Feminists are actively engaged in many academic disciplines in attempts to create new knowledge relevant to feminist issues. Attempts have been made to work within the mainstream of some disciplines, whose self-defined scope seemed to include these issues naturally. For example, women have been a legitimate topic of study in sociology, anthropology and psychology. The problem being recognized by feminists in these disciplines is that the disciplines are dominated by a male concept of society, coined in the term "malestream thought." This results in a male "norm" and a female "other," and it affects methodology. Thus, even though women have been studied, feminist research — research from the point of view of women — has not been possible. Most of the current emphasis of feminists in these disciplines is on restudying familiar issues from a methodologically distinct feminist perspective.

In other disciplines, the study of women, or the study of a world in which women figure as prominently as men, is at a more primitive stage. History, for example, has only recently begun to recognize women. Women's history has become a fringe field within the discipline, while most fields of history remain essentially histories about men. Economics is at an even more primitive stage. Though economics claims as its domain the whole of production, distribution and consumption in society — the whole use of resources (both
human and physical) — it has fallen short of other disciplines on all levels relevant to feminism. Some of these levels include —

1. the invisibility of women in overall economic analysis. The economy, as studied in most fields of economics, does not include the work activities of women;
2. the lack of even a recognizable fringe field in economics devoted to the study of women;
3. the severe underrepresentation of women in the discipline. A recent study by the American Economics Association found that only six per cent of all economics faculty members in the United States were women.\(^2\) Canadian figures would be comparable. Much of the work has therefore been done by men and falls short of feminism.

Obviously, no field as broadly defined as economics can ignore women completely, and this paper will examine the areas wherein women have been a subject (or object) of interest. However, the forest should not get lost for the trees. In this case, my account of several trees may mistakenly lead one to believe that there is a forest. Furthermore, as we shall see, much of the economic work with "women" as a focus ranges from frightening and anti-feminist to simply boring and elementary compared to the general level of feminist scholarship. In this essay, I will critically review the variety of work done and point out promising or possible directions for feminist analysis in economics.

Economics earned the title, "the Dismal Science," in the nineteenth century, as a result of gloomy predictions by classical economists that sustained growth was not possible. Twentieth-century economists, luxuriating in the optimistic times of seemingly unlimited growth, congratulated themselves by relabelling their highly rigorous, rarified, mathematicized discipline, the "Queen of the Social Sciences." My question is: Which of these ephithets will feminists ultimately ascribe to economics?

In examining the work on women in economics, one must take explicit account of the context of this work in the major paradigms of the discipline. Feminists are extremely sensitive to the fact that all science and research is based on a conceptual framework — on a way of looking at the world. They tend to be well-versed in the philosophy-of-science literature on this matter, and they have advanced this literature. It is not an esoteric interest; rather, it is a brutal reality that confronts women who study a discipline and realize that it systematically cannot "see" women. Young female students find it easier than their male counterparts to grasp the principle that social science is not objective truth, but a series of conceptual frameworks.
Every framework makes assumptions about the nature of society and about human motivations and behaviour. Each chooses aspects of reality on which to focus and abstracts from others. Each framework shapes the question asked, and defines the concepts employed and the research methods to be used. They are "perceptual glasses" with which the scientist views the world and identifies problems. The framework can bind or restrict the possible topics of inquiry and the possible policy outcomes.

In economics there is a dominant paradigm, which is referred to as "neoclassical," "orthodox," or "mainstream" economics. The cornerstone of this paradigm is the view that decentralized, individualistic decision-makers, in making optimizing, rational choices, determine the observed economic outcomes. In contrast, there are two other economic paradigms that have a structural rather than an individualistic focus. One is termed the "radical" paradigm, with more or less explicit roots in the Marxist tradition, and the other is termed the "institutional" paradigm. Both emphasize factors beyond the control of individuals.

First, I want to summarize the key analytical and methodological features of each approach, suggesting how women might figure in the overall discipline. Later I will focus on particular work on women done within each of the paradigms.

Marjorie Cohen has written a good summary and critique of the neoclassical economics paradigm. She argues that the framework does not for the most part "see" women's economic behaviour and concentrates on studying economic "man" in the non-generic sense of the word. The primary unit of analysis in neoclassical analysis is the individual person, or the individual firm. The methodology analyzes rational choice to maximize utility or profits, given constraints such as incomes and prices. This methodology of analyzing constrained choice and optimizing behaviour has generally been confined to market-related phenomena — the public domain. However, economists have long claimed that the tools of neoclassical analysis are also suited to analyzing any social behaviour where choices must be made (making virtually every aspect of life a potential subject of analysis). In recent years this potential has been explored with vigour by a group of economists studying non-market behaviour. This work has been coined the "new home economics," and includes analyses of such things as the marriage market, fertility, time use and crime. As we shall see later, this expansion out of the price system lands one in women's sphere. This work, like that of the more market-oriented mainstream, still abstracts from the sociological, political and organizational aspects of the problem. No attention is given to
the nature of conflict, the use of power, or the basis of attitudes. There is no systematic, structural basis for inequalities or discrimination, or for the sexual division of labour.

When one examines most fields in neoclassical economics, women are invisible, locked somewhere inside neutral categories of the "household," the "consumer," and the "firm." These neutral categories belie any fundamental difference or conflict of interests between male and female actors. Furthermore, the activity of women in the home is not related to general economic activity. The household is traditionally viewed as a unit of consumption, not production. And the tools of household work are analyzed as consumer goods, not as capital. Thus, the principles of efficient allocation of scarce resources need never be applied to home "production" as compared to market production. Purchases of individual washing machines, for example, are analyzed as rational consumer decisions reflecting tastes, rather than as production decisions to be analyzed in terms of efficient use of scarce capital. It is really only in labour economics that women may be studied specifically or seen as distinct in their economic behaviour or experience. It is primarily this work that I will examine later in this paper.

