

Beyond Adding on Gender and Class: Revisiting Feminism and Marxism

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At a time when “class has almost disappeared from feminist analyses, even those claiming a materialist feminist position,”¹ to insist on feminist-Marxist dialogue is to swim against the intellectual stream. Nevertheless, some practitioners of feminist political economy continue to maintain that Marxism is a school of political economy that gives feminism useful theoretical tools to understand capitalism.² As Beverley Skeggs argues, “[t]o abandon class as a theoretical tool does not mean that it does not exist any more; only that some theorists do not value it. It does not mean the [sic] women would experience inequality any differently; rather, it would make it more difficult for them to identify and challenge the basis of the inequality which they experience.”³

Feminists, however, have frequently noted the failure of Canadian political economy to give adequate consideration to gender relations and the concerns of women’s liberation. It is less well known that much of “the new Canadian political economy” has also been criticized for not placing workers and class struggle at the centre of analysis. This article proposes that these two failings have common roots in political economy’s theoretical foundations which place objective structures and contradictions in a dualistic external relationship with struggles and subjectivity. Human needs and struggles are not present from the beginning of the theory. The result is, at its root, a theory of society rather than an emancipatory theory of, and against, society. This is significant because feminism

has most often engaged with Marxism in this kind of political economy; in Canada, this engagement has produced an important school of feminist political economy.

To begin to develop an alternative approach, I return not to orthodox Marxism but to Marx's critique of political economy.⁴ This can be transformed by feminism in order to grasp how class, gender, race and sexuality are mediated by each other in social reality. Such a theory, I suggest, offers a promising framework in which people and their struggles are not just "add-ons." This is arguably a more valuable resource for an emancipatory feminism than the approaches more commonly used in contemporary feminist theory, such as liberalism, poststructuralism, postmodernism, Frankfurt School critical theory and orthodox Marxism.⁵

Gender and Class in Canadian Political Economy The political economy developed in English Canada over the past three decades has had an ambiguous relationship with Marxism, which has commonly been seen as an important approach to doing political economy. The introduction to the collection *The New Canadian Political Economy* spells out a widely-held understanding:

While political economy is based on a tradition that investigates the relationship between the economy and politics as they affect the social and cultural life of societies, within political economy there have been divergent tendencies. Broadly, the liberal political economy tradition has placed determinate weight on the political system and markets, while the Marxist tradition grants primacy to the economic system and classes.⁶

According to Clement and Williams, Marx's political economy adds to the labour theory of value of the earlier political economist David Ricardo's analysis of the exploitation of "the commodity 'labour'"⁷ and consequently of labour's struggle.

In the same book, Isabella Bakker's article on gender and political economy argues that "[t]he new political economy tends to 'add on women' instead of making genuine attempts at theorizing gender," which, she notes following Meg Luxton and Heather-Jon Maroney, is a central feature of society and

not just another way of saying “women.”⁸ Reviewing *The New Canadian Political Economy*, David McNally contends that because much of the work done by writers in this tradition has not built on Marx’s critique of political economy— in particular its de-fetishizing analysis of how alienated labour is at the core of capitalist production — the working class is also often added on. This, he speculates, is “a point not unrelated, perhaps, to the way in which it [Canadian political economy] adds on women.”⁹

McNally does not develop this observation, but some thoughts by Himani Bannerji on feminism, anti-racism and political economy are more suggestive. Bannerji argues that most Marxist-feminists have treated Marxism as a kind of political economy and read *Capital* in a positivist fashion, even though they reject the sexism and lack of gender analysis of many male Marxists. Such a reading “disattends Marx’s analysis of capital as a social relation rather than a ‘thing.’”¹⁰ Family structures and patriarchal ideology are joined to the categories of political economy. Radical feminist politics of “personal life” are adopted but not theoretically integrated into the theorists’ Marxism. Race and ethnicity, like other phenomena frequently considered to be cultural or ideological, get added on to a Marxist political economy characterized by its “objective, structural abstraction.” Bannerji contends that the result is a combination of a Marxist “objective idealism” and a feminist “essentialist or idealist subjectivist position” because “self or subjectivity remains unconnected to social organization or history in any formative and fundamental sense.”¹¹ This analysis of feminism’s encounter with a widely-held interpretation of Marxism as political economy is perceptive.

