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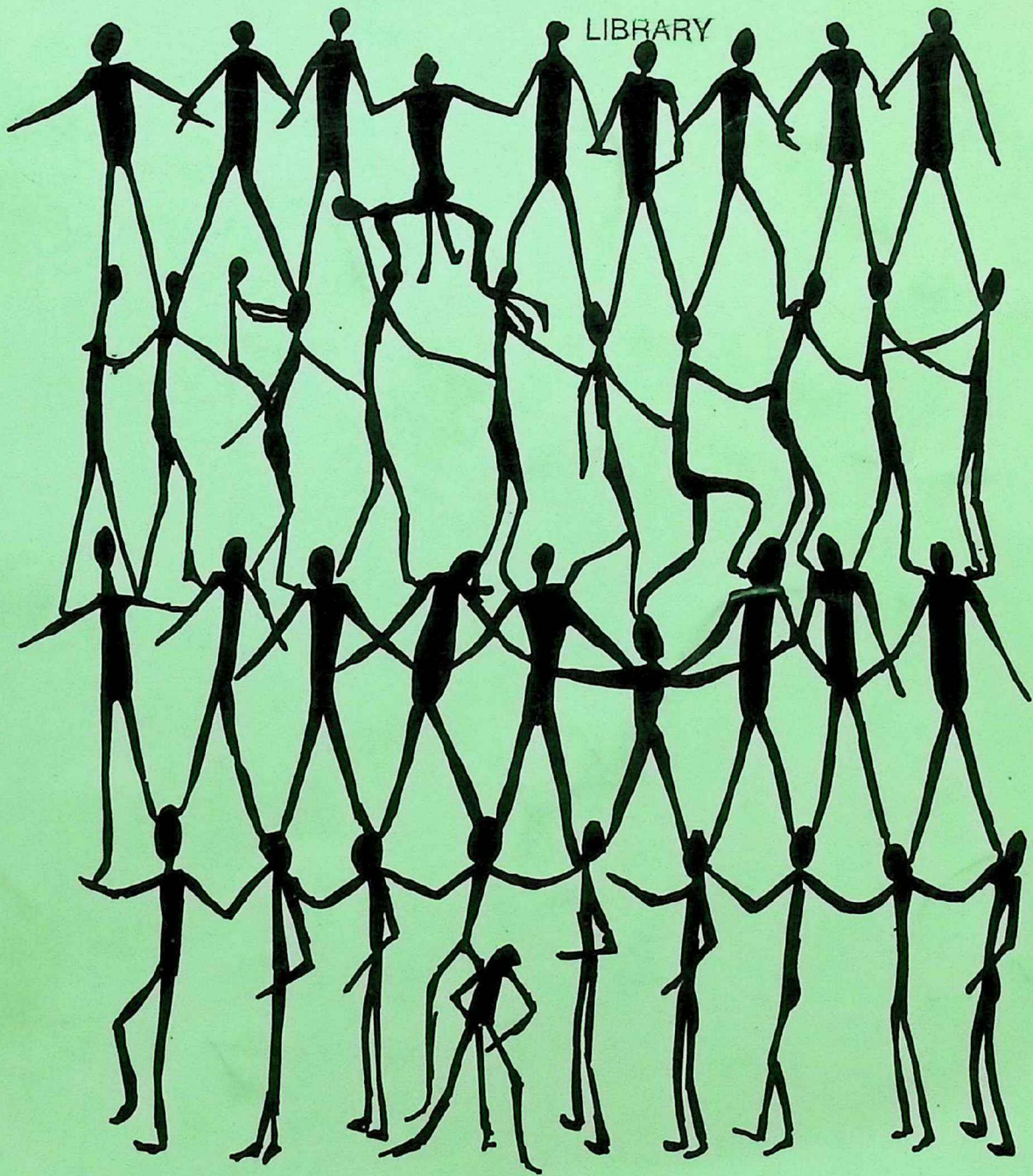
Serials

SOCIOLOGY

Objective: to issue a refereed journal to assist interest and debate in the clarification and development of theoretical analysis and research in sociology, though not exclusive concern with that field.

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL NOTE

This is the first issue of what we hope will be a useful and informative journal, with a major contribution to make to the development of the sociological literature in New Zealand.

The editors would like to take this opportunity to thank those who subscribed in advance for their vote of confidence in the enterprise. We would also like to thank Tessa Brown for the cover design, as well as the Editorial Board for their support.

We take this opportunity to invite your participation by:

(a) considering us as an outlet for your work;

(b) putting your name foreward as being willing to act as referee for papers submitted to us; and

(c) putting your name foreward as being willing to review books for us.

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Dick Harker   Chris Wilkes

The State of New Zealand Sociology:
some preliminary observations

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INTRODUCTION

This paper attempts to extend the beginnings of a systematic and empirically-based picture of the development of sociology in New Zealand, using a cross-disciplinary frame of reference. This paper is intended not only as a reflexive analysis of our own situation, but also as a basis for discussion and action. However, we have some ambivalence about this study as a contribution to the somewhat alarming build-up of the 'sociology of New Zealand sociology' (see references in Robb and Crothers, 1985) — or as Franklin has more acidly termed it, the New Zealand penchant for a 'sociology of **no** sociology!' (Franklin, 1978)

We start with an updating and reworking of material originally studied for the doctoral research of the senior author on the social organisation of social research in New Zealand (Crothers, 1979) and also to update and extend material more directly focused on sociology in New Zealand written with Professor Robb (Robb and Crothers, 1985).

We attempt to begin to answer three general questions about the 'state of the art' of New Zealand sociology:
— what is its current knowledge-base?
— what is its current person-power?
— what is its current share of research resources?

Answers to these questions will be partly historical, and partly presented in comparison with other social science disciplines in New Zealand. However, international comparisons are not attempted. The study concludes with some general reflections.

The analysis is broadly organised around a conception of social sciences as involving a 'knowledge-production system' (Crothers, 1979). thus, 'the product' — contributions to the stock of social knowledge — is seen as the output, from a complex system of social research structures and resources, which are at least partially dedicated to this purpose, and influenced by a wider societal environment.

As in any 'production system', the 'product' can be explained to a considerable degree by the social organisation of the 'production system', and the wider 'social environment' within which it is set. In describing social research output as a product, it is important to conceptualize its key characteristics — the total volume, physical form, substantive content, theoretical orientation, empirical base, degree of policy-relevance and the political/moral implications that it carries. But, it is not enough to merely measure different aspects of the social research output, but to try also to grasp conceptually some of the major axes which bind together particular types of the social research output: the paradigms within which each is embedded (if these can be clearly identified) or the extent to which each is orientated towards building up a 'local' or 'cosmopolitan' stock of knowledge.

The quantity and type of social knowledge output is affected by the internal social organisation of the production system — the units into which it is divided, the internal relations within these, and the relations between different units. Again, this process requires examination of a range of details about the size of units, resources available to them, and characteristics of the staff peopling the units. As well as these 'surface' features, there should also be consideration of the deep structure of its organisation, such as social relations of an exploitative nature.

The wider social environment has a wide range of influences in the operation of any social knowledge production system. It provides a structure of opportunities and constraints in the carrying out of any social research, especially in the providing or withholding of resources (which might include not just finance, but also accessibility to research-sites, provision of official state social bookkeeping data, publishing outlets, and legal constraints of libel). The wider social environment also includes the users of social research output; for example the extent to which policy-makers, intellectuals or other audiences draw on social research material. It may well be that something of an 'exchange' relationship between the 'social research system' and the wider environment needs also to be examined at deeper levels: for example, social research work may well be seen to be but a manifestation of particular ideological frameworks, or the functional role of much social research in legitimating the status quo might be recognised.

Such a theoretical task of understanding the development and limitations of a body of social knowledge of a society is immense, although useful theoretical resources for this task can be derived from the sociology of knowledge (e.g. Habermas, 1972); the sociology of sociology (e.g. Gouldner, 1970; Barnes, 1982) and the sociology of science (e.g. Crane, 1972; Rose and Rose, 1976). However, it is not the task at hand to review this material. Having identified the range of theoretical material that might be drawn upon in analyzing the New Zealand situation, we now turn to the task of building a more descriptive account of sociology in New Zealand.

THE SOCIOLOGICAL PRODUCT

The results of sociological thinking and research can take a variety of forms — books, articles, other scholarly published material, research reports, theses, other printed forms of diffusion, presentations, consultations, speeches, talks etc. Part of this product is delivered within the confines of universities or related institutions and is concerned with teaching. A description of the **teaching** production of Sociology in New Zealand is reasonably approximated by the teaching programmes outlined in university calendars and departmental handbooks, and has been commented on in more depth circa 1970 (Timms and Zubrzycki, 1971) and circa 1983 (Crothers, 1985). It will not, then, be commented on, although teaching material is one of the bases on which research may be developed.

The non-teaching ('research') production is rather more difficult to track down. In principle, it should be possible to identify the population of New Zealand sociologists, assemble their lists of publications and other activities, and use this to describe the stock of social knowledge produced by New Zealand sociologists. However, in practise, this would be a rather more difficult task. Moreover, the stock of (sociological) social knowledge on New Zealand society may bear only a limited relation to that produced by New Zealand sociologists (inasmuch as New Zealand sociologists produce **other** than social knowledge on New Zealand, while non-New Zealand and/or non-sociologists may produce New Zealand social knowledge). In terms of the diagram below (Figure 1) this paper is concerned with cells 1 and 2 rather than 1 and 3 (although it will not prove easy to separate these out neatly).

Figure 1: Production and Producer Combinations

	Product	
Producer	New Zealand Social knowledge	non-New Zealand social knowledge
New Zealand Sociologists	1	3 ·
non-New Zealand and/or non Sociologists	2	4

This partial and preliminary study of the stock of New Zealand sociological knowledge is concerned: (1) to measure its various characteristics — size, type, subject-matter, empirical base etc; and (2) to trace changes over time. A third task: to analyse internal structure (degree of inter-connectivity etc., preferably using the standard tools deployed by citations analysts, (see Edge, 1979) is not attempted here.

Unfortunately, this portion of the study departs from the multiple disciplinary coverage of the remainder of this article, by concentrating only on sociology. This limitation is because of the practical difficulties in tracking the content of the production of those from other disciplines (however, see Crothers, 1979 for Education and Geography, and Crothers, 1975, for Political Science).

The beginning for this study is the New Zealand material included in **Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology** over the period 1965-1985 — a period of 20 years. This should be a fairly obvious starting point for this study, since the journal is the official publication of the Sociological Association of Australia and New Zealand and has been the sole scholarly journal outlet devoted to local sociological material over the last two decades. (The advent of **New Zealand Sociology** in 1986 will be the first main extension of local, and purely sociological publishing opportunities.)

This study is a byproduct of a project, carried out under the now defunct PEP employment scheme by Chris Gribben, to prepare a computerised bibliographic data-base of backdated sociological material for inclusion in SOSRIS.

The volumes have been divided into four periods (five year periods apart from the first) — 1965-70, 1971-75, 1976-80, 1981-85. Material covered in the study includes all articles, comments, communications and research notes either **on** New Zealand or written by someone domiciled in New Zealand. Information collated includes: —

— length of article (short — up to 3 pages, medium — 4 to 9 pages, and long — 10 pages or longer);
— the institution(s) of the author(s);
— the disciplinary background(s) of the author(s);
— the subject-matter covered;
— the empirical research base (if any) or type of article content.

(See Appendix for detail about coding decisions).

Over the two decades some **97** items with a New Zealand connection were published in **Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology**. This volume of publication might be usefully compared to an estimate of the number of scoiologists in New Zealand universities — some 500 person-years (see subsequent section). After a slow start in the first half-decade (1966-70), New Zealand publications peaked in the 1976-80 period.

Approximately one-third of the items fell into each of the short, medium or long categories. The proportions have shifted markedly over the four time-periods. This can be explained partly by an apparent trend in the internal development of New Zealand (and Australian) Sociology, partly by the changing publication policy of the **Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology**, and perhaps most importantly by a complex dynamic interplay between the two. In 1972 a highly visible change in editorial policy replaced a laisse-faire approach with a strongly interventionist approach in which articles on present symposium issues were actively solicited. This clearly had a marked effect on the number of items actually published, and it seems that once this break-through was achieved, a relatively high level of publication was then established. (This effect applies, too, to Australian contributions although this is not investigated here). However, within the higher production period, there has been a marked shift in the 'size' of the contributions. Alongside the increasing size of contributions has been a gradual relaxation in the publication policy of the **Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology** as successive editors have used less interventionist approaches.[1]

Examination of the disciplinary background of authors reveals a surprising finding: a bare majority of items are authored by members of sociology departments. Further, the proportion is lower in the more recent periods. The departmental backgrounds of other contributors include:-

— Education
— Politics
— Geography
— Psychology
— Economics
— Medical Science

The institutional background of authors falls into 3 broad groupings by level of contribution:-

— high (Victoria)
— moderate (Auckland and Canterbury)
— low (Waikato, Massey and Otago).

However, these figures do not necessarily reflect the contributions of the Sociology Depoartments in these institutions. Several universities have contributed at a reasonably consistent rate over time, the divergences from stability are Auckland (with an increasing output) and Victoria (with a marked decrease).

Almost two/thirds of items have some empirical base, with some considerable, but declining, use of 'survey' work, but also a wide range of census, 'other official statistics' and other data (mainly assembled for a particular project), but very few participant observation studies.

Again, in terms of subject-matter, there is much variety — but a concentration on several fairly 'standard' subject-areas. More detailed examination is needed in order to reveal any pattern.

Beyond the local material in the **Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology**, there is a scatter of New Zealand material published in other journal publications — in Nexus, **American Journal of Sociology**, **British Journal of Sociology**, and a few other British or North American journals. Few New Zealand sociologists

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1   Sifting out the causal effect of the 'natural' development trajectory of Australasian Sociology, from the causal effect of publication policy is cleary difficult: perhaps it is enough to suggest that each mirrored the other, and to signal the topic for further investigation.

Table 1: New Zealand-related Items in **Australia** and **New Zealand Journal of Sociology, 1965-1985.**

	1965-70	1971-75	1976-80	1981-85	Total
Number of Items	4	26	43	24	97
Length of Items					
Short	25%	61%	40%	9%	37%
Medium	25%	23%	47%	39%	38%
Long	50%	15%	12%	52%	25%
University/Location of Author(s) (1)					
Auckland	25%	11%	15%	32%	18%
Waikato	0	15%	2%	5%	6%
Massey	0	7%		5%	6%
Victoria	25%	26%	37%	14%	28%
Canterbury	50%	15%	20%	18%	19%
Otago	0	4%	5%	9%	5%
Other N.Z.	0	15%	5%	9%	9%
Outside N.Z.	0	27%	10%	25%	8%
Discipline of Author(s) (1)					
Sociology	100%	62%	49%	42%	51%
Other	0%	38%	51%	58%	49%
Data Base of Items					
'Comment'	0	38%	25%	24%	27%
Theoretical	0	12%	8%	10%	9%
'Survey'	75%	19%	20%	19%	22%
Census	25%	7%	10%	14%	11⅛
Other Statistics	0	12%	20%	5%	13%
Participant Observation	0	7%	3%	5%	4%
Other	0	4%	15%	24%	13%
Subject Areas of Items (2)					
'Theory'	0	7%	15%	5%	9%
Social Class	75%	7%	8%	5%	9%
Urban	50%	14%	18%	9%	15%
Deviance	0	4%	15%	14%	11%
Minority groups	0	4%	15%	14%	11%
Industrial	0	4	3%	18%	5%
Educational	0	14%	8%	9%	8%
Attitudes	0	4%	5%	18%	7%
Sociology itself	0	21%	3%	5%	8%
Other	25%	25%	13%	5%	15%

Notes: (1) May be more than number of items because of multiple authorship.
   (2) Some items are counted in more than one category.

   Rounding errors may apply. First Period is 6 years; remainder, 5 year periods.

appear to write for other New Zealand Social Science Journals, with the exception of **The NZ Population Review**, **Sites** and now the **Womens Studies Journal**. The size of this somewhat elusive literature is probably no more than three dozen items over this period.

However, there has also been a small stable of New Zealand Sociology **books**, in particular many edited collections. For example, the 1985 **New Zealand Official Yearbook** lists in its publications section, especially under 'Social Science and Public Administration' the following books:-

Ageing New Zealanders R.A. Barker et.al. (eds.) Department of Health, 1982.

The Smith Women R. Barrington and A. Gray, Reed, 1981.

Rich and Poor in New Zealand D. Bedggood, Allen and Unwin, 1980.

Health and Health Care in New Zealand P. Davis, Longman Paul, 1981.

Social Policy and the Welfare State in New Zealand B. Easton, Allen and Unwin, 1980.

Families in New Zealand Society P. Koopman-Boyden (ed.) Methuen, 1978.

The Jones Men A. Gray, Reed, 1983.

Shades of Deviance M. Hill, et.al. (eds.), Dunmore Press.

Issues in Equity Judith Davey and P. Koopman-Boyden, New Zealand Planning Council, 1983.

The Other New Zealanders D. McGill, Mallinson Rendel, 1982.

The Fixed and the Fickle Hans Mol, Pilgrims Southern Press, 1982.

Who Makes Social Policy? New Zealand Planning Council, 1982.

New Zealand Population: Patterns of Change New Zealand Planning Council, 1984.

New Zealand, Sociological Perspectives P. Spoonley et.al., Dunmore, 1982.

Johnsonville D. Pearson, Allen and Unwin, 1980.

Eclipse of Equality D. Pearson and D. Thorns, Allen and Unwin, 1983.

People Like Us Anthony Hass et.al., Asia Pacific Books, 1982.

Divorce in New Zealand R. Phillips, Auckland and Oxford University Presses, 1982.

The Population of New Zealand R.J.W. Neville and J. O'Neill, Longman Paul, 1979.

Religion in New Zealand Society B. Colless and Peter Donovan, Dunmore, 1980.

Toil and Trouble B. Roth and J. Hammond, Methuen, 1981.

Trade Unions in New Zealand B. Roth, Reed, 1974.

Social Welfare and New Zealand Society A.D. Trlin (ed.), Methuen, 1977.

Women in New Zealand Society P. Bunkle and B. Hughes (eds.), Allen and Unwin, 1980.

The Family and the School in New Zealand Society P. Ramsay, Pitman, 1975.

The Maori Population of New Zealand D. Pool, Auckland University Press, 1977.

More extensive listing from similar library sources might more closely round off this attempt to describe major sociological contributions. It would certainly need to include Forster's **Social Process in New Zealand**, Webb and Collette's **New Zealand Society**, Trlin and Thompson's **Contemporary New Zealand**, Pitt's **Social Class in New Zealand**, and Wilkes and Shirley's **In the Public Interest**. Beyond this a more exhaustive cataloguing would need to search out technical reports (all New Zealand Sociology departments have buried many of their empirical studies in departmental series or ad hoc reports), theses (which may be in fact an under-utilised cognitive backbone for New Zealand Sociology), a wide variety of important applied social research reports from Goverment Departments and an even more fugitive category of New Zealand Sociological literature — conference papers. (New Zealand Sociology seems able to generate enough papers at many annual

conferences to equal the published material for at least a half-decade, yet few of these papers are subsequently published). It would be useful to extend the analysis conducted on **Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology** items to these other items, however this has not yet been attempted. A qualitative content analysis of the chapters of the Spoonley et.al. reader and its precursors might tell us very much about the content of New Zealand Sociology.

Several points about the New Zealand social knowledge literature can be hazarded on the basis of the study to date:

— the size of the published literature is fairly small;
— the literature is very loosely knit (apart from occasional bursts of comment and counter-comment) and there is little evidence of cumulation;
— the literature is only tangentially based on empirical studies;
— the literature is often preoccupied with rehearsing overseas 'theory' and only generally concerned to advance locally-sensitive versions of theory;
— many empirical studies are either small-scale and/or in response to policy needs, but in either case underanalyzed and inadequately integrated into the wider New Zealand literature;
— the New Zealand official bookkeeping apparatus has seldom been drawn on for sociological purposes;
— the mounting of major theoretically-attuned but thorough empirical studies seems rare;
— many useful sociological contributions lie interred within theses, conference papers, technical reports etc.

THE PERSONNEL OF NEW ZEALAND ACADEMIC SOCIOLOGY

The above description of the social research product of New Zealand sociology raises the question of attempting to describe the characteristics of those who produced the output. New Zealand sociologists are to be found in several different settings:-
— University departments of Sociology;
— Other University departments, especially other social science disciplines;
— Social Research Units, especially in Government departments;
— Other intellectual and general occupations.
The extent of active involvement in the development and diffusion of New Zealand sociology will differ amongst those in each of these categories, and more generally between these categories. There are three main ways of tracing persons with some involvement and interest in sociology:
— University Calendars, or other lists of personnel — the New Zealand Sociological Association and the Sociological Association of Australia and New Zealand (NZSA/SAANZ);
— Membership lists of the professional associations;
— Subsequent careers of Sociology graduates.

The first part of this section reports a study of academic sociologists drawn from University Calendars. This academic focus is not to denigrate the importance of 'applied sociologists' (c.f. Couchman, 1984, Tait, et.al., 1981), whose contribution needs also to be examined. Although some phantoms haunt the lists of staff published in University calendars, in general they are a markedly accurate official listing of University teaching staff in the social sciences, together with some of their key characteristics. The core information provided in the 1985 Calendars is generally correct as at November, 1984 when they are published, and comprises department, rank, name, degrees and other 'letters', and for some universities, date of first appointment. From name, the gender can usually be determined, since there is a practise to publish the first names of at least the female staff (there is a small degree of error in guessing gender from first name). From degrees,

it is possible to describe: the levels of degree obtained, the countries in which the degrees were obtained (and knowing the degree-granting institution perhaps even allows some estimate of the 'calibre' of the granting university, as well as estimating the degree of 'institutional incest' — the hiring by a university of its own graduates). It is also a slightly precarious base for estimating the 'nationality' of social scientists, and the extent to which they are more influenced by North American, British, or other sources.

Different University Calendars supply various supplementary items that have some use in building up a comparative picture of sociology as a discipline — these include information on departmental headships, technical and teaching support staff (including junior/assistant lecturers), vacant appointments, and publications (see Table 2).

Table 2: Availability of Information in University Calendars (1985)

Item of Information	Auckland	Waikato	Massey	Victoria	Canterbury	Lincoln	Otago
Name	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Rank	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Department	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Degrees	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Gender (First names)	x	x	x	x	—	x	x
Headship/not	x	*1	x	x	x	—	x
Technicians	—	x	—	x	x	x	x
Junior Lecturers	—	x	x	x	—	x	x
Year of appointment	x	—	x	—	—	x	x
On leave/not	—	x	—	—	—	—	—
Publications	*2	—	x	—	x	x	x

Notes: *1 Only marked when Professor not Head of Department Key: x   Information available
       *2 Research report separately published   —   Information unavailable

The relevant information was collated for the classic nine social science disciplines — anthropology, economics, education, geography, history, management/business studies, political studies, psychology and sociology — together with minor social sciences areas — Maori studies, nursing studies, social work, town planning, agricultural economics, criminology etc. Farm management is excluded. This range of disciplines is quite traditional, but has the deficiency of including those various biological/physical scientists who inhabit departments of Geography and Psychology in particular (and to a lesser extent Anthropology, and Education) while excluding those various social scientists who lurk in non social science university departments, such as Community Health, Psychiatry and even Italian. Unfortunately, it is difficult — since they are not easily identifiable — to move such social scientists in, or such physical scientists out. Another difficulty is that

some 'humanists' may be unwillingly snared in this categorization 'social science', and some management/business studies staff will not be social scientists.