The radical paradigm, with its roots in the Marxist tradition, also has traditionally focused on the relations of production and class rather than of reproduction and gender. The economy that has been studied is the same money economy as in neoclassical economics. The disagreements between the paradigms are for the most part disagreements among men. The methodologies of each are both in the tradition of scientific rationalism. The Marxist tradition, however, has always paid some attention to the work of women. In his historical approach, for example, Marx analyzed the change from the domestic mode of production to capitalism — a transformation that greatly affected the centrality of women’s economic activity, and one that altered the relation between production and reproduction. Engels wrote a serious work on the origin and development of the family, and there was debate from the earliest days among Marxists on the "Woman Question." The framework also incorporated a relationship of reproductive labour to the moneyed economy, in that the value of labour and the amount of surplus value were affected by the costs of reproduction of labour power. There were also predictions about the development of capitalism and its impact on the family and the sexual division of labour. Marx’s view of the labour process also drew attention to differentiations among the workforce as a tactic in the conflict between capital and labour. In these ways, gender relations are more visible in Marxist economics, though they
have traditionally been only of peripheral interest in the main development of the paradigm. Even in labour-process work, Marxists tend to analyze "women and other minorities," just as neoclassical economists do, with no particular analysis of the domestic labour of women. It is only the Marxist-feminists (most of whom are not economists) who have done serious theoretical and empirical work on a broader conception of production, and on the relations of both production and reproduction under patriarchy and capitalism. As Marxist feminist economists Hartmann and Markusen point out, this work has for the most part been "largely ignored by much of the contemporary left professing to be interested in serious theory." Furthermore, they argue that "among the most grievous and insulting developments in recent Marxist theory is the borrowing of the analysis of reproduction from feminists and the subsequent destruction of its feminist content."

The methodology of Marxist economics, which emphasizes historical analysis, class conflict, relations of power and the interrelationships of the capitalist mode of production with other modes such as the domestic mode, has both attractions and traps as a framework for feminist economic research. It is appealing in its fundamental recognition of conflicting interests and in the questions raised about the material basis of families, the family wage and the importance of the reproduction of labour power. It is disappointing, however, in its emphasis on class relations over gender relations and its tendency to pursue most economic analysis without reference to women. As in neoclassical economics, women have been introduced in certain fields as a topic (an object of investigation), but the overall paradigm has not been altered, and most fields have proceeded to study economics for and of men.

The third paradigm in economics is termed institutional economics. This is the least rigorously defined, both conceptually and methodologically. Its main feature is its opposition to aspects of both the neo-classical and Marxist approach. Work in this tradition is less abstract and mathematical than neoclassical work. The models are "muddied" by real-world complexity. The work has a more interdisciplinary flavour, reacting against the narrow bounds of mainstream economics. The approach, does not, however, embrace the Marxian categories or method. Within this approach there is much diversity. Every subfield in economics would have work that would be, according to self-definition, neither neoclassical nor Marxist. The field where this paradigm has the most distinct literature is probably labour economics, and it is with reference to that field that we will examine institutional research on, by and for women.
In summarizing work related to women and contrasting the work in the various paradigms, I will organize the discussion by major topic areas. The broad topics are: family economics — looking at labour-force participation decisions and market/non-market economic activities; wage inequality — looking at discrimination, occupational segregation and segmentation; and economic growth and change — looking at the relationship of women to other aspects of the broader economy.

Family Economics

There has been considerable work done in economics explaining labour-supply phenomena. This is the major area of economics that looks at non-market activity, since labour-force participation decisions are related to other uses of time and resources. The specific issue of determinants of female labour-force participation has been of interest for many years in all paradigms. In the neoclassical paradigm, this took the form of standard labour-supply analysis based on individual choice, and in the radical tradition, work focused on women as a reserve army throughout the history of capitalism. In recent years the work in each paradigm has expanded to include more emphasis on the total sphere of non-labour-market activity. In the neoclassical paradigm this has meant an economics of family life — marriage, fertility, divorce, division of labour — using standard utility maximization analysis. In the Marxist paradigm, this has meant a more complex analysis of the relations of reproduction and production as capitalism develops. For Marxist feminists, it has meant an analysis of the interrelations of patriarchy and capitalism.

Turning first to the neoclassical literature, labour-supply analysis uses a model of individual choice over allocation of time between work (income) and leisure (non-market activity). The individual has certain preferences and faces certain constraints in terms of income potential, and makes a utility-maximizing choice regarding labour-force participation and hours worked. The model sees contradictory pulls from what is called the income effect, whereby higher wages encourage more leisure, and the substitution effect, whereby higher wages make the opportunity cost of leisure higher and encourage more work. Women have long been a favourite target of empirical work testing this model, since it is they who display variation in labour-supply behaviour. There has been much reaction against this model, where "leisure" is obviously not the same for men and women, and where the emphasis is on the rational free choice women make rather than on the constraints they may face. It was not until 1962, in a now classic article, that Jacob Mincer refined the argu-
ment slightly by recognizing that leisure for women included housework and that women's wage rates affected the opportunity cost of staying home.9 This emphasis on the opportunity cost of time led to a whole new "home economics," studying the allocation of time and further analyzing of non-market/market interactions in terms of the use of time. Gary Becker is prominent in this work.10

Becker built on Mincer's work and that of others in developing a generalized theory of the allocation of time.11 The allocation of the time of various family members between market and non-market activities is analyzed as a matter of optimizing family utility. The rational choices, of course, generally leave women in the home or in secondary labour-market activity, while men remain the main family-income earners.

