried.

Miss Ulm, teaching English in Northway, was unique among teachers interviewed in that she was expecting a baby herself while not having married the man she had lived with for nine years. She said:

> I have no antagonism to the married state, neither do I see it as a prerequisite of parenthood.

In policy non-Western families were denied authorisation through a) not being mentioned b) positive references only being made to Western religions c) negative references being made to "rapidly multiplying" people which included Catholics and others whose religion or culture bars contraception. If reference to the variety of family traditions in different cultural groups did not arise, in relation to the question on

the family, then teachers were asked first if they thought cultural minorities needed to be taught different things from indigenous groups, in general, and then if the same or different curricula should be available in preparation for parenthood. In their responses less than half communicated that non-Western family forms were to be valued.

A positive, informed, and therefore exceptional view of a non-Western family was expressed by Mrs Smith, a sociology teacher in Central Girls:

> I have seen at close quarters the extended family and to me that is almost ideal where parents can be relieved of the very, I think, terrific responsibility of looking after the children all the time where they can relax and go off on their own, and where grandma is there available as a matriarch, if you like...not too dictatorial, but caring and regarded with quite a lot of respect, and someone who has quite a lot to offer...she's not put aside because she's old. They've lived life and they've learned from it, and they'll pass it on if you're willing to listen. The young have this very...this tremendous...experience of a great care and love from a number of people and not just one, or two, people.

Almost a quarter of respondents were either ambivalent about the presence of different cultural groups in England or they were seriously concerned about the complexity of multicultural teaching.

Mrs Lyle, an English teacher in Westwood Green, communicated a certain lack of acceptance of diversity:

> ...different ethnic groups who come to our country should be taught our manners and customs so they fit in more easily.

Mr Ash, a teacher of Personal, Social and Health Education in Eastmount speaks for those who experience difficulties, as white teachers, working with non-white minorities:

> **This is a massive problem. I wouldn't know where to start...I have just completed a course on multicultural education...I enjoy it...I love meeting people...I know something about it and I wouldn't start to answer that question.**

7.2.2 Views on parents who threaten society.

In policy deprivation is presented as though it exists across generations, linking family members through mechanisms associated with inheritance and socialisation so that inadequate parents are defined as threatening, not only to their own family, but also to the family as a sociological phenomenon. No direct question focused on this area, but views relevant to it were spontaneously expressed, particularly during responses to questions about qualities of good and bad parents. Some, but not many, teachers expressed the view that parents - and more particularly mothers - are a source of threat to the family. Mrs Symons, a biology teacher in Central Girls, said:

> **If mother wants to see daughter married off as soon as possible and views boyfriends as potential husbands, even if the girl is only fifteen or sixteen, then the girl will think along those lines. But if the parents consider higher education and a career to come...nobody supposes this is necessarily a permanent thing.**

Mrs Symons believed that early marriage and parenthood are likely to end in divorce and single parenthood, also that girls should be prepared for economic independence through a career. At one level these views oppose

the thrust of policy. However, if the ideal is not achieved Mrs Symons sees this to be the responsibility of the mother, who, because of a biological or social predisposition, is responsible for influencing her daughter in negative ways. If the ideal is achieved then it is both parents, rather than the mother, who have the influence. In her statement Mrs Symons communicates several things of relevance to this study: that mothers are the main dynamic in cycles of deprivation; that a confusion between the terms 'parenthood' and 'motherhood' exists; and that influences harmful to the well being of the family arise from within the family itself.

Though reference to intergenerational deficits were not frequently made, when they were, they were strongly phrased. Mr Gordon, an R.E. teacher and head of sixth year in Eastmount:

> ...you are aware of it all the time you see the filth among the kids and the different standards...the different morals...these spring from the parents. I know its easy to generalise, but I can pick a kid out and know he has a problem at home and I am nearly always right.

7.2.3 Views on preparation for parenthood as a benefit to society.

In its extensive support for preparation for parenthood, policy reflects the view that individuals and not the collective society, the state, or social structures, are responsible for the quality of life and the well being of the nation. Teachers were asked whether they thought people could be educated for parenthood in schools, and whether this teaching would benefit society as a whole. More than half the teachers communicated they expected that effective preparation for parenthood

would benefit all of society. For example Mr. Berber, involved in Personal and Social Education in Westward Green, had this to say:

> A lot of families don't have the information as to what a good parent is; to them the norm is coal in the bath and that sort of thing...they don't know what is missing from their family relationships so they're not really bothered.

Mrs Tiler, teaching Personal and Social Education in Central Girls, said in response to the question "Will preparation for parenthood benefit all of society?":

> Yes, in that I think some families are obviously lacking in one respect or another, and I think if you can help to remedy that, even to a tiny extent, then it can be beneficial.

In their responses, Mrs Tiler and Mr. Berber both indicated that some families, and not others, would benefit from preparation for parenthood. Mr Berber's reference to coal in the bath suggests that he thinks it is working class families who would benefit most from this form of education. This view is communicated fairly often in comments relevant to cycles of deprivation.

7.2.4 Views on cycles of deprivation.

The major thrust of the cycle notion is in its suggestion that children brought up in disadvantaged circumstances are destined to become inadequate parents who will in turn bring their children up to be disadvantaged. The notion is dense, vague, and abstract, and as such has potential as a manipulative symbol. Only a third of the teachers interviewed expressed acceptance of such a cycle, thus showing limited

support for this fundamental aspect of preparation for parenthood policy. These teachers expressed a variety of views: one group seemed to think that inadequacy is rooted in biological or innate mechanisms, another favoured sociological mechanisms, and a third group perceived a cycle but did not suggest a cause.

Mrs Xzavior taught needlework in Northway; she indicated both innate and learned mechanisms through reference to imprinting, response, and stimulus:

> I think their home and their surroundings imprint them far more in their attitudes, beliefs and reactions. When you have a small child in a home, half the time you don't think what you are doing, you just sort of respond to the stimulus of the little thing that you've got, and the way in which you respond is probably something that has its origins way back.

Miss Rose taught domestic science in Eastmount and she referred to class:

> I think they will automatically learn it (parentcraft) if they are from a middle class background.

Mr Sole taught Maths in Northway; he referred to a cycle but did not suggest its cause:

> You can see it with children on the estate. Pupils come back to see us after they have left a year or two. They have already got a baby, and a flat; a husband out of work or no husband; you can see cycles repeating themselves.

7.2.5 Views on mothers as the main dynamic in the cycle of deprivation.

This was the view expressed by Sir Keith Joseph in 1972:

> The basis of future behaviour patterns is laid when an infant experiences a rewarding relationship with his mother.
>
> (Cycles of Deprivation p 8)

Preparation for parenthood policy is mainly concerned with the quality of mothering, but while about a third of teachers seemed to accept that a cycle of deprivation existed, few indicated that they thought mothers alone bore the responsibility for creating and perpetuating it. Mrs Oak taught Child Care in Eastmount; she associated child care courses with education for girls, but she did not explicitly associate deprivation with poor quality mothering. When asked at what age, or stage, she thought preparation for parenthood should occur, her response was:

> I certainly think that fourteen to sixteen is a good age. I think that younger than that their own ideas are insufficiently formed; but by then they will certainly be interested in the actual looking after...particularly when I'm thinking of girls, not boys, I haven't taught boys...

Mrs Green in Westward Green, also teaching Child Care, was more explicit in linking deprivation with poor quality mothercare:

> I think a girl who has lived in a lousy, rotton home, is likely to perpetuate it and we hope that what we have taught will influence her a bit.

7.2.6 Views on research into the cycle of deprivation.

Teachers were not asked directly about research into the cycle of deprivation, and there was no spontaneous reference to this.

7.2.7 Views on how education can break the cycle of deprivation.

Policy suggests that the ideal family can be saved from self destruction by educating pupils for parenthood. A curriculum is suggested which closely resembles that provided in child care courses. Although all sixty teachers interviewed identified aspects of their work as preparation for parenthood, only 13%, mainly women, expressed views suggesting that education would erode a cycle of deprivation. Three teachers in Eastmount strongly supported preparation for parenthood. Mrs Oak, teacher of Child Care said, simply:

> Yes, there is a great need.

Mrs May, also teaching Child Care:

> It means a lot to them, when you talk about it, and they realise what they have missed. It isn't until you actually talk about it, or until other children say what happens in their home, that they realise 'that doesn't happen in my home' and they realise they have missed a large part of family background out.

Mr. Hazel, teaching Personal and Social Education:

> ...there are quite a number of things that could be changed, and obviously, schools could help. It is just about the only skilled job in the world that you don't have to do any training for.

7.2.8 Views on the adequacy of support and benefits for parents.

During his launch of preparation for parenthood policy Sir Keith Joseph said that the cycle of deprivation had proved resistant, in the past, to attack through social services. He mentioned that facilities were still needed for children, and said that government would be supporting

voluntary agencies, rather than proving extra nursery places by statute. Teachers were asked if they thought parents could be helped, other than by preparation for parenthood. More than a third mentioned statutory services, provided by departments of health and social welfare, or help from voluntary agencies. Informal support was mentioned, but rarely. Only seven teachers thought more government services were needed. The majority believed that sufficient statutory services were being provided and some people felt that too much help was already available. Mr Norman, Eastmount's head teacher, held this view. Referring to the family he said:

> ...it waits to be fed, it waits for things to be done to it...I think there's too much of "you just sit there and we'll do it".

Mrs Green, teaching Child Care in Westward Green, mentions a range of services a parent might draw upon, including a reserve army of grannies:

> I think that nursery schools and play groups have a huge part to play. As we have the social and probation services, etc., I think we could have ladies who are not working, perhaps in their early sixties doing a sort of Samaritan type role. They could be available to young mums, to either give them half a day off, or just even to come and do a bit of ironing, or let mum sit and rest....a sort of Granny Samaritan service.

7.2.9 Views on the cycle of deprivation as an aspect of social control.

Policy suggests that a cycle exists, caused by the shortcomings of individual parents, and recreated in each generation through inadequate parenting practices. The cycle notion is taken as the rationale for preparation for parenthood, offering a way to break intergenerational

cycles, via educating girls in parentcraft. Opposition to the cycle and preparation for parenthood notions is based on the view that, if any cycle exists, it is related more to the economy and shortcomings in state management than it is to individual parents. Mr. Reeze, head in Northway, is alone in making a comment which suggests he is not quick to blame parents for social problems:

> Vandalism more and more is being blamed on parents and less on the people who perpetuate it.

7.2.10 Views on making more support and benefits available to parents.

Few teachers expressed the view that support services were inadequate. One who did was Mr. Ash, teaching Personal and Social Education in Eastmount, who said:

> The way things are in this country at the moment, with this government, for a lot of people its just survival - there's no help given at all.

7.2.11 Views on parental adequacy and economic stability.

Opposing the thrust of policy, there is a suggestion that without economic stability, the child care provided by the most knowledgeable and best intentioned parents would be lacking in some way. Only eleven teachers (18%) communicated the view that inadequacy in parenthood might be more strongly linked to economic stability, than to other possible determinants. Mr. Lamb, teaching Personal and Social Education in Northway, holds this view:

> Financial problems are so important to people; I don't necessarily think that makes a good parent. But it gives them problems, being

without. And then again, in this area, employment problems. It must be soul destroying when you see your man, your husband, feeling he wants to go out and do something for the family but he just physically can't because he can't get any work. And this lends itself to tensions and problems.

Mrs. May, in Eastmount says flatly:

You can't look after a child if you haven't enough money to bring a child up.

7.2.12 Views on support for the mothering role. A critique of policy points to the way in which valued contributions to society are associated with employment and in particular areas where men predominate. Womens' work, especially domestic work and mothering, are valued in emotional terms, leaving women economically insecure and relatively powerless. There is inadequate support for womens' work, especially in the following areas: lack of parity in ante-natal provision; lack of physical and emotional support in the home; lack of acceptance of and support for working mothers; lack of publicly funded high quality nursery places for pre-school age children; inflexible working hours. 8 teachers (13%) express the view that mothering, rather than parenthood, is inadequately supported. Mrs Oak, in Eastmount:

I know, in my area, it is very difficult and how young mums get to an ante-natal class from where I live, I just don't know.

Miss Ulm, teaching English in Northway, was currently embattled with a doctor in her NHS ante-natal care programme:

> I know so many women do feel isolated, left alone, particularly women who have had a good education, and so on. I think his (the doctor's) attitude might have been slightly more hostile to me, possibly because I wasn't married, but he certainly would have been more patronising to less educated women, I think. I think its horrible for women to put up with this, or confront it. I confronted it as well as I could, but I did feel...not so much intimidated... but I felt constrained because I know I needed good care and I wanted good care - so I didn't want to antagonise the man too much. It seems to me the implications of these arguments are terrible. The society; for everybody but especially for women; I really came out feeling there was no change despite the government's policy on one's position and so on; there really has been no change.

Only three teachers said they thought there was a shortage of nurseries, or good alternative childcare, for working mothers.

7.2.13 Views on mothers as biologically conditioned for child care.

Policy includes symbols connoting destiny, suggesting that human failings are biologically rooted; that mothers are natural caregivers; that the working class is biologically as well as socially stratified; and that the cycle of deprivation is indelible because of its genetic nature. Only two teachers mentioned anything that could be interpreted to reflect the view that mothers are somehow conditioned, biologically, to be better prepared than anyone else to look after their children. Mr. Gage who taught English in Westward Green, demonstrates this minority view:

> The child is born, the mother has the natural instinct to care for and protect it, and the father's at a bit of a loss.

7.2.14 Views on boys and girls and education for economic independence

A critique of preparation for parenthood policy holds that, since economic stability is fundamental to well being in today's society, then girls as well as boys should be educated in such a way that they can compete equally in the employment market.

Teachers were asked firstly if they thought boys and girls should be taught different subjects, in general, and then this question was related specifically to preparation for parenthood. Only two teachers responded in such a way as to suggest they thought that boys and girls should equally be educated for economic independence. Mrs Weaver, teaching Child Care in Central Girls:

> I can see it from the parents' view, some of them might be concerned if they (children) are going off to do something called 'Parenthood'...when they really think they should be concentrating on O or A levels. But if it is a natural topic, that is introduced all through the years, that boys and girls participate in then, yes, it is important.