The following tables and commentary compare the major disciplines — in terms of university location, rank, gender, qualifications, indigeneity, direction of influence, period of appointment, publications and ancillary staff. Other tables have been produced to examine the relationships between several of these variables and in order to 'explain' some of the differences between disciplines, but the tables are not reproduced here.

In examining the cross-discplinary tables several explanatory lines of analysis will be invoked. One broad line of interpretation involves the relationship between a discipline and the 'institutional area' it studies. Several disciplines are tied more closely to the study of a particular 'institutional area' — economics ('the economy'), education ('the education system') management studies ('business') and political studies ('the polity') which may therefore tend to give them a more 'applied' flavour.

However, while this may have some implications for the mode of knowledge-acquisition in each discipline, it is not entirely obvious what the implications are for the 'demography' of the university teachers of that discipline. It seems possible to us that there are two quite divergent patterns, which depend on the relationship between the prestige of the 'institutional area' as opposed to the cognate 'academic' role. Where working in the 'institutional area' is more prestigious, the discipline may be able to attract only the active young en route to fame and fortune or the laggards who have retired, beaten from the fray. In this non-competitive situation, underqualification may be rife. Alternatively, where academia is more prestiguous compared to the 'institutional area' many academics will have served an apprenticeship in the 'institution area' and will be able to fight their way into a more comforting niche only with the advantage of high qualifications.

It may be that some disciplines are more theoretically salient than others, or that they differ in terms of extent of cognitive consensus. Some, indeed, seem to be loosely-connected coalitions of sub-disciplines rather than centrally-united disciplines. It is along lines such as these that sociologists of science might expect to find patterns between disciplines (c.f. Merton and Zuckerman, 1972; Storer, 1972; Price, 1970; Lipset and Ladd, 1975).

Another cleavage may involve the relationship between professional groups and disciplines. Geography and history are clearly the training ground for cadres of schoolteachers, while clinical psychologists, vocational guidance staff and some teachers are trained by Psychology and Education Departments. Economics and Management/Business Studies may also have minor professional training roles. Other disciplines may 'merely' be orientated to a 'general arts' framework.

A final line of interpretation relates to the different patterns of historical development of different disciplines within New Zealand universities. Some have been the 'mother disciplines' from which other disciplines have literally, 'hived off'. Others are recent and lusty infants. This 'internalist' line of interpretation, however, may prove to be of more descriptive than explanatory value, since the internal dynamics of universities are unlikely to provide much causal impact that is not largely harnessed from outside sources. The actual establishment of sociology departments in New Zealand, as with any other university innovation, requires sociological analysis itself and this has already been a matter of debate. (for comments see Robb and Crothers, 1985)

Table 3 fits this 'internalist' theme, by laying out a long time-frame of the development of social science disciplines in New Zealand.

Sociology is amongst the smaller of the main social science disciplines. The big two are Business Studies and Education (with about 100 permanent staff each), with another four disciplines of middle size (about

70 each) — economics, pyschology, history and geography — and a final grouping of three small-sized disciplines (about 50 each) — anthropology, sociology and political studies. Sociologists (in Sociology Departments) comprise 7% of the total of some 700 social science university staff.

Table 3: Staff in Social Science Departments of Universities (1935-1985)

Dicipline	Date							
	1935	1950	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985
Anthropology	1	3	5	10	28	42	43	56
Business Studies	0	0	0	2	10	45	90	100
Economics	8	16	15	29	50	68	71	76
Education	6	17	23	45	70	72	99	100
Geography	1	15	21	50	60	64	67	67
History	7	22	28	35	62	78	77	75
Political Studies	0	4	4	15	35	45	45	49
Psychology	0	0	19	26	45	73	78	79
Sociology	0	1	4	7	20	45	56	57
Town Planning	0	0	2	3	5	6	6	7
Agricultural Economics	0	1	4	15	17	28	26	31
Nursing Studies	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	9
Rural Education	0	0	2	2	3	3	3	3
Higher Education Research	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	5
Journalism	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	2
Total	25	81	127	239	405	574	673	716

Source: University Calendars (c.f. Crothers, 1979, p. 12). See Appendix for some discussion of coding decisions.

The pattern of distribution of sociologists fits the overall pattern of distribution of social scientists for Auckland, Massey and Victoria with the absences in Lincoln and Otago being 'compensated for' by relative over-representation in Waikato and Canterbury.

Compared to other disciplines, sociology has its share of professors and **almost** its share of senior lecturers, but has a relatively smaller proportion in the reader/associate professor range, and far more than its 'fair share' of lecturers: indeed, it has the highest proportion of lecturers amongst all the disciplines covered.

Table 4: Characteristics of Social Science Disciplines in New Zealand (Permanent Staff only)

Discipline	No. of Staff	% Lecturers	% S.L.	% Prof. A/Prof	% Female	% PhD	% NZ BA	NZ	% of PhD's Australia	Nth America	UK	Average Years in Post	% Ancillary Technical	Teaching
Anthropology	56	16	61	23	17.1	68	70	26	13	40	16	12.7	7.7	6.1
Business Studies	100	25	58	17	9.7	29	52	28	7	28	24	7.7	7.0	4.3
Economics	76	21	50	29	11.6	53	49	18	15	33	33	10.3	2.4	6.0
Education	100	18	60	22	15.1	74	78	50	4	38	8	12.0	4.6	0.9
Geography	67	6	60	34	7.7	81	64	22	19	25	32	15.2	13.6	3.7
History	75	12	48	40	24.6	79	64	25	14	19	42	15.3	3.8	2.5
Political Science	49	20	51	29	7.3	82	45	18	15	33	28	15.5	0	5.8
Psychology	77	20	57	23	15.6	79	66	53	13	15	20	11.6	18.0	3.0
Sociology	50	30	50	20	18.0	62	53	29	10	19	39	10.5	0	9.1
Other	66	26	55	20	26.6	24	74	13	6	63	19	11.0	22.4	7.5
Total	716	19	55	26	15.1	63	62	28	12	31	26	12.2	8.0	4.9

Source: University Calendars, 1985.

Sociology has a relatively high proportion of female staff (as high as any other major social science discipline — although history's proportion is similarly high, and several of the minor disciplines have much higher proportions). Even so, the proportion is still under 1-in-5.

Unfortunately, no readily available data on ethnicity are available (as inferring from name alone would be highly hazardous). There are a few New Zealand sociologists with a Maori ethnic affiliation, and some sociologists of Asian ethnicity, but it is clear that this proportion does not reflect a representative share compared to the proportions of minority ethnic groups within the New Zealand population.

The recency of sociology's inclusion in New Zealand universities is pointed up by the average length of appointment (amongst those universities for which data are available). However, equally telling, the proportion of recent appointments is relatively low (although not as low as the two classical social science disciplines — History and Geography).

In terms of credentials, Sociology stands in the middle range — alongside Anthropology and Education — with some two-thirds with PhDs. The contrast lies with the 'classical social sciences' with 4-in-5 with PhDs on the one hand — and the 'applied' parvenus of the order of 1-in-5 with PhDs on the other.

Sociology has a relatively low measure of indigeneity compared to other disciplines — although higher at the PhD level. Like History there is a strong weighting towards the United Kingdom. Ancillary staff suport for sociology is very low. In the competition for laboratory technicians etc., Sociology Departments have clearly not been successful in working up adequate cases for support, especially compared to Psychology and Geography Departments.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Command over research resources may inhibit or enhance the extent to which a discipline might attain its purposes. However, it must be recognised that social science disciplines may differ considerably in terms of their data-requirements and their needs for research support, as well as their interest in gaining such resources. The gradual widening of support for social science research (itself an important area of study, c.f. Couchman, 1984) has removed many of the barriers and difficulties that rendered the pursuit of social research more difficult before the 1980s.

Several research funding agencies have at least some considerable relevance to university social research in New Zealand — most notably the Social Science Research Fund Committee (SSRFC), but also the Medical Research Council, the University Grants Committee and the Universities themselves, several Government Departments which provide research grants (especially the Department of Education) and some foundations, interest groups and even corporations. In the end, it is important that any discussion of social research funding be conducted against the whole range of sources. Unfortunately, although it probably amounts to only about one-fifth of social research funding in New Zealand (excluding market research expenditure) this discussion will focus on SSRFC funding.

Over the 5 year period 1980-1981 to 1984-1985 the SSRFC had spent upwards of a million dollars on some 64 projects, chosen from amongst 207 applications. Of the 64 projects, 30 have been completed, 23 are still in progress and 8 either slow, withdrawn or abandoned.

A breakdown by discipline and by university is available (Johnson, 1985). This data has been reworked to focus on:

Table 5: Grant Status by Discipline: SSRFC, 1980-1985

(1) Discipline	(2) Total Applications	(3) Grants	(4) Completed Projects	(5) In Progress	(6) Slow/ Withdrawn	(7) Declined Applications	(8) Porportion of all Com- pleted/In Process	(9) 'Coverage Rate'	(10) 'Success Rate'	(11) 'Incompletion Rate'
Anthropology	15	8	3	4	1	7	13.2	27	53.3	12.5
Business Studies	11	4	3	1	0	7	7.5	11	36.4	0
Economics	17	4	2	1	1	13	5.7	22	23.5	25.0
Education	17	6	3	2	1	11	9.4	17	35.3	16.7
Geography	6	3	1	1	1	3	3.8	4	66.7	33.3
History	3	2	0	2	0	1	3.8	4	66.7	0
Political Studies	5	2	0	2	0	3	1.9	10	40.0	50.0
Psychology	43	17	7	9	1	26	30.2	56	39.5	5.9
Sociology	36	9	7	1	1	27	15.1	72	25.0	11.1
Other	51	9	4	1	1	45	9.4	n.a.	11.8	16.7
Total	204	64	30	23	8	143	100.0	n.a.	30.9	12.5

Notes: (1) Supplied by previous Director, SSRFC from SSRFC records (Johnsonton, 1985).

(2) 'Coverage-rate' is number of applications (column 2) divided by number of permanent staff (from Table 4).

(3) 'Success-rate' is proportion granted of all applications: column 3 divided by column 2.

(4) 'Incompletion-rate' is number of incompleted projects divided by grants: column 6 divided by column 3.

(5) Proportion Completed/In process is column 4 and column 5 for each discipline divided by the total (30+23 = 53).

(6) Proportion of Applications delined is column 7 divided by its total (143).

coverage (the extent to which social researchers have applied);
success (the extent to which applications have been granted); and
incompletion (the extent to which grants have been abandoned etc.).

Discussion based on these rates must be tempered with attention to the absolute numbers involved, which are small.

Of all the university social scientists (using the definitions above), 1-in-5 have applied to SSRFC over the last 5 years. (University staff account for about 3/4 of applications, 80% of grants). Sociology and Psychology have a high coverage, followed by Anthropology, Economics and Education. Business Studies, Geography, History and Political Studies have been less likely to generate applications.

Success-rates differ considerably between disciplines. Anthropology, Geography and History have high success-rates and Business Studies, Education, Political Studies and Psychology have moderate success-rates. Sociology and Economics have been least successful apart from the residual 'other' category.

Incompletion also differs considerably — with Political Studies, Geography and Economics having poorer records. The size of grants and of applications may vary considerably between discipline, and analysis on this basis may reveal a slightly different pattern from that presented here.

It is clear that restricting this study to SSRFC funding has presented a biased picture — it is likely that several seemingly well-heeled disciplines, notably Geography, Psychology and Education, may receive much of their funding from other sources. Nevertheless, this analysis has begun to build a useful picture.

A related aspect is the extent to which members of various social science disciplines have secured positions of power within university, social research advisory bodies, or other expert policy bodies. Several social scientists have obtained positions of responsibility within Faculty structures of Arts or Social Sciences. At present, at least one Vice-Chancellor (Brownlie, Economics, Canterbury), and three Deputy or Assistant Vice-Chancellors come from the ranks of social scientists (Tarling, History, Auckland; Fraser, Sociology, Massey; Beaglehole, History, Victoria). In the past, other historians or economists have headed universities and the University Grants Committee. There has been a reasonable, if limited, representation from sociologists on New Zealand social research institutions — Fraser and Wilkes on Committee D of the National Research Advisory Council; Fraser on the Medical Research Council, and Carter and Fenwick (Fenwick as an organisational representative) on SSRFC. Recent successes within policy-making structures have been a sociologist in the Cabinet (Shields) and others on the Defence Policy Review Committee (Clements), Medical Benefits Review Committee (Fourgere), National Housing Commission (Thorns), and Overseas Aid and Redevelopment Committee (Vodanovich) and NRAC, and latterly the Ministerial Review Team (Whitcombe). Peggy Koopman-Boyden has had a long involvement with both the Social Development Council and the New Zealand Planning Council, and played a key role in setting up of the 1984 Economic Summit Conference, while Penny Fenwick is Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, and Susan Shipley a Deputy Director of Training Policy in the Department of Labour. Sociologists have at least secured a toehold in appropriate quangos and policy making structures. This penetration by sociologists may assist in the process of ensuring some attention is paid by those in policy-making structures to sociological argumentation and research studies.

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

This essay has been concerned with a reflexive attempt to focus attention on the strengths and weaknesses of Sociology in New Zealand, and to engender a self-consciousness and perhaps even outline a basis for collective action. It is intended that this self-reflexivity should have some impact on the undergraduate teaching

practises of New Zealand sociologists, the graduate training programmes, research strategies and institution-building tactics: in short, the whole pursuit of sociology in New Zealand.

As a vehicle for helping to engender such self-consciousness, this essay is limited. It is especially limited, if the essay is seen as attempting to exemplify the sociology it propounds: a sociology which is theoretically developed, empirically-grounded and morally active. Indeed, the essay has included several studies of major aspects of New Zealand sociology, but in each case, it was possible to only sketch broad contours.

An examination of the published output of New Zealand sociology suggested that there has been an array of articles, chapters and papers but very few well-developed research monographs. Indeed, it was found much of the literature comprised a relatively slender contribution of research notes and comments. And even then, it seems that much work more recently published in the official Australia and New Zealand outlet comes from writers outside Sociology Departments and often with affiliations to other disicplines. There is some evidence that the publication outlets being used by New Zealand sociologists have recently become more dispersed. However, the utilisation of this wider range of publication outlets is not at a level sufficient to entirely account for the apparent fall-off in output.

It is not sufficient to only chart the amount of sociological literature on New Zealand that has been produced. In addition, it is important to examine the way in which the network of citations in this literature binds it together, as well as assessing the overall content of this literature. Although neither of these approaches was attempted in this essay, it is likely that the structure of linkages is very limited, and that a qualitative content analysis of the material published would reveal that it is framed by a wide and inconsistent range of different theoretical approaches and methodological agenda.

Having provided a general overview of the published material of New Zealand, we then turned to examine the characteristics of the personnel of New Zealand sociology, and to its organisational and resource-availability arrangements. Some of the limitations identified in the production of New Zealand social knowledge can be traced back to the demographic characteristics of the personnel and to the institutional structure they work within. The time-depth of sociology in New Zealand is limited, and its advent sudden and this advent was followed by only a slow and gradual growth. Recruitment of many academic sociologists was undertaken against a climate of a general shortage of teachers. This resulted in the recruitment of many staff without much formal training in sociology. Many had received their advanced training in other disciplines or were recruited from outside New Zealand, and many had not yet completed a PhD. Yet this cadre of hastily recruited teachers was faced with a large numbers of students. The result of this recruitment pattern may well explain the pattern of social knowledge that has resulted. For upwards of a decade the main cohort of New Zealand sociologists may well have been encumbered with teaching duties, and setting up their own long-term research projects. These absorptions may have limited their writing in the meantime. Such difficulties have perhaps, as Perry (1985) recently noted, been aggravated by the lack of strong leadership and direction from the small cadre of senior sociologists. What is particularly interesting about this account of New Zealand sociology is how similar it is to the collective portrait of British sociology developed by Payne et.al. (1981). Such a similarity in difficulties of development, is, of course, aggravated by the small scale of sociology in New Zealand. The similarity may not only be due to similar circumstances pertaining in each country, but may arise through the importation of British difficulties through some imported staff and some imported postgraduate experience. In addition, North American influences on New Zealand sociology have been ambivalent in their effects. (The topic of the degree of external influence is yet another area deserving more attention).

There are some implications for us in the discipline to reflect upon. There are clearly some concerns that should be aroused by this picture of the content of the New Zealand sociological literature. It is not especially large and seems to be falling, although there may be some displacement to book chapters and forms other than journal articles or notes. Worse, the strengths of its empirical underpinning are limited, while its theoretical architecture is ramshackle (certainly, more ramshackle than it need be). There is little evidence of the building of much cumulative writing on particular themes, and little sense of 'intellectual community'.

In demographic terms, sociology bears some of the marks of its marked expansion in the mid-seventies, but it is beginning to work towards more 'maturity' (towards the pattern of the classical social sciences in New Zealand). Perhaps as the discipline upgrades the quality of its qualifications and increases the New Zealand orientation of its members, a through-flow of this qualitative change into the published output may result. Clearly, though, it will need sustained effort to develop.

APPENDIX: CODING DECISIONS

A range of minor coding and/or recording decisions were made in the course of this study which must be documented.

(1) Items (Table 1) where a characteristic related to an author, rather than a published item, data from **each** author is included (so that totals may exceed that for the 'number' row at the top of the table). Discipline refers to university **department** of author, rather than their subjectively-held disciplinary affiliation. The classifications of 'data-base' and 'subject areas' are ad hoc and underdeveloped. Theoretical articles were those with a closely developed theory-construction approach. 'Survey' was taken as **any** form of research using questionnaires and 'other statistics' indicates studies in which data was generated during the fieldwork. The extent of empirical data involved is overestimated since any data lightly referred to allowed coding as an empirical study.

(2) Some limitations of using University Calendars for these research papers are discussed in the text, and tabulated in Table 2. A major problem is developing a cross-university classification of 'disciplines' or 'departments', as the match of disciplines (and especially subdisciplines) with departments varies considerably between New Zealand universities. In general, named departments or subdepartments could be separately identified and were retained as separate units, if most other universities had similar units. Quite frequently, subdepartments had to be collapsed into broader groupings to serve compatibility between universities (thus Maori Studies were split off from Anthropology, Planning from Geography, Social Work from Sociology, Agricultural Economics from Economics, but others were combined — for example, Marketing and Business Studies). Nomenclature of disciplines/departments varies between universities (especially 'Political' and 'Business' studies), but this was seen as less problematic. The details of the classification used by SSRFC are unknown.

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Taking gender into account: feminist and sociological issues in social research

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Gender is always present as a feature of research, though it may appear to be problematic only under certain conditions. Both as an aspect of social life requiring investigation, and as a characteristic of those involved in the research, gender has a crucial bearing on a research project, from conception to completion. It plays a part in the formulation of the enquiry, the questions asked, theories used and methods selected. It is an important component of relations between the researcher and those whose lives are being studied. The aim of this paper is to raise feminist and sociological issues concerning the effects of gender on the research process. This is carried out through a personal account of doing research.

Both feminism and sociology need to consider their treatment of gender in research. This assertion is obvious in reference to sociology. There is little evidence that the discipline has acknowledge the centrality of sexual divisions within social processes, despite vigorous feminist critiques of sociology since the early 1970s. Sociology has not faced the implications of sexual divisions for theory and research. It still largely reflects the configurations of power relations in society, rather than critically subjecting them to analysis. The first section of this paper outlines the general problem of sexism in sociology and its implications for research.

The assertion that feminist researchers also need to examine their treatment of gender is perhaps less obvious. For feminists of all theoretical persuasions, gender is the issue. Uncovering the nature of gender relations and reconceptualising them are key concerns of the feminist project. These concerns, however, must include critical examination of feminist assumptions about gender. As a perspective, feminism must reflect on its own development, as well as questioning the dominant intellectual tradition. (Acker et.al., 1983: 425) This is a necessary step to developing an effective understanding of gender relations.

This paper raises specific issues about gender stemming from my experiences as a woman researching women. The first issue is concerned with assumptions about gender in my research. Feminist research is concerned with developing a methodology that takes the experiences of both sexes into account. However, it is not entirely free of traditional, ideological assumptions about gender. Nor has it dispensed with conventional techniques of social research. These are important tools of feminist research, although many have been criticised for their inherent sexism.

The second issue concerns the extent of women's common identification and interests because of their shared gender. Gender is not the only, nor in some instances, the most significant factor which shaped my relations with the women who participated in the study, and which consequently affected the research. Crucial features which set us apart were race and ethnic identity.

Finally I conclude with some observations about being a feminist researcher. This experience involved various tensions and contradictions — theoretical, ethical, political and personal.

The research that this paper focusses on, was conducted in a single industry town where gender divisions are particularly stark. The town is divided into a public world of industrial production, dominated by men, and a private world, associated with women, domesticity and the family. The study considered how wives of mill workers employed in the dominant industry deal with the effects of their husband's jobs on themselves and their families (James 1985). The husbands of the women in this study are mostly operators, labourers and tradesmen. They can be defined, using Steven's (1978) analysis of New Zealand's class structure, as members of the working class. It is not only the men, but also their wives and families who are affected by this

class position, which is a major determining factor of the women's material circumstances,[1] affecting for example their access to income, their housing, and their social status in the town. The mill's occupational hierarchy provides the basis for a powerful and pervasive local status system. The main dividing line is between 'salaried' and 'hourly paid' workers, and this division is often reflected outside of the workplace in patterns of association and leisure. The women's daily lives are shaped by the nature of their husbands' employment. My study concentrated on two aspects of this experience; the mill's determination of the family routine through the demands of the industrial timetable, and the effects of an industrial dispute on mill workers' families.

The research developed from my own experience of living in the town and through contact with women resident there. A variety of methods were used to obtain information. A major source was in-depth interviews, conducted with 16 women. They were all wives and mothers. Their employment status ranged from full-time employment in the labourforce, to part-time paid workers, to full-time workers in the home. They included Maori, Pakeha and Pacific Island Polynesian women. A further technique used was unstructured group discussions. These involved 32 women, who brought a diversity of experience and interests to the discussions. I also drew material from a previous study of the town which included participant observation. (James 1979)

SEXISM IN SOCIOLOGY

Gender places limits on sociological investigation: there are circumstances in which the gender of the researcher becomes problematic. For example, gender may determine the matter of access, or become an issue for reasons of sensitivity or propriety. Many would consider it insensitive and inappropriate for a male researcher to elicit personal accounts of women's experiences of rape or domestic violence. On the other hand, it is practically impossible for a female researcher to experience the male mateship of the pub or the sportsfield. Spatial arrangements and cultural expectations work against this.