The current neoclassical literature on the labour supply of women builds on this Mincer/Becker foundation, refining and quibbling about aspects of the theory, and running endless empirical tests. The labour-force participation rate of women is hypothesized to be related positively to their education and their own expected wages (from the opportunity-cost-of-time argument) and related negatively to their husbands' incomes (the income effect). The recent dramatic increases are related to these factors or to changes in the time trade-offs between wage and domestic work due to smaller families or labour-saving household devices. The lower participation rates of women compared with those of men are "explained" by the higher utility of their work in the home compared with that of men.

In recent work emphasizing the production that occurs in the home, this explanation is phrased in terms of productivity rather than utility. Women are seen to have higher productivities in non-market production (for whatever reason) relative to the wage they can earn in market work (assumed to reflect their productivity there). One of the quibbles in the literature involves resolving the paradox that, by this method, the value or productivity of housework is implicitly determined by the value of the market wage given up, meaning that the housework of a lawyer, worth $20/hour, is twice as valuable as that of a nurse, worth $10/hour, even though the latter may be technically more efficient.12 Recent empirical work also casts doubt on whether women do make logical decisions about labour-force participation based on a comparison of the value of home time and labour-market time. "When a substantial minority is unable to formulate estimates of one or both of these, the foundation of the whole line of reasoning is undermined."13 Many feminists would make a stronger statement than this about the usefulness of such an approach to women's economic activity. As Amsden says in a review of this
literature, it "at once explains everything and nothing . . . any behavioral configuration is admissible. Such a theory is thus irrefutable . . . neoclassical theory explains nothing insofar as it leaves one ignorant as to why the income or the substitution effect governs at a particular time." As with other economic issues, the important questions concern the changing configuration of constraints, whereas the neoclassical methodology allows one only to describe the choices made, given constraints. For feminists, this merely describes what they already know. Lest we think that such analysis is alive and well only in labour-economics textbooks, let me remind you that the recent Economic Council of Canada report, *Women and the Labour Market: An Analytical Framework*, is a classic application of this approach, and it is this approach that underlies most policy-directed research.

As mentioned above, this opportunity-cost-of-time approach has spawned a whole economics of non-market phenomena. Even the existence of the family is analyzed as a utility-maximizing choice of individuals, where the gains from marriage will be greater the more complementary are the inputs of the two partners. The analysis is like that of comparative advantage in trade theory, where countries (persons) gain by specializing. From there it is a short step to the conclusion that the sexual division of labour in the family follows economic-maximizing principles. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, considerable work was done on topics such as fertility, marriage and divorce, and the division of labour and resources within the home. Recently, Gary Becker has published his magnum opus on the whole field: *A Treatise on the Family*. As Ben-Porath comments in a favourable review of the book, "Becker is a maximizer, indeed an imperialist, of the economic approach in its purest form." Chapters in the book include "Division of Labour in Households and Families," "Assortive Mating in Marriage Markets," "The Demand for Children," "Altruism and the Family," and "Imperfect Information, Marriage and Divorce."

The analysis is useful for describing how a system perpetuates itself — how market-wage differences lead to a household strategy of resource allocation that perpetuates the market-wage differences. It may well describe the choices rational people make in the present economic and social context. It also shows how small differences in opportunity or ability become magnified to complete specialization or division of labour. Applying the theory of comparative advantage leads one to the conclusion that even small differences in productive capacities imply large differences in allocation of time in equilibrium. This rings true, of course, with much of our exper-
ience: there seems to be in operation an irrational process wherein one slip up in asserting equality ensures that we will be sucked into a current that will pull us towards traditional sex roles/division of labour. And in Becker’s model, one needs only women’s biological specialization in infant care to tip the balance and send us sliding toward complete specialization in home production.

However, the analysis does not address the origins or development of the current sexual and economic relationships. The constraints in the theory — such as lower market wages for women — are the real topic of interest. As we shall see later, neoclassical economists explain wage differences ultimately as a function of the division of labour, and the division of labour ultimately as a function of wage differences; that is, they aptly describe the vicious circle women experience, but they do not explain its existence or function. Furthermore, as an analysis of domestic activity, it does not go beyond the utility of this activity to the individual family. Again, this productive activity is not related structurally to market productive activity. How does the “economy,” the company, or the male worker gain from this activity? How does domestic labour tie in with market production? What forces move production from one sphere to another? How are market-dollar values — prices, wages, profits — affected by what occurs in the non-market sector? These questions are not addressed in this framework. Furthermore, as Isabel Sawhill notes in her excellent review of this literature, many of the assumptions underlying this economic theory of the household must be questioned. Preferences are taken as given, rather than examined as being determined endogenously by the socio-economic environment. There is an underlying assumption of harmony of interests:

The people marching through the economist’s household are an envious group: they are motivated by loving and caring and rarely by hate or fear. Very little attention is given to the nature of conflict or to the use of power within the family.

These issues are more central in the Marxist economic work on the family. There have been two lines of development in this. One begins from the labour-market side and the other begins from the domestic-labour side. The former analyzes women’s differential participation historically, linking it particularly to the Marxian analysis of the reserve army of labour. The latter approach focuses on the sphere of reproduction, examining its relation to surplus-value production and its changing relationship to the sphere of production. The reserve-army literature has had to develop an analysis of domestic
labour, and the domestic-labour literature has had to examine the meaning of the movement of production (and labour) in and out of the wage-labour sphere. Economists working on these issues have by and large begun from a labour-market focus and then extended the analysis into the household. Most of the Marxist-feminist work starting from the household has been done by sociologists rather than economists. For example, not one article in the collection, *Hidden in the Household*, is by an economist. It is this work that elaborates the debate about the relationship of domestic labour to Marxist value categories and categories of productive and unproductive labour.

