

THE ARTICULATION OF CLASS AND GENDER RELATIONS:

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF SECRETARIAL EDUCATION AND

SECRETARIAL LABOUR PROCESSES

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## ABSTRACT

The thesis is about class relations, gender relations, and the relations between these analytically separable systems of social differentiation. A method of articulation is developed which focusses particular attention on the complexities of the connections between class and gender relations. It is argued that these complexities are constituted in the coherencies, incoherencies, contradictions, tensions and ambiguities between and within these categories of relations. These are explored within the production and education contexts, as well as in the context of the relationship between these two sets of social institutions. Basically this method explores the moving, informing and shaping of the structures of class and of gender relations by each other.

The method of articulation, proposed in the thesis, is based on a structuration process approach. Analysis centres, in the first instance, on the differences and similarities between substantive expressions of gender relations and between substantive expressions of class relations. Analysis then proceeds to examining the pattern in which certain forms of gender, and certain forms of class, subordination/superordination, coincide. In other words, analysis explores a distinctive category of relations, constituted by emergent patterns at points of interconstitution of these analytically separable sets of relations. In short, this method analyses the structures of class and of gender relations as working on and through each other. This is conceptualized as structural agency. Connections between structural agency and human agency are explored as a component of the articulation of class and gender relations.

The empirical focus of the thesis is a specific sphere of 'women's work and education'. That is, inter-connections between class relations and gender relations are explored by using the proposed method of articulation to analyse reproduction of secretarial labour power within education and the mechanisms which connect this vocational education with secretarial production. Secondary source data on secretarial

labour processes are re-analysed through the method of articulation developed in the thesis. A major source of original data on secretarial education is a comparative case study of relevant courses in two sharply contrasting colleges. This case study compares in detail the institutional structures, cultures and processes of an elite private secretarial college with the procedures adopted in equivalent courses in a state college of further education.

Articulation analysis of secretarial education indicates that both class and gender relations are reproduced in this sphere of vocational education. The perspective developed in this study suggests that challenges and confrontations, by secretarial teachers, students and workers, in respect of the class and gender constraints which they experience, contribute towards reproduction of these systems of social inequalities. As such, this study engages with those existing conceptual frameworks, and those analyses of the reproduction of secretarial labour power, which suggest that reproduction of class and gender relations is exclusively or primarily a feature of the acquiescence and accommodation, of relevant constraints on action, on the part of women students, teachers and workers in gender specific areas of education and work.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BEC	Business Education Council
BTEC	Business and Technician Education Council
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
CTC	Central Training Council
CTC	City Technology College
CPVE	Certificate in Pre-Vocational Education
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
LCC	London Chamber of Commerce
MSC	Manpower Services Commission
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualifications
PA Dip	Diploma for Personal Assistants
RSA	Royal Society of Arts
YTS	Youth Training Scheme

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## INTRODUCTION

### CENTRAL ISSUES

This thesis is about class relations, gender relations, and the relations of these relations. In other words, it concentrates on analysing connections between these analytically separable forms of social differentiation. To do this, a method of articulation of forms of social differentiation is developed. This approach focusses particular attention on the complexities of the connections between class and gender relations. These are explored by using the proposed 'articulation' perspective to analyse reproduction of secretarial labour power within education and the mechanisms which connect this vocational education with the sphere of production.

Current ongoing debate, in one area of social theory, is concerned with very similar issues to those of this thesis. That is, a considerable literature has emerged in recent years which describes and analyses connections between class and gender relations (eg Bruegel 1982, Pringle 1988, Rubery and Tarling 1982, Alexander 1981, Sargent 1981, Hartsock 1985, Hearn 1987, Walby 1986 and 1990, Hartmann 1979). A recurrent issue, discussed in this debate, centres on the question of whether class inequalities and gender inequalities can best be understood as a unitary system of 'capitalist-patriarchy', or whether these forms of social differentiation should be viewed as a dual system of class power

and male power. In spite of this apparently clearcut distinction between perspectives on class and gender connections, it is not as easy, as some analysts perhaps suggest (eg Walby 1990:2-7), to classify analyses according to these two opposing standpoints. Imprecisions abound when labelling any particular perspective as unitary or dualist, since, as Cockburn points out:

"there are those who proclaim themselves to be working with a unitary theory, and who, despite protestations, continue to talk about the two systems separately, to talk the language of 'inter-relationship'". (1986:81)

Although difficulties arise when categorising the numerous and varied perspectives on connections between class and gender relations, there are important broad variations particularly in the assumptions which underpin their methodological frameworks. A starting point for 'dualists', for example, is that class and gender relations constitute parallel, autonomous, but inter-relating systems, acting alongside each other rather than inter-meshing (eg Mitchell 1975). In other words, they treat these sets of relations as separate systems with tangential connections. For example, dualist analysis often explains that capitalism creates the structure of hierarchically ranked places in production, but that gender determines who fills these places (Hartmann 1979, Valli 1986). In contrast, many Marxist feminists' frameworks presume upon the view that women's subordination to men is integrated with the system of capitalist class relations (eg Eisenstein 1981). Nevertheless, many of their consequent analyses turn out to be closely associated with dualist approaches (eg Gardiner 1975, Beechey 1977). Against this background, the method of articulation developed in the present study attempts to avoid this particular discrepancy between conceptual model and analysis.