To say this is not to dismiss the valuable work in the feminist political economy tradition in Canada that has grappled with class, gender and (less successfully) other social relations,¹² but to raise questions about possible weaknesses in the theoretical frameworks most often employed and their consequences for concrete inquiries. There have been important feminist Marxist efforts in this tradition to develop theory that integrates gender into an analysis of capitalism, rather than leaving either gender or class as conceptual “add ons.”¹³ While these theoretical contributions have broken with

Marxist orthodoxy by taking gender seriously, I would argue that the kinds of Marxism most often, though not always,¹⁴ drawn on in this intellectual current have been relatively orthodox. For this reason, I will proceed to outline another theoretical approach, one which, I suggest, offers a stronger basis for feminist Marxist research.

Marx's Critique of Political Economy as the Basis of a Theory Against Society John Holloway contends that what is often referred to as Marx's "economics" is, as the subtitle of *Capital* indicates, actually a critique of political economy, in the specific sense of a critique of theories developed on the basis of fetishized forms of appearance.¹⁵ To clarify this interpretation, it is worth reviewing Marx's theory of capitalism, especially since it is so often caricatured or misunderstood. As Simon Clarke has argued, "Marx laid the foundations of a critical social theory but, contrary to Marxist orthodoxy, he did not provide an all-encompassing world view. Marx marked out a critical project, which was to understand and to transform society from the standpoint of the activity and aspirations of concrete human individuals."¹⁶ His starting point, first explored in the Paris Manuscripts of 1844, is alienated labour. By working under conditions in which they sell their labour-power to employers, proletarians reproduce capital's domination of the labour-process and its products. In Marx's words, "The relationship of the worker to labour creates the relation to it of the capitalist... Private property is thus the product, the result, the necessary consequence, of alienated labour."¹⁷ Although many commentators have for various reasons failed to grasp the centrality of alienated labour, Marx is unequivocal. This is a point of considerable importance. It establishes that Marx's point of departure for theoretical inquiry into capitalism is historically specific social relations between people, not abstract individuals whose constitution as such is hidden by their relations with property (things).¹⁸

What Marx develops over the twenty-three years between the Paris Manuscripts and the first volume of *Capital* is a critique of political economy that does not discard his early philosophical ideas about alienated labour, but deepens them and makes them more concrete. His work is a critique of the

ideological notions of the leading classical political economists whose categories—such as those of the theory of class based on the “trinity formula” of land, labour and capital, the three factors of production corresponding to rent, wages and profit—mask the social and historical character of the relations described.¹⁹ The key question Marx answers, going beyond Ricardo, is why labour takes the form of value. Ricardo recognizes the centrality of labour to production. His labour theory of value considers the labour-time embodied in products by individuals as the source of value and the basis of the producers’ property rights in their products. In contrast, for Marx labour is social, not individual, and a commodity has value in capitalism as a result of the labour-time socially necessary for its production, not the labour embodied in it by its producer. Ricardo’s concept of production is ahistorical and naturalistic, while Marx’s concern is the social form of production.²⁰ Marx’s theory of value “is not primarily an account of the formation of prices, but an explanation of value as the alienated form of appearance of social labour.”²¹ Because abstract labour, the substance of value, is the alienated labour of the working class, the categories of Marx’s critique of political economy “contain an accusation and an imperative.”²² At root, this is not a theory of things or structures but of social relations between people.

Having clarified why Marx’s theory of capitalism is not political economy (at least in the usual sense of the term), let us turn to a reconstruction of a theory against society on the basis of this reading of Marx. An open Marxism does not automatically solve the problem of treating gender and women’s struggle for liberation as “add ons” however it makes it easier to develop an integrated theory.

“In the beginning was the scream,” writes Holloway.²³ This is a way of making the point that people’s experiences of, and responses to, exploitation and oppression are the starting point for a theory whose purpose is to understand the world so that human beings can change it. We need to hear the many voices in the scream to which Holloway directs us. The scream is made up of cries coming from people with a range of different gender, ethno-racial, national and sexual identities, not a mythical white male working class. If this is the point of departure, Marxism is first and foremost a way of

making more coherent the “existence-against-society” of people engaged in resistance, in whatever way. In other words, Marxism is a “theory against society,”²⁴ a theory of negation and transformation.