7.2.15 Views on the opportunities of girls being limited through educational structures.

The school is educating male and female pupils differently, preparing them for different futures in terms of employment, economic standing and adult roles. Nearly three quarters of teachers made some reference to

this area and most expressed considerable support for the view that girls' education is limited by educational provision and related public attitudes. Mrs Charles, a biologist in Eastmount, puts the majority view briefy. In response to the question: "Do you think boys and girls should be taught different things?" she responded:

> No, I don't think so.

Mrs Fish, teaching Personal and Social Education in Northway, was currently experiencing guilt and stress which she related to public attitudes toward mothers who work. She spoke at length:

> I've got to the stage where I will not sacrifice myself any more for the traditional role of women...my husband said to me last night, he said, "You've hardly spent any time with the children this weekend" and the two hours I didn't spend with them I was playing squash one hour and visiting in hospital the other. Now, from two till eight Sunday night he was playing cricket, and the same on Saturday, but that's alright, that's different!
>
> It was while he was redundant this full time job came up so of course my excuse to all the family was, while he was out of work, if I could take this job, at least we'd have some money. He in fact got a job at the same time as me and that caused problems. Now I get the blame for a lot of things that happen, because I should be at home, but I'm out at work.

Mrs Symons expresses the opposite view:

> I have no patience with those who want to get the child dumped.

Mrs Fish's education had prepared her to work, but her husband, and public attitudes, were limiting the use she could put this to, creating guilt and stress. Some teachers expressed some ambivalence about equal education for boys and girls. For example, they say they believe in the same subjects for boys and girls, but with different emphases because this is :

...still society's way

or they say that preparation for parenthood should be provided for boys and girls, but not to facilitate equal opportunity, rather to facilitate the smooth running of the existing inequality. For example, one teacher said that boys and girls should both experience preparation for parenthood, because male parents will be enabled to:

...better understand a woman's view.

It is, however, a small minority (three teachers) who said they preferred a different curriculum and gender roles for males and females. Mr. Lunt, who teaches maths in Central Girls, had this to say:

> I think its fine that fathers bath babies; whether you'd be successful in trying to persuade the sort of machismo, skilled, Corby worker that his son ought to be able to knit and sew and bath babies, I think it would be a very dangerous thing to pursue.

Mr Zirov teaches general science in Northway. He said:

> Dad at work on the coal face, mum at home. That's how I feel and I know a lot of kids round here feel the same.

Having expressed this view, however, Mr Zirov went on to say he thought boys and girls should learn the same subjects at school.

7.2.16 Views on 'motherhood' as caught up with notions of femininity and romance.

Opposition to policy suggests that motherhood is an aspect of the wider ideological notions of femininity and romance, that these are influential during girls' development, bringing about the feeling of naturalness and desirability of partnership and the traditional domestic role. Only six teachers expressed views relevant to this area. Four disapproved of ways in which motherhood was presented as magical. Two, however, used this formulation as a teaching aid. Mrs Groom, teacher of Child Care in Central Girls:

> ...little Kerry, or somebody, saying "I hate sewing on buttons - I hate making buttonholes". Alright, you are going to meet Prince Charming one day, and the first thing he is going to say to you is "Can you sew a button on?" - and a few say "No" - "Well, I'm not going to marry you then". I make a joke of it, but underneath there is an element of how practical it is to learn these little bits and pieces.

Mrs Fowler taught Personal and Social Education in Central Girls and she communicated a similar view:

> I had a phone call at seven in the morning from my friend whose daughter had this baby. It was magic! It was fabulous! I was able to tell them about that, and compare it with another girl I had, who had got pregnant in the fourth year, whose parents were totally devastated, you know, and had to pick up all the pieces.

7.2.17 Views on confusion between 'mothering' and 'parenting' is an aspect of social control.

Confusion between these two terms is often apparent in policy, no more so than when preparation for parenthood is provided mainly for girls who will become mothers. It may be that confusion between these terms facilitates the social control of women, especially since Equal Opportunities policies proscribe the open association of women's work with domesticity.

Only two teachers expressed views which indicated they thought confusion between the terms parenthood and motherhood might obscure aspects of control. It may be that this belief was behind the comment made by Mrs Vane, an English teacher in Northway:

> There becomes the danger that childcare is a subject given to not-very-bright girls. I don't know why this might be. They might be going to become parents, but obviously there are going to be just as many boys. I don't see why this should be regarded as just a girls' subject.

7.2.18 Views on preparation for parenthood being taught in schools.

Between half and three quarters of teachers interviewed said they thought preparation for parenthood should be part of the school curriculum. Miss Clark, teaching Home Economics:

> ...they may think it doesn't help them at all but you know that in a few years' time something will be there at the back of their mind which they can draw upon...

Mrs May, teaching Child Care in Eastmount, puts her view more forcefully:

I don't think we can do it anywhere else. I mean you wouldn't get them attending the health centre on a voluntary basis. I don't think they should have to opt; I think it should be part of preparation for life.

Mrs May does not refer to overriding influences from home, as do nearly half of the other teachers. Mrs Marks. teaching maths in Central Girls demonstrates a popular view when she indicates that some things can be taught and some can't:

Some of it is instinct, but I think there are areas where people do need help and understanding to enable them to cope with their children. If there were more lessons, lectures, or whatever...

Several teachers expressed two, apparently mutually exclusive, views. One view indicated that teachers should provide education for parenthood, and the other suggested that home influences are so strong that, if messages from school were different from home messages, the latter would have more effect.

7.2.19 Views questioning whether certain aspects of personal life can effectively be taught in schools.

This area raises the question of whose knowledge is valid. The new policy ignores differences in values and the validity of knowledge as associated with differences in gender, class and culture. Preparation for parenthood is provided by teachers who are professionals, predominantly Western European in origin, and largely middle class. They devise curricula for girls of the working class which seems to work toward retaining gender, class and cultural differences. More than half (68%) the teachers interviewed said that preparation for parenthood could and should be

taught in schools. Some teachers thought the home influence would erode the effects of his teaching. Mrs Marks says:

> I think it could cause problems because a lot of kids go home and say "Teacher said this..." and you can have conflict right away...they obviously have their values and bring their children up the way they want to...

Miss Clark and Mr. Gage in Westwood, who supported education for parenthood in schools, also recognised the strength of the home influence:

> The majority of their education takes place at home, so I feel the education that takes place in school would only be a minor part. The original impetus must come from the home...the parents of course have the formative task in the first five years.

7.2.20 Views on preparation for parenthood in schools as ideological.

A critique of preparation for parenthood asserts that this curriculum legitimates inequalities in power and privilege and is harmful to women. The rationale for preparation for parenthood, and the assumptions underlying it, themselves do harm. The effects of teaching merely reinforce class and gender-based inequalities. The stated views of three teachers seemed to reflect thoughts in this area. Mr. Lake, teaching maths in Central Girls, said:

> We have a society where many people in power have never come to realise what life is like to those who are at the receiving end of the power as it were. I suppose that education here could help, although if God could ever educate Mrs Thatcher that much, I don't know. She sits there, with her flower arranger having set things up,

talking about life for the urban blacks... I think perhaps the media could do something....perhaps schools, yes, perhaps one ought to take the social security officials and try and educate them. But then, you don't pay them a lot...

Mrs Tiler, teaching Personal and Social Education in the same school says:

In a way, if you are teaching about parenthood the whole time, you are in turn pressurising the next generation to accept the values that you think they should have. Similarly, Miss Ulm in Northway says: I'm not saying you should never, ever, have parentcraft; I think it just needs to be carefully considered. If it isn't going to be carefully considered I'd rather see it not happen.

7.3 Patterns in perspectives communicated by teachers.

This section summarises what has gone before by outlining positions communicated by three teachers. There is no 'typical' perspective, which could be used to summarise views communicated across the sixty interviews, rather, there are three responses which summarise the pattern which emerges. Mrs May demonstrates harmony with the assumptions and rationale of policy; Miss Ulm demonstrates disharmony with these; and Mr. Lunt demonstrates a certain level of ambivalence.

7.3.1 Mrs May in support of preparation for parenthood policy.

Mrs May taught Child Care in Eastmount. She supported marriage and the Christian family. She said she knew about the Kibbutz system, but observed that "it no longer seems to work", giving this as evidence that the traditional two-parent, nuclear family with children is the natural

and therefore lastingly successful format for family life. She observed that Asian families have "too many taboos" and provide their children with too little information about parenthood, believing that schools in the U.K. can supplement information from home. She also communicated that working class girls are at risk of receiving, either not enough or the wrong kind of information, therefore missing out on good family habits. She said that, although good habits can be demonstrated in schools, these will not necessarily be retained by pupils, because working class attitudes are resistant to education. Mrs May accepts the notion of the 'critical period' in child development, observing that parental attitudes, learned early in life, remain influential:

> If they are not brought up properly, they have lost out on practically most things in life.

Mrs May felt that financial stability is an all important aspect of parental adequacy but money management is not a strong point for the working class:

> Some are at the lower end. Not altogether due to money, its the way they use their money...they are lazy in using what they've got.

Mrs May places responsibility for a child's actions on the shoulders of the parents and so seems to accept the notion of cycles of deprivation:

> ...when I see these tiny tots throwing bombs in Ireland... where is the parental responsibility?

Although Mrs May teaches Child Care only to girls, she does not support traditional gender roles, observing that male and female roles are "intermingled these days". She does not support policy in asserting that sufficient support for mothers already exists, illuminating her point with accounts of her own stressful experiences, as a young working

mother. Mrs May is strong in her support for preparation for parenthood, because she thinks it is important, "isn't done anywhere else", and says it should be core in the curriculum.

7.3.2 Miss Ulm in support of the opposition.

Miss Ulm taught English in Northway. Her views were in opposition to policy in many respects. She said that marriage is not necessary, although she believed in stability, and commitment. She thought much could be learned from different cultural groups:

> So much of interest is set against a background of a multi-racial society. I don't think there's much excuse for teachers not to have it available, even in a school such as this one, where there are few children of different races.

Miss Ulm agreed with Mrs May, in that she thought practical hardships were most likely to be behind problems experienced by parents, but she disagreed with the assumption that it was personal inadequacy or mishandling of finances that brought about social problems:

> I think society should be consciously making it easier for people to cope, and it seems to me that it's not. It makes things more difficult. I can't think why it's doing that. I'd like to think it wasn't doing it consciously or malevolently, but that's how it must appear to many people who are in difficulties.

With regard to the different genders, and exposure to preparation for parenthood, Miss Ulm pointed out that schools were not ensuring equality of educational provision:

> The intention is for boys to opt for these things, but boys don't, and I am sure that what you do is ensure imbalance, then.

Miss Ulm referred to the man she has lived with for nine years as her husband, although they were not formally married. She talked about the way in which society censures unconventional family forms, and working mothers, and speculated on the possible isolation experienced by those in relationships typified by role reversal. She demonstrated her point by reference to a recent experience of her own:

> My husband will look after the baby. At the ante-natal clinic, the doctor was shocked. He told me I had my life and now I must be prepared to consider the baby. Then I think how hard it must be to find that you are alone with a child if you don't have a very equal relationship with your husband...and possibly not be able to articulate it, if you haven't worked out that's what it is.

Miss Ulm did not believe in preparation for parenthood:

> I don't think people can be educated to be good parents. I think we can educate people to be more thinking people and hence they will probably be better parents.

7.3.3 Mr Lunt demonstrates ambivalence.

Mr. Lunt taught maths in Central Girls. He revealed ambivalent views in relation to preparation for parenthood in humorous terms:

Interviewer: What does the idea of the family mean to you?

Mr. Lunt: The answer's 42! Oh gawd! Someone defined the family as the place where if you return they must take you in.

On being asked if he believed that marriage should come before parenthood, Mr. Lunt said:

> I'd be naive if I didn't in a Western society...that is the normal Western society.

Mr. Lunt did not believe in differentiating between cultural groups during educational provision, saying that it "would be incredibly dangerous" and did not refer to ways in which the values and assumptions underlying Western family traditions, and preparation for parenthood in U.K. schools might be different, or opposed, to those underlying other cultural traditions. While Mr. Lunt believed that preparation for parenthood would benefit society:

> ...of course, because we can help make the world a better place to live in...

he also believed that parents were inadequately supported by society in their role:

> I think there are certain social classes of society who provide political and industrial leaders of our society and I think that their situation has made them either unaware or insensitive to very large sections of the society in which they live...whether its insensitivity or just "couldn't care a twopenny damn" I don't know.

With regard to gender differentiation and education for parenthood, Mr. Lunt says, early in the interview:

> At a very subtle level it starts in infant schools, where there are Wendy houses, and we're starting to get models built up. Rather sexist models, I suppose, and as Guardian readers we would probably shudder.

When asked if preparation for parenthood should be compulsory for all pupils, he answers:

> ...some very odd people believe that women should be treated as though they were equal to men! Now this is clearly such an absurd view that it would be unacceptable to some parents and they should be

> given the opportunity of withdrawing (their children) from it. For example, bathing the baby, carrying shopping bags, is a woman's job, everyone knows that and so one would object quite strongly to boys having to suffer that female nonsense... I am tempted to say no more unless I appear in Monday's Guardian.

Mr. Lunt demonstrates a belief that the preparation of girls for parenthood would benefit all of society and so, at this level, he seems to believe that womens' work of child care is important; at another he sees it as demeaning. In this his response corresponds with ambivalence observed in policy. His views depart from policy when he suggests that society inadequately supports the work of parents. His responses therefore demonstrate support for some directives of policy and lack of support for others.

Mrs May's approach reflects a large amount, but not total, support for preparation for parenthood policy. In this, her response is typical of the majority, although few other teachers have her forcefulness in support for policy. In her opposition to directives in policy Miss Ulm is not typical and speaks for few other teachers. In demonstrating both support and lack of support for directives in policy Mr Lunt is not alone among teachers interviewed; his ambivalence regarding the roles of women, reflected the views of many men although no one else was prepared to be that frank.

7.4 Comparison between schools

Comparisons were made between teachers in different schools because it was thought that social and geographical location might make a difference

to teachers' perspectives. Four different school were involved: Westward Green in Lancashire which served a stable community near a large seaside resort; Northway school in Knowsley, situated in an estate of high rise local authority housing; Eastmount school in Leicestershire in a metropolitan service area; and Central Girls in Northamptonshire, in a small town associated with small industry and mining. Fourteen teachers from Westward Green were involved; sixteen in Northway; twelve in Eastmount; and eighteen in Central Girls (further details of schools and teachers are given in Appendices 2 and 3). There were elements of agreement and disagreement between teachers in different schools.