What can be claimed for existing analyses is that they shed light on certain analytic links between class and gender relations. However, they generally neglect to explore whether class and gender relations inform and transform each other in the structure and distribution of power. In contrast, the proposed articulation approach focusses on the constitution, reconstitution, redirection and reconfiguration of class and of gender relations, as constituents both of their inter-connections

and of their reproduction. Articulation analysis of these aspects of connections between class and gender relations illuminates the complex structures of each of these relations, in comparison with the more simple structures assumed in, for example, dualists' frameworks.

One reason for the comparatively simple structures built into dualist models is that, in the main, these methods focus on the underlying 'principles' of class and gender relations. They explore aggregate inequalities between men/women and capital/labour. The tendency is to identify only those substantive instances of these relations which give coherent expression to the generic rules underpinning class and/or gender relations. In addition, they incline towards emphasizing unproblematic coherencies, within class and gender relations, as the main characteristic of the 'fitting together' and of the reproduction of these relations. In essence, dualists generally neglect to take account of incoherencies, ambiguities, tensions and contradictions within and between these forms of social differentiation. As a consequence they generally highlight the stable and static characteristics of both class and gender relations when considered separately from each other. In the main, dualists overlook the possibility of the redirection or reconfiguration of each of these categories of relations which points to more than their tangential interconnections, but rather their interconstitution.

Dualists concentrate on tangential connections between class and gender relations, and do so from several different perspectives. For example, some allocate patriarchal and capitalist relations to different institutional contexts (eg Gardiner 1975), the tendency being to allocate patriarchy to the domestic context and class relations to the production context. Others acknowledge both forms of social differentiation within specified social spheres. For example, Downing (1981) explores both class and gender relations in the context of secretarial production, and Hartmann (1979) argues that both housework and waged labour are important sites of women's exploitation by men.

In spite of using different approaches, most dualists tend to assert the mutual co-existence of class and gender relations. This identification

of a harmony between these relations stems from both their high degree of analytic abstraction and also their tendency to prioritize either one of these categories of relations. For example, some dualists maintain that the constraints imposed, through the structure of patriarchy, upon women in the home, determine that women are allocated to proletarian production places (eg Gardiner 1975). A fundamental problem with such explanations is that they only account for female labour processes which have proletarian characteristics. Part of this problem may be contained in the dominance which, in this instance, is allocated to patriarchy over class relations. That is, this explanation implies that the structure of class relations is determined by, and derived from, patriarchal relations. Another consequence of dualist approaches is that in highlighting coherencies, within both class and gender relations, they emphasise the unproblematic 'fitting together' of these relations. This focus on coherencies underpins dualists' assertion of a pattern of mutual reinforcement between these relations. A contention of this study is that dualists tend to over-simplify social relations. In effect, they fail to provide appropriate analytic tools for identifying or explaining not only such coherencies, but also anomalies, tensions, ambiguities and contradictions within and between class and gender relations, and, in turn, they are left unable to deal with the consequences of these for understanding power.

In problematizing dualist methods, the fundamental issue, explored as a constant underlying theme in this study, is whether class relations make a systematic difference to the structure of gender relations, and whether gender relations make a systematic difference to the structure of class relations. In other words, the method developed in this thesis focusses on the forms, as distinct from the degrees, of class and gender domination/subordination. In so doing, the proposed articulation perspective takes issue, and engages, with the comparatively simple structural forms, as well as the processes of reproduction, of class relations and of gender relations built into many existing perspectives. It does this by exploring the systematic shaping and informing of the analytically separable social categories of class relations and gender relations. It is in this sense that 'articulation' is used in this thesis. Other analysts of class and gender relations also use the term 'articulation'. For example, 'articulation' is often used when

referring to political action in respect of a particular class and/or gender position. However, they rarely define their usage of the term 'articulation'. In the main it is left to readers of the literature to draw their own conclusions about the concepts implicit in this somewhat vague usage of 'articulation'.

In general, many existing analyses use 'articulation' to refer to coherent expressions of the generic principles of, say, systems of social differentiation. For example, analyses concerned with explaining patriarchal relations often refer to 'women's jobs' as being characterised by low pay, low status, lack of training (eg Barron and Norris 1976). In the conventional sense, these practical qualities of 'women's work' can be said to 'articulate', or in other words give coherent, and continuity of expression to, the broad principles of patriarchal relations. That is, they represent a practical manifestation of women's subordination to men. In terms of the 'fitting together' of class and gender relations, these particular expressions of patriarchal relations also cohere with the principles underlying class relations. When these analysts go on to explain that domestic gender relations determine that women acquire jobs with proletarian characteristics, their emphasis on coherencies between these relations entails an implicit claim for dominance of patriarchy over class relations (eg Beechey 1977, Bruegel 1982).