It is important to be able to understand the different social relations of oppression and exploitation against which people struggle. For this reason, every theory against society must also include a theory of society. “A theory focused on the rupture of capitalist society must incorporate an understanding of the reproduction of capitalist society.”²⁵ The priority here, however, is different from that of dominant ways of doing theory, which involve explaining existing society as it is. Most social theories—including most versions of Marxism—subordinate or stifle negation because it is confusing or diverts from the task of providing an account of what exists.

There are numerous theories against society. What distinguishes this open Marxism is not that it is scientific (in the usual positivist meaning of the term as objective and excluding subjectivity) but “its claim to dissolve all externality.”²⁶ There is nothing truly outside those who labour, those who reproduce capitalist society and thereby their own subordination to capital. Society is produced by human beings. Work, understood in the broad sense of creative practice, is the basis of social organization. “Work is all-constitutive.”²⁷ Here it is very important to heed the feminist insistence that work is much more than what is done for wages. Much human labour is unpaid, including the unpaid domestic labour largely carried out by women.

I will return to domestic labour, but for the moment let us consider only labour directly engaged in social production.²⁸ In class-divided societies, producers do not associate freely. Rather, they toil for exploiting classes whose control of the social surplus gives them immense power. The domination of producers by the fruits of their alienated labour assumes dramatic proportions under capitalism, a radically expansionary mode of production that develops the powers of human labour in unprecedented ways. One consequence of alienation in capitalist society is fetishism “reducing the social objectivity of the forms of capitalist relations to a natural objectivity.”²⁹ Phenomena that are social and historical appear natural and eternal. What exists and is experienced as the force of objec-

tive social structures coercively determining people's lives, however, is in fact dead labour; the product of working people. The most objective structures are ultimately not external to human subjectivity but are our subjectivity in an alienated social form. It is not that the objectivity of social structures is simple illusion, the result of some deception or mystification. The history of capitalism is littered with examples of the tyrannical power of such objectifications. We need go no further than the reality of mass starvation in a world that produces more than enough food to meet the nutritional needs of every person on the planet.³⁰ Every barrier presented by the market to the realization of human needs is a reminder of the very real power of this alienated objectivity. The crucial theoretical mistake lies in separating it from human subjectivity in an external relationship that breaks the link between dead and living labour. Another error is to freeze the objectification of human practice as objectivity. To do so fails to grasp that fetishism is really fetishization; not a once-and-for-all achievement, but an ongoing and contested process that depends for its perpetuation on the reproduction of the capital-labour relation.³¹

This view of human labour as the basis of social relations is not popular in contemporary social thought. Theories that conceptualize the constitution of society as linguistic are more widely accepted than what Gyorgy Markus calls "the production paradigm."³² Although they differ with each other in significant ways, post-structuralism, structuralism, hermeneutics and positivism all belong to the "paradigm of language." "The production paradigm" does not deny the role of language in social life. Human labour is conscious, social and therefore necessarily linguistic.³³ What needs to be questioned is any attempt to model society along the lines of language, no matter how language is understood to function. To do so is mistaken because societies do not change historically in the same way that languages do.³⁴ In addition, the language paradigm "sees history merely as becoming, as pure change."³⁵ But if history is seen as potentially about progressive development as it logically ought to be by those who believe that liberation from oppression is possible then this will not do:

The apparently purely theoretical objection raised by the Marxist perspective against the language paradigm—that within its

framework the question about the “causal mechanisms” of historical change cannot even be formulated—actually includes a practical demand for a kind of relation to history in which human beings are not merely observers or suffering participants of the historical process as a fated flux of events but are, rather, active and conscious co-creators of their own history.³⁶

For this reason, the kind of theory for which I am arguing is particularly compatible with a feminism that remains committed to the struggle for the liberation of women and other oppressed people.

The preceding paragraphs may seem a philosophical excursus of no relevance to the issue of feminism and Marxism, but this is not the case. Dissolving the theoretical separation of human subjects from objective social structures begins to address the concerns Bakker and McNally raise about “adding on” gender and class and Bannerji’s observations about the “objective, structural abstraction” of the political economy of many Marxist-feminists. Within an open Marxism, structure and struggle are no longer conceived as externally related. All who labour are present from the beginning because work is recognized as constitutive of society. This includes wage-labour, domestic labour and other forms.³⁷ A link is established between human subjectivity and its alienated existence as objectifications. While only a sketch, at least this points in the direction of a theory that would remedy the problem of “self or subjectivity remain[ing] unconnected to social organization or history in any formative and fundamental sense.”³⁸ Political economy and other theories of society that conceptualize social structures in separation from human subjectivity will always find themselves wrestling to establish the connection between the two.