However, research should not inevitably be a sex-defined activity. A research topic is not innately appropriate to one sex or taboo to another. Rather, it is the way an issue is conceptualised and research carried out that raises gender as a problem. If men and women sociologists are expected and encouraged to have different skills and research interests in separate areas of social life, then ideological assumptions about sexual divisions are unquestioningly incorporated into sociological activities. Such prescriptions would severely curtail any radical potential for sociology and maintain rigid sexual divisions and inequalities.

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1   I am aware of the difficulties of defining women's class position in terms of traditional class analyses, whether Marxist or Weberian. A criticism of both of these perspectives has been the treatment of women as appendages of men; i.e., defining women's class membership in terms of their husbands or fathers (see Delphy, 1981, for a criticism and suggestions for an alternative theoretical approach). My purpose here is not to get enmeshed in a debate on women and class. However, I have chosen in this study to emphasise the ways in which women's lives as wives are substantially affected by their husbands' class membership. This is not to argue that the husband's class is the sole determinant of the woman's class position, but to explore the bearing it has on wives' material circumstances and social status.

Yet is is because sex divisions and inequalities are intrinsic to our society, that women sociologists have become increasingly intolerant of the way sociology has ignored the experiences of women. Sociological theory and research have been based on men's experiences and activities, and focussed on the processes of the public sphere (Stacey 1981). Women have led the investigation into the nature of gender relations. They have a vested interest in doing so, as members of a subordinate social group. But male sociologists cannot continue to be blind to their roles as 'man' as well as 'investigator' in research situations, and the consequences of their gender for sociological enquiry. In the light of critiques of sociology as a predominantly male-defined and dominated enterprise, it is imperative that male sociologists examine their own assumptions and practices.[2]

The feminist critique of sociology attacks the way that sociological knowledge itself is constructed. Smith (1974) argues that sociologists do not construct objective knowledge; instead the production of knowledge is inseparable from the social, historical and political contexts in which it occurs. The assumption of objectivity — the assumption that the researcher must strive to be a neutral observer, standing detached from that which is studied — is rejected by the feminist perspective. In contrast, this perspective regards the separation between researcher and researched as illusory, arguing that it is impossible for the researcher to set aside her/his 'point of view'.

The feminist argument places particular emphasis on the ways in which knowledge is constructed in sociology to reflect and perpetuate male dominance.[3] As in many other institutions where knowledge is produced and legitimated (such as science, the law, communications and politics), women do not figure prominently in sociology. Important consequences for the study of gender relations stem from this. The first is that male experience is equated with all of human experience. The male experience is taken to be an impartial account of social processes.

The second consequence is that developing ways of analysing and explaining women's experiences is difficult. Existing conceptual tools are limited in their ability to 'name, describe and understand' women's lives. (du Bois, 1983: 110) Women are faced with a dominant system of ideas not directly derived from their own experiences. In common with other subordinated groups, women's voices are 'muted' (Ardener, 1975); they must structure and interpret their experiences according to the worldview of the dominant group. To overcome the powerlessness involved in being without a voice, women need to develop new ways of conceiving of themselves and their relations with others.

Feminist sociology strives for a radical reorientation of social analysis. This involves the idea that gender is central to the constructions of all social relations. Analysis is concerned with how personal, individual experience is both shaped by, and lives out its possibilities within, a broader structural context.

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2   Two examples of male sociologists who have examined the effects of their gender on their research practices are Frankenberg (1976) and Morgan (1981).

3   It is not intended to argue here that it is only men who are dominant in knowledge constructing processes, or that all men enjoy a privileged position. In addition to power relations based on gender division, class and racial differences also determine the control of the production and legitimation of knowledge. Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony is useful in understanding these processes. He argues that certain groups exert a hegemony (or leadership) over social life. It is a combination of economic and political dominance on the one hand, and a cultural and ideological dominance on the other. Gramsci emphasised the importance of ideas in the attainment and maintenance of social control and political power. While he examined this in reference to the hegemonic bourgeois class in capitalist society, his ideas can also be applied to relations between racial and gender groups.

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT GENDER IN FEMINIST RESEARCH

In this section discussion concentrates on problems relating to gender which I encountered in using particular research techniques.

My main research tool was the indepth, structured interview. This technique has been used extensively in feminist studies, and it is regarded as a useful means of documenting women's lives. However, it is also argued that the structure of the interview can obscure women's experiences. Ann Oakley (1981) argues that problems are raised for feminist researchers if they adopt standard research practices. Oakley argues that the traditional interviewing framework is restrictive when interviewing women because the interview is commonly regarded as a mechanical instrument of data collection. It is expected that the relationship between the interviewer and subject is hierarchical and one-way. Distance and impartiality are supposed to be maintained by the interviewer.

Oakley's solution to the limitations of the interview method was to develop personal relationships with the women in her study. The interview became a more egalitarian exchange that acknowledged the active participation of the subjects of study in the research. Oakley dealt with the problems of the objectivity and reliability of her research findings by critically examining how her involvement with the women affected the research. This meant consideration of issues not usually included in research reports; the social characteristics of the interviewer, the interviewee's feelings about being interviewed, hospitality offered the interviewer, and the extensions of the research encounter into a more broadly-based social relationship. (Oakley 1981: 31)

These issues influenced the way I examined my research practice. They tell as much about how I obtained my information, as do more conventional details of methods used. Like the women in Oakley's study, the women in mine 'asked questions back'. By doing so they undermined the traditional assumption of the passive respondent in the interview process. Their questions were important to the development of the research, revealing points of contrast between their lives and mine which provided valuable insights into their experiences. The women wanted to know both my opinion and my circumstances. They asked me about my marriage, what I thought of the town as a place to live, my views on local race relations, and on sexual equality. In all instances I responded, considering that my willingness to answer their questions was important for the development of trust. It was also a decision to reject the rigid prescription of interviewing practice as an impersonal encounter, controlled by the researcher and guided by narrow notions of scientific enquiry. In choosing to conduct the research in this manner, I became aware of how the information was gathered, its possible biases, inconsistencies and ambiguities. My goal was not a detached, objective study, but there was, nevertheless, a commitment to a systematic and rigorous analysis.

The application of feminist ideas to traditional interviewing procedures does not overcome all the problems inherent in the structure of the interview. Nor does the practice of a woman interviewing women. Hilary Graham (1983: 143) raises an issue relating to the interview's focus on verbal communication. Her discussion illustrates the powerlessness experienced by a 'muted' group. Often members of a subordinate group cannot clearly articulate their frustrations and discontents; yet these may be expressed in inchoate ways. Silence and apathy may shield real grievances which are unable to be clearly voice. Dorothy Hobson (1978: 81) suggests that laughter is particularly significant in understanding the way women interpret their experiences. Laughter can indicate many things which words obscure: a taboo subject; embarrassment; avoidance of criticism; or awareness of contradictions between attitudes and behaviour.

The interview's emphasis on verbal communication can also become problematic when interviewing women belonging to another culture. As well as possible misunderstandings in the use of language, there may be non-verbal communication which is missed by the interviewer. I was not sufficiently aware of possible cross-

cultural difficulties in using the interview technique. Although there were no obvious misunderstandings in the use of English with non-Pakeha women, it is significant that this was the only language used in discussions with them. The use of English in such situations is a subtle form of ethnocentrism which requires examination. On the one hand, it assumes English is their preferred language of communication. Furthermore it reinforces the Pakeha linguistic and cultural domination pervasive in their lives. But on the other hand, and ironically (because of the pervasiveness of Pakeha culture) it would have been incorrect for me to assume they were fluent in another language, and that they would want to use it in the presence of a stranger.

The langauge of the interview raised problems in another context, again highlighting the theme of women lacking the means to name and describe their experiences. There were some topics on which the women were not used to speaking. One is sexual equality. Towards the end of the interview I asked each woman two questions: one was whether she thought sexual equality has been achieved in society; the second was whether she thought sexual equality was a good or a bad thing. I was soon aware of the inadequacy of the concept of sexual equality in understanding women's lives. The concept was used by me to express the idea of similar rights and responsibilities for women as well as men, in all areas of life. But the women defined the concept in a quite different way.

The concept of sexual equality had little or no meaning for the women. It was not something they had considered previously. It was not a concept they used to make sense of their own lives. When prompted by my questions to consider the matter of sexual equality, the women referred to their own experiences, rather than to an abstract idea. They applied the concept to their marriages and to their experiences of paid work. In the latter context, sexual equality was regarded as a matter of equal pay and equal employment opportunities. These were generally supported as significant gains for women. However, a woman's economic independence was also regarded with suspicion, because it may potentially conflict with a woman's marital and familial responsibilities. Many expressed a tension between their own needs for independence and assertion of personal identity, and their family's needs, which they see as their duty to fulfil.

The women's view of equality was not an individualistic one of freedom for a woman to pursue her own ambitions and desires. Their main reference point was their relations with others. Thus, they defined sexual equality as an equality based not on the same roles and responsibilities for women as for men, but on complementary ones. For them, the notion of equality was compatible with, and reaffirmed their selflessness in relation to others, and their domesticity (in contrast to men's identity, derived from the relations of production and the market). It was expressed by one woman as respect for the expertise of both sexes in their distinct spheres:

'. . . he's made it quite clear how important, and how he appreciates me being at home . . . he does treat me as an equal and he holds my job in just as high regard as his own . . . I guess I'm one of those people who really doesn't function well in the workforce, therefore the job he has to do is put up on a pedestal, and I think he's such a great person to do it, because I myself think I couldn't.'

The concept of sexual equality was given another meaning by a Maori woman. She dismissed the concept as a Pakeha idea, with little relevance to her experience, or to a Maori worldview:

'The Maori woman has her role and the Maori man has his . . . the Maori male cannot do without the Maori woman, especially on the marae, because the first voice that is heard on the marae is the woman's and the man can't do without the support of the women . . . A woman can't do a man's job and a man can't do a woman's job. They just have those definite separate roles'.

Though they refer to different cultural contexts, both the above quotes reveal similar expectations about the complementary spheres of expertise of the two sexes. In both cases, biological, reproduction differences between the sexes are assumed to result in distinctive social roles. The first comment, made by a Pakeha woman, illustrates this in comparison of reproductive/domestic activities and productive activities. The Maori woman's comment makes the point in reference to ritual activities which embody distinctions between the sacred and the common, or everyday.

Above all the women wished to retain differences between the sexes. They feared that gains in sexual equality would result in the loss of women's privileges (they referred to small courtesies), male protection, and respect for motherhood and womanly qualities. The notion of social equality with men compromised their image of feminity.

Another topic that the women were not used to speaking about was housework. The women expressed surprise that I should want information about housework. To them, it was a taken for granted aspect of life unworthy of discussion. One woman even made the point that participation in the study was a welcome change from 'boring old housework'. In contrast to housework, shiftwork and strikes were regarded as areas which required investigation. They saw these matters as having public as well as private effects, while the public implications of housework were largely invisible to them.

However, once housework was raised as an issue by my questions, some of the women started to see their domestic activities in a new light. One observed about housework:

> 'Do I think its important? It's a tough one, that. Yes, 'cos it wasn't til after I said it I realised, you know, because we're supposed to be so many different things, you're supposed to be the accountant, you pay all the bills, as well as all the other roles that come into it.'

In another part of the interview, the women were more sensitive than I to the way women's activities are often ignored in research. I asked the women if they talked with their husbands about his job. This was an important question in terms of the research's concern, as I wanted to find out the extent of wives' knowledge of their husbands' occupation and workplace. Some of the women reinterpreted the question and extended its applicability. They not only recalled conversations with their husbands about his job, but also mentioned that they discussed their own paid work or day at home with their spouses. Their responses alerted me to underlying assumptions in the questions about the greater importance of the man's work, and the associated trivialisation of domestic activities. Although my theoretical approach was one critical of sociology's emphasis on the public sphere, this was not always carried through to research practice.

The indepth interview was central to the research, but not the only method used. Group discussions were also conducted. These involved 32 women. They included: single women; married and solo parents; employed and unemployed women; and full-time housewives — Pakeha, Maori and Pacific Islander. Their husbands worked in a variety of jobs, both within and outside of the dominant industry. They represented a wide range of ages, from women in their twenties to grandmothers. The group discussions provided an alternative means of obtaining information, balancing the individual indepth interviews in several ways. They are less structured, revealing some of the common wisdoms of the community and its members, and they enabled the women to contribute to the formation of the research project.

One of the limitations of the indepth interview is that it employs structured questions. Therefore it imposes the researcher's concerns and preconceived notions on to the respondent. I overcame this difficulty to a certain extent by the use of open-ended questions in the interviews. But the group discussions were much less structured also, and free-flowing discussion easily developed. The women showed very little hesitation

or awkwardness in speaking in a group situation. Group members were known to one another, having common associations through the neighbourhood, friendship, their children, sports or work.

The group was a non threatening environment, made relaxing by the familiarity of the participants and the refreshment provided. My presence, as part of the group, was less intrusive and over-bearing than in the case of a one-to-one interview. The discussions were lengthy (often over two hours) and wide ranging. Topics covered included: their impressions of the town, their experiences of changes in the town and its industry over the years, how they coped with shiftwork and strikes, their own employment experiences, isolation and depression of housewives, and marital problems.

The group context of interaction was important, not only for the exchange of ideas between the women and myself, but for the sharing of ideas among the women themselves. Through their discussions I identified some 'common wisdoms' — their common understanding of the way life is in their community. It soon became clear there was wide agreement on some matters. The town was defined as a 'man's town', and the mill as a 'man's world'. The mill was acknowledged to be a pervasive influence on their lives, often in undesirable ways. But it was also generally held that there were advantages in being associated with the mill — advantages in wages and housing. For these reasons, the community was deemed a 'good place to bring up children'. Such common points of view were later explored in the individual interviews.

In this way the group discussions and the individual interviews were complementary sources of information, where views and experiences could be compared, and matters clarified. I did not expect everyone to agree with the common wisdoms. In a group discussion one person may feel reluctant to challenge collective ideas. However, most seemed to find it easy to voice dissent. This may have reflected the non-threatening atmosphere of the groups and that the participants were known to one another. I constructed the indepth interviews keeping in mind the issues and concerns that had been identified in the groups. In this way the women had direct input into the research.

DIFFERENCES AMONG WOMEN

For feminists it is an attractive notion that all women are united in their biological experiences of human reproduction, and through their many common social experiences — as wives and mothers, exploited workers, victims of male violence and the like. Consequently, it may be too readily assumed that a woman doing research involving women will have much in common with them, and that this means she has a privileged insight into their lives. But in my experience, research is shaped as much by the differences between the woman researcher and the women subjects of the research, as by any similarities between them.

Education and occupation together were identified by the women as significant points of differences between them and me. The women's educational qualifications varied, but several had left school as soon as they were able. These women had little or no formal qualifications. On leaving school, the reality for many had been difficulty in getting a job and finally having to settle for any work, usually of an unskilled nature. The exceptions were three women who had trained as primary school teachers. A typical experience was of a job in the secondary labourmarket, in a low paid, low status, semi- or unskilled occupation, lacking in job security.[4] One woman's labourforce experience provides a good example of the secondary sector

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4   See Barron and Norris (1976) for definition and discussion of the secondary sector of the labourmarkets, as applied to women's labourforce experience.

worker. She worked as a cashier, nurse aid, petrol station attendant and clerk, all before the age of twenty. Other common occupations, both before and after marriage, included shop work, factory work, cleaning and waitressing. The labourforce experiences of these women are typical of the narrow range of occupations in which women are concentrated in New Zealand. (Novitz 1982: 297)

At first some of the women responded to me suspiciously because I was associated with a university. I was told by one, sometime after the research had got underway:

> The biggest thing I think you had going against you, was that you were classed as an intellectual
> ... it was something to be scared of at the start ... because, you know, if you say the wrong
> thing, 'what's she gonna think?'

Looking at this comment from the distance of five years, issues are raised about the relationship between the researcher and the researched that were not clear to me at the time. There are power relations between the woman as researcher, and the woman as the subject of research that may be obscured by the feminist emphasis on egalitarian and collaborative research practices.[5] Efforts to establish a sympathetic understanding with the subjects of the research on the basis of shared womanhood may be complicated by another set of factors — the respondent's deference to a person of higher educational and occupational status.[6] Angela McRobbie shows it is as important for feminist researchers as for anybody else, to be aware of the exploitative and patronising characteristics of the relationship between the researcher and the researched. She compares the power relations between these two with the unequal power of the social worker and client, or teacher and pupil. (McRobbie 1982: 51)

Differences in family circumstances were also apparent between the women and myself. But these did not necessarily put me in a more powerful or higher status position. From their point of view, not having children placed me in a junior position to them. On my return to the community, part of the conversation at these times would be about their children's activities. I could not reciprocate in the sharing of such experiences. Their response to my marital situation (a commuter marriage) was one of curiosity. But they regarded this solution to conflicts between career and home life as impractical for them, and for most women.

These women strongly identified with family life — understandable considering their orientation towards it from an early age, and their labourforce experiences in low paying and often unsatisfactory jobs. For many of the women, marriage and motherhood occurred in the first few years after leaving school. These were regarded not so much as conscious choices they had made as young women, but as an expected and unquestioned part of the transition from childhood to adult status. For them, marriage was the most realistic way of dealing with their situation. One woman (now in her thirties) set out the lack of choice she faced upon leaving the town's secondary school:

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5   For discussion of the characteristics and goals of feminist research see Stanley and Wise (1983) and Bowles and Klein (1983)

6   I have deliberately referred to education and occupation here rather than to class. The issues I am discussing are more clearly identified by highlighting educational and occupation differences between the women and myself. In doing this I am not arguing that class is irrelevent to a discussion of power relations in research. The significance of class relations cannot be denied, especially when social research has traditionally been concerned with studying people who are less privileged and powerful than the researchers themselves.

It's not so bad for the guys 'cos they've got the mill, but there's very few jobs for the girls that leave school. They've either gotta hang round . . . or you have to leave and go to Auckland, or somewhere like that. So, the ones that do stay, the easiest way to sorta get round the whole business is to get married.

The differences between our ideas and experiences of marriage, family and work affected the way I formulated questions, and how the women answered. For example, in asking about the sexual division of labour in the household, I did not want to impute certain jobs to one sex or the other. I was careful not to imply that women should automatically take responsibility for domestic work. I also asked for information on husband's involvement on domestic tasks. I phrased questions about paid work in ways that assumed women's right to participate in the labourforce. However, many of the women strongly supported the traditional sexual division of labour. A common response to the questions I asked on women's employement was that motherhood should take priority over paid work. As Woodward and Chisholm (1981: 177) remarked about their research, I found that women perceived many of my questions to emphasise a preoccupation with paid work, marital conflict and gender inequalities. In contrast, their responses emphasise the satisfactions of being a wife and mother, and the importance of a domestic identity.

Perhaps the most significant differences between myself and some of the women were racial and ethnic ones. These differences were not systematically considered in the study. However, it is clear that Maori and Pacific Island Polynesian women experience a social reality in which people are judged, reacted to and discriminated against, according to colour and cultural differences.

The town is about 30% Maori, and there is also a small Pacific Island community. Both groups are internally diverse, and this should be acknowledge in any analysis. Maori people have migrated to the town from all tribal areas. They maintain links with their home communities and foster their own tribal organisations within the town, in addition to supporting a multi-tribal marae. The Pacific Island Polynesians include people from Western Somoa, Cook Island and Tonga. Many also have strong ties with their island communities, which in some cases include heavy financial obligations to kin.

A Pakeha researcher neither can nor should speak for women of another culture. With her different personal experiences and social position a Pakeha woman must acknowledge her perspective as imbued with assumptions based on her own ethnicity. If this ethnic perspective is not identified and critically examined by the researcher, it inevitably results in a partial account of Maori and Pacific Island Polynesian women's lives that distorts or obscures important aspects of their experience. Feminist criticism of male scholarship as blind to gender has a parallel application for white feminists. Hazel Carby (1982) points out that white feminists are unaware of their own ethnocentrism in theory and research. Consequently, black women's experiences have been marginalised, stereotyped and ignored, in common with the treatment of women's lives in traditional male-orientated social analysis.

While the white feminist cannot talk about the black woman's experience as if it is her own, she nevertheless has a responsibility to analyse the notions of race and ethnicity, and relations between groups based on perceived racial and ethnic differences. 'Race' is constructed in specific historical and social circumstances.[7]

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7   My approach to the notion of race is based on Miles (1982). He argues that 'race' has no scientific or biological basis, and so cannot be accepted as a valid theoretical concept. Instead 'race' is a social construction and the useage of the term reflects specific historical and social circumstances. The categorisation of others on the basis of perceived racial differences results in racial oppression. According to Miles 'race' is an ideology (hence his use of quotes). He sees the purpose of analysis is to examine the processes by which racial groups are constructed, and the consequences of the ideology of 'race' for social relations.

As a member of a powerful racial group, the white feminist needs to investigate the ways her group constructs and seeks to maintain unequal power relations through the idea of race, and the notion of racial inferiority. White feminists are not facing up to Carby's criticisms, if they take feminism's emphasis on the political importance of personal experience, only to refer to the experience of personal oppression. Personal experience also includes the experience of power and privilege.

The structures of racism affect the lives of Maori and Pacific Island Polynesian women in this town. It is especially apparent when employment, housing and education are examined. These areas were only briefly considered in the study. A more sensitive analysis of Maori and Pacific Island Polynesian women's experiences as wives of mill workers would have paid more attention to relations between the different racial and ethnic groups in the town, and to the interrelation of race and gender.

Such an approach would have commenced with consideration of historical relations between the different groups. Conflict between Maori and Pakeha over land was involved in the very establishment of the town. It has continued to affect the development decisions of both the dominant industry and local government. The mill site was originally chosen on the basis of certain industrial advantages. But the company had to negotiate with Maori owners over land for the mill site. Though the Maori owners eventually sold their land, they did so with misgivings about the industrial intruders. Some staged protests over the transaction by disrupting the surveying party. The mill was not only regarded by the local people as a threat to their physical livelihood, which was derived from the river and surrounding land. It also threatened their spiritual life. Over the years forestry plantings have encroached on the nearby mountain, sacred to the local tribe.

An historical account such as this one briefly outlined, emphasises that, right from the start, the local Maori experience of the mill and the town established to service the industry, was quite different from the Pakeha one. The industry brought income to an economically depressed region where many people had relied on subsistence farming and seasonal work. But the mill also brought disruption, overwhelming a way of life and values with the imperatives of industrial production.

This was the personal background of some of the Maori women in my study. They had, as children, experienced the coming of the mill into their world. For all Maori women living in the town now, there are specific ways in which industrial production affects their ethnic experience. For example, the demands of 24 hour production may override and conflict with traditional kin obligations, such as the tangi. The organisation of the industry also provides examples of institutional racism.

The mill dominates the local labourmarket, but it does not offer equal opportunities for all. As a resource-based industry, the mill's demands are for skilled, adult male labour. These criteria obviously work against the unskilled, youth and women. But within these disadvantaged groups, Maori and Pacific Island Polynesias are disproportionately affected. They are overrepresented among the local unemployed, particularly Maori school leavers. In the mill itself, ethnic divisions are apparent in the composition of the workforce. Pakehas predominate in managerial and professional positions, while Maori and Pacific Island Polynesians predominate among the rank and file workers, in production jobs, and in the less skilled occupations. One union on the site, the Timberworkers Union, which includes many of the lower status and lower paid occupations, is over 80% Maori.