Marxist work on the family and on the reserve army is familiar to feminists in many disciplines; therefore a brief summary of some of the more specifically economic literature in the area will suffice. A considerable amount of empirical work has been done, mainly of an historical nature. This work begins with the changes from independent commodity production to the capitalist mode of production, examining the changing nature of families and of women’s labour. This was the first step in the creation of the two economic spheres and the allocation of household labour between wage and domestic work. Work by historians and economic historians has examined transition and the implications for women’s economic activity. The capitalist mode of production is viewed as placing contradictory and sometimes competing demands on women as unpaid domestic workers and as wage workers. The reserve labour literature examines the historical movement of women into and out of the labour force, reflecting changes in the needs of capitalism for wage labour versus reproductive labour. Clearly, the needs of capital are contradictory, and the balance changes with development. Connelly and Power argue that married women were a latent reserve which became activated once the capitalist mode of production moved into activities traditionally done in the household. Domestic labour no longer provided goods and a means of support outside the capitalist mode of production. Household work now is for maintenance, not production (for either use values or exchange) and is not an alternative to income-earning work. This is not to deny that such domestic labour is still functional for capitalism, as is analyzed in the domestic labour debate.

The analysis of women’s labour-force participation in the Marxist literature thus focuses on broader development trends, and on the role of domestic labour in relation to the external economy, rather than solely on the decisions of the individual woman and her family, as in neoclassical analysis. The changing needs of capitalism for labour, as the market expands into new products and new services,
draw women into the workforce. Of course, the economy of individual households is also important in this framework, but the questions asked differ. Why do more and more males not earn a "family wage"? Why do women intensify their domestic labour in some places and times, and substitute wage labour in others? What is the interest of the broader political economy in the household division of labour? Pursuing this line of questioning, we find two directions of analysis emerging. One direction develops the reserve-labour concept and examines how women are similar or dissimilar to other elements of the reserve, and how and why the composition of the labour reserve changes over time. This work ties in with the labour-process analysis, focusing on segmentation in the labour market. It involves adding to the general notion of reserve labour the additional factors of sex segregation once in the labour market, and reproductive work outside the labour market.

The second direction focuses more on the relationship of the family to the economy as a way of understanding the changing labour-market behaviour of women. Included in this is an analysis of the history and meaning of the male family wage. There is a familiar debate in Marxist-feminist literature concerning the extent to which the development of the one-income family was in the interests of capital at a certain stage, or the working-class family, or patriarchy in alliance with capitalism. Gita Sen argues that a dynamic analysis of the process includes elements of all these positions. The erosion of the male family wage, which evidence increasingly shows was always more myth than reality, is the latest development with which Marxist-feminist economic analysis of labour-force participation must come to grips. Again, labour-market segmentation analysis points to characteristics of the latest stage of capitalist development that have increased the necessity of multiple-earner families.

When one examines Marxist work on the nature of the family, and resource allocation within families, a very different image of the family emerges from that of the neoclassicists. The analysis is of the dual and interwoven effects of patriarchy and capitalism, and the family is a locus of unequal power, conflict and dependence. One approach within Marxism sees a maximization of family interests in the working-class attempt to gain a male family wage. Other studies emphasize the contribution of women to making ends meet in the family, either through intensification of domestic labour, or entering wage labour, or home production for exchange. But always there is an inequality between men and women, the operation of patriarchy, and the ultimate interests of capitalism. These themes are also examined in the radical work on women and development.
This research examines the changes in the family and in women’s economic activity that occur with the development of a dominant capitalist mode of production.\textsuperscript{35} The institutional work on the family and labour-force participation is more amorphous than the Marxist and neoclassical work. One type of research that comes to mind involves general analyses of historical trends in participation.\textsuperscript{36} These studies give detailed evidence and general explanations that draw on changing economic, sociological and institutional factors affecting the supply and demand of female labour.

A second type of institutional research on family economics is time-budget research, which is done by economists and sociologists.\textsuperscript{37} In this research, a time diary is kept of all activities of individual members of households during a specific period of time (usually twenty-four hours). These diaries provide invaluable data on the allocation of time between market and non-market activities, types of non-market activities engaged in, sequence and time of activities, and of course the sexual division of labour. Time-budget research is coordinated on an international scale, which enables comparisons across different economic and cultural contexts. Time-budget data can support a wide variety of analytical investigations, and feminist researchers should make good use of such data in combination with related information.\textsuperscript{38}

\textbf{Wage Inequality}

The major area in economics where women are a focus concentrates on their experiences once they are in the labour force — in the public, priced economy. Here their experiences can be dissected and compared with those of all other members of the formal workforce. In this regard, women present an interesting problem to economists, for they demonstrate wage inequality with men and occupational segregation. Their labour-force experience, all in all, is quite distinct, and economists have paid some attention to this.

In the neoclassical paradigm, worker-wage inequality must be integrated into a general model of wage determination that emphasizes equalization tendencies through market forces and rational behaviour (i.e., equal treatment of equals and wage equalization). Therefore, inequalities are anomalous for the simple models. Classic work done on male/female wage inequality includes various discrimination models, occupational segregation and crowding models, and human-capital models.