7.4.1 Disagreement between schools.

Support for policy. Westward Green in Lancashire stands out in its high level of support for policy. Among statements identified as relevant to this study, for every four supportive of policy, only two would be in opposition to it. Support was demonstrated in relation to two areas in particular: most of the teachers consulted believed (a) that society as a whole is threatened because of inadequate parenting and (b) that schools could and should devise preparation for parenthood curriculum. No one observed that the mothering role was connected to ideals of femininity or romance.

Opposition to policy. Northway in Knowsley stands out from the others because of a higher degree of recognition by teachers of political ideology and a lower level of support for policy. Among the comments identified as relevant, for every two which supported policy, three reflected oppositional standpoints. Only in this school did opposition

outweigh agreement with policy. No one supported the views that the family is under threat from within, by parents, that mothers are biologically responsible for child care, or that mothers are the main dynamic in perpetuating cycles of deprivation. Four teachers (25% of the teachers who were interviewed in that school) made statements which can be construed as recognising ideological processes and this was unique among schools in this study.

7.4.2 Agreement between schools.

Several similarities are apparent between schools; these are sometimes in support of, and sometimes in opposition to, policy.

Support for policy. There was a fair degree of support across schools for two views in particular: (a) that inadequacy in one generation could lead to perpetuation of poverty and disadvantage (cycles of disadvantage) and (b) that there is a sufficient amount of support for parents in the form of statutory, voluntary or informal help. There was a similarly low degree of support across schools (including the more radical Northway) for the following oppositional views:

- parental adequacy is rooted in economic stability
- the maternal role is inadequately supported
- motherhood is associated with ideals of femininity and romance. There was a similarly low reflection across schools of perceptions of ideological influence associated with preparation for parenthood. In only one school (Northway) did anyone comment on aspects of control and the confusion between the terms 'parenting' and 'mothering', in preparation for parenthood in the school curriculum. In Northway these views were put

forward by four different teachers, between them reflecting consciousness of only three ideological influences, so that even here opposition to influences in policy was low. In every case these teachers also put forward views in support of policy.

Support for the opposition. There was a consistency across schools reflected in the low level of support for the notion that mothers are biologically prepared for child care and are therefore naturally responsible for this. There was also a consistently high level of support for the view that education is influential in limiting girls' future possibilities.

The highest and lowest levels of support for policy was reflected in the views of teachers in the most and least affluent locations. A high level of support for policy is indicated by teachers in Westward Green where the school served a stable and comparatively affluent area. Although nowhere was there a high degree of opposition to the directives of policy, where teachers were alert to ideology in the school curriculum this occurred in Northway, where the school served a council estate with a high level of poverty and unemployment.

7.5 Comparisons between subject specialisms.

Comparisons were made between teachers with different specialisms to explore whether the subject area influenced teacher's views. Appendix 3 identifies the numbers of teachers involved in the different subjects contributing to this study. A comparison between subject areas reveals there to be most within-subject consistency between teachers of Child

Care and Development, and Personal, Social and Health Education. There was little agreement between teachers in the remaining subject areas. There was some similarity in the topics covered in Personal, Social and Health Eduction and those in Child Care. The differences were most obvious in the teaching methods followed. PSE used group-based and exploratory methods, focusing on personal development, and not on examination success. Child Care followed a curriculum leading toward an exam. Conventional, didactic teaching methods were used, and also a range of practicals including work with young children, needlework, toymaking and cookery.

7.5.1 Child Care and Development.

Support for policy. Teachers of Child Care expressed similar views to each other, both when in agreement and disagreement with policy. They agreed in reflecting policy's view of the authorized Western family and were less than accepting of cultural diversity. Most Child Care teachers said there were enough services and benefits to support parents. Most said that preparation for parenthood could, and should, be taught in schools. Only one of the eight teachers of Child Care believed that O and A levels would be more important to all girls, including those in the working classes, than preparation for parenthood.

Support for the opposition. Teachers of Child Care did not reflect the view that mothers are biologically conditioned to care for their children, and there was a lack of support for the idea that mothers are the main dynamic in any cycle of deprivation which may exist.

7.5.2 Personal, Social and Health Education.

Support for policy. Teachers of Personal, Social and Health Education were united in saying that preparation for parenthood could, and should, be part of the school curriculum. There was lack of reference within the group either to (a) romance as misleading and influential in relation to decisions to do with marriage and parenthood or (b) to a need for girls of all classes and abilities to gather qualifications toward future economic independence. Views expressed by this group did not suggest that they were aware that ideology might play a part in schooling.

Support for the opposition. Teachers of Personal Social and Health Education did not reflect the view that mothers are biologically conditioned for the caring role and neither did they say that society was under threat from within by parents.

Courses in Child Care and Development, Health Education, and PSE were in the main developed alongside Sir Keith Joseph's Cycles of Deprivation discourse, and teachers of these subject show a consistency of accord with the messages in Sir Keith's policy. This consistency is not demonstrated to such an extent in other courses.

7.6 Comparisons between male and female teachers

Of the sixty teachers interviewed, twenty-three were male and thirty-seven (including all teachers of Child Care) were female. Men outnumbered women in senior positions and in maths teaching. Men and women were fairly equally represented in Health Education, PSE., and in R.E.

Gender is revealed to be an important factor, influencing the views of teachers as much as school location, and more than subject specialism, or experience of parenthood. Some similarities were revealed between the views of males and females, but there were far greater differences.

7.6.1 Similarities between the views of men and women

Men and women were similar in showing little support for the idea that females are biologically conditioned for child care.

7.6.2 Differences between the views of men and women

A striking difference lies in the greater range of views offered by women when focusing on the following: marriage and the family; preparation for parenthood as beneficial to all society; the provision of services for parents; educational outcomes of preparation for parenthood when provided by the school; and the issue of similarity or difference of curriculum for male and female pupils.

Marriage and the family. A higher proportion of men than women supported the concept of the Western religious family unit and marriage. Women were more likely to say that marriage was not necessary before parenthood. A higher proportion of men rejected non-Western family forms. No male said, for example, that we should value and learn from differences, while this was said by women.

Preparation for parenthood as a benefit to society. A higher proportion of men expected preparation for parenthood to be of benefit to society. Some women differentiated between its usefulness to the working class,

rather than to middle class pupils, while men did not as often make this distinction.

Services for parents. A higher proportion of men thought that current provision was sufficient. Men tended to be more conservative than women, saying for example, that social services prevent people from standing on their own feet. Only women, while believing that the state provides sufficient services, thought that parents need more help in finding access to them. More women identified where further help was needed, for example in the creation of flexible working hours, and more nursery places. Only women illustrated their points and perspectives with personal experiences.

Educational outcomes. A higher proportion of men said that preparation for parenthood in schools would probably not be effective; some said it was worth a try, using group-based and exploratory teaching and learning methods. Only women, though a very small number, thought that preparation for parenthood was not advisable at all.

The curriculum for males and females. More men believed strongly in a different curriculum for males and females. Women either supported the same curriculum or were uncertain.

Economic stability. The issue of economic stability as basic to adequate parenting was the only point where one group more than another supported the opposition: more women stressed the importance of economic stability.

7.7 Comparisons between parents and non-parents

A comparison between parents and non-parents was carried out, since it seemed possible that experience of parenthood would make a difference to views being expressed. It was found, however, that differences were small, being far outweighed by differences in gender and school location.

7.8 The hidden curriculum of preparation for parenthood

Considering teachers' views overall, it is apparent that there were some who strongly supported the assumptions and directives of preparation for parenthood policy, and that these were in the main teachers of Child Care or Personal, Social and Health Education. There were some, but very few, teachers who were unsure of the motives behind preparation for parenthood, suspecting it to be an ideological site, and these were largely based in a school serving an estate where people were experiencing considerable hardship. The majority of teachers followed a middle line, rejecting the more punitive assertions of the cycles of deprivation notion, but supporting preparation for parenthood as beneficial to all of society. While gender bias in the school curriculum was almost universally recognised, the subtle working of ideology in support of this (as for example in the acceptance of the 'ideal' family; the use of romantic notions as a pedagogical tool; the use of the term 'parenthood' for 'motherhood'; the way in which female gender roles were seen to be of less importance than male roles...) was rarely recognised. Men were especially concerned to maintain gender differences in the school curriculum.

It is girls, rather than boys, who experience preparation for parenthood. It is non-academic and domestically-oriented girls who receive saturation levels of this curriculum, which is repeated in core subjects such as Personal, Social and Health Education, in English and in Maths. It is present again in options: in Child Care, Human Biology, Home Economics, Needlework... Pupils, and especially girls, receive preparation for parenthood from many directions in schools, from male and female teachers, and in the main from those who are supportive of the assumptions, meanings and prejudices of preparation for parenthood policy. The hidden curriculum of preparation for parenthood is informed by an ideology which seems to work toward the continued inequality of women and especially women who mother.

This finding suggests that there are mutualities between the discourse which is preparation for parenthood policy, practices in the school, and teachers' views. The norms which are part of preparation for parenthood are accepted in the main by teachers to whom they appear just and natural. These norms seem to be aligned with the way in which teachers make sense of the world. At the same time, these norms are beneficial to the patriarchal state and state management of the economy, in that the emphasis on preparing pupils for parenthood (in order to improve the quality of life) diverts attention and energies away from any consideration of those who benefit from oppression and inequality. While teachers who prepare pupils for motherhood may, at one level, oppose gender bias in schooling it is likely that, at another level, their work will ensure its continuation.

CHAPTER EIGHT

RESULTS:

THE VIEWS OF GIRLS.

CHAPTER EIGHT

RESULTS: THE VIEWS OF GIRLS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on an exploration of the perspectives, relating to motherhood and employment, of a group of fourteen-year-old girls in 1988. Two methods were employed, the 'Just Imagine...' questionnaire which had been used with fifteen and sixteen year-olds in 1982, and a small group discussion.

The aim of using the questionnaire was a) to explore the extent to which girls' views on parenthood, revealed in the 1982 study, were replicated in a different educational context, and six years later, and b) to identify a small group who would take part in a later discussion.

The aim of the discussion was to explore in greater depth some of the issues raised by questionnaire results and also some of the questions raised by the study as a whole. In particular it seemed important to find out whether girls, in a school which supported gender equality, retained or rejected support for the ideal family and exclusive mothering. I hoped also to find out more about influences on the beliefs of girls in contemporary society, and try to assess how much power they would have as grown women, to organise their lives to their own satisfaction.

8.2 The 'Just Imagine...' questionnaire in 1982 and 1988

Views arising from the use of the questionnaire in 1982 and 1988 were in some ways the same and in some ways different. Differences were probably due to school influences, the passage of time, and the changing

perspectives of girls and society more generally. The research situations of 1982 and 1988 contrasted in a number of ways.

8.2.1 Comparisons between the use of 'Just Imagine...' in 1982 and 1988

There were several differences between the 1982 and 1988 studies: between the schools drawn upon; curriculum organisation; pupils involved; procedures, and outcomes.

Differences between schools. The school drawn upon in 1982 was Westward Green in Lancashire, a former grammar school now comprehensive, which had served a stable community for several generations. Westward Green offered preparation for parenthood across the curriculum; teachers were strong in their belief that society is threatened by inadequate parents and that preparation for parenthood could improve matters.

The school drawn upon in 1988 was Southlands, a community school providing arts, sports and further education facilities to a new town in the South Midlands. Here teachers were alert to the potential of gender bias in the curriculum; preparation for parenthood was an issue; and equal preparation of boys and girls for all aspects of adult life was the ideal. In 1988 such a school was chosen with the aim of exploring the extent to which the different and more progressive approach is reflected in the views of girls.

Differences in curriculum organisation. The fifth year curriculum in Westward Green consisted of a number of core subjects undertaken by the majority of pupils, along with a system of optional subjects, from which

pupils made their selections at the end of the fourth year.

In Southlands a common curriculum for all included English language and literature; maths; physics; environmental studies; humanities; at least one language; an expressive arts subject; and design and technology. In addition modular short courses provided supplementary business studies and information technology. In the fourth and fifth years the tutorial programme increased its emphasis on careers preparation, and work experience was provided for all, as a three week off-site opportunity. The common curriculum did not eradicate gender differences related to curriculum organisation because within each of the different courses optional experiences were available, so that the boys taking design and technology could opt for craft design and technology, while girls could opt for design for living and home economics. Teachers facilitating the study in Southlands, described the optional structure within design and technology as having a limiting influence on their aims to provide a curriculum which does not extend or confirm gender differences found in society. Part of the responsibility of one teacher was to monitor gender influences which might arise from the design and technology curriculum.

Differences between pupils. The 1982 study took a cross-section of pupils in the fifth year, boys and girls, including those following each of the six different curriculum pathways found to be in existence. Four pathways were being followed by girls and two by boys. The 1988 study focused only on girls. Those taking the design for living and home economics option in the design and technology course were selected, because this was the nearest course to Child Development on offer at Southlands, and

because the views of domestically-oriented girls are the main concern of the current study. The fourth year group was chosen not because of their age, but because the study was of interest to the particular teachers who were facilitating access to the school.

Differences in procedures. The six groups which were the focus of the 1982 study were identified on the basis of their different pathways through a traditional secondary school curriculum. This was not possible in the 1988 study since pupils followed, on the whole, a common curriculum. The questionnaire was therefore administered to one group of girls who were of major interest.

In 1988 thirty girls completed the 'Just Imagine...' questionnaire (Appendix 6) in Southland's design for living and home economics class room. Responses were searched for any correspondence to those of the 1982 study in terms of girls' plans for further education and career; perspectives on family; and perspectives on parental responsibilities.

Differences in outcomes. In the 1982 study, the views of pupils differed according to which of the six curriculum pathways they had followed. To facilitate communication of results, the characteristics and perspectives of pupils in the six groups were drawn upon to devise a label, identifying 'builders' (non-academic boys); 'managers' (academic boys); 'mothers' and 'office clerks' (two groups of non-academic girls) and 'doctors' and 'prospective teachers' (two groups of academic girls).

The 1988 study focused only upon girls, but findings did not form a

pattern which completely reflected the four girl's groups (the mothers, office clerks, prospective teachers and doctors) of the 1982 study. Instead, results made a pattern suggesting the presence of five groups, only three of which bore any resemblance to those in the earlier study: mothers, office clerks and prospective teachers. Eleven of the thirty in the total sample were included in these three groups. No one offered views or plans which corresponded to those of the doctors. Nineteen girls differed from the remainder in that they acknowledged gender issues and clearly accepted them as relevant; this group of nineteen were split into two sub-groups differing in the extent that views on gender equality seemed securely or superficially based.