Implications for Feminism and Marxism A theory against society developed on the foundations of the constitutive power of work and Marx’s critique of political economy is one in which workers’ struggles are present from the beginning. At this point a skeptical feminist might comment that this is all very well, but where are women’s struggles? And what about gender? Are we not left with a Marxism open to

workers but closed to women, who will yet again be added on in the way Bakker says they tend to be in political economy?

The heterodox Marxists on which I have drawn are of little assistance here. One way of gendering this theory would be through the work of Mariarosa Dalla Costa. This would be an appealing choice to some theorists sympathetic to the interpretation of Marxism advanced above. Dalla Costa uses the "social capital" theory formulated by Italian autonomist Marxists,³⁹ who have influenced writers like Holloway. Dalla Costa's concept of "the exploitation of the wageless"⁴⁰ in the community sphere of the "social factory" where the family is located, however, entails the position that domestic labour produces value in a Marxist sense. On this basis, she advocates the "Wages for Housework" strategy. Without entering at any length into the domestic labour debate, there are compelling arguments for rejecting Dalla Costa's theory of domestic labour. Lise Vogel's evaluation that in the debate "[a]s it turned out, it was relatively easy to demonstrate theoretically that domestic labour in capitalist societies does not take the social form of value-producing labour," even if what domestic labour actually is was left unclear, is sound.⁴¹

Can gender feature in this open Marxism in more than an "add-on" way? While an adequate theory is no guarantee that theorists will generate studies of concrete social processes in which gender (or any other social relation) is treated appropriately, the remedy for gender-blindness can only lie in making gender present from the very beginning. The constitutive role of human practice is the level at which gender must be introduced. Work is performed by human beings who, from the moment of their birth, acquire gender identities as social constructions in specific cultural contexts.⁴² Because Marx and many later Marxists have lacked a historical and materialist theory of gender, but not ideological assumptions about gender difference and social organization, they were unable to gender human practice in this way. Only in the wake of the rise of the women's liberation movement of the late 1960s and the development of feminist theory that scrutinized gender did gendering Marxism in a serious manner become possible.

What is gained by introducing gender in this way? The advance upon social theories that take fetishized structures as their point of departure and then bring in gender and other

social relations lies in the recognition by this kind of feminist Marxism that gendered human subjects and their practice are the basis of society. This can help to make the gendered character of social relations more prominent. The remainder of this article suggests some ways in which an open Marxist theory can be gendered. To do so is not to suggest that only gender and class matter; we also live within other social relations including those of race and sexuality. Because class, gender, race and other social relations do not exist in isolation but simultaneously mediate each other in social reality, an integrated and inclusive theory is needed. All should be introduced at the level of the social organization of the human labour that is constitutive of society; for reasons of length, what follows is limited to gender and class.⁴³

To delve into the various contending theories of women's or gender oppression would be a major endeavour,⁴⁴ so instead I will note two assumptions underlying what follows. Briefly stated, the first is that capitalism and gender oppression are not identical but, in the words of Pat Armstrong and Hugh Armstrong, "inseparable. They act together... not autonomous, nor even interconnected systems, but the same system."⁴⁵ The second is that this theoretical position has a solid foundation in historical research. As the authors of a noteworthy anthropological study conclude, "The origins of female subordination are inextricably interwoven with the origins of social and economic differentiation among sub-groups or separate families within any society... Anthropology and history offer no justification for the opposition some political activists make between the struggle against class rule and the struggle against patriarchy."⁴⁶ Both assumptions are controversial but, as Armstrong and Armstrong, Coontz and Henderson and others have shown, eminently defensible.⁴⁷