Discrimination models must contend with the basic neoclassical result that employers who discriminate make lower profits than those
who do not.\textsuperscript{39} One response has been to consider discrimination a "taste" for which someone would be willing to pay (i.e., employers would pay in lower profits). This model was developed by the ubiquitous Becker, who argued that male workers benefit from employer discrimination, and that in the long run the degree of discrimination will tend to decline due to the competitive advantage of non-discriminating employers.\textsuperscript{40} Competitive models such as this have been shown to generate sex segregation but not wage differentials, as was their original intent.\textsuperscript{41}

Other neoclassical discrimination models are based on market imperfections that reduce the competitive forces which tend to eliminate discrimination. One model argues that all males act as a monopoly in their dealings with women and that they all gain from discrimination.\textsuperscript{42} This account takes note of the many ways in which discrimination can occur — in human capital markets and occupational restrictions, as well as in lower wages. Other authors, in explaining persistent wage inequality, emphasize such factors as imperfect information, the influence of unions, and the exercise of monopsony.\textsuperscript{43}

These models tend to be aimed at explaining discrimination in wages for the same job and for equally productive workers. Another direction of neoclassical theory has been to focus on unequal productivity, using human-capital theory. In this work, the lower earnings of women are not viewed as unjust but are attributed to women's smaller investments in human capital and their resultant lower productivity. The implicit assumption in all human-capital models is that the investment choices are voluntary, and that therefore the individuals must bear responsibility for the wage outcomes. Women acquire less human capital because they spend, on average, fewer years in the labour force. This affects human-capital acquisition in several ways: it will not be rational for women to acquire expensive schooling that requires a long working life to recoup; it will not be rational for them to enter jobs with extensive on-the-job training and consequently initial foregone earnings; it will not be rational for employers to invest in training for women with questionable labour-force attachment; the human capital they have depreciates through disuse, rather than appreciates from continuous experience. In this framework, the rationality of the lower human-capital investment is due to women's lower labour-force participation. This in turn is due to the household sexual division of labour. It may also, of course, be a matter of rational choice, given discrimination in such areas as access to funds to finance human capital, or given the returns women may expect from human-capital investment.\textsuperscript{44} The problem
with this analysis is that it focuses on free rational choice, not on
the constraints which exist and which are the real source of the in-
equalities. In the neoclassical economics of the family, the sexual
division of labour was fundamentally due to the male-female wage
differential, taken as a given. In the human-capital part of the
analysis, it is the division of labour that is given and that determines
women's human-capital investment, which in turn causes a male-
female wage differential. This circularity occurs because the fun-
damental sex roles are taken as given: the origins, nature and func-
tions of sexism or patriarchy are not analyzed in neoclassical
economics.

Human-capital theory is also used as an explanation of occupa-
tional sex segregation. It is argued that women are concentrated in
occupations that do not penalize them for intermittent labour-force
participation and do not require extensive on-the-job training. How-
ever, this theory does not stand up to the evidence. Sex segrega-
tion is more pronounced than are productivity or human-capital dif-
fferences. Much sex segregation occurs between occupations with com-
parable human-capital requirements. Educational attainments of men
and women are almost equal, and labour-force participation patterns
are converging, yet sex segregation persists. Human-capital theory
thus fails as a satisfactory explanation of either wage inequality or
occupational segregation.

The final type of neoclassical work done on wage inequality focuses
on the effects of crowding in the labour market. This model assumes
some kind of occupational segregation so that women are limited
to a few occupations. Even if those occupations involved skills similar
to those involved in male occupations, the result of the crowding
would be a lower female wage due to the large supply of labour.
The leader in this work has been Barbara Bergmann, who has drawn
on early work by Edgeworth. Crowding is obviously a real
phenomenon: there is an oversupply of trained women to a few tradi-
tionally "female" occupations, and there are limitations on access
to other occupations. However, the occupational segregation still re-
 mains to be explained, and usually this work is coupled with a Becker-
type analysis of employer "tastes," or an analysis of "statistical
discrimination," where individuals are treated on the basis of perceiv-
ed group averages, thus eliminating women from many types of
employment. As Blau and Jusinlus argue, the neoclassical models
fail to provide an explanation of the multiple phenomena of wage
inequality, occupational segregation and general discriminatory prac-
tices in the markets for both labour and human capital.

The institutional approach in labour economics offers an analysis
of wage inequality based on rigidities and immobilities in the labour market, due particularly to the nature of complex institutional structures such as firms and unions. A variety of work would fall under this general category. Considerable work has been done on internal labour markets and their impact on women. The term “internal labour market” refers to the job structure in a firm where only certain jobs are filled from the external labour market, while most jobs are filled from within. It follows that these latter jobs are insulated from competitive market pressures, and that the rationality of the internal structuring and hiring/promotion policies for these jobs must be analyzed. Blau and Jusenius examine the implications for women's employment and wage opportunities of the operation of internal labour markets, as analyzed by Doeringer and Piore. This approach is extended to a Canadian context in the work of Harish Jain. There may be systematic barriers to entry into internal labour markets, through screening devices and statistical discrimination. Within the internal labour market there may be systematic barriers to mobility through assignment to lower-level jobs, assignment to separate and less-attractive job ladders, and discriminatory promotion criteria. Union seniority systems may also be discriminatory.

Several studies have been done examining these mechanisms of systematic discrimination within internal labour markets. These studies are very useful for identifying strategies to overcome inequality which are appropriate to particular types of work situations. Such detail enables us to move beyond a monolithic analysis of sex discrimination and a “shot-gun” approach to policy. This work is more useful to immediate ameliorative policy formulation, however, than it is to settling theoretical issues on the fundamental nature of economic sex differences. It illuminates the process of sex segregation and pay differentials but not the necessity of them.