8.2.2 Results of the 1988 study using the 'Just Imagine...'questionnaire

The views and prospects of girls, revealed in their responses to the questionnaire, suggested the presence of five groups.

'The mothers'. Only two of the thirty girls involved in this study were less interested in paid employment than in domesticity. Their responses were similar to those of the 'mothers' in the 1982 study in that they planned to leave school as soon as possible, ideally to enter marriage and become a parent. They accepted different knowledge areas to be relevant to girls and boys, and expected males and females to have different, traditional, responsibilities in the home.

In this group, Dalia planned to leave school at 16 and had no plans for employment. She said that, as a good teacher in the imaginative situation provided by the questionnaire, she would teach her class about

what the working world is like and how to find a job. She would teach this to boys because:

> ...boys have to do harder work than girls because boys learn all about machines and they learn how to do engineering...they can support their family because of earning good money.

She would teach this to girls because:

> ...they have to learn how to bring their child up if they are a one-parent family...

Dalia gave reasons why, as a mother of a young child, she would or would not go out to work. In her projected image of herself as mother she would go out to work because:

> I would need money to buy the child clothing and food. I would need to support my family and household.

She would not go out to work because:

> ...it's a man's job and I would have to stay at home and look after my own child...

Although both girls in this group lived currently with original parents in a nuclear family situation they did not rule out the possibility of themselves becoming a single parent, and then living at home with parents, or possibly with a boyfriend.

'The office clerks'. A group of four girls reflected the 'office clerks' of the 1982 study in that they were not academically inclined, expected to leave school as soon as possible and work for a short time in jobs where salaries available would probably not allow them to be economically independent. They looked forward to romance and parenthood more than to a

career. Two in this group said that they would not work before their children went to school, and two said that they would prefer not to work while their children were young, while realising that economic circumstances might make that necessary.

In their orientation to domesticity, the 'office clerks' were similar to the 'mothers'. Ellen planned to leave school at 16 and be a hairdresser. She would go out to work because:

> ...I earn money and look after the family on a part time job while they are at school.

She had more to say about reasons for not going out to work:

> I stay at home, look after my children and my home because my children don't go to school and are too young to leave at home. Because there are no jobs available at the moment.

Two in this group currently lived in a single parent or newly constituted family. All four said that they intended to be married before having children.

'The prospective teachers'. Five girls reflected the views of prospective teachers in the 1982 study in that they were academically inclined, would stay on at school until 18, and planned some form of further or higher education. Their responses suggested that they were interested both in marriage or partnership and in a career and would endeavour in the future to combine employment and parenthood. While already seriously planning for employment, once they were parents they would stay at home until their children went to school or nursery school. Sarah was a member of this group. She planned to leave school at 18 and

then go on to university. She hoped to:

> ...get a job, then have a child when I've established a career.

In her imaginative role as a teacher she would include domestic and communication skills, DIY, and the expressive arts:

> Also some fun things so they can relax and enjoy themselves, like how to play an instrument or how to paint and sing.

Boys would need to learn domestic skills:

> Sewing - because they should be able to mend and make clothes or toys for a child. And not lump that responsibility onto a woman.

Girls would need to learn DIY because:

> ...a woman when she leaves school should be able to either live on her own and be able to look after herself or have a career of her own.

Sarah records her feminist views in this way:

> Women are very often restricted to the 'Namby Pamby' subjects which will only allow a few jobs. Maths, etc., would allow scope for a larger range of jobs.

Sarah didn't assume she would marry before she became a parent but she foresaw a problem which could accompany motherhood:

> Who to give priority to: husband; baby; job?

As a mother Sarah said she would get very bored if her life centred around home and a child, but:

> I would want to spend the first couple of years with my child when they are first developing.

Unlike the 'prospective teachers' in the 1982 study, only two of the five in this group lived with both original parents and only two (though not

the same two) thought it absolutely necessary to be married before having a child.

Ambivalent group one. A group of nine girls referred to gender issues, tackling the implications of preparation for parenthood at a superficial level, but responses indicated that they had not fully explored the implications of gender equality. They did see the same curriculum to be relevant to boys and girls but this was not for reasons of equality. Anna, for example, believed that boys need to learn how to cook, but so that they did not have to rely on their wives; she also said that she would not work if her husband asked her not to. She also wrote that a girl should learn technology in order to be self-sufficient in fixing fuses, etc., and also to be able to show her husband all the things she could do.

Cara, another member of this group, planned to leave school at 17, go to university and then be a childrens' doctor. She thought that all the basic courses should be taught (English, maths, etc) as well as cooking, and DIY. These should be taught to boys as well as girls and for the same reasons. As a mother she would work in order to earn money:

> **...and to pay the bills and keep my house modern...**

If she did not work it would be:

> **...because at that age I have to look after my baby and keep the home in order for my husband; the baby would also get deformed if I had a child minder.**

Eight of the nine in this group said they would not go out to work while their children were still young. All nine expected to be married before

they became parents and planned to live in a traditional nuclear family situation. In reality, six lived with original parents, two lived in newly constituted families, and one with both parents and a grandparent. Gender awareness at any level was missing from the 1982 study, and so this group provides fresh information, suggesting a combination of superficial belief in feminist principles and a more fundamental belief in male dominance.

Ambivalent group two. The ten girls in this group were even more decisive in expressing feminist principles. No one thought the curriculum should be different for males and females. They expected to stay in school until eighteen and then take further or higher education and career training, and their current interest seemed to focus on employment prospects, rather than on romance or domesticity. Nina planned to leave school at 17+ and then work in the mounted police. As a teacher, in the imaginative situation, she would give her pupils work experience and teach:

> ...how the world works outside the four walls of their environment.

She adds:

> I think boys should learn more 'womens' subjects - as they put it...

and girls should learn metal and woodwork:

> ...because if they need to put up a shelf they need to know how to do it.

As a parent Nina would go out to work:

> ...for my freedom and (if I didn't) I would go to bed like a spring foal and not get any sleep because I would be so full of energy.

When asked why she would not work as a parent she said:

But I would.

In response to a question about likely problems for her as a parent, Nina said she didn't want to get pregnant:

No pain. No pregnancy. No nooky. No baby. No problem!

Despite this concern, Nina still expected eventually to live at home with a husband, children and pets.

Nine of the ten in this group planned marriage before parenthood and six indicated that they would stay at home while their children were young. Most in this group (eight) lived currently with both original parents in a nuclear family situation. It seemed as though girls in this group, while aware of gender issues and while favouring equality in educational provision and economic involvement, framed their own futures as mothers within the traditional family pattern which renders economic equality unlikely.

8.2.3 Overview of 'Just Imagine...' results

The girls involved in the 1988 'Just Imagine...' study were being taught a domestic option within a design for living course in a school where gender was a live issue. The contradiction reflected in gender awareness in the school on the one hand, and gender bias in curriculum structure on the other, seems to be reflected in girls' views on the family and domestic responsibilities. While the majority of girls indicated some acceptance of feminist principles of equality, and were seriously thinking ahead to employment which would bring economic independence, they held traditional notions of the family and domestic responsibilities

which would make it difficult for independence to be maintained. Twenty girls (67%) were living with two original parents in the nuclear situation and twenty-four (80%) expected that, should they become parents, they would reproduce this ideal. These young people seemed to accept the traditional family ideal. Four girls did not indicate clearly whether they hoped to be in employed work while parents of young children. Three indicated clearly that they would work if they became mothers and twenty-three indicated clearly that they would not work before their children went to school.

In comparison with the girls in the 1982 study the girls in Southlands were much more aware of gender issues. This is likely to be due to a combination of factors including gender awareness in the school, and gender awareness in society more generally, which may have increased in the years between 1982 and 1988.

The 1988 'Just Imagine...' findings suggest that it would be useful to broaden the focus of the current study, away from a concentration on working class girls and women, to include girls and women from all classes. The way in which the views of most Southlands girls, despite acknowledgement of the importance of employment, reflect traditional values in family form and domestic responsibility, suggests a fundamental resistance to change which affects all women. This may be to do with effects of ideology. It may be to do with intrinsic value associated by girls with family and domesticity which overrides negative aspects of economic inequality. These views may also be linked to the lack of any real or positive alternatives to set against the idealised

family, or to the mother as primary care giver in today's society.

8.3 Discussion with fourth year girls

Sarah, in the 1988 prospective teachers group, to me poignantly summarises the dilemma which affects all women who mother. When asked to anticipate motherhood while still only fourteen she wonders:

Who to give priority to: husband; baby; job?

It was Sarah's appreciation of the central dilemma of women who mother that led to the decision to ask, through the school, the five 'prospective teachers' to enter into a discussion. All five agreed, but on the day, only four were present: Sarah, Diane, Jane, and Carol. We had one and a half hours, talking informally, and loosely guided by the questions on Appendix 7. I was not at this point concerned to gain more information about their expectations in relation to mothering. I was in particular anxious to gain insight into the way in which these girls, while career-minded, also expected to take exclusive responsibility for their children, and would take several years away from employment while their children were young. The discussion ranged over the importance of boyfriends and school work; their hopes for employment; the implications of living in a non-traditional family; marriage and partnerships. We also discussed influences which might have contributed to the development of their views and talked about the media; home; school and society in general.

8.3.1 The views of girls

Views on marriage, partnership and implications of non-traditional family forms, for children. The four girls agreed that it was important to

establish oneself in a career before marriage. Carol said a career would be:

> ...something to fall back on...

suggesting that, to her, marriage held primary importance, and a career was secondary. This was not a general view. Sarah, for example, said she would not form a partnership until she was deeply involved with a man. They would be:

> ...really suited...someone you can talk to and relax with and who understands you - and who understands maybe - that your work has to come first.

Diane:

> I'm not at ease with marriage, seeing my Mum and Dad divorced. I sometimes think I'll get married around 27, 30, but really I'll have a life of my own first.

Jane:

> If you did marry and had to get a divorce, it would be such an upheaval...so in a sense...I don't know... I might just live with somebody. They'd have to be very secure, very stable.

Diane:

> Then again, for a child, you'd probably feel more secure if you had married parents.

Sarah said she would marry before having children:

> If we split up they would know who the father is, etc. Parents should be totally stable before they have children.

Jane asked her what if she didn't get on with her husband?

> ...it would be horrible to be stuck in a marriage with someone you didn't like.

Sarah answered:

> I don't know...it's a lot of contradictory things... I'd like to get a career going and get married later in life and see if it works before you have children.

Diane, a member of a reconstituted family, said:

> If anything does happen, like a divorce, it can ruin a kid's life...

and speaking of her own experience of divorcing parents she said:

> It was horrible because I was stuck in the middle and I wouldn't want that to happen to my children.

After marriage and parenthood all four girls planned to continue with their career. They hoped that the father would share the work load. Diane:

> You'd have to organise it to spread the load between you and your husband. It isn't fair if the husband goes out to work and you're stuck at home...you'd just go mad.

Comments of this kind suggested that they believed it was the woman's job to organise sharing by partners of domestic work, and they seemed to assume that the fundamental responsibility for any children would be theirs. Three of the four girls were sure they would stay away from work until their children reached at least nursery school age. Carol:

> You might feel, if you left the child on its own, you weren't playing a part in its life, you know...

Diane:

> I'd look after it until it was three or four, so I'm with it while it's growing up - otherwise the child might not be very stable.

I was anxious to explore where this perception came from:

> Why not stable?

Diane answered:

> From what I've learned so far it's best if you spend a lot of time playing with the children, taking an interest, giving them a lot of attention. If you give a lot of love and care then they're going to grow up stable.

I asked where she had learned this and she answered:

> I don't know... it's what I've learned at home, what I've learned at school, all the bits and pieces I've picked up and I put them together to make my views, and how I'd like my life to be, not how it has been.

Jane:

> My Mum went back to work earlier than a year after I was born and I was with child minders. I was O.K. They were really nice.

Carol:

> I'd stay at home until the child went to nursery school, just to bring him into life, and teach him good ways...when he went to school I'd get a part time job until they had really settled down. Views on the importance of boyfriends and school work.

There was a brief discussion of the relative importance of schoolwork and boyfriends for girls of their age. Three thought that schoolwork was more important although boyfriends were nice too. Sarah demonstrates this view:

> School work to me is very important. I want to get my qualifications and have a really good career. But it's always nice to have someone around: someone you can talk to, who will listen and understand, and a little more mature.

Carol gave little importance on either school or boyfriends.

Views on employment. Three girls already had plans for their career. Sarah, for whom a career seemed very important, had no clear idea as yet what it would be:

> My Dad says 'get yourself sorted before you leave school'. He wants me to go to university but my Mum doesn't.

Carol was already a director of her father's company, a modelling agency, and she planned to train as a model and then later help run the company. Jane was interested both in interior design and computer programming. Diane thought she might train as a secretary but was still "doing research" on the question. Following the suggestion that these were all fairly traditional careers for women, a discussion centred on why this might be so. I asked:

> Why don't you want to be an airline pilot, a sea captain, or something like that?

Sarah answered:

> People expect men to do those things.

Diane:

> I had a wild feeling I wanted to be a butcher a few years ago.

On being asked what was so wild about that, she said she didn't know. Carol said:

> I wouldn't mind doing a man's job. My Dad and me used to play war games. I was a tomboy. I wanted to be a policeman and then a car mechanic when I was ten or eleven. Then Mum said I was going to have to grow up and be a young lady. I reckon people should do what they like.

Diane:

I don't think jobs should be male or female jobs. I don't think you should be stopped from doing something because it's called a man's job. But me, personally, I want to do something imaginative...

Sarah:

I want an interesting job: imaginative and exciting.

Jane:

Men's jobs are kinds of mechanic, or behind a desk all day.

That women might choose not to do men's jobs because they were less exciting than women's jobs kept us talking for some time.

8.3.2 Girls discussing influences on their points of view.

Parental influences. This discussion began with girls considering whether they and their mothers were alike. No one thought they were like their mothers, and everyone hoped to be different when relating to their own children. Mothers were described as nagging, in one case, and over-protective in another. Family break-up was also seen to be something to avoid. Sarah, sometimes lonely as a single child, would have liked brothers and sisters. Fathers were rarely mentioned during this discussion, but perhaps only because no specific question focussed on them.