Gendering human labour at a high level of generality is perhaps most significant in its effects at less abstract levels. For example, a consequence of gendering practice in the two aspects in which it exists within capitalist society, wage-labour and labour outside of capital, is the gendering of the needs that workers develop and struggle to realize. It is to be expected that female and male workers will have different hierarchies of needs in the same historical context. This is not the

only consequence. As Michael Lebowitz notes, because the working class is heterogenous,⁴⁸ encompassing gender, racial, sexual, national and other differences that are organized hierarchically where oppressive relations exist, workers do not all approach capital in the same manner. Workers who suffer gender oppression and other kinds of domination will be weakened in class struggles. The material advantages that working-class men, white workers and other workers who belong to dominant groups gain as a result of various kinds of oppression lead to divisive behaviour and attitudes that weaken the whole working class vis-a-vis employer and state power. The fact that workers approach capital not just differently but unequally is of great advantage to capital. Its power to implement its profit-driven logic against wage-labour is strengthened to the extent that wage-labour is torn by competition and internal division.⁴⁹ It follows from this that struggles and autonomous movements for the equality and liberation of women and other oppressed groups (most of whom are also part of the working class) are not only necessary for the oppressed themselves.⁵⁰ Such struggles benefit the working class as a whole by reducing internal antagonisms and forging unity, thereby enhancing the power of labour against capital.

Wage-labour is not the only form of work within capitalism. There is much labour that has no immediate relation to capital. Although such labour falls into a number of categories, I will only address domestic labour, which has figured so prominently in feminist-Marxist dialogue. Domestic labour is best theorized in a non-dualistic manner within an expanded conception of mode of production, an approach developed by the "social reproduction" current within Marxist-feminism, in which English-Canadian thinkers have been well-represented.⁵¹ One way of doing this, proposed by Wally Secombe, posits the production of means of production, means of subsistence and labour-power as the three necessary dimensions of modes of production. The production and daily and generational reproduction of labour-power is essential if the production of means of production and means of subsistence is to take place. Across various class societies, this is mainly accomplished within families.⁵² The non-waged production and reproduction of labour-power in capitalist societies is understood as taking place within the

capitalist mode of production, but outside the immediate relation between wage-labour and capital. This avoids the mirror errors of treating domestic labour as labour for capital, as Dalla Costa does, or as part of an entirely separate mode of production.

Like other kinds of work, labour in the domestic domain also leads those who perform it to develop and seek to realize needs. The process of need formation and realization here differs from that in wage-labour, in keeping with the particular nature of the domestic labour-process. The distinctiveness of the needs formed here is frequently reinforced by the rough coincidence in the history of many capitalist societies of the division between men's and women's work and that between wage-labour and unwaged domestic work. The struggles of women to realize the needs they develop outside waged production tend to lead to confrontations with capital in its role as appropriator of the products of labour. Women's needs for such things as child care, affordable housing, reproductive choice and safety from sexist violence can be translated into demands on the state. If the state is understood as the political form of the capital-labour relation, then women's struggles do not have to take place in the workplace in order to be recognized as struggles against capital.⁵³ Women's movements, like other movements of oppressed people, can and do express working-class needs because workers are not reducible to their one-sided existence as wage-labour.⁵⁴ For example, reproductive freedom is undoubtedly a need of women but it is also a working-class need, since in many capitalist societies most women are part of the working class.⁵⁵ Women's movements express working-class needs to the extent that they do not organize around issues and demands that solely serve the interests of women of the middle and dominant classes.

A cautionary closing: in learning from feminism to expand the conception of class struggle, it is important to not reduce women's needs and struggles to those of class. The demands of women for social change are not directed only at employers and states, but also against male supremacy as it is manifested and maintained by men of all classes. Sexism among male workers is not simply false consciousness. It arises from the material advantages they derive from women's subordi-

nation, even though gender oppression also weakens the working class as a whole vis-a-vis capital. To note the inseparability of gender oppression and capitalism is not the same as to propose their identity. Class is gendered, and gender is classed. Class struggles can raise women's specific needs. This potential is often unrealized, however; partly because both male supremacy and the power of capital act to constrain and funnel workers' struggles into narrower channels. This should underline the point that feminism is indispensable for Marxism, as are women's movements for workers' movements.⁵⁶

Conclusion A theory against society that (1) begins from human experience, (2) recognizes the all-constitutive nature of labour, and (3) defetishizes capitalist social relations avoids the problems of a theory of society that starts with objectified structures and fetishized forms of appearance. Theorizing structure and struggle as internally related through the constantly contested process of capitalist social reproduction puts class, gender and other social struggles at the centre of analysis. Because feminist political economy in Canada and elsewhere has made important contributions to knowledge, attempting the kinds of inquiry it has undertaken on the basis of the convergence of feminism with a different Marxism would prove worthwhile. An open Marxism that takes seriously the mediation of class by gender, race, sexuality and other social relations can improve our understanding of how capital and forms of oppression come into contradiction with human needs, and of the struggles that result. Of course, the many challenges of doing integrated analysis cannot be resolved at the level of theory. Remedying problems at this level does, however, make it less likely that real people, their resistance and the social relations that shape their lives will be displaced. If theory is understood as providing ways for people to understand the world so that they can more effectively strive to change their conditions of life, there are good reasons to consider adopting a feminist Marxist approach and developing it in the direction suggested here.