Historically the company has been the major source of accommodation for its employees. This has been in the form of cheap rental accommodation, housing loans, and the opportunity to purchase a company house. It is popularly acknowledged that a significant advantage of working for the company is the housing opportunities. However, not all categories of workers are equally eligible for housing assistance. For example, rental accommodation has been commonly allocated on the basis of occupational status, rather than on

need. Houses differ in size, design and location, and it is widely held that higher status workers get better accommodation. The most glaring example of this can be seen on the plateau area of the town (known locally as 'nob hill'). Luxurious houses were built here for overseas managerial staff recruited by the company in the early 1960s. (James 1979: 204)

In gaining access to company rental housing, Maori employees appear to have been disadvantaged. In the past the Timberworkers Union has asserted that some of its members were waiting up to three years for a house, far longer than other sections of the workforce. It was only after the union took stop-work action that the company agreed to investigate the alleged unfair treatment of the union's members. (James 1979: 209-11)

In recent years the company has sold off most of its rental housing stock, and promoted a policy of encouraging employees to buy or build their own homes with the aid of company finance. However, housing inequalities remain, as they are linked to an individual's earning power, with those in lower paid occupations finding it more difficult to finance themselves into a home.

The dominance of the Pakeha is not only evident in the control of material resources, but also in the prevalence of a certain world view. The Maori and Pacific Island Polynesian women raised this issue in reference to education. The dominance of Pakeha ideas was something they had experienced as children, and were now concerned with in their own children's schooling. The women were critical of what schools could provide for their children culturally. In one group discussion there was heated debate over the teaching of Maori language and culture in schools. It was not a straightforward matter. Tribal differences made it a question of which customs to teach, and one Cook Island woman pointed out that the heritage of the Pacific Island children received even less attention than the Maori. One Maori woman argued that the school was not the place to teach Maoritanga. To her, it was another example of a Pakeha institution taking charge of Maori matters.

While the women were sceptical of what schools could provide for their children, they also found it difficult to foster their language and customs at home. It was not simply a case of the dominance of the English language and of Pakeha values. It also involved power relations between husband and wife. Some of the Maori and Pacific Island Polynesian women had married Pakeha men. They reported that when they used their own language in the home they were met with both a male and a cultural opposition. They faced hostility from their husbands who could not speak the language. In addition, they were afraid that in speaking their own language to their children, this may conflict with or damage the children's formal education.

Some of the Pakeha women married to Polynesians also noted the influence of racial and gender divisions in their lives. One Pakeha married to a Pacific Islander commented that she found it hard to fit in with his cultural expectations about the appropriate behaviour of the sexes. She endured his strict monitoring of her association with others. Another Pakeha woman, also married to a Pacific Islander, was sometimes resentful of her husband's financial responsibility for his extended family. The regular remittances sent to his kin in the Islands were the subject of arguments between them. The woman considered she was powerless to change the situation. In her words, '. . . there's nothing I can do because I'm not classed as the breadwinner. I have to (accept it). It's not my money.'

The situation of women who marry a member of another ethnic group shows that race and ethnicity are not only matters of public attitudes and practices. They are also woven into personal relations, and may raise as problematic many aspects of private life, such as marital expectations, responsibilities to kin and childrearing practices.

My race and ethnicity did not pose problems for the study in overt ways. Nevertheless, the research was conducted from a specific ethnic and cultural viewpoint. This involves the dangers of marginalising the experiences of members of another ethnic group. The limitation of my research was that the Maori and Pacific Island Polynesian women were treated primarily as mill worker's wives. There was not detailed consideration of how their experiences as mill worker's wives are affected by the ideology of race and their own ethnic identity. But it is apparent that these women have very different experiences to Pakeha wives of mill workers, and these differences are often related to issues of race and ethnicity. I have suggested several ways in which the experiences of Maori and Pacific Island Polynesian wives differ from those of Pakeha wives — for example, in reference to their husbands' earning power, access to housing, and their children's prospects in the school and consequently in the labourforce.

BEING A FEMINIST RESEARCHER

In concluding, I want to consider several tensions between being a sociologist and being a feminist that arose for me during the course of this research. I do not propose solutions to overcome the tensions, but argue that the contradictions they highlight need to be identified and debated. The tensions are between:
(1)   feminist and non-feminist views;
(2)   the aim of feminist research to change women's lives, and its effects on women as subjects of research;
(3)   the powerful position of the researcher, and a commitment to developing more egalitarian research methods; and
(4)   the centrality of gender, and other factors that differentiate and divide women.

(1)   A tension between feminist and non-feminist views is illustrated in this paper in discussions between the women and myself concerning marriage and sexual equality. The women became aware of my views without my obvious promotion of them. This was through my responses to their questions and also through the way I chose certain topics of investigation. However careful the researcher attempts to be in avoiding personal bias in constructing questions, personal views may nevertheless be gauged. The choice of sexual equality as a topic of discussion indicates an interest, and a value stance.

I consider that the exchange of views between the women and myself was valuable to the research. It made possible a penetrating account of their lives which was more relevent to them. But conscious expression of views on both sides may have inhibited some of the women. Those who had much invested in the identities of wife and mother may have been reticent to fully voice their ideas, in case these would be seen as incorrect responses.

There is no neat formula setting out if, when and to what extent the researcher's views should be conveyed to the subjects of the research. This must be decided by the researcher, within the context of the research. Above all, what the researcher decides, and its consequences for the research need to be examined. I chose to acknowledge the personal exchanges that occurred between the women and myself. Our dialogue became a crucial component in the development of the research's main topics of investigation. It was also instrumental in overcoming some of the problems of the standard interview procedure.

2.   Ideally, feminist research should be useful for women. The process of gaining knowledge about women's lives and gender relations should contribute to political changes that improve women's lives. However, not all research has overt political goals. My research was not directed to any policy issue, nor did it explicity recommend changes for the women who participated in the study. Yet research which provides information on women's experiences can help in understanding conditions and contribute to brining about changes.

It is in more personal ways that I noted the political implications of research in my own study. The women were called on to describe and comment on many aspects of their lives, sharing their views not only with me, but in the group discusssions, with others as well. Encountering different views prompted each woman to reflect on her own circumstances, and perhaps to think about it in ways which highlighted inconsistencies and contradictions in personal circumstances.

There were times when the research raised uncomfortable and threatening issues for the women. The topic of sexual equality led them to consider equality within their own marriages, and their experiences of discrimination in the labourforce. Other topics also caused the women to reflect on their own autonomy, both within and outside of the home. They became aware of a tension in their own lives — a tension between their efforts in running a home, and constraints imposed on them by the demands of their husbands' jobs. Shiftwork constitutes a special difficulty for the women. As domestic manager, it is the wife's job to integrate the shiftwork schedule with the personal and collective routines of other household members. Shiftwork takes priority over household time, determining the timing and organisation of housework, meals, childcare and leisure activities. In talking about shiftwork, the women were made aware of a major constraint in their lives and their powerlessness to change their situation. These are examples of aspects of the women's lives that the study prompted them to look at in new ways. Sometimes a different understanding of their situation was followed by thoughts of how to react — to accept their circumstances, to try to change themselves, or the conditions external to them.

It is inevitable that some women who participate in research will change the way they see their lives. This is to be expected when the subjects of the research are actively encouraged to be involved as more than simply passive respondents. But the researcher must consider the consciousness-raising effects of research on the participants. What happens when a woman is encouraged to question her life? What can she practically do about her situation — how can the dissatisfactions be dealt with? What obligations does the research have to provide ways for women to deal with their changed views? These are not problems exclusive to feminist research. They need to be addressed by all social researchers as part of conscious and critical examination of research practice.

(3) Feminist researchers, in their commitment to egalitarian research methods, have sought to change hierarchical relations between the researcher and the researched. But power differentials are nevertheless inherent to the research relationship. In the final analysis, the researcher controls the research, and it is her definitions which prevail. Furthermore, her social and economic status is often superior to that of the subjects of the research.

Feminist research, like any other research, involves the selection, analysis and interpretation of material. These tasks are, to a great extent, controlled by the researcher. This is a justified and necessary use of power by the researcher. If feminist research is to have relevance to women, and political effect, it must not simply report women's experiences. It must go beyond the specifics of individual cases, to examine lives within the context of wider structures of social control. Theories and concepts are required to make sense of a mass of material — this means imposing a framework on it. Even so, the theoretical account should strive to reflect the reality of women's lives, and to acknowledge the gaps between theory and individual experience.

The power of the researcher does not only extend over the data, but also over the subjects of the research. Given feminism's ideals of equality, the exploitation of the researched is perhaps one of the most sensitive issues facing feminist research. But developing egalitarian research practices is not a simple exercise. I used several strategies. Answering the women's questions about my own life was one attempt at reducing the power differentials between us. In addition, the direction of the research was guided by the women's identification

of issues important to them. When I reached the stage of writing up the research I showed drafts to several of the women. Unfortunately, this was not done extensively, as it was difficult to contact all the women, and I was hampered by the constraints of time and distance. Not all the women who received drafts provided me with comments; it is not clear whether this indicates approval or disapproval of my analysis. Some of the women made constructive suggestions, giving clarification and addditional information. These responses were included in the final stage of writing up the study.

Further efforts at involving the women in a collaborative way in the research could have been made by getting more to comment on the drafts, and by conducting follow-up interviews and group discussions at a later stage in the research. But these suggestions also throw up tensions between the egalitarian goals of feminist research and the researcher's powerful position. How much choice do women have in participating in research? How much time do they want to give to such activities? McRobbie (1982: 55) suggests that women's willingness to talk and to give of their time are indicative of their deference to the higher status researcher. Women are used to servicing others and to seeing their own activities as having lower priority. Housewives may be the perfect 'captive' group for the researcher — dominant ideology portrays them as docile, engaged in trivial activites and having plenty of time on their hands. Obtaining the agreement of women to participate in research more actively and collaboratively may paradoxically reflect status differences between the researcher and the researched, as well as a commitment to more egalitarian research practices.

(4)   Feminist explanations argue for gender as a fundamental organising principle of social life. The study discussed in this paper shows that racial, ethnic and class differences, as well as gender divisions, have actual consequences in women's lives. If feminist and sociological research are to develop wider applicabilty and relevence to all women, we need to examine both material and ideological differences. At present theory is only partially and inadequately reflective of all women's situations. It tends to focus on certain groups of women, or specific aspects of women's lives, while ignoring others. Research procedures are often insensitive to the experiences of those in less powerful social positions. Social differences and conflicts in values must be brought to the centre of analysis. Acknowledgement of differences does not mean acceptance by the researcher of a narrow sphere of interest or action, in keeping with one's own social postion or personal experience. On the contrary, such an approach demands a commitment to questioning all divisions and inequalities.

CONCLUSION

In presenting my research experiences I have sought to identify some of the problems, uncertainties and shortcomings that generally escape tidy, published accounts of research. I have also suggested possible strategies and approaches to overcoming some of the issues facing researchers. While discussion has focussed on issues and dilemmas for feminist researchers, I consider these matters merit a wider audience than feminist sociologists. Of interest to all social researchers are issues concerning power relations between the researcher and the researched, the lack of fit between theory and individual experience, the 'objectivity' of research, and the connections between research and social change.

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Towards a framework for socio-economic classification

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The paper[1] is an outcome of ongoing work which is aimed at the development of a Framework for Socio-Economic Classification. The paper presents ways in which existing official statistics could be used to provide sociologists with a research tool more useful than is presently possible.

Two main themes of classification are outlined; integration and flexibility. The discussion of these issues moves from theoretical principles towards existing classification frameworks such as the Elley-Irving scales, the New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (NZSCO) and the New Zealand Standard Industry Classification (NZSIC), and the ways in which these two latter classification structures could be linked to survey data on individuals.

Specifically, the paper will deal with how:

1. occupational industrial, economic and other social data could be integrated into a single dataset.

2. flexible classification procedures could be developed whereby, for example, occupations and industries could be broken down into a number of characteristics, making it possible to group individuals according to user-selected occupational and industrial criteria.

3. such a Framework for Socio-Economic Classification could be practically created, linking existing official data sources and by adding additional information regarding the content of occupations and industrial activities. This additional information would simultaneously provide the basic means by which both the NZSCO and the NZSIC could be systematically and regularly revised and updated.

4. The paper will conclude with a discussion on how such a framework would be flexible enough to be used by sociological researchers in a number of fields. In particular, special reference will be made to its usefulness in researching the issues of labour process changes and social stratification.

GENERAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The proposed project, a Framework for Socio-Economic Classificaiton (FSEC), aims to integrate social data into a unified database where data can be manipulated and experimented with in a flexible way. The major justification for the development of such a framework is that it would generate high quality data which would help researchers and planners to obtain a more accurate and comprehensive picture of the various structures, relations and characterisitics which comprise New Zealand society. In practical terms, this end can be pursued by using occupation and industrial data in more flexible ways than is presently allowed for, and by integrating these data with other social, demographic, and geographical data.

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[1]   The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not represent an official view of the Department of Statistics.

The project aims to advance from theories and concepts to their adequate empirical representation: i.e., in this case statistical measurement. The aim is to develop a framework of empiricial variables which are distinct but integrated — since society itself is an interrelated whole — and where the categories are made flexible and open to experimentation through variation of the grouping criteria.

This project aims to distinguish rigorously between concepts and empirical variables. They are not simply translatable into each other. In fact, empirical variables should be contrasted with concepts. For example, forces of production is a concept which identifies a number of aspects of social reality, one of which is machines. Forces and relations of production are concepts which identify the essential basis of the economy perceived as a dynamic and interactive process. Unlike such concepts, empirical variables cannot function to directly identify processes or the motors of change. That is, variables identify particular segments of social reality only by breaking down reality into discrete and mutually exclusive classes of items. Any simple variable category should classify, via a consistent grouping criterion, discrete and distinct items of social reality. For example, machines used in the New Zealand economy sets the parameters of a class of discrete and mutually exclusive items.

However, it is possible to empirically identify the surface patterns of processes via the identification of standard 'individual units' commonly related to different single empirical variables, e.g., in the distribution and characteristics of the groups of individuals throughout the social structure. This is possible by breaking down processes into distinct elements, i.e. discrete observable characteristics of items, belonging to single variable classes. Once broken down, they can be aggregated in different ways which may help to test aspects of social theory by providing for their adequate quantitative measurement.

These theoretical comments should be kept in mind as the discussion moves towards a more practical account of the basic elements of a Framework for Socio-Economic Classification. In particular, an FSEC can be introduced in terms of the needs for integration and flexibility.

Integration
Integration refers to the unity of data. The basic rationale for integration is the supposition that society is a complex organism whose elements and relations are interdependent and interactive. If the structure of data aims to correspond adequately with this general nature of social reality, then data needs to be drawn together in one unified data set. Statistical integration in the field of social research can be made via a common element, in this case, the individual. Various occupational, industrial, and other sorts of social data can be linked together via the common standard of the individual. In this case, various characteristics of society can be linked and brought together via the experience and position of individuals. Statistical integration entails linking different databases into an integrated framework via a standard unit of integration.

Practical integration also entails the linking of datasets via a common variable into an integrated database network. Single linking variables are needed to connect survey data on people to databases of occupational and industrial information. Simply, data collected on individuals needs to be coded to a key variable in another dataset so that it links with a number of variables in this other dataset. As long as information about individual people contains key referencing variables to other sorts of information about their circumstances, then large amounts of information can be integrated since they refer consistently to the same sample of people.

A United Nations document argues that (UN, 1979: 6-8):

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A consistent conceptual framework is a necessary preconditon for the development of fully integrated social statistics. . . .The conceptual framework should be conceived of as a family of interlocking interrelated classifications and concepts which provide the user with the context of the economic and social situation as a whole.

The framework proposed here has this same kind of aim: to bring together in one dataset comprehensive occupational, industrial, economic and other social data.

Lack of such high-level integration between these fields is noticeable in most presently held official social data. Nonetheless, the Department of Statistics can integrate social data in this way, and has done so in limited ways in the past. Certainly, the technology or the technical expertise is not lacking. But integration is not all that is required. It is also necessary to create the conditions whereby such a framework can function as a flexible research tool.

Flexibility

Another major and related aim of an FSEC, then, is to be able to use data experimentally. Integration is one condition necessary for such a research tool. The other condition is that datasets and classification frameworks need to be flexible. This is essential if social statistics are to serve as the basis for a genuine social science where theories can be tested through controlled and comparative experimentation. In a more mundane sense, it is also important that flexibility of data be pursued in order to cater for the wide range of social research and social planning interests of probable users.

The same UN document referred to above argues that (ibid: 8):

Such a framework needs to be viewed as a classification system based in a set of building blocks which can be combined in different ways for different uses.

A major objective is to be able to flexibly manipulate categories and groupings. In order to do this, it helps if the set of data is in a flexibly structured form such that it can be easily varied in terms of grouping criteria. In short, various levels of complex category disaggregation need to be opened for user manipulation. For example, the grouping criteria in occupational and industrial classifications define the categories from the outset making them fixed and inflexible. These composite variables need to be able to be disaggregated such that users can choose and apply grouping criteria more precisely, in order to identify particular groups of occupations or segments of the population according to multiple criteria, rather than being only able to use fixed classifications which are based on already given composite variables and established groupings.

The Department of Statistics has the capability to advance towards the introduction of user facilities applicable to the disaggregation and aggregation of grouping criteria which would allow for greater flexibility and experimentation in social analysis. This is significant because once it becomes possible for the researcher to group individuals (as well as occupations and industries) according to different single criteria or by multiple criteria then it becomes possible to experiment about the character of the social structure in all its interrelated dimensions. For example, it becomes possible to identify and link the dimensions of the changing character of the labour process and industrial structure with different dimensions of social groups. In particular, if occupation and industry are broken down into a number of characteristics, then it becomes possible to group individuals according to user-selected occupations and industrial criteria. Once social groups are defined according to such economic characteristics, then these groups can be profiled according to other social characteristics.

The rest of the paper elaborates specific aspects of these general concepts of the FSEC. In particular, the paper examines and criticises the Irving-Elley scales, discusses stratification concepts, criticises and elaborates an alternative which could be developed to reformulate and incorporate more information into the NZSCO and the NZSIC. This leads on to a discussion of the practical creation of a Framework for Socio-Economic Classification which uses the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) as the survey basis, and then to some illustrations of its applications. First it is useful to consider some present classification frameworks presently in use. Let us begin with the Irving-Elley scales.

ELLEY AND IRVING SCALES

The proposed Framework for Socio-Economic Classification would supercede some of the uses of the Irving-Elley (and Elley-Irving) scales. A few comments about the nature of these scales is therefore appropriate, followed by a brief discussion of some pertinent stratification issues. In general, it can be said that the Irving-Elley scales suffer from some similar limitations as both the NZSCO and the NZSCI.

Elley and Irving have always claimed that their scales are not to be used for social research into the 'status' or 'social position' of occupations or as a measure of some other social stratification concept. The authors of the scales claim that this is not their stated purpose therefore stifling criticism from this perspective. Nonetheless, as this is the most common and widespread use of the scales it would seem appropriate that their limitations be spelled out.

The scale is not adequate to measure the changing characteristics or dynamic process of the social structure or the complex dimensions and interactions which characterise the structure of social groupings in society. There are a number of reasons for this limitation of the scale.

The first type of reason is the same as with the NZSCO and the NZSIC. The scale assigns each occupational title a number which represents a position in a hierarchical gradation scale. The scale is not a framework. Rather, the scale represents a fixed 'social grading' of occupations. There is no room for variation or experimentation in the grouping criteria. The researcher is confronted with a fixed scale which has assigned occupations a grade in a social heirarchy conceived of in terms of two equally weighted status criteria: income and education.[2]

These scales, then, only provide a fixed measure of a given set of occupations graded according to the two mentioned status criteria. In other words, they provide a fixed measure of two popularly or typically held conceptions of the attributes of people's occupations which accord status or prestige to them. Status, then, is a concept which refers to popular perceptions of the prestige associated with people's positions in society.

Status is a misleading concept to use in order to construct measures of objective social positions and groupings. Within the status concept there is no objective way in which positions and social groupings can be identified because status refers to the perceptions people have about the social structure of groups or collectives of people. The perceptions people have depends on their 'vantage-point' of society.

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2   I assume that these criteria are chosen as status criteria. However, as this is not explicitly stated then this is only an assumption. It could be argued alternatively that, for example, education is applied as an occupational skill indicator, while income indicates the 'economic worth' of work.

Anyway, even if rougly universal perceptions of status criteria such as education and income are applied to measure the entire population, then the objective character of the socio-economic structure has still not been identified. All that they have done is taken typical social status criteria based on education and income; graded occupations according to objective measures of these status critera; and imposed five divisions on the scale which have no stated social structural meaning or definition and therefore from this perspective are arbitrary.

The result is a scale which is not so much concerned with the content of occupations and the broader social-economic structure but, rather, with attributes associated with or arising from given occupations which figure highly in the popular view of perceived relations of prestige and authority in society. The picture which is constructed from this basis offers the inaccurate and misleading impression that the social structure consists of a single continuous scale of social position which can be 'conceptualised for conveniences sake as a small number of ordered grades forming a hierarchy'. (Szreter, 1984: 558)

A recent article ends with the plea relevant to the I-E scales but regarding the British Registrar General's social classification of occupations stating that it: (ibid: 560)

> should be replaced by a more flexible, discerning and less stultifyingly simplistic apparatus, for the purpose of social research. A more adaptable instrument is urgently required to study the multiplicity of dimensions by which inequality is now recognised to manifest itself in British society. This would reflect a more sophisticated form of social theory, and the more powerful and advanced data handling resources that are available in the computer age.

The I-E scales are not specifically designed to provide a flexible framework. They provide fixed and pre-defined scales. Because of this, and because these scales are about the status or social grading of occupations rather than about the social and economic structure of occupations; they are unable to measure the process of change in any useful way. It is not that status is not worth studying; it is rather that, initially, a number of prior questions need to be addressed regarding the objective structure of society before we begin to examine the effects of status on the social structure. That is, the first task is to identify the nature of the dynamic by which the social and economic structure moves and develops producing objective changes in the nature of society, such as the structure of occupations and the objective circumstances in which social groups of individuals find themselves.

The questions which need to be answered direct research towards examining the links between broad social and economic processes of change and the occupational structure. The particular places in the economic structure where individuals are located is determined by broad economic processes which relate to, for example, technological innovations, changing patterns of economic ownership and changing organisational structures. The questions which need to be addressed concern the nature and direction of these broad structural changes, their effects on the occupational structure and, in turn, their effects on the structuration and characteristics of social groups.

CLASS AND FSEC

Before leaving this aspect of the work completely, it may be helpful to offer some further criticisms of some conventional views about social classes which complement the discussion about the Irving-Elley scales. It has been argued that 'if classes exist at all they must exhibit certain properties: they must be bounded, ordered, mutually exclusive, and exhaustive'. (Otto, 1975: 318) These claims can each be briefly considered.