School influences. The four girls greeted my reference to the anti-sexist policy of their school with some derision.

That's just stupid! With games the boys do weight lifting, and that's just as sexist as you can get! I said that to one of the teachers, and they didn't know what to say.

They pointed out that most sports were divided along traditional gender lines, with no opportunity for girls to do rugby, for example. In some school subjects there was supposed to be a choice, but people "do the usual":

> Only two boys do dance. Boys think they'll ruin their reputation. If you come across a male ballet dancer, it's considered feminine.

When asked why this was so, she said:

> I think it comes from your family background. You expect it. That's the way it always is. Media influences.

A discussion focussed on romance, and its influence on girl's views. Diane said:

> Oh, I'm not into romance. I don't believe in its being all lovey dovey and that. There's a lot of work to go into a marriage - helping and supporting each other.

Sarah:

> I'm really romantic, but I know life's not really like that. Romantic films sort of illustrate how you feel, and...I don't know, they're nice but they're not true.

Carol:

> It depends on whether you find the right person and the situation.

Sarah:

> 'Seventeen' says it's not sexist, but it is. They have a career every week: it's always, you know, an air hostess, a secretary, or a typically woman's job.

Jane:

I'm not romantic at all. Soap operas over exaggerate. In Dallas, you know Sue Ellen, she used to stay at home, then she became an alcoholic, but then she started her own business.

Carol:

I wanted to be a vet after seeing All Creatures Great and Small.

I asked whether all the vets in that series weren't male. Carol answered:

Yes, and the women do the clearing up...but that was supposed to be the 40s; it's just trying to be realistic. The influence of society.

Intermittently during the discussion reference was made to society in general and the way in which gender inequality was maintained. Jane referred to a friend who desperately wanted to be a lawyer, but so strongly did people associate this with masculine ability, that:

...she is finding it hard to "hang on to her ambition".

While discussing why women didn't seem to get to the top, Diane answered:

...because they are not encouraged to. And, maybe, they're pushed away. It's just the way society treats them.

A discussion focussed briefly on Mrs Thatcher who as Prime Minister, was a woman who had got to the top in a spectacular way.

Diane:

Because she's a woman they make a big thing of it; they think it's a man's job to run the country.

Sarah:

It's nice because she's a woman, but I don't like her views. She doesn't stand up for women like you'd think she would.

Diane:

> I reckon the men still have the power up front, that's what it all comes down to. Society seems to keep them (women) on the edge. It's safe. It's comfortable. It's interesting...

8.4 Interpretation of findings in relation to the interests of this study

Comparison of 1982 and 1988 findings. It would seem that, while feminist views had a higher profile in 1988 than in 1982, little had changed in the worlds of employment and domesticity for women, as seen through the filter of these girls' views. Curriculum structures in an otherwise progressive school maintained gender differentials; male curriculum choices were still likely to lead to higher wages and career consistency; wage differentials between males and females still existed; and even comparatively ambitious girls were still planning to interrupt their careers to provide full time mothering for their young children. The views of girls who were working class in the 1982 study were in accord with educational policy, and with teachers' traditionalist perspectives, and the girls were almost certainly heading for economic insecurity. In 1988 the girls who discussed these issues in depth seemed on the whole to be preparing for employment associated with the middle classes; however, the end result of economic insecurity and dependence on others is likely to be the same for both groups in the end, the only difference being that economic dependence will be delayed because plans for marriage and parenthood are delayed.

Following the analysis of the 1982 study it was not clear how girls came by their traditionalist views: did they formulate them outside the

school; did the school merely consolidate and confirm these views, or did the school introduce them? While teachers in Westward Green on the whole supported preparation for parenthood policy, teachers in Southlands did not; even so the views of girls in the two situations were similar. Southlands girls used feminist discourse, and this was not the case in Westward Green, but at a fundamental level of acceptance of the ideal family and exclusive mothering, the views of most girls in both studies were similar. In light of this finding it would appear that girls develop their views relating to parenthood outside of the school, and in addition, whether teachers set out to consolidate or challenge these views they are likely to be retained.

Thinking back to 'the 1974 divide' in preparation for parenthood policy (discussed in Chapter Six) objections to the cycles of deprivation hypothesis may have erased traditionalist assumptions from later policy, and may have been associated with a movement which resulted in radical developments in some schools such as Southlands. However at another level it did motivate teachers to produce traditionalist curricula in other schools where notions of the ideal family, ideal (exclusive) mothering and ideal pre-school environment, were consolidated. While the womens' movement is having some effect on schooling, progress is not as great as it might seem, if we define it superficially as the heightened awareness that some girls have of gender issues.

The role of the school. The common curriculum in Southlands may be more effective in eradicating class differences than gender differences. However, it is too easy to condemn the school for a policy of gender

equality which does not go far enough. In light of the girls' comments on male jobs being boring, they might have found the technology component of design for living less satisfying, than home economics and child care or development. It could be anticipated, also, that strong objections would be voiced by pupils and parents alike if the school made it compulsory for both boys and girls to take part in gendered physical subjects such as rugby, weightlifting and dance. It may be unreasonable to expect radical change, to start at the secondary level, after eleven years of conditioning for a gendered society. Unreasonable, too, in light of traditionalist perspectives in the wider society, and state management of education.

There is a problem for education in distinguishing between the ideological and cultural power of the curriculum. It would seem beneficial to include on the curriculum subjects which appeal to female cultural interests, for in these girls will do well. The problem is that it is subjects which do not appeal to girls, but appeal to boys, which today lead to marketable skills and economic security. Young (1988) explores a similar issue but focuses upon class and the academic curriculum. The academic curriculum is hierarchical in that it often does not seem to extend the cultural interests of working class children; many are not interested, and tend not to excel, in academic subjects. Nevertheless, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with academic subjects, for they have their own insights, some of which may have emancipatory potential. Young asks: can we support non- hierarchical forms of knowledge if they don't lead to equal participation in the benefits of society? For the purpose of gender and education we need to

ask: can we cater for girls' cultural interests if they do not lead to marketable skills and participation in the benefits of society? Or in contrast should we work on transforming the values of society so that skills associated with female culture become more marketable (by raising the salaries of nursery nurses, for example). Yet again, should we work on ways of making marketable skills, currently associated with 'boring men's work', more appealing to girls? This might be managed by drawing on their identification with characters in film and soap operas, to demonstrate how men's work can also be creative, interesting and imaginative, and well within the capabilities of women.

Girls' traditionalist views on the family and mothering. Certain messages contained in child development research are still being taken up by girls. The traditional family is still accepted as the ideal and the presence of both natural parents is associated with normal and untroubled child development. The concept of critical period seems to be accepted in the suggestion that the very young child is particularly vulnerable. The assumption of the centrality of the natural mother is observed in the notion that only she can provide the necessary care and that no one else shares the fundamental responsibility for the child's welfare: the responsibility of the father is seen to be of a different, kind (providing economic support for the family and emotional support for the mother) and society's responsibility seems never to be perceived. These seem to be the ingredients in girls' perspectives on the mothering role which lead them to believe it will be essential for them to give up employment during their children's early years, or at least, work part time.

The exploitation of women who mother. Exploitation seems inevitable in light of this scenario. This situation leaves males to support their partners financially, as suggested by Beechey 1977, in exchange for domestic and sexual services. Since women assume exclusive responsibility they are not likely to demand support from their partner in ways which will limit his access to paid employment, or from society or the state, because these are rarely considered as sharers of responsibility. Thus exclusive mothering, as in Chodorow's (1978) analysis, protects the state from the need to acknowledge responsibility or supply supportive facilities such as pre-school care.

The lack of alternatives. The discussion with girls who have experienced the break-up of their parent's marriage, and reconstituted family life, is revealing. While the ideal family is mythical, and while cleaving to the officially promoted ideal is in some ways, as Kamarovsky and Waller (1945) have described it, associated with taboos and ancestral traditions, the alternatives are not found to be satisfactory. The divorce of parents has proved painful, and living in a reconstituted family also has problems. While problems were also described by girls living within the idealised 'normal' family (nagging, controlling mothers; loneliness of the single child) living with both natural parents is still accepted as preferable to any of the alternatives in view.

Hegemony is achieved by a variety of means. It is partly to do with consent related to what girls need and expect from a good relationship: a special friend who will understand and support them, perhaps a little older, and wiser. This need was described by girls who did not see

themselves as romantic or taken in by romanticism; this was seen as a realistic and (given time and careful choice) attainable goal. This goal was not seen to be in competition with the need to hold a challenging, interesting and creative job; even though some girls anticipated the dilemma of whose needs to supply: husband's, children's or employer's. While no one included their own needs in this range, it is most likely that a woman's own needs would be satisfied if she can only satisfy those of others...but this is merely conjecture at this point. Echoing the thoughts of Mackintosh et al (1977) it seems to be the lack of alternatives which are at the root of the dilemma, locking mothers into material dependence on a man or parents, because of the lack of positive alternative family forms or child care provision.

It seems, from the discussion reported above, that these girls do not see themselves as less able than men to enter male-dominated areas of employment. Men's jobs, even accompanied by good salaries and security, are seen as uninteresting and uncreative. They are no match for women's jobs, or for the loving friendship and satisfaction associated with domesticity. It may be that oppression lies partly in obscuring ways in which these jobs may be interesting to women, partly in lack of parity in basic education, and partly in maintaining exclusive mothering as the only adequate provision for children. The girls interviewed above may have been holding on to traditional ideals, since positive alternatives offering greater satisfaction and security to women and children, are not yet in view.

CHAPTER NINE:

CONCLUDING CHAPTER: THE POLITICS OF PREPARATION FOR PARENTHOOD.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUDING CHAPTER: THE POLITICS OF PREPARATION FOR PARENTHOOD

9.1 Introduction

My interest in preparation for parenthood began in 1978 with an examination of the perspectives of fifteen and sixteen year-old girls in London who were, and others who were not, taking a course in child development as part of their secondary schooling. Within my orientation at the time, which included an assumption that schooling was an unqualified good, the results were disappointing. So knowledgeable were the girls who contributed to the study about the needs of young children, so committed were they to the welfare of babies they had not yet had, and so practically insightful were they, that the child care course under examination seemed fragile and trivial in comparison. That experience raised questions which have taken eleven years of study to explore. A great deal of practical information about preparation for parenthood in the school curriculum was gathered during the Aston study, but that left me with further questions of a more theoretical kind, which motivated the current study. The following questions were outlined at the end of Chapter One. What are the implications for the adult lives of pupils being prepared for parenthood? How does this curriculum reflect structures which organise gender and class divisions? Why has the call for preparation for parenthood been sustained while girls are already committed to the welfare of their future children and family life? What is the role of the state and educational policy in relation to preparation for parenthood? Why did preparation for parenthood provide a basis for curriculum development especially in the 1970s? What is the role of teachers, and how do their personal and political views influence

their pupils, through their preparation for parenthood teaching? In the concluding chapter I propose to draw together the findings of this current study to comment on each of these questions in turn.

9.2 Six questions.

9.2.1. What are the implications for the adult lives of pupils engaged in preparation for parenthood in schools?

Drawing on feminist theory, we find the preparation for parenthood curriculum to reflect patriarchal discourses, which construct and maintain notions of 'natural women, valid in the home' and work subtly and powerfully to validate the current situation of womens' inequality. Girls seem to be drawn to the idea of motherhood. Girls quoted in Chapter Eight communicated that their emerging identity includes somewhere, among other things, a sense of self that needs intimacy, companionship and security associated with traditional conceptualisations of family life. This need is expressed in terms of partnership with a man rather than a woman, and in terms of the nuclear family, rather than an alternative community form. Preparation for parenthood confirms rather than introduces these needs; it is not responsible for them but offers no alternative. It does not provide the language through which the ideology of preparation for parenthood can be deconstructed, laid bare and examined, or through which a grass roots movement for change could be developed. Preparation for parenthood seems to be about validating and maintaining inequality.

9.2.2 How does preparation for parenthood reflect structures which organise gender and class divisions?

Feminist theory suggests that preparation for parenthood carries, and exemplifies as ideal, those notions of the natural, domestic mother and home maker, that are seminal in organising and maintaining women's inequality in Western societies. These notions are part of our social structure, in its language, values, ideals; in its organisations and institutions, and in its physical reality.

Sir Keith Joseph's Cycles of Deprivation address carried within it a discourse which, working at an ideological level, offered an explanation for social inequalities, still visible despite the suggestion they had been eradicated, and likely to become more and more visible with government policy which necessitated unemployment in the 1970s. The discourse also carried with it a supposed remedy for spreading unemployment, in the reassertion of the message that women who were mothers of young children should withdraw from employment, leaving more room for men. Research with girls described in Chapters One and Eight suggests that they are exposed to ideological messages, and contradictions, and endorse or reject them at different moments. A particularly stable factor seems to be a vision of the future in which partnership and responsible motherhood both have an important place. Responsibility within current social structures means conforming to traditional values surrounding marriage, family membership and exclusive mothering; these are values which are associated with child development research, in turn called upon in preparation for parenthood.

9.2.3 Why is the call for preparation for parenthood sustained, when girls are already knowledgeable, committed, and geared toward parental responsibility?

Young girls are already committed to the welfare of their future children, and expect to conform to ideals surrounding mothering, but the call for preparation for parenthood recurs. As shown in Chapters Five and Six Sir Keith Joseph did not originate, but merely revived this ideology, but in so cogent a manner, and at such an opportune moment in economic history, that it was exceedingly effective. The notion of 'difference' between male and female (sedimented as 'deficiency' in male discourse) was reaffirmed and invigorated during this period, which is consistent with a view of preparation for parenthood as an agent of social 'gentling' in a time of threatening crisis. It would appear, therefore, that it is not the deficiency of mothers that lies behind either preparation for parenthood or calls for its implementation, but the potential of this movement within ideology. Preparation for parenthood communicates deficiency and blame; it confirms notions of the ideal family and exclusive mothering; and it insures against any social movement which might lead to real change.

9.2.4 What is the role of the state, and educational policy, in relation to preparation for parenthood?

Feminist theory, as outlined in Chapter Three, offers a framework for analysis which suggests that the role of the state is to manage society in such a way as to facilitate male power including economic domination. The state apparently draws on patriarchal discourses and the constructed dependency of women, excluding us from equal participation in the

workforce. At one level the state offers equality but seems to navigate around feminist initiatives so as to ensure little actual change. The process of domination is obscured from the consciousness of the actors involved and this is important for the effectivity of ideology. No conspiracies are suggested, for the process needs to be obscured if it is to be successful, and hegemony depends upon a consensus view - held by the majority of actors - of the essential benevolence of the state.