Notes

Thanks to Sue Ferguson, Meg Luxton, Gary Kinsman, Rosemary Warskett and Sheila Wilmot for their comments on various versions of this article, one of which was presented to the Feminist Graduate Colloquium, York University, Toronto, 26 March 1999. The support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada during the preparation of this article is gratefully acknowledged.

1. Beverley Skeggs, *Formations of Class and Gender: Becoming Respectable* (London: Sage, 1997), p. 6.
2. See the survey of Canadian feminist political economy in Heather Jon Maroney and Meg Luxton, "Gender at Work: Canadian Feminist Political Economy since 1988," in Wallace Clement, (ed.), *Understanding Canada: Building on the New Canadian Political Economy* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), pp. 85-117.
3. Skeggs, *Formations*, p. 6.
4. For a fascinating recent effort to develop a similar open Marxism, especially with respect to the changes in contemporary capitalism associated with information technology, see Nick Dyer-Witheford, *Cyber-Marx: Cycles and Circuits of Struggle in High-Technology Capitalism* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999). On the formation of orthodox Marxist theory, see Douglas Kellner, (ed.), *Karl Korsch: Revolutionary Theory* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977); Felton C. Shortall, *The Incomplete Marx* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1994); Cyril Smith, *Marx at the Millennium* (London and Chicago: Pluto, 1996).
5. Teresa L. Ebert, *Ludic Feminism and After: Postmodernism, Desire, and Labor in Late Capitalism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996) offers a sharp critique of what the authors call "ludic" postmodernist feminism. Unfortunately, this work is marred by the orthodoxy of its Marxism.
6. Wallace Clement and Glen Williams, "Introduction," in Wallace Clement and Glen Williams, (eds.), *The New Canadian Political Economy* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), p. 6.
7. In fact, Marx is consistently clear that the commodity in question is labour-power, not labour. As Simon Clarke writes, this "is no pedantic terminological distinction, it is an aspect of the fundamental distinction between use-value and value, the confusion of which underlies the mystifications of political economy" (Simon Clarke, *Marx, Marginalism and Modern Sociology: From Adam Smith to Max Weber*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 115-116. That Clement and Williams slip here seems related to their view of Marx's relationship with Ricardo's labour theory of value. As discussed later, Marx does not adopt Ricardo's theory but develops a critique of it that is central to his critique of political economy.
8. Isabella Bakker, "The Political Economy of Gender," in Clement, *Understanding Canada*, p. 101.
9. David McNally, "Political Economy Without the Working Class?," *Labour/Le Travail* 25 (1990), p. 226n.
10. Himani Bannerji, "But Who Speaks For Us? Experience and Agency in Conventional Feminist Paradigms," *Thinking Through: Essays on Feminism, Marxism, and Anti-Racism* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1995),