1. Classes must have definite boundaries, i.e, be bounded. A common component must clearly and completely establish membership or non-membership. This approach simplifies class structures and class processes. Rather, class is a concept which encompasses a much more complex social process. The complex nature of the process implies multiple criteria for identifying the various dimensions and aspects of the structure of the social formation, the social groups which arise from this structure, their various types of interaction, and their processes of change. Because classes represent the coincidence of differing sets of central characteristics, boundaries are always blurred and there is always room for ambiguities and overlapping.

2. Classes must be ordered. More precisely, Otto states that '. . . there is a criterion according to which the bounded classes can be arranged into a single hierarchy'. (ibid: 319) To argue that classes must be ordered if they exist and that this hierarchy needs to be constructed in a singular way represents a simplistic reductionism of the complexity of the 'social process'. Various social processes which express hierarchical, conflicting, accommodating, and overlapping class relations can be simultaneously identified in the same society. Various relations and interactions characterise class process. These processes cannot be represented adequately by a single hierarchy conception. The point again is that the 'class process' cannot be reduced to a single criterion of ordering when there are in fact a number of ordering criteria simultaneously at work differentiating society's members in a number of ways.

3. Classes cannot be assumed to be mutally exclusive once the social process is recognised as being complex and multi-dimensional. The class process does not simply place people into unique slots and into exclusive (closed) social groups. The class concept encompasses complex social processes involving such aspects as:

    (a) Overlapping. Classes are not distinct observable entities. A single criterion does not operate exclusively or sharply to define a social class. Social theorists are advancing towards a disaggregated conception of social class in which a number of class criteria operate simultaneously to complexly define the dimensions of the class structure. Class membership, in some instances, can become a complicated matter since some positions may fulfil some of the requisite criteria but not all, and which criteria are fulfilled varies.

    (b) Structural movement. Classes need to be viewed in the context of fluid processes which respond to structural changes. Classes are not necessarily 'fixed and closed'. Rather, they tend to have a fluid, open and dynamic element as well. This is true in terms of the structuration of social classes. It is also true in terms of the social mobility of individuals between class positions. The class process encompasses a dynamic which entails interaction, overlapping, mobility and development. There are, therefore, no fixed and closed categories. Precise boundaries and mutual exclusivity do not fit neatly with a dynamic social reality.

4. The idea that classes must be empirically exhaustive is, to some extent, a misleading idea when the class structure is only conceived of in a singular way. In any given society, more than one type of class structure tends to be operating. For some purposes, the social theorist may wish to examine the basis and dynamic of the dominant class structure. For this purpose, she may abstract out of the analysis other social collectivities which have arisen from other class structures. The point is that a singular or uni-dimensional class structure will not produce an exhaustive listing.

The I-E scales are just not adequate to empirically measure social processes in these complex ways. Let us therefore move the discussion towards the development of an alternative practice which may go some way towards developing a more sophisticated research tool adequate to the tasks at hand. First, some principles

of classification are raised before the presently used occupational and industrial classifications are specifically examined. This is an important starting-point since social classification is based in the occupational and industrial structure. The I-E scales, for example, are constructed from the NZSCO.

SOME PRINCIPLES OF CLASSIFICATION

The development of computer technology not only encourages the development of statistical theory: it also encourages the development of social theory. In particular, it has become possible for social researchers to move from static, fixed and inflexible classification structures towards dynamic and flexible classification frameworks. Complex processes no longer need to be just classified as discrete items in mutually exclusive locations and with fixed groupings. It is possible to advance from this situation towards user-defined classification structures based in user-chosen variables, combinations of variables, and classification principles. This can be achieved by breaking down complex processes into their various characteristics. These characteristics could function as grouping criteria. In this way, groupings could be constructed according to any given or combination of given characteristics.

In summary, it is possible to have more than just fixed structures for each homogeneously viewed entity. It is now possible to have user created groupings for user defined purposes. The result is a tool, a flexible tool at that, by which social theories can be tested. This approach comes closer to providing the conditions of experimentation since segments of the population can be empirically identified and delineated in a way considerably more precise than previously possible. The question, for example, of whether social being determines consciousness could be more thoroughly tested when dimensions of social being can be identified and varied according to different criteria and combinations of criteria. Nevertheless, statistics only provide a base of quantitative data on objective characteristics of the social structure and the people which are part of this structure. Quantitative data does not replace more detailed and qualitative research.

NZSCO AND NZSIC

This section briefly introduces and critically examines some of the basic principles which underlie these classification structures. This is followed by an outline of a modified approach. To begin with, the basic principles and assumptions upon which the NZSCO and the NZSIC are based are examined.

'Occupations' and 'Industrial activities' are viewed as if they were singular entities: as if they had singular realities. In many ways, this principle of classification, which is common to most known classification systems, is useful enough and has certain advantages over classification frameworks constructed according to other sets of principles. The perceived advantage of classification frameworks based on the single entity principle is that by merely stating one significant aspect of an industrial activity or the title of an occupation it becomes possible to infer the other various aspects of the activity. This is useful if we have only limited occupational information to code to the classification framework. Often, however, occupation's titles are just not enough to impute related characteristics. Further, this approach has serious problems with regard to important aspects of social research. In particular, it means that while the occupational title of an occupation may be constant, its actual content may have undergone considerable change.

Once occupations are viewed as discrete units then the next stage is to assign each occupation an exclusive location. From there the move seems inexorably to be towards the concept of fixed groupings of occupations. Occupations are listed in mutually exclusive locations and attempts are made to provide an exhaustive empirical listing.

These issues need to be examined more closely. To begin with, it is obvious that 'industrial activities' and 'occupations' are not singular entities. Industrial activities refer, in actual fact, to elements, stages and characteristics of complex economic processes. The conditions of industrial activity refer to machines, labour, and raw materials. The way in which these conditions of production interact is its process. The product is the output. Already, from this brief description of the stages and elements of a production process it can be seen that industrial activities, in reality, should not be conceived as singular entities.

Similarly, occupations are not singular entities. Occupations refer to individuals' places in the broader economic process. But, occupations refer not only to the external characteristics of a given job, i.e., place in the labour process, type of supervision, machines used, people dealt with, and so on. Occupations simultaneously entail certain personal skills or what might be termed the human content of occupations; i.e., what is required of the individual to perform the job, and also the personal characteristics or effects of that job. For example, jobs have certain skill requirements which can be approximately measured according to the common standard measurement of time taken by individuals to learn the job. Then, there are ways by which skills could be measured according to general and specialised requirements. Similarly, the characteristics of a job's content could be measured in terms of the degrees of autonomy, repetition, creativity entailed by that job. Of course, these attributues need to be broken down into variables which can be used to make some kind of measure of these attributes. Anyway, the major point is that both occupations and industrial activities are concepts which are being used as if they were single items, when in fact, they can be broken down into a number of empirical characteristics. The way in which occupations and industrial activities are grouped also causes problems.

The grouping criterion for the NZSCO is stated as 'the nature of tasks performed'. This implies that a consistent grouping criterion is applied. However, it makes no sense as a grouping criterion because the nature of the task performed can mean different things depending on which aspect(s) of the task performed are taken as being important.

Birgitta Ehrenstrom prepared an article for the ILO (International Labour Organisation) in 1983, entitled 'The Case for the Revision of International Standard Classification of Occupations'. (Ehrenstrom, 1983) She argues that all sorts of problems arise from attempting to use 'kind of work performed as the basic principle of classification'. (ibid) In particular she argues that:

1. the concept of kind of work performed can be interpreted in different ways;

2. it is not kind of work performed in itself, but certain aspects of kinds of work performed which can be used to delineate and group occupations;

3. which of these aspects should be used to establish similarity between occupations for the purpose of grouping is open to any number of interpretations.

Ehrenstrom sums it up: (ibid)

> Kind of work performed is neither a criterion for grouping, nor does the concept in itself give any guidance as to which aspects should be considered as the most important.

However, in actual practice neither the NZSCO nor the NZSIC has ever operated according to the application of a single grouping criterion. The NZSCO defines and groups occupations according to a whole mixture of industry, skill, and responsibility criteria. However, how exactly this is done is not stated. The NZSIC is more clearly based on the nature of the output as the grouping criterion. In actual fact, both these classifications use a number of criteria to construct categories which share similar characterisitics distinguishable from other categories. The NZSIC revision committee says that it will apply a decison tree by which industrial

activities are eventually assigned a precise place in the structure:[3]

> The basic objective of identifying these characteristics of industrial activities is to build up a
> logical set of decisions which will allow the easy and systematic grouping of like industrial activities.

The principle of classification by which occupations and industries are defined and grouped are similarity/
dissimilarity criteria. A variable is not used as the grouping criterion across the board to classify something
in a consistent manner. Rather, constructing complex and discrete categories using a decision-tree type ap-
proach leads to a situation where various criteria are applied at various times to delineate occupational and
industrial categoreis. The end user only has access to the results of this application.

The NZSCO and the NZSIC provide the researcher with fixed structures of classifications. Occupations
and 'industrial activities' are defined and grouped into fixed categories formed according to inconsistent
and unstated criteria. The user does not have (1) access to information regarding the criteria and procedures
used to create the categories, and, (2) the opportunity to choose variables to function as criteria for the
grouping of categories. All kinds of limitations for research stem from these factors.

A MODIFIED APPROACH

First, proposed modifications to occupational and industrial frameworks are explained. Then, some of the
advantages of this alternative approach are listed.

Disaggregation

Occupations and industrial activities should continue to be presented in their present structure for various
reasons not least of which are comparability and the continuing need for 'holding categories'. However, it
is also sensible to advance towards the modification and expansion of these frameworks such that they can:

1. incorporate additional information on the content of occupations and industrial activities;

2. provide the user with access to more variables based on this additional information which can be flexibly
    applied as grouping criteria. That is, it should be possible for users to choose variable combinations
    according to their needs. In other words, the aim is to be able to apply independently identified charac-
    teristics depending on user requirements.

The variables which identify the content of occupations should be open to the user so that occupations
and people can be classified according to a large number of varying combinations of criteria chosen by
the user. For example, the NZSCO could be restructured so that each occupation would not only have a
place in the unit group, but so it would also have a 'structured number', each digit of which would refer
to various charcteristics of occupation. For example, each occupation could be given a 'responsibility' rating
according to specific criteria which the user would be aware of. Similarly, each occupation could be given
skill ratings and so on.

Gradually, the emphasis is away from fixed and uni-dimensional groupings towards a framework which would
allow the grouping of occupations according to user-defined purposes and aims. It becomes possible to advance
towards a situation where occupations can be classified according to multiple criteria. Similarly, once

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3   See NZSIC Revision Project Management Committee, Minutes, 28.8.85, Appendix 3, p.3.

the stages of industrial activities are broken down into their distinct stages and elements, it becomes possible to identify, classify and group industrial activities according to various criteria from type of production process, e.g. batch system or assembly line, to nature of the 'output', e.g. service, raw materials, consumer goods or means of production.

Applications of these improvements are discussed below. However, in whatever field a researcher may use statistical data, the disaggregation of criteria within an integrated environment would make possible the more flexible, precise and comprehensive use of occupational and industrial data linked together and linked also to other social data. The paper now turns to discuss some of the more practical issues regarding the FSEC. The main exisiting data sources for the development of a framework for Socio-Economic Classification are the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) and the Business Directory (BD).

OPERATION

Introduction
This section outlines the basic components which would form the basis of the FSEC as an integrated dataset. These are the linking of several datasets and the incorporation of additional information on occupations and industrial activities.

Household Labour Force Survey
The central core of data on people would come from the Household Labour Force Survey. The HLFS is the newest survey undertaken by the Department. It is ongoing in that the survey is repeated every calendar quarter. The survey covers around 12,000 households involving about 1% of the NZ population. It provides a comprehensive range of statistical information about the NZ working-age population who are employed, unemployed or not in the workforce. It also provides basic social, demographic and geographical data. Further it uses the NZSCO and the NZSIC.

The proposals relating to the development of the HLFS, are as follows:

1.   integration of Business Directory (BD) information with HLFS data via key variable linkings;

2.   the incorporation of a number of additional questions in the HLFS regarding the content and characteristics of occupations;

3.   the incorporation of additional questions in the enterprise questionnaire regarding technology and labour-processes at the 'BD activity unit' level.[4]

The main effects of these modifications and additions are twofold. First, they provide appropriate quantitative data by which the NZSCO and the NZSIC can be modified, expanded and revised. Second, they would

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4   An activity unit is defined in a BD document as representing:
     the smallest unit operating at a single physical location and owned by a single enterprise to which a five digit NZSIC code is assigned. It is the smallest unit about which economic data is collected and published. In practice, activity units correspond to shops, factories, warehouses, etc. Note that more than one activity unit can exist at one location (e.g. a shop attached to a factory), but a single activity unit cannot be identified with more that one location.

generate comprehensive, integrated and usefully disaggregated data on the basic characteristics of the economic and social structure, and the distribution and characteristics of the people in it, which characterises New Zealand society. These issues need to be examined more closely.

The BD linkage
Linking the Business Directory to the HLFS entails coding responses from HLFS interviewees regarding their place of work to the 'BD Activity Unit' unique code number. This key variable linking at this detailed level provides a way into much inferrable information about the ownership and characteristics of the enterprises, i.e., activity units are connected to enterprise structures. The point to remember is that it is possible to impute information at an individual level upwards, i.e., from 'Activity Units' to 'Enterprises' but not vice versa.

As a result of this key-variable linking, a huge amount of information would be acquired regarding the industrial and social structure of the economy, integrated with comprehensive data on individuals who particpate in this environment.

List of variables
The data set created by linking the BD and the HLFS would include a whole host of useful variables relating to various dimensions of New Zealand society.

(A)   Occupational Variables
      occupational title (2 digit NZSCO coding)
      employment status
      hours worked
      education

(B)   Broader Institutional and Industrial Variables
      number of employees at activity unit and enterprise unit levels
      number of working proprietors at activity unit level
      totals and size indicators

Also, much information on legal, ownership, and institutional factors.

(C)   Birth and death dates of enterprises
      Business type, e.g. company, trust, friendly society
      Institutional sector, e.g., producer, consumer, financial intermediary
      Overseas Financial Connection Indicator
      Enterprise Groups, i.e. sets of enterprises under common ownership

(D)   Sociolo-Demographic Variables
      age
      sex
      ethnicity
      nationality
      marital status
      household type
      household location
      workplace location
      enterprise location

In addition, new variables could be created regarding occupational and industrial characteristics. The aim would be to add these new variables into this integrated information.

Occupational characteristics

A number of occupational characteristics need to be provided in order to gather comprehensive information on the content of occupations. A list of major occupational characteristics follows from which questions could be designed and scales and ratings constructed.

(A) Characteristics of Occupations, i.e., individuals' places in the process and organisation of work:

1. type of machines/tools worked with;
2. relation to these tools;
3. type of supervision and controls on individuals' labour;
4. method and amount of remuneration.

(B) Personal requirements entailed by occupations:

1. degree of autonomy of work;
2. routine nature vs creativity of work;
3. degree of skill or intellectual content (measured by time taken to learn) (Cain and Treiman, 1981);
4. generalisable vs specialised skills.

(C) Responsibilities and Authority:

1. degree of control over others work;
2. degree of participation in, and responsibility for, enterprise decision-making;
3. field of responsibility.

These kinds of characteristics of occupations would need to be translated into an appropriate set of questions. The answers to these questions would need to be translated into scales which would represent levels, degrees and features relating to occupational characteristics. That is, each occupation would be assigned a structured number, each digit of which would represent a rating for skill or responsibility, or stand for type of machine or method of remuneration. Herein lies the bulk of the development work on occupational characteristics.

However, the results would not only provide important additional information for a prototype FSEC, or for addition of a structured number to be added to the NZSCO, it would also provide means by which NZSCO categories could be revised. That is, any occupation surveyed according to these types of characteristics which showed too broad a diversity of ratings could be further subdivided. This would require the construction of some kind of a decision tree, in which the various characteristics would be assigned a level of importance. Degrees of similarity would need to be computed. Where serious divergences in any of the ratings occurred, this would provide the basis for a review of the category and, perhaps, its eventual subdivision.

Industrial characteristics

The aim would be to collect at the 'BD activity unit' level various data regarding the conditions, stages and aspects of 'industrial activities' or work organisation and processes. The kinds of data that would need to be collected in addition to information already available in appropriate form on the BD is as follows.

(A) Inputs:

1. raw materials. That is, this would entail collection of data regarding the 'materials' that are to be processed, or distributed, or sold. This could be trees, gas, data, paper, and so on;

2. machinery and tools used. This would be a difficult exercise to the extent that activity units may use a number of separate machines and tools. Generally, though, the point would be to collect data regarding the machine system which is co-operatively used by the labour force. The immediate upshot of this data collection would be a thorough inventory of New Zealand's technological infrastructure. Other characteristics regarding tools and machinery which would be useful to collect include:

> whether imported or locally made;
> date of manufacture;
> description of use;

(B) Process Characteristics:

1. type of production system. For example, batch-production systems can be compared with assembly-line production systems;

2. coordination and control structures which ensure continuity and flow of work;

(C) Output Characteristics:
this involves a description of the product or service which is the output of the work process.

This type of information would link in extremely useful ways with occupational characteristics, and other sorts of socio-economic characteristics. This detailed breakdown of information regarding the conditions, process and results of work processes may also be of direct use for economic analysis.

In particular, it would become possible to build a structured number which could be added to the NZSCI numbers. That is, for each activity unit there could be added a number each digit of which would represent one of the conditions, aspects and results of the work process. This inventory of information at the BD Activity Unit level could provide an objective and systematic way by which the NZSIC could not only be expanded and made more flexible, but also its categories could be revised using this more detailed information.

Summary
By linking in databases, adding more information, and making grouping procedures more flexible, there is provided a host of economic and social variables within a flexible and integrated environment. These developments would provide a tool by which people, occupations and industrial activities could be comprehensively grouped, related and described. This paper finishes with a few illustrations of some of the kinds of complex questions which could be pursued within such an integrated dataset environment.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF FSEC APPLICATIONS

In general, this project would culminate in the construction of a flexible research tool which would be capcable of being used to assess the various relations and dimensions of the social and economic situation of New Zealand as a whole. Several fields of application are identified and brief illustrations of how such an FSEC could be used in these fields are presented. Time and space only allows for a minimum of elaboration.

Occupations and industrial activities
The FSEC would provide a flexible tool by which the changing content of occupations and industrial activities could be identified and monitored. However, this integrated framework could do more than this; it could be used to help identify processes, test hypotheses, and explain changes. That is, this framework would link the content of occupations and the content of industrial activities into an integrated dataset referring to

the same sample of people. This is the kind of data in the appropriate form and environment which would allow researchers to identify and quantify the broader processes underlying the present occupational structure. For example, it would be possible to link the introduction of new technologies, changing ownership patterns, changing patterns of control and administration, etc. with changes in the structure and content of occupations so as to indicate, for example, changing skill requirements or the growth or decline in numbers of workers required in given fields of work.

Studies in social stratification

In general, and FSEC would have the potential to provide complex, multiple, and user-defined means by which the population can be segmented, and then, ways in which these defined segments of the population can be precisely described, characterised and compared.

First, segments of the population could be identified according to the coincidence of multiple criteria. Second, people could be grouped according to various classification principles such as dichotomous or relational principles, or according to gradational and hierarchical principles. Social groups could be thoroughly identified according to a comprehensive list of variable economic criteria. In short, social theory and hypotheses relating to theory could be empirically tested using this framework. Some examples may illustrate these general points.

Different conceptions of the class structure could be examined empirically. Economically identified segments of the population could be compared according to the social and demographic characteristics of the people in these segments. For example, population segments could be defined in terms of a number of criteria which could identify social groups according to differing theoretical conceptions. For example, the integrated dataset would enable the user to select criteria which identify whether workers are unskilled, factory workers, in the private sector, doing manual work, with no supervisory functions, and making commodities. This would identify a working class defined according to the narrow Poulantzian definition. However, some of the conditions, (i.e., criteria) could be relaxed. For example, the supervisory condition could be dropped thus including production supervisors in the working class. Or, the condition of manual work could be dropped to include clerical white collar workers such as data-entry operators. Or, both these conditions could be dropped to include white-collar supervisory positions to a certain level. Further, workers in the sphere of distribution could be included as really productive in order to test Wright's conception of the 'collective worker', and so on. Furthermore, each of these segments could be examined and compared in terms of the characteristics of the individuals in them. In other words, an FSEC would provide the technical capabilities to make this type of experimentation in classification possible and easy to do.

The extent to which the working class, defined in terms of the fulfilment of different criteria combinations, has homogeneity in its circumstances could be measured empirically and various comparisons set up. More precisely, we could empirically identify the numbers of the population in this category, compare the cluster of occupations we get when the grouping criteria are varied, compare the incomes and life-styles of the differently defined groups, and identify their geographic and demographic characteristics.

It is also possible to employ different principles of division. That is, the population could be divided in terms of dichotomies such as between owners and non-owners, or between manual and non-manual workers. Further, these dichotomies can be set up to overlap when multiple divisions in terms of the principle of dichotomy are introduced. Strata could be identified according to their location with regard to the overlapping dichotomies arising from the identification of a central relation. Middle strata could be identified in terms of various criteria relating to their ambiguous location with regard to the central capital-labour

relation. That is, classes are to be seen as representing the coincidence of a number of central characteristics. The middle strata are defined in terms of inconsistent economic characteristics, or as Cottrell puts it, of overlapping dichotomies. That is, the middle strata have positions which overlap in an inconsistent way with the two major class positions which identify the basic dichotomy. The point is that once the characteristics which define economic position are disaggregated, it is possible to identify segments of the population according to the aggregation of different independent variables or variable combinations.

This movement towards disaggregation of variables, implying a disaggregated conception of social classes, is also the key to reassessing the notion that social being determines consciousness. The practical point is that this framework would give good baseline data for qualitative research into ideas, values, ideologies, and viewpoints of different segments of the population which could be precisely identified. In summary, using a complex conception of social class whereby variations in class circumstances can be more precisely identified enables the researcher to identify more exactly which aspects of class circumstances could be more accurately linked to which aspects of consciousness.

A number of criteria could be introduced to precisely identify a segment of the population which displayed high degrees of homogeneity in a number of aspects of their 'in work' and 'out of work' circumstances and demographic characteristics. Then, the researcher could pursue the extent to which this homogeneity of circumstances corresponds to a homogeneity of forms of social consciousness. Then, the criteria could be varied so that comparisons could be made. For example, our group could be defined in terms of criteria whereby all members must be: domestic labourers, unpaid, women, married to productive factory workers, living in cities. This defines a female segment of the urban industrial working class. The out of work circumstances of another segment of the working class, single women working in factory-proletarian positions, could be compared with the former group.

The general point is that contemporary class theorists are moving towards a disaggregated conceptualisation of class. The Framework for Socio-Economic Classification corresponds with this development. By breaking down 'occupations' into characteristics, and 'industrial activities' into characteristics and stages, segments of the population could be comprehensively identified and compared. A Framework for Socio-Economic Classification would cater for different research interests and for the examination and testing of various social theories and hypotheses.