The reality of domesticity is somewhat different from its image as presented beforehand. This possibility is supported by the work quoted in Chapter Two, showing that ideal family forms are becoming increasingly rare, and that the state seeks to support and advance the traditional family. If women find that their domestic roles are not so fulfilling as expected, they could lose commitment to it. Were they to successfully organise for full participation in economic activity, and force the state to manage their grievances, then resulting imbalance in the remainder of society would also have to be managed. If feminist advances laid bare the bases of exploitation, then women's action could cause considerable problems. How can the men go out to work if the women don't stay in to look after the babies? Who would care for the aged and infirm if women refused to do so? What if voluntary organisations called a strike? A further question follows, would state ideology then give way to a more overt force in order to maintain male dominance?

As suggested by the findings of Chapters Five and Six the role of the state with regard to preparation for parenthood seems to be related not only to the positioning of women who mother, more particularly working

class women as valid in the home, but also to constructing them as objects of blame for social and economic problems.

9.2.5. Why did preparation for parenthood provide a basis for curriculum development especially in the 1970s?

From its beginning, state schooling was based on the assumption that girls would spend their adult lives concerned mainly with domesticity and child care, and the early curriculum made domestic subjects for girls mandatory. The policy review in Chapter Five reveals that, by the time of the second world war and on into the 1970s, this assumption was still in place. The presumed orientation of girls toward domesticity had influenced pedagogy to the extent that even non-domestic subjects would be interpreted in domestic terms. The provision of education for middle class girls may have diverged from this, especially in single sex schools where academic qualifications were a primary concern. Until the 1970s policy supported the preparation of girls for domesticity, but with the involvement of Sir Keith Joseph from 1972, a new direction was taken which focused specifically upon preparation for parenthood. Sir Keith's emotive Cycles of Deprivation address in 1972 implicated the poor as a threat to their own children, to the family and to society. Teachers were greatly influenced, developing new curricula especially in child care and development, and in personal, social and health education. These had a high profile by the end of the 1970s when, in particular, girls who were not considered to be academically inclined were found to be experiencing preparation for parenthood in a number of different curriculum areas simultaneously. The change in education in the U.K. of the 1970s from a focus on domesticity for girls, to a focus on parenthood more

specifically, coincided with changes within the political sphere of the country; there is reference to this in Chapter Six. The women's movement was increasingly effective and equal opportunities for women were to be supported by law. The economy was contracting, unemployment rising, while some agents of the state, Sir Keith Joseph being one, were presenting a picture of the U.K. economy as stable and secure. While employment opportunities were dropping overall, one aspect was increasing, and this was part time work for women. During a period of economic contraction this was useful in that employers could benefit from womens' labour but not have to expend on security benefits. It is possible to discern, in Sir Keith's initiatives, the early influence of the Conservative New Right. It is argued here that a restatement of the discourses of patriarchy were required during state management of society in the 1970s.

9.2.6 What is the role of teachers, and how do their personal and political views influence pupils, through the teaching of preparation for parenthood?

It would seem that Sir Keith's address appealed to the humanitarian concerns of teachers, who saw themselves in a position to attack social problems at a fundamental level, by improving the skills of motherhood and through those, the welfare of children. The analysis of teachers' views, reported in Chapter Seven, reveals that they did not, on the whole, see mothers as biologically conditioned for child care, nor solely responsible for pockets of social deprivation to be found perpetuated in the working class. However, they did see preparation for parenthood as of benefit to the whole of society through improvement in mother-infant relationships. While they observed that schooling worked to

the disadvantage of girls, they were themselves engaged in a gender biased curriculum, because they were teaching preparation for parenthood to girls. These contradictions suggest that, while teachers did not accept in total the preparation for parenthood ideology, there would be little in their work which would counteract its ideological component. In particular at the level of the hidden curriculum it is likely that this ideology would have found support. Out of a concern for society, teachers were providing a curriculum which creates an atmosphere suggesting that something worthwhile is being done to avert deprivation. By supporting the notion of maternal deficiency, they were diverting attention away from alternative conceptualisations of the problem. They were also reaffirming the 'natural woman' discourse, intrinsic to male domination.

9.3 Reflections.

The small study undertaken more than ten years ago, found that girls did not learn any new mothering skills during their two-year child development course. That study was in the empiricist tradition; it tested an hypothesis and used statistical methods of analysis. However, the unit of measurement was the 'psychological construct' based on Kelly (1955) which revealed what girls, who were the focus of the study, were actually saying about their lives, beliefs, and expectations. They were all living in impoverished inner city areas. Their responses to the booklet (the forerunner of the '...Just Imagine'questionnaire) were intensely interesting and called into question the child development curriculum, which had been accepted by me until that time, without question. The girls who had and had not undertaken the course, knew a great deal, not

only about the needs of infants but also about the real material world in which mothering would take place. It was clear that the child-related curriculum would not contribute much to their lives or to the lives of their children. When that study was 'put to bed', the degree awarded, and employment gained, questions lingered.

In the study funded by the DHSS issues of gender and class arose but were peripheral to the main study. The research report was written after the completion of my contract. While it was clear that preparation for parenthood was gendered, and found to be saturating the curriculum, the implications of these findings were not mentioned in the report. Instead, it was recommended that courses aiming to prepare pupils for parenthood should be moved from the optional to the compulsory curriculum.

My registration for post-graduate research marked the point when it seemed essential for me to look at the questions which were mine, in my own way, without pressure from those who felt a greater ownership of the research and its outcomes. I was fortunate in having a supervisor who was happy to support a project which was cross-disciplinary, did not adopt conventional methods and theory, and which looked politically at an area then largely viewed as neutral. Progress was slow and uneven, employment commitments were such that I had no time to work on my own research for months on end, and I wasted time in blind alleys. There were moments of incredible luck: finding informed and interested friends; a chance meeting with an author of a book on ideology; and - the big breakthrough - meeting and talking with a French student of English literature who was using Foucauldian theory to explore the work of Virginia Woolf.

In what felt like an unconventional study I sought illumination, not truth. Like Ramazanoglu I had been schooled in empiricist science and the use of simple and well defined criterion for evaluation. At times I wanted to retire to the safety of conventional methods. But eventually the pieces began to fall into place. 'The pieces' included the evidence I was locating on the history, policy and curriculum of preparation for parenthood; the views of people associated with it; as well as other, less easily defined sources of information, including the resistance I often encountered due my treatment of the area as political.

Once in place, the pieces revealed preparation for parenthood to be the opposite of what it claimed to be - a curriculum for enhancing the quality of life. Preparation for parenthood emerged as part of an ideological discourse. I have located this discourse in educational policy, followed it through the curriculum and teachers' views, and found it in the hopes and needs of young women. The discourse seems to:

- focus on the essential, positive, life-giving work of women: conception, pregnancy, birth and motherhood;
- distort and denigrate this essential phenomenon;
- draw on the crucial nature of the work, and also its denigration, to validate a wide range of discriminative attitudes and practices which women meet in all their social encounters;
- draw on the essential nature of the work, on denigrating discourses, and on discriminating practices, in a way which is successful in winning the cooperation of many women in the process of their own marginalisation.

During the 1970s and early 1980s teachers and pupils involved in this study collaborated with the preparation for parenthood discourse to a great extent. In 1988 girls who were more aware, still looked to the benefits of future motherhood, while recognising and accepting associated dilemmas. The language of critique and alternative is, as yet, ineffective.

Currently there is little to suggest that women who choose to be located in the home will force a crisis of legitimation. They are committed to the welfare of people in their care, and are unlikely to leave them unattended unless excellent alternative arrangements could be made, thus negating any effect of their action. Many are fulfilled and satisfied. Were they not satisfied they would find it difficult to mobilise since, in union terms, womens' work is unorganised.

Perhaps change could be managed through operating from within current arrangements, by taking up and widening concessions made by the state in light of feminist demands, as well as by insisting on equal conditions for women, with men, in the workforce. Demographic changes offer an opportunity for women to decide what range of employment they would like to enter, what conditions they require in terms of flexible working hours and salary, and to become effective in securing them.

Education has a crucial role to play: contributing to, recognising and disseminating feminist insights; taking up and building on concessions such as the TVEI which have, even at an ideological level, a stated equal opportunities component; and working against gender-based inequality in

the personal and professional lives of teachers. This project would be enhanced if some way could be found to share the language of analysis with girls and women who have not chosen to make it their life work, and not merely the middle class, or the politically aware. This would facilitate equal and effective participation in relevant debate.

Childhood is an important and complex area for study and I do not suggest its abandonment either as a subject in schools or elsewhere. I would suggest that any curriculum with a focus on childhood should avoid uncritical reference to the stereotyped Western family and ideals in child care and parenting, indeed, should include the potential for revealing the effects of these ideals. Future child-related studies would benefit also from taking a broad perspective, observing a number of dimensions of childhood, including explorations of the influence of gender, race and class; historical and world-wide dimensions; and a dimension concerned with the marginalisation of certain groups, for example, travellers' children, school refusers, the disabled, homosexuals, and any other group stigmatised as being deviant, different or 'special'. Such a course could be group, and enquiry-based, and draw initially on the personal experiences of participants. Such a course, entitled 'Dimensions of Childhood', has been devised during a curriculum development project based in the Institute of Education, University of London (Smith 1988). It would be useful to monitor this curriculum in use, and evaluate its processes and outcomes, in relation to feminist concerns.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE 1982 STUDY: SEX, CLASS PROFILE AND LEVEL OF PREPARATION FOR PARENTHOOD IN THE 5th FORM

Group	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number (total = 60)	6	8	12	17	10	7
Sex	F	F	F	M	M	F
Expected school leaving age.	16	16/18	18	16	18	18
Ability as designated by teachers.	low/ middle	middle	middle/ high	low/ middle	middle/ high	high
Type of exam entered for.	CSE	CSE/GCE	GCE	CSE/GCE	GCE	GCE
Type of preferred occupation*	D U	D C	P	SM	P	P
Level of preparation for parenthood in the fifth form.	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Very low

*D Domestic
U Unskilled
C Clerical
P Professional
S Semi-skilled
M Manual

APPENDIX 2

CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHERS INTERVIEWED: THEIR SCHOOL, SEX, AND SUBJECT

SUBJECT	TOTAL	WOMEN	MEN	SCHOOL
P.S.E and Health ed.	3	0	3	Eastmount (School 1)
Child care	2	2	0	in Leicestershire. In
Biological subjects	2	2	0	an authority typified
English	0	0	0	by regional and metro-
Maths	0	0	0	politan service areas.
Senior staff	2	1	1	Mixed secondary.
R.E.	1	0	1	
Domestic subjects(H.E)	1	1	0	
General Science	0	0	0	
Others*	1	1	0	
	12	7	5	School total
P.S.E. and Health ed.	2	1	1	Westward Green(School 2)
Child care	1	1	0	in Lancashire. In a
Biological subjects	1	0	1	rural seaside resort
English	4	2	2	area. Mixed secondary.
Maths	0	0	0	
Senior staff	1	0	1	
R.E.	1	1	0	
Domestic subjects	2	2	0	
General science	0	0	0	
Others	2	1	1	
	14	8	6	School total
P.S.E. and Health ed.	6	5	1	Central Girls (School 3)
Child care	3	3	0	in Northamptonshire. In
Biological subjects	2	2	0	an area of traditional
English	0	0	0	industry and mining.
Maths	3	1	2	Girls' secondary.
Senior staff	0	0	0	
R.E.	1	1	0	
Domestic subjects	0	0	0	
General science	1	0	1	
Others	2	2	0	
	18	14	4	School total
P.S.E. and Health ed.	4	2	2	Northway (School 4)
Child care	2	2	1	in Knowsley. In an area
Biological subjects	1	0	1	typified by local
English	2	2	1	authority housing and
Maths	3	1	2	high unemployment.
Senior staff	1	0	1	Mixed secondary.
R.E.	1	0	1	
Domestic subjects	0	0	0	
General Science	1	0	1	
Others	1	1	0	
	16	8	8	School total
	60	37	23	Grand total

*Other subjects: needlework (1); art/design (1); history (1); chemistry (1); geography (1); careers (1).

APPENDIX 3

CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHERS INTERVIEWED: MARITAL STATUS, SEX AND SUBJECT SPECIALISM

SUBJECT	MARRIED WITH CHILDREN		MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN		UNMARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN		PARTNER-SHIP WITH CHILDREN		TOTAL
Sex	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Personal, Social and Health Education.	7	4		4					15
Child care.		5				3			8
Biological subjects.		2		2	2				6
English	1	2		1	1			1	6
Maths	2			1	2	1			6
Senior Staff	3			1					4
R.E.	1		1	1		1			4
Domestic subjects.				1		2			3
General Science.			1		1				2
Others	1	1		1		3			6
Totals	15	14	2	12	6	10	0	1	60
% male and female	12	23	3	20	10	17		2	M 38 F 62
Percent of total	48		23		27		2		100

APPENDIX 4

PERSONAL VIEWS AND AIMS FOR PREPARING PUPILS FOR PARENTHOOD

Questions guiding semi-structured interviews with teachers.

Setting the scene:
What does the idea of the family mean to you?
What would you say was the best kind of family?
What does the term 'parenthood' mean to you?
Do you associate parenthood with marriage?

The qualities of parents:
What would you say are the qualities of a good parent?
How would you describe a bad parent?

Preparation for parenthood in schools:
Can people be educated to be good parents?
Is there a need for preparaton for parenthood?
Do you think preparation for parenthood should be compulsory?
Should any (other) subject be compulsory in school?

Benefits of preparation for parenthood to particular pupils:
Would boys and girls both benefit from preparation for parenthood?
Are the same topics equally useful for children who grow up in the country and in the city?
Are the same topics useful for children in all cultural groups including minorities?
Are the same topics equally useful for members of different social classes?

Examinations:
What do you think about examinations in general?
Do you agree with examinations for preparation for parenthood?

Parental involvement:
Should parents be consulted:
a) about the content of teaching in general
b) about the content of preparation for parenthood?

Help with difficulties:
What comes to mind when you think of difficulties which might be experienced by parents of small children?
Would education for parenthood help prepare people to deal with such problems?
Are there any other ways, than through education, that parents and children could be helped when in difficulty?