Another aspect of the institutional analysis has been the development of dual labour-market or labour-market-segmentation theory. This work focuses on the discontinuous nature of the labour market, where there are in fact two or more markets operating, with barriers between them, and very different job characteristics. Work on segmentation is done within both the institutional framework and the radical paradigm. In the institutional tradition, segmentation studies have developed as an extension of internal labour-market theory, where the economy was observed to have one sector of jobs characterized by internal labour markets and another sector of jobs totally exposed to external labour-market pressures. The stereotypes of secondary versus primary labour-market jobs are by now familiar to most social scientists; the former jobs are basically the “bad” jobs
(i.e., lower paid, less secure) with fewer promotional opportunities. The early proponents of this approach in economics were desperately trying to refute human-capital theory’s emphasis on individual differences as the cause of wage differences. The dual labour-market analysis predicted unequal wages for identically skilled workers, depending on the labour-market segment in which they were employed. The emphasis shifted towards structural factors and away from blaming the individual. This work grew primarily out of analysis of racial inequalities, but very quickly attention focused on the implications for sexual inequality. Women are disproportionately found in the secondary labour market, though a satisfactory explanation of this is not generally offered. Partial explanations include sexual discrimination by unions in their sheltering actions, sexual bias in legislation such as protective legislation, a lack of full commitment to wage work, and the remains of a caste system where women are socialized to accept low-paying jobs. Evidence found in segmentation literature indicates that women suffer from both sex segregation and labour-market segmentation in terms of their job allocation. In other words, even female-segregated occupations and/or industries are affected by segmentation. In terms of earnings, women experience more of a gap in returns between segments than do men.

Turning to the radical paradigm, we also find work on labour-market segmentation as one of the fruitful current areas of research with implications for women. In the radical paradigm, labour-market segmentation is a characteristic of modern monopoly capitalism, reflecting the dualism of the industrial structure, and the ongoing conflict between capital and labour over control of the labour process. In this view, internal labour markets were created by management in an attempt to divide and control labour in the monopoly sector, and they were adapted by successful unions as sheltering mechanisms to be used as protection against the competitive market and the reserve labour force. In the Marxist analysis, the secondary labour market is found primarily within the competitive sector and resembles conditions of control and of work characteristic of earlier capitalism. The two segments are organically interrelated in that a primary labour market (PLM) creates and requires a secondary labour market (SLM). The process of segmentation involves divisions of the workforce along sexual and racial lines. Pre-existing group differences are used, exacerbated and transformed, and new lines of division are created as employers adapt to changes in group expectations or identity. Recent work focuses on the continual evolution of labour markets, as primary labour-market firms attempt to escape restrictions on their power over the labour process.
segmentation theory utilizes the general labour-process analysis of writers such as Braverman, which emphasizes the de-skilling of labour through technological change, and the dynamic of creation and absorption of reserve labour in the continual expansion of capitalism.\textsuperscript{55}

In radical segmentation analysis, as in institutional analysis, it is recognized that the secondary labour market is disproportionately populated by women. Some of this work has been criticized as being rather blind to the meaning and implications of this finding—which I have referred to as the "women and other minorities" approach.\textsuperscript{56} Some work, however, has tried to focus on the way segmentation theory can enhance our understanding of the role and position of women in the economy. Hartmann, for example, has analyzed the interactions of capitalism and patriarchy in excluding women from the emerging primary labour market.\textsuperscript{57} Her work links with the family wage literature discussed above, for the primary labour market is where family wages have been earned. The efforts of male workers to gain a decent family subsistence wage for themselves are linked with the development in the capital-accumulation process of the monopoly sector/competitive sector split. The early action of men in trade unions to protect women and to secure their own jobs from competition was part of the struggle over control of the labour process in the monopoly sector which contributed to the development of segmentation in labour markets. Canadian work on the particular relation of women to the segmentation process has been done by MacDonald, and recently by Phillips and Phillips in their book \textit{Women and Work}.\textsuperscript{58} These writers emphasize the current expansion in the SLM, with the increase in subcontracting, part-time work, runaway shops, self-service, and the microelectronic revolution. Women in particular are being used in this present stage of SLM expansion in terms of the new areas being brought into the market, the transference of prior (male) PLM jobs to the SLM, and the erosion of family wages.

The attraction of a segmentation framework when analyzing women is that it forces people to relate sexual differences and sex segregation to the other processes of segmentation and differentiation that occur in the labour market. The commonalities and differences can then be explored. However, there is much still undone, or un-doable, in this framework. For example, it addresses many of the questions on the organization and strategies of labour demand which must provide the background for an analysis of any particular group in the labour force; however, it sheds less light on the differences in supply among groups. For women, it offers no separate
insight into the relation of domestic labour and reproduction labour to the labour supply or demand decision. A recent feminist criticism of segmentation analysis argues that there is inherent sexism in the approach, in that it begins with the processes of the male norm — the primary labour market — and defines the secondary labour market, along with its female inhabitants, as the "other." A similar, though less explicit, criticism is found in Weinbaum's argument that not only sex differences, but age and kinship relations must enter into a complete analysis of production and labour. Too much of the segmentation literature uses the gross categories male/female and pays little attention to household relations.

There is other work in the radical paradigm which focuses directly and exclusively on female labour-market experience and male/female wage inequality. The two key areas are occupational segregation and women as reserve labour. Obviously the topics of reserve labour, occupational segregation, and labour market segmentation overlap considerably, but they differ in terms of primary focus. Radical work on occupational segregation examines the mechanisms and function of sex segregation in an historical context. Studies by economists include analyses of broad forces such as male union strategies and protective legislation in conjunction with capital's search for cheap labour and interest in a divided workforce. There have also been many occupation-specific studies to understand the dynamics of the sex-typing of occupations, most of which are not by economists. More work is needed to understand the ongoing process of sex segregation. Current technological change provides a wealth of material to be analyzed. Our lack of full understanding of sex segregation is evident in the weaknesses of predictions about the effects of current changes on sex segregation and wage inequality.