- p. 76. A similar point was made in 1972 by Selma James: "We inherited a distorted and reformist concept of capital itself as a series of *things* which we struggle to plan, control or manage, rather than as a *social relation* which we struggle to destroy" ("Introduction to 'The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community'" in Rosemary Hennessy and Chrys Ingraham, (eds.), *Materialist Feminism: A Reader in Class, Difference and Women's Lives* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 33).
11. Bannerji, "But Who Speaks," pp. 9, 10.
 12. See, for example, the articles collected in Roberta Hamilton and Michèle Barrett, (eds.), *The Politics of Diversity: Feminism, Marxism and Nationalism* (Montreal: Book Center, 1986); M. Patricia Connelly and Pat Armstrong, (eds.), *Feminism in Action: Studies in Political Economy* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars', 1982); Pat Armstrong and M. Patricia Connelly, (eds), *Feminism, Political Economy and the State: Contested Terrain* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars', 1999), and such books as Leah F. Vosko, *Temporary Work: The Gendered Rise of a Precarious Employment Relationship* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).
 13. The articles by Roberta Hamilton, Bruce Curtis, Angela Miles, Bonnie Fox, Wally Secombe, Pat Armstrong, Hugh Armstrong, Patricia Connelly and Mary O'Brien collected in the section "Towards Feminist Marxism" in Hamilton and Barrett, (eds), *Politics of Diversity*, along with Dorothy Smith, "Feminist Reflections on Political Economy," *Studies in Political Economy* 30 (1989), pp. 37-59, can be seen as the high point of feminist Marxist theoretical debate in Canada. The subsequent waning of this intellectual current (along with other currents of Marxist scholarship) has meant that little theoretical development of feminist Marxism has taken place subsequently.
 14. While different in significant ways, the Canadian theoretical contribution whose approach most resembles mine is probably Smith, "Feminist Reflections."
 15. John Holloway, "Crisis, Fetishism, Class Composition," in Werner Bonefeld, Richard Gunn and Kosmas Psychopedis, (eds.), *Theory and Practice* Volume 2 of *Open Marxism* (Pluto: London, 1992), p. 160.
 16. Clarke, *Marx, Marginalism*, p. ix. Shortall, *Incomplete Marx* and Michael Lebowitz, *Beyond Capital: Marx's Political Economy of the Working Class* (New York: St. Martin's, 1992) are important works on the incomplete character of Marx's work.
 17. Quoted in Clarke, *Marx Marginalism*, p. 67.
 18. Clarke, *Marx, Marginalism*, pp. 68-70.
 19. *Ibid*, pp. 126-128.
 20. *Ibid*, pp. 96-103.
 21. *Ibid*, p. 97n.
 22. Herbert Marcuse, "The Concept of Essence," (trans.), Jeremy J. Shapiro, in *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (Boston: Beacon, 1968), p. 86.
 23. John Holloway, "From Scream of Refusal to Scream of Power: The Centrality of Work," in Werner Bonefeld, Richard Gunn, John Holloway and Kosmas Psychopedis, (eds.), *Emancipating Marx*, Vol. 3 of *Open Marxism* (Pluto: London, 1995), p. 155.
 24. *Ibid*, p. 156.
 25. *Ibid*.
 26. *Ibid*, p. 159.
 27. *Ibid*, p. 172.

28. That unpaid domestic labour is not directly engaged in social production is widely, though not universally, accepted. There is much less agreement on a positive understanding of domestic labour. I touch on these points below.
29. Norman Geras, "Marx and the Critique of Political Economy," in Robin Blackburn, (ed.), *Ideology in Social Science: Readings in Critical Social Theory* (Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1972), p. 297.
30. On this issue, see, for instance, Frances Moore Lappé, Joseph Collins and Peter Rosset, with Luis Esparza, *World Hunger: Twelve Myths*, 2nd ed. (London: Earthscan, 1998) and John Warnock, *The Politics of Hunger: the Global Food System* (Toronto: Methuen, 1987).
31. Holloway, "From Scream," pp. 173-174.
32. Jurgen Habermas argues that the production paradigm is obsolete (Jurgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, (trans.), Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987), pp. 75-82), but see the response of Alex Callinicos in his *Against Postmodernism: A Marxist Critique* (New York: St. Martin's, 1990), pp. 113-115.
33. See David McNally, *Bodies of Meaning: Studies on Language, Labor and Liberation* (Albany: State University of New York, 2001).
34. Gyorgy Markus, *Language and Production: A Critique of the Paradigms*, Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science Vol. 96 (Dordrecht and Boston: D. Reidel, 1986), pp. 34-37.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 39. This is how history is seen by Nietzsche and in post-structuralism. See, for example, Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in Donald F. Bouchard, (ed. and trans.), *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), pp. 139-164.
36. Markus, *Language*, p. 39.
37. How much of the total labour-time performed by members of subordinate classes is alienated labour for wages, independent commodity production, domestic labour or other forms is an important empirical question not addressed here.
38. Bannerji, "But Who Speaks," p. 80.
39. See Mario Tronti, "Social Capital," *Telos* 17 (1973), pp. 98-121.
40. Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James, "Women and the Subversion of the Community," in Hennessy and Ingraham, (eds.), *Materialist Feminism*, p. 44. This essay, in fact by Dalla Costa, is attributed to both Dalla Costa and James (the joint editors of the pamphlet in which it was first published) in the anthology *Materialist Feminism*.
41. Lise Vogel, *Marxism and the Oppression of Women: Toward a Unitary Theory* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), p. 23.
42. For a more materialist treatment of the social construction of gender than is found in post-structuralist work on the topic, see Suzanne J. Kessler and Wendy McKenna, *Gender: An Ethnomethodological Approach* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1985).
43. Johanna Brenner, *Women and the Politics of Class* (New York: Monthly Review, 2000), pp. 293-324, discusses the "intersection" of class and other social relations. Each kind of oppression requires its own historical and materialist study. Notable contributions on the roots and reproduction of racism include Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*, 2 vols. (London and New York: Verso, 1994-1997); David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London and New York: Verso, 1991); and his *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness: Essays on Race, Politics, and Working-Class History* (London and New York: Verso, 1994). Enakshi