Difficulties and benefits for society:
Do you see any benefit to society as a whole if people were to be prepared for parenthood?
Do you see any problems for society arising from preparation for parenthood?
(General questions on subject taught, marital status and numbers of children.)

APPENDIX 5

AREAS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM ANALYSIS OF PREPARATION FOR PARENTHOOD POLICY.

Statements guiding the analysis of teachers' views.

In support of policy:

-The 'authorised' family is a traditional and Western one.
-Parents threaten 'the family' from within.
-Preparation for parenthood would benefit all society.
-A cycle of deprivation exists.
-More research into cycles of deprivation is needed.
-Education can help erode cycles of deprivation.
-Sufficient material benefits are already provided for parents.
-The mothering role is adequately facilitated.
-Mothers are biologically conditioned for child care.
-A curriculum which prepares pupils for parenthood should be developed by teachers and taught in schools.

In opposition to policy:

-The cycle of deprivation notion is an aspect of social control.
-More material support and benefits should be made available to those parents who need them.
-More facilities designed to support the mothering role are needed.
-Parenting is made more difficult in poor economic circumstances.
-Boys and girls should equally be educated for economic independence.
-The economic opportunities of girls are limited through educational structure s.
-'Motherhood' is caught up in notions of femininity and romance.
-Confusion between 'mothering' and 'parenting' is an aspect of social control.
-Teaching about aspects of personal life should not be part of the role of the school.
-Preparation for parenthood has an ideological role.

APPENDIX 6

Just

Imagine.....

.....you are a good 5th year teacher; you teach what you think will be useful and important to people when they have left school

(1)

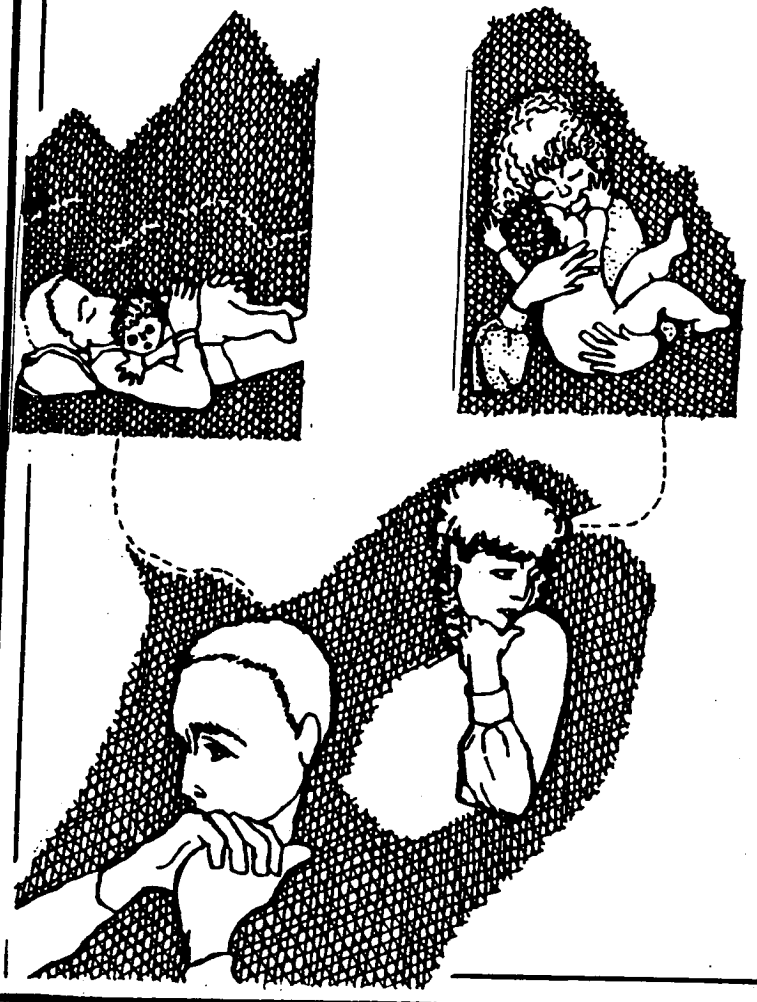
I teach my class about.....

I encourage boys to learn each of these because.....

I encourage girls to learn each of these because.....

(2)

Now you are a parent with a young child



(3)

The closest members of my family are.....

Living at home with me are.....

The next close members of my family are.....

Members of my family but not very close are.....

(4)

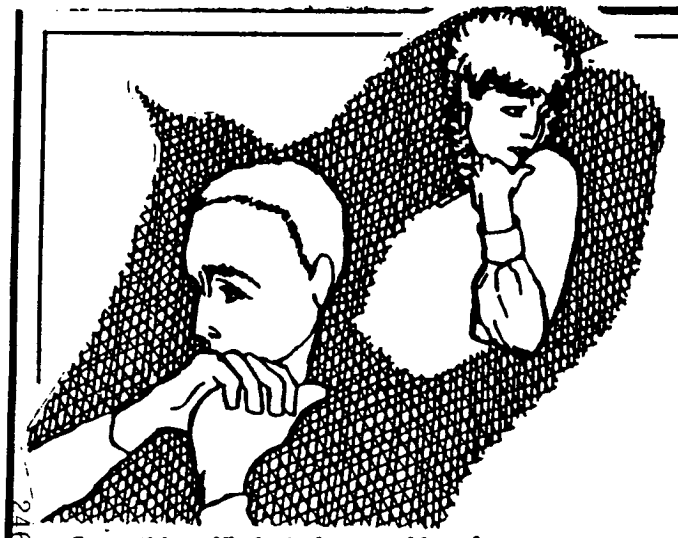
Having a child has changed my life in these ways.....

(5)

As a parent I do go out to work because.....

As a parent I do not go out to work because.....

(6)



Some things likely to be a problem for me as a parent are.....

(7)

I think I'm a good parent because.....

If I were a bad parent I would.....

(8)

We would like you to tell us about yourself as you are now

	Please write here:
1. What is your name ?	
2. Who lives at home with you? example: *Me* *Mother* *Stepfather* *Uncle* *Sister* *Sister* *Brother* *Grandmother*	
3. How many children at home are younger than you?	

(9)

	Please write here
4. How often do you babysit or look after young children? *Please tick one of the boxes*	☐ at least once a week ☐ about once or twice a month ☐ now and again ☐ never
5. At what age do you intend to leave school?	
6. Have you any plans for any further education or training? Please tell us what they are	
7. What do you hope to do when you have finished your education?	

THANK YOU

(10)

APPENDIX 7

STRUCTURE GUIDING THE DISCUSSION WITH FOURTH FORM GIRLS

Exploring media influences:
Which magazines do you read?
What kinds of film do you like (humour; adventure; westerns; romance, etc)
Are the heroines in your magazines and films like you?

Exploring hopes and expectations of marriage/partnerships:
Not everyone here thinks we should marry before having children - could we talk about this?
Do you expect to gain anything from marriage/partnership? (What?)
What is the best age for marriage/partnership
Where do our ideas about marriage/partnership come from?
Is it more important to have a boyfriend or to do well at school?
When did you first think about having a boyfriend of your own?

Exploring expectations of employment:
Are you already quite sure what job you want?
What qualifications will you need?
Will your job bring you enough money to live without help from others?
What made you decide what you want to be?
What stops you wanting to be an airline pilot; sea captain; priest?

Exploring mother-daughter continuities:
Are you growing up to be like your mothers?
What are the similarities/differences between you and your mother now?

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

ACKER J. "The Problem with Patriarchy" Sociology, Vol 23, No 2. May 1989. pp 235 - 240

ACKER S. "No-woman's-land: British Sociology of Education 1960 - 1979" Sociological Review, Vol 29, No 1. 1981. pp 77 - 104.

ACKER S. "Feminist Theory and the Study of Gender and Education" International Review of Education, Vol 33, No 4. 1987. pp 419 - 436.

AHRENS R. "Beitrag zur entwicklun des physionomie und mimikerkennens" Journal of Experimental Applied Psychology, 2. (Z.F. Exp. Angew. Psychol. 2) 1954.

AINSWORTH M.D.S. "The Development of Infant-Mother Attachment" in Caldwell B.M. and Richiuti H.N. (Eds) Review of Child Development Research, Vol 3. University of Chicago Press. 1982.

ALLIN P. & HUNT A. "Women in Official Statistics" in Whitelegg E. et al., (Eds) The Changing Experiences of Women. Oxford U. Press. 1982.

ALTHUSSER L. "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes toward an Investigation" in Althusser L Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays London, Monthly Review Press, 1971.

AMOS V. & PARMAR P. "Challenging Imperial Feminism" Feminist Review No. 17 1984. pp 3 - 19.

ANGRIST S. & ALMQUIST S. Careers and Contingencies; How College Women Juggle with Gender. N.Y. Dunellen. 1975.

ANNUAL ABSTRACT OF STATISTICS, No 24. 1988.

ARNOT M. "Male hegemony, social class and womens' education". J. of Education 164, 1. 1982. pp 64 - 89.

BACHRACH P. & BARATZ M. Power and Poverty. N.Y., OUP. 1970.

BARTHES R. Elements of Semiology. London, Cape. 1967.

BARTKY S.L. "Toward a Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness" in Vetterling-Braggen M. et al (Eds) Feminism and Philosophy. New Jersey, Littlefield Adams. 1981.

BEECHEY V. "Some notes on female wage labour in capitalist production" Capital and Class No. 3. 1977.

BEECHEY V. Unequal Work. London, Verso. 1987.

BEDFORD EXPRESS. April 13, 1988.

BELOTTI E.G. Little Girls. London, 1975.

BERNARDES J. "In search of 'The Family' - analysis of the 1981 United Kingdom Census" in Sociological Review Vol 34, No 4. 1986.

BLACKSTONE T. Preface in Whyte et al (Eds) Girl Friendly Schooling London, Methuen. 1985.

BLACKSTONE T. A Fair Start. The provision of pre-school Education. London, Allen Lane. 1971.

BLACKSTONE W. Commentaries on the laws of England, Book 1. Oxford, Clarendon. 1775. p 442.

BLAND L, BRUNSDON C, HOBSON D, WINSHIP J "Women inside and outside the relations of production" in Women Take Issue. Aspects of Womens' Subordination. Womens' Study Group, CCCS, University of Birmingham, Hutchinson. 1978.

BOWLBY J. Maternal Care and Mental Health. World Health Organisation. Geneva. 1951.

BOXER M.J. Review essay in Keohand N.O., Rosaldo M.Z., Gelpi B.C. Feminist Theory: A Critique of Ideology. Brighton, Harvester. 1982.

BREUGAL I. "Women as a reserve army of labour" in Feminist Review No 3 London 1979.

BURCHELL H. & MILLMAN V (Eds) Changing Perspectives on Gender: New Initiatives in Secondary Education. Open U. Press. 1989.

BURNISTON S, MORT F, WEEDON C, "Psychoanalysis and the cultural acquisition of sexuality and subjectivity" in Women Take Issue. Aspects of Womens' Subordination. Womens' Studies Group, CCCS, University of Birmingham, Hutchinson. 1978.

BYRNE D, WILLIAMSON B, FLETCHER B. The Poverty of Education. A Study in the Politics of Opportunity. Bath, Pitman. 1975.

BYRNE E. "Education for Equality" in Weiner G and Arnot M (Eds) Gender under Scrutiny: New Inquiries in Education. London, Hutchinson. 1987.

CARBY H.V. "White women listen! Black Feminism and the boundaries of sisterhood" in The Empire Strikes Back. Race and Racism in 70s Britain. CCCS & Hutchinson. 1982.

CHODOROW N The Reproduction of Mothering. University of California Press. 1978.

CLARRICOATES K. "The importance of being Ernest...Emma...Tom...Jane. The perception and categorisation of gender conformity and gender deviation in primary schools" in Deem R. (Ed) Schooling for Womens' Work London, RKP. 1980.

COCKBURN C. "The gendering of jobs: workplace relations and the reproduction of sex segregation" in Walby S Gender Segregation at Work Open U. Press. 1988.

CONNELLY P. "On Marxism and Feminism" in Hamilton R. & Barrett M. (Eds) The Politics of Diversity London, Verso. 1986.

COURT, S.D.M. The Court Report: Fit for the Future. HMSO 1976.

COWARD R. & ELLIS J. Language and Materialism. Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject. London RKP. 1977.

COX M.H. "The Teaching of Child Development in Secondary Schools: A Preliminary Study. Unpublished Thesis for Master's Degree. University of Nottingham, Department of Psychology. 1976.

CROWTHER G. The Crowther Report: A Report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England). HMSO. 1959.

DALY M. Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation. Boston, Beacon Press. 1973.

DAVID M. "The New Right's Road to Power" in New Left Review 128. 1981.

DAVID M. Discussion paper for the West Hill Conference on Class, Gender and RAce: January 4 - 6 1982.

DAVIN A. " 'Mind that you do as you are told': reading books for Board School Girls 1870 - 1902." Feminist Review No 3.

DHSS The Family in Society: Preparation for Parenthood. HMSO 1974a.

DHSS The Family in Society: Dimensions of Childhood. HMSO 1974b.

DHSS The First Report from the Select Committee on Violence in the Family. Violence to Children. HMSO. 1977.

DINNERSTEIN D. The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and Human Malaise. N.Y. Harpur & Row. 1977

DIXON R.A. & LERNER R.M. "A History of Systems in Developmental Psychology" in Bornstein M H and Lamb M E Developmental Psychology: An Advanced Textbook. London, Lawrence Erlbaum. 1984.

DUNN J & KENDRICK C. Siblings: Love, Envy and Understanding. Cambridge, Harvard U. Press. 1982.

DURKHEIM E. Suicide N.Y. Free Press. 1966.

EDELMAN M. Symbolic Uses of Politics. Urbana. U. of Illinois Press. 1964.

EIDUSON B T, KORNFEIN M, ZIMMERMAN I L, WEISNER T S "Comparative socialization practices in traditional & alternative families" in Lamb et al (Eds) Non-Traditional Families: Parenting and Child Development. N.J. Erlbaum. 1982.

EISENSTEIN H. Contemporary Feminist Thought. London, Unwin. 1984.

ELSHTAIN J B "Feminist Discourse and its Discontents: Language, Power and Meaning" in Keohand et al (Eds) Feminist Theory. A critique of Ideology. Brighton, Harvester. 1982.