CONCLUSION

FSEC could become used as a flexible tool for economic and social research and planning. Its potential uses and applications are many and varied. I have only given a few brief illustrations of the sort of complex questions which could be empirically examined using such a framework. Such a framework opens up a whole new range of fields which can be precisely and empirically examined. Ultimately, the FSEC could open up a whole host of ways in which researchers and planners could more accurately identify the characteristics of the economic and social structure of New Zealand society, and the differing characteristics of the collectivities of people distributed throughout this structure.

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Epistemology and politics in social science

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In this paper, the relationship between epistemology and politics is discussed and some support for the claim that there is a strong connection between the two is provided. Throughout the paper arguments developed by Russell Keat in **The Politics of Social Theory** (1981) are used and critiqued, as a basis upon which to develop the argument. More specifically, I set out to refute Keat's claim to have shown that:

> the criteria of validity for scientific theories involve no reference to the acceptance or rejection
> of particular moral or political commitments : whether a theory is true or false can be deter-
> mined independently of such normative standpoints. (Ibid: 18)

The ostensive content of **The Politics of Social Theory** is a critical discussion of Habermas's peculiar version of critical social theory, and his interpretation of Freud and psychoanalytic theory in terms of this view. However, what Keat is especially keen to criticise is Habermas's claim that there exists a unity between epistemology, social theory, values or interests, and political practice. In fact his discussion of Habermas and critical social theory is, to a considerable extent, merely a platform for a generalized attack on all those theorists — mainly Marxist or neo-Marxist — who have maintained that there is a strong connection between epistemology and politics. Keat's view 'is that there is little if any connection between the two' (op. cit.: viii) and he develops his critique of Habermas's position in order to defend this view which is, he claims, consistently both Weberian and socialist.

In what follows I am not at all concerned with Keat's critique of Habermas's interpretation of Freud and psychoanalytic theory. Indeed, Habermas's revision of the epistemology and politics connection itself is of interest only to the extent that a discussion of it is required to critique Keat's own position on value-freedom. Nor am I interested in pursuing an argument as to whether Keat's position on this is really the same as that of Weber (although, as a matter of fact, I think that with respect to most aspects of the value-freedom debate discussed here their positions are very similar). Instead, I am concerned to show that Keat's arguments in defence of his position of value-freedom are, for a variety of reasons, unconvincing, and that his belief in the possibility of separating epistemological issues from politics is erroneous.

In general, Keat claims to be 'sympathetic to the project of a social theory which, guided by certain values, is aimed at contributing towards the transformation of social reality'. (op. cit.: 9) Nevertheless, he believes that the conception of the nature of social theory and its relationship to political practice developed by critical theorists is essentially mistaken. The root of the error is, he claims, the critical theorists' critique of positivism which provides them with a starting point for the development of their own position. In Keat's view this critique is flawed due to a confusion, or running together, of a number of distinct elements which, together, are taken to be characteristic of positivism by critical theorists and others. Keat claims 'that what they call 'positivism' in fact consist of a number of distinct claims, which have quite complex logical and historical relationships to one another'. (op. cit.: 12) He goes on to distinguish

> four doctrines, each of which may not unreasonably be termed 'positivist' . . . 'scientism',
> 'the positivist conception of science', 'scientific politics', and 'value-freedom'.
>
> (op. cit.: 15)

Keat defines the first three of these 'positivist' doctrines as follows:

(1)   'scientism' (S) is 'the view that science alone represents a genuine form of human knowledge' (op. cit.: 16);

(2)   'The positivist conception of science' (PS) is that view of science which
>   aims at the explanation and prediction of observable phenomena by showing that these
>   are instances of universal laws that apply in all regions of space and time

and where
>   The truth or falsity of statements intended to express such laws is determined solely
>   by their logical relationships to other, non-universal statements that describe particular
>   observable 'data' (op. cit.: 17);

(3)   'scientific politics' (SP) is that position which advocates as the ideal
>   the use of scientific knowledge to provide rational solutions to all problems concerning
>   the organization of society, and to free such decisions from influences of a non-scienti-
>   fic (and thus supposedly non-rational) kind. (op. cit.: 18)

However, the last of the four 'positivist' doctrines identified by Keat, that of 'value-freedom' (VF) requires a more complicated definition incorporating two different aspects of the separation of science and values:[1]

(4)   (i)   the criteria of validity for scientific theories involve no reference to the acceptance or rejection of particular moral or political commitments: whether a theory is true or false can be determined independently of such normative standpoints. (VF_1);

and   (ii)   It is not possible to support political or moral judgements solely by means of scientific knowledge, so people may agree on the relevant scientifically establishable claims, yet legitimately disagree about the desirability of what is advocated in such judgements. (VF_2) (op. cit.: 18)

It is with regard to the last doctrine of value-freedom that Keat and the critical theorists part company. Keat shares their opposition to the first three positivist doctrines, but he does not share their opposition to the doctrine of value-freedom. More specifically, while he can understand the desire on the part of critical theorists to develop social theory or theories which can play a part in the transformation of social reality, he does not believe:

>   that, in order to achieve them, it is necessary to specify the criteria of validity of a critical
>   social theory in such a way that they are logically tied to acceptance of this normative stand-
>   point, and indeed to the successful outcome of practices guided by this kind of theory.
>   (op. cit.: 37)

In support of this belief Keat identifies a 'paradox' in the critical theorists' critique of positivism which, he believes, stems from their failure to distinguish the different elements of positivism and the various relationships between them. This 'paradox' consists of critical theorists' simultaneous rejection of both the

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1.   The first of these has been previously cited, but for the sake of clairty and ease of presentation I have re-cited it here.

ideal of scientific politics and the doctrine of value-freedom as features characteristic of positivism when, according to an alternative, Weberian perspective:

> the doctrine of value-freedom represents an alternative to the ideal of scientific politics, and is based upon an account of the relations between science and values that provides the basis for rejecting altogether that characteristic ideal. (op. cit.: 14).

On Keat's interpretation, Weber's arguments[2] support versions of both aspects of the doctrine of value-freedom as Keat defines them. Firstly, Weber maintains a strong version of VF_2 such that not only is it impossible to support value judgements solely by means of scientific knowledge but, further to this, normative issues are not open to rational (scientific) resolution at all.[3] Secondly, Weber upholds VF_1, that there are value-free criteria for scientific validity on the basis of which one can assess scientific propositions or theories independently of normative issues, although Weber adds the proviso that in the first instance the scientist's choice of subject-matter is necessarily determined by reference to normative standpoints. The paradox then, as Keat sees it, is that Weber, who is vehemently opposed to scientific politics in all of its forms, at the same time adheres to a version of the doctrine of value-freedom which is in some respects stronger than Keat himself is prepared to countenance. On the basis of the argument, Keat claims to have identified a crucial flaw in the critical theorists' critique of positivism, one that casts doubt not only on their analysis of positivism in particular but also on the critical theory project as a whole.

However, if we look at the details of Keat's discussion with respect to these claims, we find that the relationships between scientific politics and value-freedom are only partially examined. A more careful examination reveals that this 'paradox' which Keat identifies in the critical theorists' critique of positivism consists of a conflict between the ideal of scientific politics and the second aspect of the doctrine of value-freedom only, that is between SP and FV_2. Consistent adherence to the ideal of using scientific knowledge to provide solutions to all social problems, thus liberating us from the necessity of employing non-scientific (and hence non-rational) means, requires that we reject the view that it is not posssible to support political or moral judgements solely by means of scientific knowledge. Indeed, it is on the basis of this argument that Weber denies the possibility of realising the ideal of scientific politics. But advocacy of the ideal of scientific politics is perfectly consistent with (although it does not entail) adherence to FV_1, the view that the criteria of validity for scientific propositions and theories are independent of normative standpoints. One can consistently adhere to both doctrines (SP and VF_1), and many positivists have in fact done so.

Thus, while it may be too strong to claim that the two doctrines SP and VF_1 entail one another (as, for instance, Weber's position testifies) nevertheless, the two doctrines are certainly not contradictory, even though SP and VF_2 are.[4] Furthermore, given the history of positivism, there are good reasons for asserting that

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2.   These arguments are to be found in the **Methodology of the Social Sciences** (Weber, 1948) and, in particular, in 'The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality'' in **Sociology and Economics**; (pp. 1-47).

3.   In this respect Keat's position departs from that of Weber in that Keat wants to support the possibility of rational argument about normative issues, and does not regard them as non-rational just because they are not scientifically resolvable (op. cit.: 32, 42)

4.   I am not sure that critical theorists ever actually claim that the relationship between SP and either aspect of VF (VF_1 or VF_2) is one of entailment.

there are strong connections of one sort or another between them. The authority with which this type of scientific knowledge has been traditionally endowed, as a source of effective solutions to social problems, has to a considerable extent stemmed from its claim to generate knowledge on the basis of criteria which are independent of normative issues and commitments. Hence, it is claimed, scientific knowledge provides a solid or 'object' foundation from which to derive solutions to social problems. Consequently, there is nothing paradoxical in the critical theorists' characterization and subsequent rejection of positivism, on the basis of positivists' adherence to both the ideal of scientific politics and the doctrine of value-freedom, if the doctrine of value freedom is understood in terms of its first and not its second aspect. It is this possibility which is left untouched by Keat's analysis.

But there are other more important deficiencies in Keat's analysis which relate to the more ambitious claims he wants to make on the basis of this 'paradox'. Keat's aim in criticizing the critical theorists' case against positivism is to provide support for the doctrine of value-freedom as he defines it. What he actually does is as follows. He makes the claim that there is something paradoxical about critical theorists' opposition to positivism on the grounds that they attribute to positivists adherence to both the ideal of scientific politics and the doctrine of value-freedom. According to Keat there is a conflict involved in adherence to both of these doctrines simultaneously, and he uses a discussion of Weber's critique of scientific politics on the basis of Weber's commitment to value-freedom to illustrate his case. But Weber only makes use of the second aspect of the doctrine of value-freedom to deny the possibility of scientific politics which is not surprising since, as we have seen, the 'paradox', such as it is , exists only between SP and VF_2 and not between SP and VF_1. Thus, even is SP can be discredited on the basis of the truth or validity of VF_2 this does not provide an argument for VF_1 since VF_1 is neither entailed by, nor entails, SP, as Keat himself is well aware.[5]

Clearly then, Keat's identification of a 'paradox' in the critical theorists' case against positivism provides much less support for the doctrine of value-freedom than Keat implies it does. In particular his adherence to VF_1 is left, at this point, virtually undefended. The most that Keat might say on the basis of his assessment of the critical theorists' opposition to the positivist doctrines of scientific politics and value-freedom, is that their case loses some of its impact as a consequence of their failure to present and examine, with sufficient clarity and care, the different relationships there are between the ideal of scientific politics and the dual aspects of the doctrine of value-freedom.

However, to some extent Keat himself is guilty of this charge, since he appears to perpetuate those aspects of the confusion which might be to his advantage. Specifically, he uses the paradox he identifies between SP and VF_2 to discredit the critical theorists' opposition to VF in general, thus running together a number of issues which are in fact separate. It may be the case that critical theorists do believe (wrongly) that scientific politics entails both aspects of the value-freedom doctrine, whereas SP and VF_2 are in fact contradictory and SP and VF_1, while not contradictory, do not entail each other. But to point out this confusion and/or error in the critical theorists' case, and perhaps in the nature of positivists' beliefs, does not provide a case for VF. Most importantly Keat is still required to provide some independent arguments in support of VF_1

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5.   At one point Keat goes so far as to criticize the critical theorists' case against the doctrine of value-freedom on the grounds that they are led to reject the doctrine of value-freedom due to the mistaken belief 'that it either entails, or is entailed by, the ideal of a scientific politics' (op. cit.: 37)

if he is to dismiss the opposition of critical theorists (and other Marxists and neo-Marxists) to the doctrine of value-freedom. A critique of SP by way of VF$_2$ is not just insufficient to establish the validity of VF$_1$ but, for the most part, hardly to the point.

It is regrettable that there is a distinct lack of arguments throughout Keats discussion which are specifically designed to establish the claim that the criteria of scientific validity operate independently of normative standpoints. Most of the argumentation directly concerned with VF$_1$ is directed against the claim, made by numerous advocates of the doctrine of value-freedom and most notably by Weber, that the independence of scientific criteria of validity from normative issues and commitments requires that all 'normative elements must be expunged from the concepts of social science' (op. cit.: 39). I think Keat is quite right to argue that this is not necessary. Keat defends a position which he likens to that of Ernest Nagel. In his defence of value-freedom in social science Nagel draws 'a distinction between 'characterizing' and 'appraising' value-judgements' (op. cit.: 40) such that

> considered as a characterizing judgement, whether an organism is anaemic depends upon determining the number of red blood cells that are present . . . the degree of anaemia present in the organism is scientifically determinable. At the same time, though, the judgement that an organism is anaemic may also be an appraising one, indicating that this is to be seen as an undesirable or pathological condition . . . But the the acceptance of this appraising judgement is not presupposed by the truth of the characterizing judgement that the organism is anaemic. (loc. cit.)

Similarly, it may be correct to describe most known societies as 'patriarchal', where 'patriarchy' is defined:

> as a set of social relations between men, which have a material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women. (Hartmann, H. in Sargent (ed.): 1981: 14)

But no crticism or normative judgement of this state of affairs is necessarily intended although, as Keat goes on to point out (op. cit.: 41), very often when concepts such as 'hierarchical', 'domination', 'patriarchy' and the like are used, both kinds of judgements — descriptive and appraising — are intended.

I am inclined to extend Keat's (and perhaps Nagel's) argument however. I side with those who have made a much stronger argument to the effect that the use of normative concepts in scientific statements is not merely permissible, but often necessary. This is especially (although not exclusively) true of the social sciences, where in many instances an adequate characterization of some or other aspects of social life requires the use of normative concepts. Hence Roy Bhaskar's claim that, due to the 'value-impregnation' of the social sciences' subject-matter, while it may be possible to describe social phenomena in a value-neutral way it may not be adequate, and may even be incorrect, to do so. According to him 'one is here concerned with questions of **descriptive** (and more generally scientific) **adequacy**'. (1979: 75) Bhaskar cites (loc. cit.) a famous example from Isiah Berlin's work which clearly illustrates this point. We are asked to compare four statements of what happened in Germany under Nazi rule:

(a)   the country was depopulated;
(b)   millions of people died;
(c)   millions of people were killed;
(d)   millions of people were massacred.

All four statments are true. But (d) is the best description of what actually happened, because it is the most precise and accurate of the four statements. And it is the most precise and accurate just because it is evaluative. The subject-matter of social science is such that value-neutral descriptions are not always possible or adequate, and consequently we shoud not attempt to dislocate our subject from its value-laden context or deprive it of its value-impregnated content.

> Hence just as to define a foetus as an unborn human being is already to load the debate on abortion in a certain way, so to attempt to construct an index of fascism comparable to that of anaemia is . . . value-laden (because it functions so as to remove from our purview, in science, precisely that range of its implications internally related to objects that we value, such as human life). In short, not to call a spade a spade, in any human society, is to misdescribe it. (op.cit.: 78)

However, just because social science frequently uses, and perhaps requires the use of, normative concepts in its descriptions does not necessarily mean, as Keat points out, that the accuracy of such descriptions is precluded from scientific assessment on the basis of criteria logically independent of normative standpoints (assuming for a moment that there are criteria such as these):

> For the requirement that social theories can be assessed by value-independent criteria of validity does not entail the absence of normative concepts in the presentation of such theories.
>
> (op. cit.: 14)

But we are left wondering as to what, precisely these value-independent criteria might be, since Keat does not provide any further explicit discussion of them, because the bulk of Keat's arguments are in support of VF_2. For the most part I have no difficulty in accepting these arguments as valid. However, as it turns out, it is Keat's counter-arguments to objections to FV_2 which provide an interesting basis for the critique of VF_1.

Keat's arguments in defence of VF_2 take the form of a dismissal of the claim that normative judgements can be derived from social theories. His position is that while scientific knowledge may be relevant to the process of making normative judgements, and while it may in fact provide support for some of the normative judgements we do make, nevertheless it is not possible to support normative judgements **solely** by means of scientific knowledge. In other words, considerations other than scientific ones will always have a part to play in our moral and political decisions. So, for example, Marx's (scientific) theory of industrial capitalism and the specific applications of this analysis by contemporary Marxists to twentieth century historical sites such as Britain or France might reveal the revolutionary potential of the working classes in those countries. But this will not, on its own, convince the working classes in those countries to try to tap this potential. They may, on the basis of other consideration, choose to pursue change through reformist measures, or not at all. Nor will it tell them precisely (how) they should attempt to tap that potential, if they should decide to do so. There are numerous possibilities; agitation by way of the political party system; strikes; non-violent and violent protest; and so on. And, finally, argument on the basis of scientific knowledge alone is unlikely to persuade those members of the working classes in France and Britain who are reluctant to align themselves with working class struggle that they should become involved. Thus, to use Keat's own words — 'Scientific statements can be, and often are, logically relevant to, without entailing normative judgements'. (op. cit.: 44)

According to Keat, there are at least three ways in which scientific knowledge may play a role with respect to normative judgements. Firstly, some particular normative judgements depend on the truth or accuracy of a particular description of or item of knowledge about a person or situation to which the judgements

pertain. So, for instance, to use Keat's illustrations (ibid.), we are unlikely to appraise someone's behaviour as dishonest if we know that they did not intend to deceive. Similarly, we are unlikely to accept the political judgement that legislative changes will see the successful implementation of equal pay rates with respect to men and women, if we know that many women are in fact still receiving less remuneration than men for doing similar work. However, while the truth or accuracy of such knowledge claims is necessary for the attendant normative judgement it is not sufficient for it. For the truth or accuracy of the descriptive statement does not mean we must accept the appraising judgement as well.

Secondly, scientific knowledge is relevant to normative judgements to the extent to which it enables us to predict the outcomes of various courses of action, and hence predict the consequences of acting in a particular way. However, as illustrated earlier with respect to working class revolutionary potential, scientific knowledge cannot, on its own, determine either what we are to do or what would be best for us to do. Decisions as to how we are to act always involve us in considering factors other than scientific ones.[6]

Thirdly, Keat suggests that if we accept the principle that 'ought implies can' then scientific knowledge is important in assessing whether or not a normative judgement (political or moral) is realizeable or merely utopian. This third point is, I think, a very important one, and one which Keat does not appear to understand in its full implications. I return to it later in the paper. Apart from this argument, I can find little cause for disagreement with Keat's position at this stage. However, he then goes on to examine a number of objections to his position and here in one crucial respect his counter-arguments lack credibility.

Keat identifies a common objection to the doctrine of value-freedom offered by critical theorists and others (Marxists, neo-Marxists, and some non-Marxists). This is the claim, based on the possibility of scientific 'critique of ideology', that

> scientific theories are necessarily potentially critical of social reality, to the extent that the latter involves beliefs that can be shown scientifically to be false, internally inconsistent, and so on. In addition, if these defective beliefs can be explained by reference to other features of social reality, these too are to be criticized; and activity aimed at the removal of these features, and thus also of defective beliefs and activities based upon them, is thereby shown to be desirable. (op. cit.: 46-47)

Keat raises two different counter-arguments against objections to the doctrine of value-freedom on this basis. Firstly, he rejects the claim that the possiblity of scientific critique of ideology undermines his general position on the relationship between scientific knowledge and normative judgements. Secondly, he provides an argument to show that the possibility of scientific critique of ideology entails neither the principle of freedom from ideology nor any additional socialist principles. I deal with the second of these counter-arguments first because I think it is quite easy to show that Keat is right. I then move on to consider the first counter-argument which has, I believe, more important implications for the value-freedom debate, and in which Keat has moved a little too swiftly.

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6. The consideration of non-scientific factors when making normative judgements does not necesarily mean that these are irrational however, contra Weber's position.

Keat's second counter-argument centres on the claim that social theory 'is not merely 'critical', but 'critical in a distinctively socialist manner'. (op. cit.: 47) The suggestion is not just:

> that there is a necessary link between the practice of social theory, and the acceptance of a substantive political ideal: namely, that social relationships should be 'ideology-free', and that relationships which require for their existence and reproduction the presence of ideological beliefs are **ipso facto** to be rejected. normatively, and eliminated through an appropriate political practice. (op. cit.: 48)

But, as well, there is a further claim that the critique provided by a scientific social theory supports or provides 'the basis for a distinctively socialist conception of critical social theory'. (ibid)

As far as I can see, Keat's reservations about both these claims are entirely in order. A commitment to socialist principles such as, for instance, the abolition of private property no more follows from the principle of freedom from ideology than the latter principle follows from the scientific critique of ideology. One might accept scientific analyses which show that many of our everyday beliefs are false or, at the very least, inconsistent and nevertheless there be no necessity, felt or otherwise, to accept the normative principle of freedom from ideology, let along socialism. Indeed one might, as have some neo-Marxist thinkers (e.g. Althusser), see ideology as an integral and necessary aspect of any form of society. However, when it comes to Keat's claim that the possibility of scientific critique of ideology goes no way towards undermining his general position on the relationships between scientific knowledge and normative judgements, I am less convinced. Part of Keat's problem is, I think, that he states the opposition's position too strongly and consequently renders their case more simplistic than it is.

With respect to VF₂, Keat's real objection all along has been to the notion that normative judgements can be arrived at or supported on the basis of scientific knowledge alone. Clearly this is not the case. Other variables of a non-scientific (but not necessarily irrational) nature will play a part. He has already conceded that it is possible for scientific knowledge to be relevant to the assessment of normative judgements, even though the latter are not derivable from the former. Furthermore, he has no quarrel with the proposition 'that scientific statements can be critical in the sense of challenging some kinds of assumptions involved in social practices'. (op. cit.: 47) What he fails to consider is that the extent to which scientific statements can be critical or challenging, and the degree to which they might be (along with other factors) relevant to the assessment of normative judgements, is for the most part dependent on the nature of scientific statements and theories themselves. It may be the case that no normative judgements can be arrived at solely on the basis of scientific knowledge. And it may well be the case that scientific judgements do not entail particular normative judgements. But nevertheless, it is also the case, I believe, that the nature of scientific knowledge sets limits on, and hence to some degree determines, the extent to which it will be relevant to the formulation of normative judgements and useful as a basis for social critique and social transformation. Not all forms of social scientific knowledge are of equal relevance or value with respect to political and moral judgements. Some forms of social scientific knowledge, by virtue of their (superior) model of explanation, provide a better basis for social critique, and are thus able to identify a wider range of possible courses for future action.

For instance, the adoption of empiricist criteria of scientific validity, such that all valid scientific knowledge must be based on experience, means that both positivist sociologists and their idealist counterparts, interpretive sociologists, are unable to recognize the multi-dimensioned nature of social reality. That is, they fail to make the necessary distinctions between our experience, which is a subject of that which actually occurs in the concrete historical process; that which actually occurs, which is a subset of social reality considered as a

totality; and the totality which includes essential aspects of social reality which continue to exist independently of how and when they manifest themselves in actual concrete historical events. Consequently, both positivist and interpretive sociologists see sociological explanation as consisting of the identification of regularities or patterns in our experience of actual concrete historical events. The main difference between them relates to those aspects of the concrete historical process which each considers to be most important. Positivist sociologists favour behavioural features which are directly, or at least indirectly, observable, whereas interpretive sociologists opt for those internal features of human action, that is complexes of meaning, which we have access to only by way of our understanding.