A recent study by sociologists Val Burris and Amy Wharton examines differences in current trends of sex segregation in different occupational sectors in the U.S. They find a decline in segregation in middle-class occupations, and a stable or increasing level in working-class occupations. They interpret these findings using the analysis of radical segmentation theory, in terms of the differential interests of employers and male employees in the preservation of occupational sex segregation. Sex segregation is one aspect in dividing labour and maintaining control over the workforce. The creation of internal subdivisions in the working class enabled employers to buy off the most militant and best-organized sectors (by creating primary labour markets) at minimum cost, while decreasing the power of the rest of the workforce. Burris and Wharton argue that employers now have less to gain in terms of control by preserving the male
monopolies in the skilled (independent) primary labour market, and that they have an increasing interest in reducing wages. They also argue that in the subordinate (lower skilled) primary labour market, sex segregation is still important as a means of decreasing unity and of maintaining the oversupply of cheap female workers in secondary occupations. As well, Burris and Wharton argue that the joint interests of male employees and employers in maintaining segregation are stronger and more mutually reinforcing in working-class occupations. Their findings support this analysis, with sex segregation decreasing in middle-class occupations and persisting or increasing in working-class occupations. As mentioned, this article is by sociologists, but it indicates a direction for research that should be pursued by economists as well, since the distinction between these disciplines becomes rather irrelevant in the radical paradigm.

The final approach to inequality in the radical literature is the analysis of women as reserve labour. Again, much of this work has been done by sociologists rather than economists. In this approach, women form a reserve army of labour for capital. Both their particular labour force participation pattern and the pattern of their employment and wages reflect this role they play in a changing capitalist economy. Early work using the concept was primarily descriptive of the intermittent entry of women en masse into the workforce during periods such as wars. Recent work has tried to account for the whole historical pattern, including the current influx of married women into the labour market. The approach links Marxist-feminist analysis of women's role in the family with the Marxist analysis of the ways in which capitalist development creates and absorbs a surplus labour force. Recent work distinguishes among the categories of floating, stagnant and latent reserve and evaluates how women have moved among these categories as capitalism has developed. This is essentially an analysis of the movements of economic activity between households and firms, and the sometimes contradictory needs of capital for women as reproducers of labour power and women as labour. It is argued that until recently, women in the household have been a latent reserve (similarly, agriculture was a holding tank of latent surplus labour), and that now this reserve has been activated. It is also argued that this process is not reversible, because production has moved out of the home. Women now will form part of the employed labour force, or the floating reserve, or the stagnant reserve. An attempt has been made to link these reserve categories to the labour segmentation categories and to analyze the movement of women among the various categories of reserve and market segments. It is also important to understand the
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differential use of various groups within the reserve as capitalism develops. More analysis is also needed of the relationship of the reserve-labour concept to women as cheap labour and to sex segregation.

Economic Growth and Change
I have reviewed a wide variety of work done in economics either directly or indirectly related to the topic of women in the economy. Most of this work comes from within the field of labour economics, with the exception of the Chicago School (Becker) work on the family and the "new home economics." This paper started with the question: What does the economics discipline have to say about women and the economy? Economics is a broad discipline, yet content specifically related to women is found almost exclusively in one small field. As mentioned earlier, most of economics is an analysis of an implicitly sex-neutral public economy. In scanning the rest of the discipline, very little work is being done examining the relationship of women to other aspects of this broader community. The discussion of economic growth and change is a very brief indication of what work does exist in this area. Again, the criterion is work done by economists, not work on an economic issue done in other disciplines.

One area of interest to economists, as noted by Amsden in her review of women and economics, centres on the macro-economic implications of the increasing labour-force participation of women. Particular attention is directed towards the implications for unemployment levels and the unemployment/price level relationship. Certainly the trend to multi-earner families changes some of the aggregate economic relationships, raising questions such as how to interpret unemployment statistics, how spending patterns are affected, and how income distribution is altered. Old concepts such as full employment have lost their meaning. This fact highlights how economic theory has been particularly tailored to the description of a public economy without women as visible participants. Much of the current response in macro-economics still implies that the real economic situation would be clearer if we basically abstracted from the presence of women: for example, the unemployment connected with their presence is not considered as serious as "real" (male) unemployment. Certainly, the range of policy issues up for re-examination — such as pension plans and unemployment insurance — is triggering responses from economists on the implications of the changing economic situation of women.

Another area where at least some work that focuses on women
is starting to appear is the field of development. The process of development and change often disrupts, and thus exposes, existing economic relationships. Furthermore, in the development process, groups within the society may be affected differently. Both these areas have received at least minimal attention in the economic literature. However, much of the initiative in this field has been taken by anthropologists and sociologists rather than by economists. Some work is being done within the radical paradigm. For example, Deere analyzes changes in the mode of production and the role that rural women’s subsistence production plays in underdeveloped areas. Parallel work is being done on the relationship of women’s work to the development process in rural Nova Scotia. In this approach the development process is both shaped by women’s labour and affects women’s labour.

A final area where there is a particular inclusion of women in the literature is work on technological change. The current process of technological change, which is just beginning to be studied, clearly has dramatic implications for women’s wage work, household labour and the nature of the family as a resource-pooling unit. Economists have not exactly been first off the mark in this research and theory; however, they are increasingly being pushed into paying some attention to these issues, and I expect a considerable amount of work will be forthcoming, shaped — as in all topics considered — by the paradigm used.

Conclusion

The major purpose of this paper has been to summarize for the non-economist the ways in which the economics discipline studies women. It is hoped that it will be a useful guide and reference both to the thinking of economists and to relevant material for feminists. Feminists are suspicious of economists but are intrigued by economics. Feminist visions are often trivialized or dismissed as unreasonable, irrational, inefficient or economically unsound by economists. We have all heard comments such as “Of course equal pay is a nice idea, but it just isn’t economically feasible.” On the other hand, feminists in many disciplines are engaged in trying to understand the economics of the position of women. As an economist, I am intrigued by the possibility that feminism and economics can be combined within the discipline and not left just to the sociologists. Certainly a working knowledge of the language enables one to stickhandle attempts to prove that your so-called economic arguments are naive, emotional or sociological.
As we have seen in the literature review, most of the economic issues that feminists would like to have clarified have not yet been successfully explained in economics. The neoclassical approach to the economics of the family and to wage inequality takes us around the vicious circle that we want to have explained. It takes the status quo as given and explains why women, men and "employers" make the choices they do. The feminist idea that women's work is undervalued and thus underpaid is almost impossible for a neoclassical economist to grasp.