ENGELS F. The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State. N.Y. Pathfinder. 1972.

FIRESTONE S. The Dialectics of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution. N.Y. Bantam. 1970.

FREUD S. "Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes" in The Interpretation of Dreams Vol 19. Standard Edition of the Complete Works. London, Hogarth Press. 1925.

FREUD S. A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis. N.Y. Washington State Press. 1960.

FLAX J. "The political Philosophy and the Patriarchal Unconscious: A Psychoanalytic Perspective on Epistemology and Metaphysics" in Harding S & Hintikka M.B. Discovering Reality. London, Reidal. 1983.

FOUCAULT M. The Order of Things. N.Y. Pantheon. 1970.

FOUCAULT M. The History of Sexuality, Vol 1 and Introduction. Allen Lane. 1976.

GITTINS D. The Family in Question: Changing Households and Familiar Ideologies. London, MacMillan. 1985.

GRAFTON T, MILLER H D, SMITH L, VEGODA M, WHITFIELD R, "Gender and Curriculum Choice" in Arnot M and Weiner G Gender and the Politics of Schooling. London, Hutchinson. 1987.

GRAFTON T, VEGODA M, SMITH L, WHITFIELD R, "Getting Personal. The Teacher's Dilemma" in International J. of Sociology and Social Policy Vol 2, No 3. 1982.

GIROUX H.A. Theory and Resistance in Education: A Pedagogy for the Opposition. London, Heinemann. 1983.

GRAMSCI A. Selections from the Prison Notebooks, Hoare Q & Nowell Smith G (Eds). London, Lawrence and Wishart. 1971.

HABERMAS J. Legitimation Crisis London, Heinemann. 1976.

HANDY J. A. "Psychology and the Social Context" Bulletin of the British Psychological Society, 40. 1987.

HARDING J. Switched off: the science education of girls. Schools Council Programme 3. 1983.

HARDING S. "The Instability of the Analytical Categories of Feminist Theory" in Sex and Scientific Inquiry, Harding S & O'Barr J.F. U. of Chicago Press. 1987.

HOGENWEG-DE HAART H.P. "Characteristics of Social Science Information: a selective review of the literature; Part 2." Social Science Information Studies. Vol 4. 1984.

HOLLWAY W. "Gender Differences and the Production of Subjectivity" in Henriques J et al (Eds) Changing the Subject. London, Methuen. 1984.

HUTTER B & WILLIAMS G Controlling Women: the Normal and the Deviant. London, Croom Helm. 1980.

JANEWAY E. Man's World, Woman's Place: A Study in Social Mythology. N.Y. Dell. 1971.

KAGAN F. KEARSLEY R.B. ZELAZO P.R. Infancy. Its Place in Human Development. Cambridge, Harvard U. Press. 1978.

KAMERMAN S. "Managing Work and Family Life: A comparative family overview" in Moss P. and Fonda N (Eds) Work and the Family. Temple Smith. 1980.

KELLNER D. "Ideology, Marxism and Advanced Capitalism" in Socialist Review 42. 1978.

KELLY A, WHYTE J, SMITH B, Final Report of the GIST Project Department of Sociology, U. of Manchester, 1984.

KELLY A. "The Construction of Masculine Science" in British J. Sociology of Education, Vol 6, No 2. 1985.

KELLY G. The Psychology of Personal Constructs. N.Y. Norton, 1955.

KESSLER S, ASHENDEN D, CONNELL B, DOWSETT G. "Gender Relations in Secondary Schooling" in Arnot M & Weiner G (Eds) Gender and the Politics of Schooling London, Hutchinson. 1987.

KENNELL J, VOOS D, KLAUS M. "Parent-Infant Bonding" in Helfer R.E. & Kempe C.H. Child Abuse and Neglect. The Family and the Community. Ballinger. 1976.

KLEIN H.M. "Marxism, Psychoanalysis and Mother Nature" Feminist Studies Vol 15, No 2. 1989.

KOMEROVSKY M & WALLER W. "Studies of the Family" in American J. of Sociology, Vol 50, No 6. 1945.

JOSEPH Sir Keith "The Cycle of Deprivation" Address given to the Pre-School Playgroups Association Conference. June 29-30 1972.

LACAN J Escrits: A Selection. London, Tavistock. 1977.

LANGE L "Woman is not a rational animal: on Aristotle's biology of reproduction" in Harding S and Hintikka M.B. (Eds) Discovering Reality. London, Reidal. 1983.

LARRAIN J. The Concept of Ideology. London, Hutchinson. 1979.

LICHT B.G. & DWECK C.S. "Sex differences in achievement orientations" in Weiner G & Arnot M (Eds) Gender and the Politics of Schooling. London, Hutchinson. 1989.

MACEY D. Lacan in Contexts. London, Verso. 1988.

MACKINTOSH C.A. HIMMELWEIT S, TAYLOR B "Women and Unemployment" Discussion paper for 'What is a Socialist Feminist?' Conference, London 1977.

MACKINNON C.A. "Feminism, Marxism, Method and the State: An Agenda for Theory". in Keohane et al (Eds) Feminist Theory. A Critique of Ideology Brighton, Harvester. 1982.

MACKLIN E.D. "Non-Traditional Family Forms: A Decade of Research" in J. of Marriage and the Family. Vol 42, No 4. 1980.

MARX K. Capital. Vols 1 and 111. N.Y. International Publishers. 1967.

MARX K. Value: Studies by Karl Marx. Dragstedt A. (Ed). N.Y.Publications. 1976.

MARX K. & ENGELS F. The German Ideology. London, Lawrence & Wishart. 1970.

MARX K. & ENGELS F. Collected Works. Moscow, Progress Publishers. 1975.

MCROBBIE A. "Working Class Girls and the Culture of Femininity" in Womens' Study Group Women Take Issue. CCCS London, Hutchinson. 1978.

MCROBBIE A. "The Politics of Feminist Research: Between Talk, TExt and Action." Feminist Review. 12. 1982. pp 46 - 57.

MCWHIRTER L & PARKES J. "Cohort Evidence on the Transition from School to Work: A Focus on Gender" Paper presented to the Annual Conference of British Psychological Society, Developmental Psychology Section. York, September 1987.

MIDDLETON S. "The Sociology of Women's Education as a Field of Academic Study" in Weiner G & Arnot M (Eds) Gender and the Politics of Schooling, London, Hutchinson. 1987.

MILLETT K. Sexual Politics. N.Y., Doubleday. 1970.

MINSON J. "Strategies for a Socialist? Foucault's Conception of Power". Economy and Society, Vol 9, No 1. 1980.

MITCHELL J. Woman's Estate. Penguin. 1971.

MITCHELL J. Psychoanalysis and Feminism. Pelican. 1975.

MOUFFE C. "Democracy and the New Right" Politics and Power. London, RKP. 1981.

NEWSOM J. Education for Girls. Faber & Faber. 1948.

THE NEWSOM REPORT: A Report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England), Half Our Future. HMSO. 1963.

NEWSON J & NEWSON E "Cultural aspects of child-rearing in the English speaking world" in Richards M P M The Integration of a Child into the Social World C U P. 1974.

THE NORWOOD REPORT. Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools. HMSO. 1943.

OAKLEY, A. The Sociology of Housework. Martin Robertson. London. 1974.

OAKLEY A "Normal Motherhood: An Exercise in Self-Control? in Hutter B and Williams G (Eds) Controlling Women: The Normal and the Deviant. Oxford, Croom Helm. 1980.

O'DONAVAN K. "The Male Appendage - Legal Definitions of Women" in Burman S (Ed) Fit Work for Women London, Croom Helm. 1979.

OFFICE OF POPULATION CENSUS STUDIES General Household Survey for 1985 Series GHS No 15, HMSO 1988.

ORR P. "Sex bias in schools: national perspectives" in Whyte et al Girl Friendly Schooling. London, Methuen.1985.

ORTNER S.B. "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture" in Rosaldo M Z and Lampere L (Eds) Women, Culture & Society Stanford. S U P. 1974.

PILLING D & KELLMER PRINGLE M Controversial Issues in Child Development. National Children's Bureau, London 1978.

PRATT J. "The Attitudes of Teachers" in Whyte et al (Eds) Girl Friendly Schooling. London, Methuen. 1985.

RAMAZANOGLU C "Improving on Sociology: The Problems of TAking a Feminist Standpoint" in Sociology Vol 23 No 3 1989. pp 427 - 442.

RAPPAPORT D "The Structure of Psychoanalytic Theory" in Psychological Issues Monograph 6, Vol 2 No 2. N.Y. International Universities Press. 1960.

RICH A. Of Women Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution. N.Y. Norton. 1976.

RICHARDS J.R. The Sceptical Feminist. London, RKP 1980.

RILEY D. War in the Nursery. Theories of the Child & Mother. London, Virago. 1983.

ROBINSON, O. "The changing labour market: growth of part-time employment and labour market segmentation in Britain." in Walby S (Ed) Gender Segregation at Work. Open U. Press. 1988.

ROGERS R. Crowther to Warnock: How Fourteen Reports Tried to Change Children's Lives. London, Heinemann. 1980.

ROGERS S M & SHOEMAKER E F Communications of Innovations: A Cross Cultural Approach. N.Y. Free Press. 1972.

ROSALDO M "Women, culture and society: a theoretical overview" Women, Culture & Society in Rosaldo M & Lampere L (Eds) Stanford U. Press. 1974.

RUBIN G. "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex" in Reiter R R Toward an Anthology of Women N.Y., Monthly Review Press. 1975.

SAUSSURE F. Cours de Linguistique Generale. 1916.

SCARR S & DUNN J. Mothercare and Othercare: The child-care Dilemma for Women & Children. Penguin. 1978.

SCHEFFLER I Beyond the Letter. A Philosophical Inquiry into Ambiguity, Vagueness and Metaphor in Language. London RKP 1979.

SCOLNICK A & SKOLNICK J H "Domestic Relations and Social Change" in Intimacy, Family and Society. Boston, Little Brown. 1974.

SCOTT J. W. "Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference: or, the Uses of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism" Feminist Studies 14, No 1. 1988. pp 33 - 50.

SEBESTYEN A. "Tendencies in the Movement: then and now" Organising Collective (Eds) Feminist Practice: Notes from the Tenth Year. London, Theory Press. 1979.

SEMADINI A. "Play and Learning During the Early Years of Childhood". Unpublished Thesis for M Sc, University of London, 1985.

SHERIDAN A. Michel Foucault: The Will to Truth. London, Tavistock. 1980.

SHULMAN A K "Sex and Power: Sexual Bases of Radical Feminism" Signs 5 No 4. Summer 1980. pp 590 - 604.

SMART C. "Law and the Control of Women's Sexuality: the Case of the 1950s" in Hutter B & Williams G Controlling Women: the Normal and the Deviant. London, Croom Helm. 1980.

SMITH D.E. "A sociology for women" in Sherman J & Beck E T (Eds) The Prism of Sex Madison, U. of Wisconsin Press. 1979. pp 135 - 187.

SMITH L. "The Attitudes of Adolescents to Child Development: Does Education make a Difference? A Personal Construct Study of the Issue" Unpublished Thesis for M Sc, University of London 1978.

SMITH L. Dimensions of Childhood. A Handbook for Social Education at Sixteen-Plus. London, Health Education Authority and UNICEF. 1988.

SMITH L. VEGODA M. GRAFTON T. WHITFIELD R. "School-based Preparation for Parenthood and the Attitudes of Pupils to Adult Life, the Family and Parenthood". Unpublished paper presented to the 10th International congress of the International Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions, July 25-30. Dublin. 1082.

SMITH M. "Bank is happy holding the baby" Financial Times 20.8.88.

STANLEY L & WISE S Breaking Out: Feminist Consciousness and Feminist Research. London, RKP 1983.

SYDIE R.A. Natural Women, Cultured Men. A Feminist Perspective on Sociological Theory. Open U. Press. 1987.

ten TUSSCHER T "Patriarchy, capitalism and the New Right" in Evans J et al Feminism and Political Theory London, Sage. 1986.

TIZARD B. Early Childhood Education: A Review and Discussion of Research in Britain. Social Science Research Council. 1974.

TREIMAN D S & HARTMANN H I (Eds) Women, Work and Wages: Equal Pay for Jobs of Equal Value. Committee on Occupation and Analysis. Assembly of Behavioural Sciences. National Research Council. Washington DC. National Academy Press. 1981.

WADSWORTH M E J. Roots of Delinquency: Infancy, Adolescence and Crime. Oxford, Robertson. 1979.

WALBY S. Gender Segregation at Work. Open U. Press. 1988.

WALBY S "Theorising Patriarchy" Sociology Vol 23, No 2. May 1989.

WALKERDINE V. "Developmental psychology and the child-centred pedagogy" in Henriques et al Changing the subject: Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity. London, Methuen. 1984.

WALKERDINE V. "Post-Structuralist Theory and Everyday Social Practices: the family and the school" in Wilkinson S (Ed) Feminist Social Psychology. Open U. Press. 1986.

WALLACE G "Paradox and Policy" Paper presented at the Middle School Research Group Conference, Marylands College, Woburn, April 1980.

WATERS M "Patriarchy and Viriarchy: an Exploration and Reconstruction of Concepts of Masculine Domination". Sociology Vol 23 No 2.1989.

WEEKS J Family Studies - Information Needs and Resources; the Report of the Review Panel on Family Studies. Library and Information Research Report 43, British Library Research and Development Dept., Boston Spa. 1986.

WEINER G. "Feminism, Equal opportunities and Vocationalism: The Changing Context" in Burchell H & Millman V Changing Perspectives on Gender. New Initiatives in Secondary Education. Open U. Press. 1989.

WILSON E. Women and the Welfare State. London, Tavistock. 1977.

WOLPE A M "Education and the sexual division of labour" in Khun A & Wolpe A M (Eds) Feminism & Materialism. London 1978.

WOLPE A M Some Processes in Sexist Education. Women's Research Resources Centre, London, 1977.

WOODHEAD M An Experiment in Nursery Education. NFER 1976.

WOODHEAD M. "Pre-School Education Has Long Term Effects: But Can They Be Generalised?" Oxford Review of Education. Vol 2 No 2. 1985.

YOUNG M F D "Curriculum and Democracy: Some Lessons from a Critique of the 'New Sociology of Education'". Paper given to the American Educational Research Association Conference, New Orleans, April 5 - 9. 1988.