Theoretical realists, on the other hand, reject both positivist and interpretive sociologists' modes of explanation. They do so on the grounds that neither can provide an adequate explanation of why things actually happen as they do, only descriptions of what does actually happen (usually or most of the time). Furthermore theoretical realists claim that both positivist and interpretive sociological theories exhibit a 'commitment to the actual' in virtue of their commonly shared commitment to empiricist criteria of scientific validity. Consequently, whether it is intended or not, positivist and interpretive theories of social reality are inherently conservative. This is because, in line with their allegiance to empiricist principles, positivist and interpretive sociologists produce knowledge which reflects the way things actually are at any point in space and time and do not, indeed cannot consistently consider the real, although perhaps unrealized, possibilities which exist for future forms of social organization, social action and so on. In contrast, theoretical realists pursue scientific explanations of what actually occurs in terms of the underlying structures of social reality considered as a totality, and the causal interactions between them. It is these structures which are held to be responsible for what actually occurs and the way in which we experience it. Social scientific knowledge then consists of causal explanations of concrete history in terms of the underlying structures (and their properties) of social reality. But, in the process of identifying these structures (and their properties) in order to explain what has actually occurred, or is actually occurring, one is also able to identify what would occur if these structures operated under a different set of conditions. As such, the very act of providing an explanation is also an act of laying the basis for effective intervention in the world.

Scientific knowledge, understood in this way, is inherently political. Its political character is not something we add later when utilizing that knowledge. Nor does it consist of specific political or moral directives of any kind, socialist or other. Rather its political character is an integral part of the way in which it is produced. Marx's method of analysing the capitalist mode of production provides a concrete illustration of the approach. According to Marx's analysis, the history of people, with the exception of primitive communism, has always been the history of class struggle and conflict. But he does not thereby commit himself to an account of human history which is confined to what has actually always or usually been the case, or is actually the case now under a capitalist mode of production. On the contrary, one of his major tasks is to investigate why such class struggle and conflict occurs under capitalism, so as to identify real possibilities for its transformation.

Variations in the degree to which different forms of scientific knowledge and hence different social (scientific) theories are politically and/or morally efficacious are not accidental. Rather they are directly related to the criteria of validity adopted by respective philosophies of science. So, while we may agree with Keat that normative judgements cannot be derived from scientific statements and/or theories, since it is not possible to support political or moral judgements on the basis of scientific knowledge alone, nevertheless we might still legitimately claim that there is a necessary link between the structure of scientific theories and normative judgements. Different social (scientific) theories have different normative implications, particularly with respect to social critique and the transformation of society.

It is important to be clear, however, as to the source of these normative implications. Certainly they do not arise as a consequence of the intentions of individual scientists or of the social scientific community. The claim is that different social scientific theories have different normative implications, whether or not the scientist or scientists involved in the development of the theory are aware of this, and regardless of what the professed politics (conservative or radical) of the scientist or scientists might be. One might still claim that positivism, as advocated for instance by Saint-Simon and other early French positivists, is intrinsically conservative in that it preserves the **status quo**, while acknowledging that this was not Saint-Simon's avowed intention. The conservatism originates at the level of epistemology, not at the level of individual intention. It may be of course that social scientists who are aware of the connections between different epistemologies and politics may adopt an epistemology consistent with their political views. But this is by no means always or even usually the case. There are numerous sociologists who would see themselves as committed to the dual aim of social critique and social transformation, who nevertheless practise forms of sociological inquiry which, at best, provide knowledge of only tangential interest to the pursuit of these goals.

Perhaps part of the problem is the terms in which the entire debate is couched. VF_1 is the claim that the criteria of validity for scientific theories involve no reference to the acceptance or rejection of particular moral or political commitments. I have already dealt with the significance of the term 'particular' earlier in the discussion. I agree with Keat that one cannot derive specific normative principles from scientific social theory, and that a commitment to socialist or some other set of political principles is not required in order to conduct social scientific inquiry. But the term 'commitment' is somewhat problematic, as is the phrase 'the acceptance or rejection of particular moral or political commitments'. Both are misleading in this context. For the acceptance or rejection of particular moral or political commitments on the part of social scientists is not really at issue here if this is understood as involving an explicit, intentional decision. I would be the first to agree that there are criteria of validity which can be used to determine the truth or accuracy of social theories independently of whether or not the scientist using them is aware of, much less accepts or rejects, the normative implications which are a consequence of their doing so. What I cannot accept is the claim that the truth or accuracy of a theory can be determined independently of any normative standpoint whatsoever. That the scientist is or is not aware, does or does not accept, the normative standpoints implicit in different epistemological frameworks, is, at least for the purposes of establishing the credibility or otherwise of VF_1, neither here nor there. It would be nice to think that social scientists are on the whole aware of the normative implications of conducting their inquiries according to a given set of criteria, but this is not required for there to be these implications. At any rate such a state of affairs is unlikely to ensue as long as acceptance of VF_1 continues to dominate our thinking concerning these and related issues.

What I am claiming, then, is that there are normative implications which originate as a consequence of the structure of scientific knowledge itself; that is, as a result of the criteria which determine what is and is not to count as valid scientific knowledge. That Keat recognises this as a different, and perhaps more fundamental, level at which to pursue the analysis of the relationship between epistemology and politics is evidenced by his acknowledgement that Habermas's critique of positivism and his subsequent development of the theory of knowledge-constitutive interests

> is intended to show the normative presuppositions of philosophical accounts of scientific knowledge itself . . . as distinct from the norms presupposed or entailed by particular social theories that may operate with the same general epistemological assumption. It thus addresses the question of the relations between science and values at a significantly different level of analysis (op. cit.: 65).

I believe that it is at this level of analysis that a fundamental connection between epistemology and politics exists, although I think Keat is right to reject the way in which Habermas construes this relationship in his theory of knowledge — constitutive interests.

Habermas differentiates three forms of knowledge: empirical-analytic science; historical—hermeneutic science; and critical knowledge. The object-domain of each is constituted by a different interest — the technical, practical, and emancipatory respectively. These constitutive interests not only determine the forms of knowledge but also the possibilities for their use. Consequently, contra the claims of some, and those of positivists in particular, 'scientific knowledge is not neutral normatively; and its objects do not belong to an independent reality'. (op. cit.: 66)

Much of what Keat has to say about Habermas's work in this area is acceptable to me. Habermas's theory of knowledge-constitutive interests is fundamentally flawed as a consequence of the Kantian epistemology he adopts, and the limited ontology this generates. These limitations are especially damaging when considered in relation to the critical role which Habermas wants theory generated on the basis of this epistemology to perform.

As Keat points out, Habermas's position closely follows that of Kant in a number of respects.

> First, he accepts that there is a basic dichotomy between subject and object, regarding it as plausible and necessary to postulate the existence of an independently existing externality. . .

> Second, Habermas also accepts from Kant that this externality only becomes an 'object' for us — that is, an object of knowledge — when mediated through a specific set of basic categories: these categories, imposed by the subject, are thus constitutive of what he terms 'the objectivity of the possible objects of experience'. (op. cit.: 73-74)

On an epistemology such as this the notion of 'an independently existing externality' acts as an unattainable ideal marking the limits to our knowledge claims. There is a world which exists independently of us but given our limitations as knowing subjects we cannot know anything about it. Instead we are confined to 'objects' as they appear to us. There may be a relationship between the two 'worlds' but we cannot possibly know what it is. In fact, strictly speaking, we cannot know that there is a world which exists independently of us. Habermas's epistemology then is more or less a direct re-working of Kant's. The main line of divergence consists in Habermas's denial

> that the object-constituting categories are imposed by a transcendental consciousness. . .
> insisting instead that they are imposed by the human species. (op. cit.: 74)

This epistemology involves Habermas in proposing an ontology which is severely restricted on the basis of 'the limitations of a categorical framework that is itself generated by (among other things) the interest of the human species in technical control'. (op. cit.: 76) These limitations are far from unchallengeable on their own account. But, in addition, in the absence of an ontology comprising objects whose existence is independent of our knowing or experiencing them, Habermas's theory exhibits a number of internal inconsistencies. All of these stem from the same root, which is his fundamental confusion of epistemological and ontological matters such that the nature of the latter is determined by that of the former.

Keat identifies three inconsistencies of this kind. Firstly Keat cites McCarthy's criticism of Habermas to the effect that Habermas's claim 'that nature is constituted as an object by the human species' technical interest'

would appear tó be in conflict with another claim 'that this species has emerged through an evolutionary process' since this latter claim must involve a conception 'of nature as pre-existent in relation to the human species'. (op. cit.: 78) On similar sorts of grounds Keat criticizes both Habermas's denial of the possibility of a 'hermeneutics of nature' and Habermas's concept of systematically distorted communication. Both of these require a conception of the externality (nature and humans) as ontologically independent of the categorical framework whose specific applications it determines.

Keat's criticisms of the inconsistency in Habermas's position with respect to the latter concept of systematically distorted communication are particularly important for the present discussion. According to Habermas, systematically distorted communication is the outcome of the failure to apply correctly two different interpretations (empirical-analytic and historical-hermeneutic) of the categorical schema (space, time, substance and causality) to social relationships. On the one hand, according to an empirical-analytic interpretation determined by the technical interest, social relationships are construed causally and hence appear 'reified' as 'relations between things'. (op. cit.: 86) On the other hand, a historical-hermeneutic interpretation, determined by the practical interest, conceives of social relationships as being 'immediately intelligible relationships between autonomus subjects'. (ibid) Both forms of social science are, according to Habermas, inadequate for the analysis of social relationships which are in fact quasi-causal rather than purely causal or immediately intelligible. An adequate analysis of social relationships requires, then, that both

> be replaced by a critical social theory which both detects, and aids in overcoming, their quasi-causal character, so ushering in the non-repressive social order of autonomy and intelligibility. (ibid.)

However, as Keat goes on to point out:

> the possibility of discriminating between causal, quasi-causal and hermeneutically intelligible relationships surely presupposes that the differentiation of these object-domains is **not** determined by the operation of different constitutive interests, for if it were, there could be no basis for criticizing those forms of social science . . . positivist and hermeneutic.
>
> (op. cit.: 86-87)

Keat is on undeniably solid ground in criticizing Habermas in this manner. However he goes too far with the conclusions he draws on the basis of these criticisms. Habermas's theory of knowledge-constitutive interests seeks to dismiss positivism's conception of science and its view of the relationship between theory and practice on the grounds of its false 'objectivism'. According to Keat it is only on the basis of 'an objectivist, realist' (ibid.) philosophy of science that a critical social theory could achieve its stated aims of social critique and the transformation of society. He defines objectivism as consisting of

> two related elements. First, there is the belief that the objects of scientific knowledge exist independently of the epistemological framework on the basis of which they are investigated. Second, there is the claim that such knowledge is value-free, in the sense that the validation of its claims is independent of the acceptance of normative standpoints.
>
> (op. cit.: 66)

Habermas rejects both of these elements of the objectivist position; Keat accepts both. But we need to ask — How related are they? I contend that it is quite possible to accept the first and nevertheless reject the second argument, and the fact that Habermas can be shown to be wrong to reject the first does not mean that Keat is right in accepting the second. The claim that the objects of scientific inquiry are independent

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of the process of our knowing or experiencing them does not vindicate any claims as to the value-neutrality of the knowing process, or the criteria of validity which informs it.

The inadequacy of Keat's criticisms of Brian Fay's position on value-freedom goes some of the way towards illustrating this point. Fay argues, similarly to Habermas, that positivist social science is constituted by the technical interest. His major grounds for doing so relate to the structural identity of explanation and prediction in the deductive-nomological (D-N) model of explanation adopted by most positivists. Scientific explanation and prediction on this model have an identical formal structure such that 'what we need to know in order to predict something is the same as what we need to know to explain something'. (op. cit.: 69) Keat's reply to this is that rather than being seen as a defining feature of explanation according to the D-N model, symmetry of prediction and explanation should be seen as a **consequence** of the way in which explanation is defined according to that model. According to the D-N model, to explain something is to subsume it under a universal law which consists of a non-accidental regular relationship between empirically accessible phenomena which are understood as existing independently of us. A (non-accidental) consequence of the nature of these laws is that they not only provide the basis for explanation but also for prediction and control:

> So although it is true that what we need to know in order to predict something is the same as what we need to know to explain something, this is not because explanation **consists** in the possibility of prediction, but because it consists in the knowledge of laws, which can be used for both explanatory and predictive purposes. (ibid.)

The problem with this response to Fay is that it merely pushes our queries back to another level, rather than dispelling them. For it is by no means obvious that scientific laws conceived in this way can act as adequate explanations. And if we do not think they can, then we might well ask why such a view of scientific laws developed in the first place, since there are alternative ways in which we might conceive of them which do not entail the symmetry of explanation and prediction. Against the background of the paucity and unsatisfactory nature of social scientific explanations based upon law-based predictions, this does not appear to be an unreasonable question.

Historically I think Keat is on flimsy ground in trying to deny any explicit connection between the development of positivist philosophy of science, with its non-accidental regularity conception of laws, and the desire to predict in order to control. There is no doubt that the promise of control, or at least of some practical advantage, facilitated the adoption of this sort of view of scientific laws and explanation. However, understood in another way, we can support Keat's misgivings about the move from acceptance of the claim that (positivist) scientific theories provide the basis for prediction and control to acceptance of a different claim — that it is the possibility of this use that is constitutive of scientific knowledge. The interest-relatedness of scientific knowledge is not necessarily intentional, or even known, by either individual scientists or the scientific community, much less by the society as a whole. But, as a matter of fact, it is the possibility of its use as a basis for prediction and control, and all the practical advantages this involves, which is most often cited as a justification for scientific activity by scientists and non-scientists alike.

Yet there are alternative views of science, scientific laws, and scientific explanations which have consequences other than the possibility of prediction and control. For instance, return for a moment to the principle of 'ought implies can', and Keat's suggestion that scientific knowledge might play a role in assessing whether or not a normative judgement (political or moral) is realizable or merely utopian. With a positivist view of scientific explanation, the role scientific knowledge can play with respect to consideration of this kind is that of providing 'conditional predictions' on the basis of universal laws, which report non-accidental

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regular relationships between empirically accessible phenomena, thought to exist independently of us. However, according to a theoretical realist conception of scientific laws these do not report what actually occurs or exists. Rather, they are statements about the properties and forms of activity characteristic of the things of the world, whether or not these have manifested themselves in actual concrete historical process. Scientific laws are then statements about potentialities, not actualities; they tell us what is (and is not) possible regardless of whether these possibilities have ever been realized or are likely to be realized under prevailing conditions. Of course scientific laws conceived in this way will not tell us what we are to make of these possibilities, or determine for us what it is that we will eventually do. Nevertheless we can see that the broadness of range in our future options is very much dependent on the type of scientific knowledge which is provided and this, in turn, depends upon what grounds one accepts a theory or statement as scientifically valid. Clearly, then, if one's professed aim is social critique and the transformation of society, some forms of scientific knowledge are more useful than others.

An extended discussion of the dominant philosophies of social science and their different normative implications is not possible here. What this paper does do is go some of the way towards establishing firstly, that there are no value-free criteria of scientific validity and secondly, the sorts of grounds upon which this claim rests. There are a number of flaws in Keat's discussion of this issue. To begin with, he relies far too much on the identification of flaws and inconsistencies in the Habermassian position to make his case.

Although his criticisms of these are more often than not correct, they are usually not sufficient to establish the claim that scientific knowledge is value-free, in that the criteria for scientific validity are independent of the 'acceptance' of normative standpoints. Furthermore, although Keat acknowledges that there are a number of different philosophies of science, and therefore presumably different criteria of scientific validity, he does not allow this insight to play any major part in his understanding of the relationship between scientific knowledge and normative judgements. Finally, the fundamental flaw in Keat's position is that at no stage does he spell out precisely what these value-free criteria of scientific validity actually are. His entire argument appears to presuppose the existence or at least the possibility of a set of value-free criteria of scientific validity. But it is this very claim which his arguments are supposed to defend.

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'Video nasties': censorship and the politics of popular culture[1]

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This paper is concerned with the recent New Zealand debate over video cersorship, a debate culminating in the Video Recordings Bill to come before Parliament in mid-1986. We examine the reasons for the emergence of this debate and the central issues at stake. Some reference is also made to the positions of the major interest groups involved in the debate. The debate focused on claims and assumptions about the negative effects of 'video nasties' on the young, the question of the legitimate limits of state intervention in the private sphere, and the nature and effects of 'pornography'. The construction of the debate in such terms has arguably made it a moral panic: an issue out of proportion to the actual scale and nature of the problem. (Cohen, 1980) The consequent opting for a State-imposed legal solution to video censorship is, I wish to argue, the wrong approach to resolving what is really an issue of cultural politics, particularly concerned with the social construction of sexuality.

CULTURE

In this argument, 'culture' is viewed as:

> the processes by which sense is made of the world, of consciousness and feeling and the forms in which they are expressed. These processes take place in the context of struggle, conflict and negotiation amongst, in particular, classes, genders and 'races'. The outcome of these exchanges is taken to be the reproduction or restructuring of relations of domination and subordination. (Sites, 1985: 2)

Culture, then, is understood to be inherently political. 'Popular culture' is simply an extension of the above definition referring to those cultural practices current among, or accepted by, people generally.[2]

WHY A VIDEO DEBATE NOW?

A number of factors explain the current emergence of debate and concern about video censorship. Firstly, there has been a rapid expansion of ownership of video cassette recorders (VCR's) since the removal of import licensing restrictions in December, 1980. An extensive study of New Zealander's ownership and usage

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1. Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the Cultural Studies In-House Workshop, Massey University, October 1985; the NZARE Conference, Auckland, December 1985; and at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, January 1986. I am grateful to the participants at these presentations for their comments and suggestions. I am also grateful to the Film Censor's Office for providing access to their files on video censorship. A 'final' draft of this paper, prepared for New Zealand Sociology, was usefully commented on by Martin Barker, Steve Maharey, Keith Ridler, and Ivan Snook.

2. Popular culture has frequently been seen in Arnoldian terms as a form of barbarism appearing to oppose 'the best that has been thought and said', or, from the perspective of the Frankfurt School, as homogeneous mass art and an instrument of oppression. Both these views are rejected here, with culture instead being considered as an active process involving a tension between social structure and human agency. For overviews of the various theoretical perspectives on 'culture', see Swingewood, 1977; Williams, 1981; Bigsby, 1976.

of VCR's showed that in mid-1985 VCR 'household penetration' stood at around 21%. (cited *Televiews*, 1986: 30) Industry spokespersons have claimed that in the Auckland area one in three households now have VCR's.

One can discern in comments on this development a feeling that this mass usage has been accompanied by mass tastes. Little research has been done into video hire patterns in New Zealand, but one of the few findings to emerge is that in lower socio-economic groups the rate of hire is disproportionately high. This group, claimed the head of one large rental video chain, is the major audience for the ultra-violent videos:

> They're the action videos. We tend to put them into locations in South Auckland, Porirua, at Tokoroa, the East Coast . . . (Campbell, 1984:18).

The upsurge in VCR ownership has been matched by - and may be in a symbiotic relationship to - a marked increase in the range and quantity of videotapes available to the New Zealand public for private use. This has placed pressure on the Customs Department and the Film Censor, the two Government agencies most directly concerned. The most recent report of the Customs Department observed that 'the traffic in imported indecent material has continued to cause concern'. The Department's officers viewed approximately 14,000 videotapes in the 1984-1985 year, double the figure for the previous year. (*AJHR*, 1985, B.24:23) In the case of the Film Censor's office, importers and distributors are increasingly referring videotapes for a classification. In the 1984-1985 year, the Censor dealt with only 35 videos, but during the 1985-1986 year, 216 videos were examined.

It is important to note that very few of the videos viewed by either the Censor or Customs have been declared 'indecent'. Of the 14,000 viewed by customs (in 1984-85), only 342 were seized as being indecent. Furthermore, when contested, some of these have been subsequently passed by the courts or the Film Censor. As a Government Interdepartmental report concluded: 'The question is whether such a small number of videotapes constitute a level of indecency which warrants Government taking further action on their availability.' (*Report*, 1985, paragraph 1-2) Subsequent developments showed the official answer to be 'yes', though, as we shall see, the issues involved are complex.

A factor compounding the issue is the very confused situation regarding responsibility for video censorship. The Indecent Publications Act, 1963 covers all videotapes which have not been approved for public exhibition (referring them to the District Court); The Films Act, 1983 includes videotapes for public exhibition. 'Indecent' is defined in the 1963 act as:

> describing, depicting, expressing or otherwise dealing with matters of sex, horror, crime cruelty, or violence in a manner that is **injurious to the public good**. (my emphasis).

The criterion 'injurious to the public good' is also used in the Films Act, 1983, and is determined by consideration of similar factors.

It is immediately obvious that the terms 'indecent' and 'injurious to the public good' are inherently problematic. It has been argued that 'These terms are used precisely by the [Indecent Publications] Tribunal, the courts and the Chief Censor in relation to the specific publication/film under consideration.' (*Report*, 1985, paragraph 4.2) This claim sounds rather hollow in the light of conflicting District Court discussions on the same videos and the fact that the Customs and Police Departments have had to develop their own informal guidelines for doubtful material. Since this is an area where the standards of the community at large change over a period of time, precedent is of limited validity.

During 1985 it became clear that the various Government departments involved shared a desire for more authoritative guidelines on the treatment of videos. This desire was shared by a number of interest groups, the most important being Women Against Pornography, the Society for Protection of Community Standards,

and the New Zealand Video Retailers' Association. As we shall see, these groups differ markedly in their analyses and suggested solutions to the question of video censorship. Press coverage of the video debate showed a marked increase during 1985, with comment ranging from a reasoned discussion of the issues involved (*Evening Standard*, 27 September 1985, editorial), to alarmist claims of an impending 'Fornication Feast in Videos!' (*New Zealand Truth*, 1 October 1985:5).

Fueling the New Zealand debate have been developments overseas. In the United Kingdom the Video Recordings Act, 1984 was passed amidst considerable controversy. The sponsors based much of their argument on research that has subsequently been seriously questioned, while the operation of the Act has already created serious difficulties. (Barker, 1984) In Australia, the Commonwealth and the State Governments have also introduced legislation covering the sale and hire of videotapes. (*Report*, 1985, Annex A) At the Federal level in Canada, video censorship has been linked to the issues of pornography and prostitution. (Fraser Commission, 1985) The Ontario Board of Censors, the most influential of the Canadian provincial bodies, in late 1984 had its powers expanded to include the right to censor films and videos intended for noncommercial and private use. Such overseas debates and legislation are frequently referred to by the New Zealand groups and government departments interested in video censorship.

WHAT IS A VIDEO NASTY?

The video debate has been characterized by a striking lack of specificity, with little intelligent critical examination of the particular titles frequently referred to. The critics of video nasties have largely subscribed to a capsule description based on a few videos. In the debate in the United Kingdom, papers complained of 'films which show castration, sadistic attacks on women and violence including the use of chain saws and electric drills', and of 'films which specialize in extreme violence, sadism, mutilation and cannibalism'. (cited Petley, 1984) Recognizable in such descriptions are several videos available in New Zealand which have attracted attention such as, **I Spit on Your Grave**, a rape-revenge story, and **Driller Killer** and **Texas Chain Saw Massacre**, the titles of which are fairly self-explanatory.