- Dua and Angela Robertson, (eds.), *Scratching the Surface: Canadian Anti-Racist Feminist Thought* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1999) is an important collection of Canadian anti-racist feminist thought. On sexuality, see Gary Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire: Homo and Hetero Sexualities*, 2nd ed. (Montreal: Black Rose, 1996). On indigenous peoples in Canada, see Deborah Lee Simmons, "Against Capital: The Political Economy of Aboriginal Resistance in Canada," dissertation, (York University, 1995).
44. Sylvia Walby, *Theorizing Patriarchy* (Oxford and Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990) provides an overview.
 45. Pat and Hugh Armstrong, "Beyond Sexless Class and Classless Sex: Towards Feminist Marxism," in Hamilton and Barrett, (eds.), *Politics of Diversity*, p. 226.
 46. Stephanie Coontz and Peta Henderson, "Property Forms, Political Power, and Female Labour in the Origins of Class and State Societies," in Stephanie Coontz and Peta Henderson, (eds.), *Women's Work, Men's Property: The Origins of Gender and Class* (London: Verso, 1988), pp. 154-155.
 47. On the origins of women's oppression, see also Eleanor Burke Leacock, *Myths of Male Dominance: Collected Articles on Women Cross-Culturally* (New York: Monthly Review, 1981) and Henrietta L. Moore, *Feminism and Anthropology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).
 48. Lebowitz, *Beyond Capital*, pp. 117-120.
 49. *Ibid*, pp. 64-67.
 50. However, it is those who suffer a particular oppression who will inevitably first identify and challenge it. The need for the autonomous self-organization of oppressed groups arises because consciousness concerning oppression develops unevenly (as does class consciousness). Oppressed people themselves have, in general, more understanding of their oppression and the need to struggle against it than those who do not experience that specific form of oppression.
 51. See the valuable discussion of this current in Sue Ferguson, "Building on the Strengths of the Socialist Feminist Tradition," *New Politics* 2nd ser. 7.2 (1999), pp. 89-100.
 52. Wally Seccombe, *A Millennium of Family Change: Feudalism to Capitalism in Northwestern Europe* (London and New York: Verso, 1992), pp. 11-14.
 53. For arguments for theorizing the state in capitalist society as the political form of the capital-labour relation, see John Holloway, "State as Class Practice," *Research in Political Economy* 3 (1980), pp. 1-25; Werner Bonefeld, *The Recomposition of the British State During the 1980s* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1993); Peter Burnham, "Capital, Crisis and the International State System," in Werner Bonefeld and John Holloway, (eds.), *Global Capital, National State and the Politics of Money* (New York: St. Martin's, 1995), pp. 92-115.
 54. Lebowitz, *Beyond Capital*, p. 147.
 55. As Bettina Bradbury suggests, "we have to reconceptualize the working class to include not only those who sell their labour power, but also those who reproduce it, ideologically and materially, and those who are largely dependent on the wages of others" (Bettina Bradbury, "Women's History and Working-Class History," *Labour/Le Travail* 19 (1987), p. 40). Lesley Hoggart, "Socialist Feminism, Reproductive Rights and Political Action," *Capital and Class* 70 (2000), pp. 95-125

examines some of the tensions around struggles for reproductive rights in the history of the British labour and feminist movements.

56. Johanna Brenner, "Women's Self-Organization: A Marxist Justification," *Against the Current* 1st ser. (1980), pp. 24-32. The converse is also true, above all at a time when global capitalist restructuring stands as a barrier to the realization of the needs of workers and women.