The feminist interests in the systematic nature of sexism, and the essential economic contribution that women make in their various roles are more compatible with the radical and institutional paradigms in economics. The institutional approach provides many avenues for policy research and many accounts of the built-in inequalities of the economic system. Time-budget work, for example, provides a wealth of data and evidence on the division of labour which can be analyzed from a feminist perspective in an effort to understand interrelations between domestic and wage work. Internal labour-market analysis provides a framework for detailed examination of the processes of inequality in the workplace. Labour-market segmentation invites further development and study on the detailed allocation of jobs under varying conditions in the formal and domestic economies. Cross-country, cross-cultural and historical studies in this area can help resolve many issues regarding women and work.

Work within the radical paradigm in economics is promising in that it places issues of conflict, unequal power, systematic inequalities and uneven development at the centre of the analysis, and interprets the economy in the broadest possible sense. It is the most receptive to the interrelated economics of both domestic and wage labour. As was clear in the literature review, work in this area is done as much or more by sociologists as by economists. This political-economy approach is not without its feminist critics, however. It runs the dual risk of being marginalized by the general radical paradigm and of suffering from a "malestream" bias, so that women are still the "other" rather than the "subject." There are, however, many promising avenues of further research in extending and deepening the analysis summarized in this paper. Interdisciplinary research is of course particularly essential in piecing together a coherent, sophisticated political economy of women, or a sexual political economy of production, as Weinbaum prefers to call it. 

Finally, we need to engage in some consideration of how to do economics — all kinds of economics — for women. For example, how do I explain to my male colleagues that the fields of money and
banking, international trade, or public finance are not sex-neutral? What questions would be asked if one were doing an economics for women in such fields? I can imagine that in international trade one would ask about implications for the international sexual division of wage labour, and implications of various strategies/arrangements for the nature and economic contribution of domestic labour and for the real standard of life of women as well as men. In public finance, cost-benefit analysis would take account of effects of various programs on wage inequality and on domestic labour. Fiscal policy would take account of the transference of activities between the home, the state and the private-sector economy.

These examples are only meant to suggest the issues that economics does not now address because of the assumed sex-neutrality of the economy and the exclusive emphasis on the public sphere. It is no easy task to undertake such a reshaping of our economic thinking. Certainly the economics profession is insensitive to the need for such a change. Yet we must make the point that economic theory as it exists today is a theory about only part of the economy. It is like the old elephant story: perhaps part of the failure of economists recently to describe, predict, or alter the economic elephant is due to the fact that they have only touched the head and the tail. We are a long way from a feminist economics, and what I want to emphasize is that such an economics must not only explain the role and position of women, but it must analyze all economic phenomena from a model that includes the full economy — formal and informal, public and private, male and female.

Notes

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1. See, for example, Angela Miles and Geraldine Finn, eds., Feminism in Canada: From Pressure to Politics (Montreal 1983).


3. Marjorie Cohen, "The Problem of Studying 'Economic Man'," in Miles and Finn, Feminism in Canada. (See n. 1 above.)

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5. Cohen, "The Problem of Studying 'Economic Man'" (See n. 3 above.)


8. Ibid., 89


10. Gary Becker first achieved prominence when he buttressed the neoclassical framework against attacks on its inability to explain earnings differentials by developing modern human-capital theory. See Gary Becker, *Human Capital* (New York 1964). In this work, earnings differentials are analyzed as returns to investment in human capital, and investment in human capital is analyzed using the framework of free choice and individual optimizing behaviour.


18. Becker, *A Treatise on the Family*. (See n. 4 above.)


21. Ibid., 134


26. Connelly, *Last Hired, First Fired*; and Power, “From Home Production to Wage Labour.” (See n. 25 above.)

27. Fox, *Hidden in the Household*. (See n. 22 above.)


30. Sen, “The Sexual Division of Labour and the Working Class Family.” (See n. 25 above.)


33. Humphries, “The Working Class Family, Women’s Liberation and Class Struggle.” (See n. 29 above.)


37. For a review, see A. Szalai, *Use of Time* (The Hague 1972).

38. Examples of current Canadian work on the sexual division of labour in families, using such data, are Susan Clark and Andrew Harvey, “The Sexual Division of Labour: The Use of Time,” *Atlantis* 2:1 (Fall 1976); and Susan Clark, Andrew Harvey, and Susan Shaw, “Sex Roles, Time and Leisure in the Canadian Family” (Paper presented at the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Detroit, September 1983).


44. A classic article on this is Jacob Mincer and Solomon Polachek, “Family


56. MacDonald, "Implications for Understanding Women." (See n. 28 above.)

57. Hartmann, "Capitalism, Patriarchy and Segregation by Sex." (See n. 29 above.)

58. MacDonald, "Implications for Understanding Women"; and Phillips and Phillips, Women and Work. (See n. 28 above.)


61. Hartmann, "Capitalism, Patriarchy and Segregation by Sex"; and Humphries, "The Working Class Family, Women's Liberation and Class Struggle" (see n. 29 above).


64. MacDonald, "Women in the Workforce"; and Power, "From Home Production to Wage Labour." (See n. 25 above.)

65. Connelly and MacDonald, "Women's Work." (See n. 34 above.)

66. Amsden, Economics of Women and Work. (See n. 14 above.)


68. Deere, "Rural Women's Subsistance Production." (See n. 35 above.)

69. Connelly and MacDonald, "Women's Work."

70. Weinbaum, Women's Liberation and Socialism. (See n. 60 above.)