Instead of a close examination of particular videos there has emerged a vague yet pervasive video nasty stereotype. This consists, says Barker of 'bad acting, bad filming; no real story line; endless successions of scenes of sex and violence, with no reason for showing them; everything cheap and poorly done.' (cited Petley, 1984) While I don't want to argue here for video nasties on aesthetic grounds, it must be conceded that among the execrable are films of considerable cinematic merit.

Linked to this stereotype is the serious misconception that video nasties represent some kind of homogeneous category or self-contained genre. As Barker notes: 'Quite different kinds of films have been labelled as 'nasty' without regard to form, narrative meaning or skill of making.' (cited Petley, 1984) A British Director of Public Prosecution's continually updated 'list of video cassettes which have been successfully proceeded against under the Obscene Publications Act 1959 or are subject to pending proceedings' is a clear repudiation of stereotypes. The list (Petley, 1984) includes science fiction, crime, and documentary, in addition to the expected assortment of horror films (the splatter/nasty genre). As Petley notes: 'Such is the diversity of the sixty or so films on the list that it is impossible to generalize about them in any but the vaguest, most pointless fashion.'(ibid)

New Zealand comment on video nasties illustrates the definitional problems involved, although there does appear to be a coalescing of objections around two types of film: (i) those depicting violence against women, as in **I Spit on Your Grave**; and (ii) non-sexual ultraviolence, as in **Driller Killer**. (See WAP, undated; Campbell, 1984; and press statements by Patricia Bartlett) Despite the concern, however, the objects of the

debate - the video nasties - have been largely conspicuous by their absence. As occurred in Britain, discussion of the videos themselves has been either highly generalized, or absurdly selective. We have, for example, Patricia Bartlett, of the Society for the Promotion of Community Standards, with the liberal aid of the fast-forward control, showing 'the nastier bits' of **Driller Killer** (reported *Evening Standard*, 10 October 1985); while attempts to show compilations of 'violent and pornographic excerpts from videotapes' to MP's were only stalled when such video tapes were rejected by the Film Censors office. (Customs Minister Margaret Shields, *Dominion*, 3 October 1985) The sweeping assertions of the supporters of stronger video censorship can be seen at their most extreme in the comments of Mr Tapsell, the Minister for Internal Affairs. While admitting that he had not personally seen any of the videos in question, later in the same interview he claimed that 'people do not realise the depravity of some of this material.' (Insight, 1984)

THE ISSUES

The debate surrounding video censorship has once again raised a number of issues and claims related to censorship. While these are interrelated, four are distinguished here in the hope that clarity of analysis will be enhanced.

(1) Behind closed doors

The video debate is often framed in terms of a distinction between the public and private spheres, a distinction involving the question of the legitimate limits of State interference in everyday life. It is generally argued that a balance must be struck between people's right to see what they want and 'the public good': a balance between 'prudity and nudity'. (*Dominion*, 3 October, 1985)

The public/private distinction has been advanced as an argument against censorship:

> Some of the video sex is pretty raunchy stuff, but most of it is destined for private exhibition on home videos. Who says the state can determine what is acceptable conduct behind closed doors in the homes? (*Evening Post*, editorial, 10 November, 1985)

A modified version of this is the view of Arthur Everard, the Chief Film Censor, who has consistently argued that 'by and large ordinary mature rational viewers ought to be willing to take the responsibility for their viewing into their own hands, it being clearly only material which is 'injurious to the public good' which should be subject to restriction.' (letter, 2 April, 1985. Film Censor's Office, File Cen. 3/15/22)

The Films Censorship Board of Review has also commented that 'whether or not a film should be available for New Zealanders to view privately gives rise to different considerations from whether or not the same film should be shown publicly.' (*New Zealand Herald*, 4 June, 1984) The Board did not elaborate on what these considerations were, but did claim that the availability and acceptance of a video of a certain type may eventually lead to a more ready acceptance of the same subject matter being exhibited publicly. The Society for the Protection of Individual Rights (SPIR), on the other hand, has argued for leaving the matter entirely up to individual responsibility, including the individual's right to import a video tape purely for private use:

> To follow any other course constitutes an unwarranted invasion of privacy by Government. There is absolutely no evidence from the sciences of criminology, sexology or psychiatry which shows any 'injury to the public good' would result. (*Scrutineer*, 1985)

Acceptance of a public - private distinction, however, is not without its difficulties. At the general level, there are a number of precedents for State intervention in the 'private' sphere, most notably with respect to crimes against the person. (Benn and Gaus, 1983: 172-6) This is not the case with video censorship, where

the distinction to be used is that made between 'self-regarding' and 'other regarding' acts. A supporter of 'private' freedom can legitimate it by claiming the caveat 'providing no harm is done to others', thereby ruling out crimes against the person.

If the argument is that video nasties harm the viewer alone, the public-private distinction can be accepted and discussion turns to the legitimacy of the State's paternalistic intrusion into the private sphere. If, on the other hand, the argument is that video nasties lead to harm to others (violence, rape, etc.), the public-private distinction is of little value, and the focus turns to an examination of the effects of visual stimuli in different viewing contexts. This last is an important point with regard to video. Does it matter if the viewing context is a public cinema, a hotel room or bar, or a private residence? Is the individual's response going to be the same in the anonymity of a darkened theatre, in a bar with their drinking companions, or in the lounge at home with friends and family? These are empirical questions, which require answers if the debate is to move beyond the simple assertion of values positions.

(2) The corruption of the innocent

One of the main arguments advanced to legitimate the State's regulation of home viewing, is that 'while this indecision continues, violent and pornographic videotapes remain widely available to children and teenagers.' (Paul East, Opposition Spokesman on Justice, *Evening Standard*, 25 September, 1985) Women Against Pornography have heard of a number of cases of children watching pornographic videos in the home, (*Evening Post*, 7 June, 1984) the Films Censorship Board of Review claim that 'many children would be exposed to these films either because of derelict parenting or natural childhood curiosity', (*New Zealand Herald*, 4 June, 1984) and Patricia Bartlett of the Society for Protection of Community Standards has frequently expressed concern over the access young people could have to such material. As is the case with many of the claims in the video debate, however, hard evidence is in short supply.

It is important to mention here the widely publicised findings of the British Parliamentary Group Video Enquiry in 1983. This used a research study by Dr Clifford Hill which claimed that some 40 percent of kids aged 5 to 16 had seen at least one of the 32 videos which had been declared obscene by the Director of Public Prosecutions at the time Hill's poll was taken. Hill's highly selective use of incomplete statistics, his inadequate methodology (relying on self-report and lacking in-built checks), and glib acceptance of theories of imitation have subsequently been severely castigated. (Brown, 1984) Nonetheless, the Parliamentary Group's report was influential in passing very severe censorship legislation, while its 'research' basis remains widely referred to in the popular press and by supporters of stricter video censorship.

The appeal to 'the corruption of the innocent' has always proved a useful catchcry in moral debates, (Pearson, 1983) and is one that needs to be closely examined. It is worth noting that children's access to particular videos will not **necessarily** be prevented by any system of classification, or even banning, of videos. The current legal position is that anyone exhibiting 'indecent' or restricted material to children commits an offence (under the Indecent Publications Act). As the Interdepartmental Committee noted, however, detecting and prosecuting such offences is very difficult, 'particularly when the parents of the children are involved and where the conduct involves no more than leaving the relevant material and the videotape recorder unattended'. (*Report*, 1985: para. 8-10) Given the unfeasibility of preventing banned videos from entering the country anyway, the committee could see no legal solution to this difficulty.

The liberal position here is that the onus should remain with parents to ensure that 'adult' material is not freely available to their children (and their children's friends). A colleague suggested to me that such videos should be treated as one would a firearm held in the household. This view is an extension of the argument for individual responsibility in the 'private' sphere, and, like that argument, rests on the question of the

effects of viewing video nasties. The negative effects of such viewing is frequently all too readily assumed. When critics can combine the consciousness of both aesthetic and moral superiority, the temptation to condemn is hard to resist. While aesthetic preference can be justified - no one makes great claims for video nasties as an art form - moral judgements assume the direct influence of medium on behaviour. This is a much contested relationship, and the controversy over mass media violence (and sexuality) and behaviour is now a long standing one - for overviews, see Noble, 1975; Burstyn, 1985: Appendix 1; Brody, 1977. A skim of the research literature indicates widely differing assumptions about human nature and some problematic methodologies. (Grixti, 1985; Bart and Jozsa, 1980) That there is a link between viewing violence and participating in violent behaviour, is now widely accepted. However, 'There is no evidence to suggest any ill-effects at all from sexually explicit movies . . .' (American researcher Ed Donnerstein, *Dominion*, 21 May, 1985). Do we need to worry more about the violence of a popular television series like the **A-Team** rather than the explicit sexuality of the controversial **Electric Blue** video series?

(3) In the groin of the beholder

A prominent aspect of the debate has been the question of what constitutes 'pornography'. At the personal level of course, 'pornography' is what **you** like, 'erotica' is what I like, or to quote (I believe) Oscar Wilde, 'pornography is in the groin of the beholder.' Any rigorous attempt at definition is fraught with difficulties, (and, I shall argue later, may indeed be counterproductive). It appears, for example, that a difference exists between the genders on what constitutes pornography and their reactions to such material - see Faust, 1980; Snitow, 1979; Yaffe, 1979. The following discussion of radical feminists' analysis of pornography illustrates some of the difficulties involved.

Radical feminist critiques of pornography are angry, powerful, and frequently compelling. (Griffin, 1981; Dworkin, 1981; Lederer, 1980) They argue that underlying the existence of pornography is the incorporation into male psychosexual development of a need to differentiate the self from the other, and to dominate the other. Pornography is therefore presented as the expression of purely male sexual fantasy, and male sexual violence is seen as the ultimate expression of masculinity. This view is strongly evident in the New Zealand group, Women Against Pornography. WAP see pornography essentially as the objectification and exploitation of women: 'Pornography teaches men and boys that women exist for their sexual pleasure. Women are presented as bodies, or bits of bodies for male consumption.' (WAP, undated:6)

If considered in relation to visual pornography, however, these claims make several questionable assumptions about the male viewer: (The following discussion is based on Barrowclough, 1982; and Coward, 1982)
(i)   his fantasy is one and the same as the pornographic fantasy;
(ii) pornographic images directly influence behaviour - sexuality flows from fantasy to enactment; and
(iii) there is one undifferentiated male viewer - all men react the same way, and all identify with the male point of view.

Now I don't have time to examine these in detail in this context, except to note that they are contestable assumptions. All beg the key question: **'Who is the male viewer?'** There is also a misleading tendency to collapse together different forms of pornography, compounding all such images into one pornography (eg. The Canadian film on pornography, **Not a Love Story**, 1981).

Yet: 'Various pornographies operate differently, cater to different audiences and elicit different sexual responses.' (Barrowclough, 1982:30) This occurs even within one medium, such as video. As Coward has convincingly shown, the pleasures, interests and meanings conveyed by photographic images are determined by: (a) the

contexts and the conventions which they presuppose, (eg. the family snapshot assumes that infantile nakedness is not sexual nor is it open to sexual interests in the viewers); and (b) meaning is decided by the composition of the image - what this arrangement connotes, what chains of ideas we mobilize to reconstruct (or deconstruct) the image. Put simply, this means that we must consider the **form** (of the representations) as much as the content itself.

Another problematic aspect of the radical feminist stance is the claim that 'apparently disparate sexual practice - on the one hand representations of sex, and, on the other, violent sexual assault - are connected.' (Coward, 1982) This view underpins slogans such as 'pornography is violence against women', claiming that the representation of women found in pornography is the theoretical expression of the same physical violence found in rape. Women Against Pornography argue that pornography encourages men to commit violence against women by 'showing women as submissive, there for men to use sexually . . . (and) by showing women as enjoying being raped and beaten.' (WAP, undated:10)

Specific examples of such an apparent connection can be pointed to, while one piece of research found that (under controlled experimental conditions) 'massive exposure to pornography resulted in a loss of compassion toward women as rape victims and toward women in general'. (Zillman and Bryant, 1982) However, studies of sex offenders provide no basis for establishing a connection between pornography and rape, (Burstyn, 1985:198) while Donnerstein goes so far as to assert that 'no research ever has proven a causal link between pornography and rape.' (Reported *Dominion*, 21 April, 1985)

(4) Constructing sexuality
Let me finally turn to the question of what is, I think, really at stake here. While the concern over children and videos, the public/private distinction, and the nature of pornography are all important issues, I want to argue that of greater significance is what can be termed the social construction of sexuality.

The issue of pornography has generally been dichotomised by two major political positions: (i) the liberal, 'anything goes so long as it is private' and without offense to 'reasonable' people; or (ii) the extreme conservative, pro-family, anti-sex position. The monopolising of the debate between these two standpoints has tended to collapse the arguments into the simplistic question: 'Are you for intervention in sex or against it?' What the debate should really focus on, however, is **definitions** of 'sexuality' and the attendant concepts of the body, pleasure, desire, and morality that are at issue here. (Mort, 1983) This is a political matter. Private/domestic gender relations (including sexuality) are reconstituted in the public sphere, and therefore become a matter of public concern and regulation.

In **Sex, Politics and Society**, Jeffrey Weeks, (summarising and extending Foucault), demonstrates that ' . . . there are class sexualities (and different gender sexualities) not a single uniform sexuality. Sexuality is not a given that has to be controlled. It is an historical construct that has historical conditions of existence.' (Weeks, 1981:10) Within the 'historical' we can incorporate the 'social' - here, specifically the role of the media in establishing 'gender sexualities' (i.e. patterns of behaviour and attitudes between male and female, men and women, men and men, and women and women in our society).

Let us try to relate this more closely to the video debate. An editorial (*Evening Post*, 11 June, 1984) observed that 'most women', whether their attitude is one of contempt or anger, see pictures of scantily clad or naked females in suggestive poses as exploitative of their sex because physical attributes are emphasised at the expense of humanity. In contrast, as the recent acrimonious debate at the FOL conference showed, 'there are a number of males who regard enjoyment of pin ups as one of life's legitimate pleasures.' Presumably there would also be many who would view 'pornographic' videos in a similar fashion, particularly those described

as 'animated girlie magazines'. It seems clear that such visual material caters predominantly for male fantasies, presenting a stylised, unrealistic and stereotyped view of the female body, sexual activities, and sexual needs.

While I would regard fantasy as a necessary element of human existence, its social sustenance must become questionable when its representations are offensive to a significant proportion of the population. The question remains, however, whether such offence is best dealt with in terms of more rigorous attempts to define guidelines for censorship of video (and film). While I think that common agreement exists on the need for the restriction of child pornography and bestiality, it seems difficult to go much beyond these specifics. Consider for example one of the guidelines within the much-heralded Australian Commonwealth regulations: censoring for 'explicit violence against non-consenting persons'. While this criterion can be used to exclude depictions of violent rape, it can also be applied to films, such as **The Day After**, with anti-nuclear themes. In both cases, the Australian Censor's Office has recourse to considering such themes in terms of the overall context and intent of a particular film and the way such incidents are treated, but difficulties of interpretation nevertheless remain. One must also concede some force to the 'artistic defence' viewpoint: 'the vital and inalienable right of artists - whether painters, anarchists, playwrights or film makers - to create nightmares as well as dreams. A society without the freedom to dream is a dead or atrophying society.' (Andrews, 1984:46)

Legal attempts to define censorship are not only extremely difficult but are accompanied by the danger of handing over to the state the right to define what constitutes 'sexuality'. This usually means the legitimation of heterosexuality in the context of the family, and the active repression of other forms of sexuality (particularly homosexuality). As King notes: 'The vast and complex body of the state is not neutral, but works along clearly patriarchal lines. It is therefore irrational to expect that same state to adopt feminist principles when dealing with sexual representation.' (King, 1985:84)

This leads us into a closely associated issue - the question of the legitimacy of the State's intrusion into the private sphere.

> The very stridency with which the argument for control or bans are often put should make the rest of us pause to consider what is proposed. The zealots want to impose their terms, conditions and standards with an apparent certainty about what is best for the rest of us and civilisation. What they urge would restrict individual and civil rights and freedoms which are our heritage... (*Evening Post*, 29 May, 1985: editorial)

The editorial implies that videos may be only the first target: 'History has plenty of examples of censorship serving evil purposes.' (ibid)

Certainly, the so-called 'moral majority' has given clear indication that its ambitions extend well beyond the regulation of homosexuality and videos. In the U.S. and Canada, legal prohibitions against pornography have been used against gay and sex education literature. (Burstyn, 1985: 99-129) In the United Kingdom, the Video Recordings Act, aimed at video nasties, has been used in attempts to prevent the screening of the anti-nuclear film **The Day After**, anti-vivisection films, and birth control material. Roger Scruton, 'populist philosopher for the Tories' (Barker, 1984:14), referred to **The Day After** as 'a particularly disgusting video nasty', and claimed

> That is should have been banned goes without saying. There is no more excuse for displaying a realistic picture of nuclear catastrophe than for displaying a realistic picture of a woman being cut up with a chain saw. (cited Barker, 1984:14)

This view has much in common with the New Zealand group, the Society for the Protection of Community Standards. Such developments illustrate a central difficulty of imposing legal solutions on social problems

-in this case ceding to the State the right to impose a particular definition of what constitutes sexuality in society. Nevertheless, New Zealand is currently adopting a legal response to video censorship, a response embodied in the Video Recordings Bill. This Bill sets up 'a procedure for determining whether video recordings available for sale or hire to the public are indecent, and for abscribing a classification to such video recordings.' The criteria to be used for determining whether a video recording is 'indecent' are substantially the same as those under the Films Act, 1983, and the Bill establishes a Video Recordings Authority to examine and classify videos. Introduced in late 1985 and to come into force 1 July 1986, The Video Recordings Bill also 'enacts a requirement that all video recordings made available for sale or hire to the public must have a label indicating the audience for which the video recording is suitable, and a description of its contents.' (Explanatory Note)

While legal solutions should not be neglected - the law represents one site of struggle - a purely legal approach does not go far in meeting the difficulties outlined in this paper. A more desirable alternative to broadening legal attempts to control pornography would be to shift the parameters of the debate. As Burstyn puts a feminist alternative: 'The sexism inherent in so much pornography requires not the repressive response of censorship. Rather, we must make our own explorations of sexuality known throughout society.' She outlines constructive alternatives to both censorship and pornography, 'to giving concrete content to a strategy based on responsible pluralism in sexual life.' (Burstyn; 1985:156-7) Such alternatives need to be developed here if we are not to cede to the State an important aspect of the production of cultural meanings.

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REVIEWS

A Standard for Justice: A Critical Comment of the Proposed Bill of Rights for New Zealand
By J.B. Elkind and A. Shaw.
Oxford University Press $22.95

Review by Mike Behrens

This work is intended to be more than a reference book, but its first merit is that it brings together the texts of a number of international and state Bills and Charters of Rights. The purpose of this collection is also comparative. In criticising the Minister of Justice's Draft Bill and offering an alternative, the authors refer extensively to overseas versions.

Their task is difficult: to explain, criticise and innovate in the dustbowl of Constitutional Law. The publishers claim that the book is for 'both the ordinary citizen and the lawyer'. To write successfully for these traditional enemies, stimulating interest from one, admiration from the other and purchases by both is no mean feat.

Even the Consititutional Law devotee would admit that the Draft White Paper has probably wrapped a few portions of fish and chips. It requires time and study and its subject is dull alongside issues like violence and punishment. Perhaps it is time for Mr Palmer to disclose that he sleeps with it under his bed. The question of constitutional form or reform for New Zealand is nevertheless one that has been around for a long time, and it seems that decisions could be made which will actually affect the rights, duties and status of persons living in New Zealand.

The authors are unashamed of their concern and excitement about what they see as the various possibilities. Their enthusiasm overlying scholarship for the most part, makes for interesting reading. There are parts where the lawyer will have difficulties and the 'ordinary citizen' no chance. Occasionally the head will spin at the choice of legal avenues. The best thing to do then is to go immediately to the end of the section and possessed of the helpful summary that is always there, ride the route again. At times, arguments are developed with references to cases and to what has been or will be said in the text or its copious notes, and then the point is finally made. This technique is presumably to make colleagues feel at work and is the foundation for the publisher's claim that the lawyer is catered for. If you are ordinary, stick with it, things soon settle down.

Recent media publicity has been concerned with whether or not there should be a Bill of Rights. This book is not about whether there should be, but rather what should be in a Bill. It was published before the New Zealand Law Society came out against a Bill of Rights, and it is perhaps unfortunate that only about nine pages are given to the 'should we — shouldn't we' argument. I doubt that the authors would be worried. They are crusaders and would probably feel that the argument has been trampled underfoot as it deserved.

The bulk of the work is a clause by clause dissection and criticism of the Draft White Paper. The style of this analysis is direct and inelegant, but the reader is informed of the issue efficiently, except when there are the few flights into legal fancy stuff. The relationship of the Treaty of Waitangi to a Bill of Rights whatever its form is a subject that the authors believe has serious repercussions for New Zealand. Their treatment of it is important reading.

There is a quaintness about the insistence that the preamble to the Alternative Bill of Rights must be inspirational. The preamble is almost lyrical and after the initial shock of its style and content, makes sense. The pessimist will imagine that it is likely to have about as much relevance to life under a Bill of Rights, as Parliament's opening prayer has to the subsequent deliberations of the prayerful.

Peter Mahon has written the Foreword. The fact has been considered commerically significant as it appears on the cover. What he has written doesn't really help. The former Judge opines that the book is 'sure to do well', citing heavy reading, domesticity as a student with someone who obviously knew his onions and is now on the Court of Appeal, and an intimate dinner with a very High Judge in Australia, as some of the reasons for his view. I would have believed him without excerpts from his social diary.

The book is softback with a sound constitution. It is just thick enough to protect if worn over the heart when the vigilantes come to restore law and order. In the meantime it should be read.
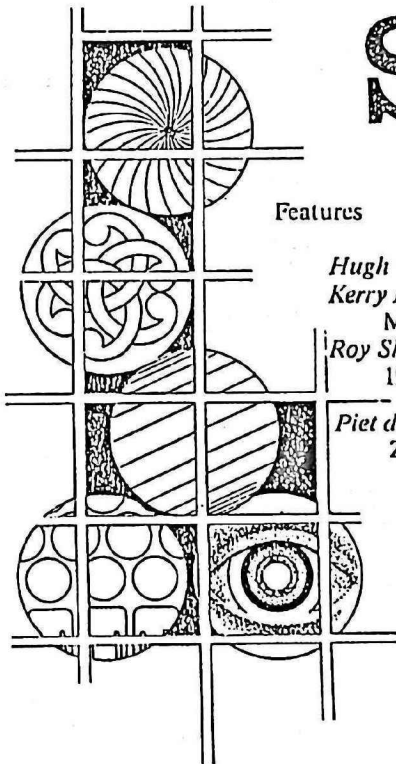
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Note that in the first example the words in the title are not capitalized (as they are for the title of a book, as in the second example).

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