Implicit in the conventional usage of 'articulation' is, then, coherence both between expressive material instances and the general principles inherent in particular categories of social relations, and also in the 'fitting together' of these different categories of social relations, within and between different sets of social institutions. Basically, 'articulation' is not given this conventional meaning in the present study because the method adopted aims to explore not only coherencies but also the complex of incoherencies, ambiguities and tensions, within and between class and gender relations, within and between different sets of institutions. That is, it attempts to move beyond exclusive reliance on either the coherencies, within and between class and gender relations, or the claims to domination of one or the other set of

relations associated with the concepts implicit in the common usage of 'articulation'.

It is necessary to emphasise that substantive expressions of class and gender inequalities are not referred to in this thesis, as in some dualist analyses, as the 'articulation' of these forms of social differentiation. Implicit in the usage of 'articulation' in this thesis is a dynamic process, constituted in the dialectics of interconstitution within and between analytically separable dimensions of class relations and of gender relations. As such this study attempts both to expose and also to explain some of the complex features of class and of gender relations and of their reproduction, including the coherencies and incoherencies, continuities and discontinuities within and between these relations. In this respect, the thesis addresses the issue that some women at work are clearly not in the uncompromised proletarian location suggested or implied by most dualists (eg Bruegel 1982, Braverman 1974, Edwards 1979, Valli 1986). Women doctors, members of parliament, lawyers, teachers, for instance, are involved in labour processes which are not routine, repetitious, tightly controlled. In addition, women in these sorts of occupations exercise control over some men, such as school caretakers, court ushers, hospital porters. These women are not apparently subordinate to all men. Furthermore, there are sharp differences between these women's labour processes and, say, those of school 'dinner ladies', women office cleaners, supermarket 'check-out girls'. Nevertheless, it is likely that all these women's labour processes are informed in some way by patriarchal relations. On the other hand, the distinctions between these high and low status occupations might include differences in the ways in which the women are constituted in both patriarchal and class relations.

At the very least the patriarchal structure of male dominance appears, from the examples of women's occupations above, not to act uniformly. In addition, where women exercise control over some men, there is an apparent substantive manifestation of a contradiction of the generic rules of patriarchy in which men dominate women. It is in this sense that a substantive instance of, say, patriarchal relations may, at one

and the same time, cohere with and contradict the generic rules of these relations. That is, a woman teacher, for instance, may experience patriarchal subordination in respect of her relations with the male headteacher of the school. This coheres with the generic rules of patriarchy. On the other hand, the form that this patriarchal subordination takes is likely to be very different from the form of patriarchal subordination experienced by the woman cleaner in this school. The woman teacher's material form of patriarchy may, in reality, be part of a process by which she is conferred control over the women and men cleaners. In itself, this contradicts women's universal and uniform subordination to men inherent in the underlying principles of patriarchy. Although on the surface paradoxical, an instance of, say, patriarchal subordination can, then, simultaneously cohere with and be incoherent with, the basic principles of that system of social inequalities. Basically, these distinctive features, of continuity and discontinuity with the underlying principles of, say, patriarchy, constituted within one instance of patriarchal subordination, surface according to, in this case, the comparative model of labour processes which is used. For example, incoherencies within patriarchy, only come to light in this example from education, when the woman teacher's labour process is compared with that of the woman school cleaner, rather than confining analysis of patriarchy to comparisons between men and women's labour processes. However, that is not to rule out the possibility that incoherencies within patriarchy may also be contained in the differences and similarities between men and women's labour processes.

Incoherencies, within and between class and gender relations, like that illustrated in the discussion above, are highlighted in this study when analysing the restrictions on, and opportunities for, action realized by material circumstances and social relations of the daily realities of women's working life. Features of labour processes such as tasks, responsibility, remuneration, control, material conditions, are explored. In the proposed method of articulation these aspects of women's labour processes are explored as practical instances of class and of gender relations. They are taken to constitute the cultural dimension of these relations inasmuch as they are represented in the

conscious realities of class and of gender experiences. The patterning of various instances of the realization of class and gender relations is taken to constitute the structural dimension of these relations inasmuch as this patterning represents the non-conscious, collective sphere of individual women's experiences of these relations.

This study takes more detailed and systematic account, than in most dualist methods, of the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations. This emphasis highlights some complicated aspects of these relations. That is, incoherencies, tensions and anomalies, surface, within and between class and gender relations, when, for example, comparing the tasks and social relations of different women's labour processes, which constitute the conscious realities of their workaday experiences. These complexities are important. In the first place, they raise the problem of explaining the complex tensions, incoherencies and coherencies as either part of the structural pattern of these systems of social differentiation or simply, as implied by most existing perspectives, as exceptions which prove their underlying rules. The method adopted in this study provides a framework for explaining both coherencies and incoherencies as part of the structural form of class and of gender relations, as well as of the patterning of these particular structural forms of these relations with each other. In the second place, many features of the complexity of social relations tend to render dualist methods confusing. For example, the differences in the experiences of patriarchal domination of, say, a woman doctor in comparison with a 'check-out girl' seem likely to have something to do with the different class specificities of these occupations. Yet, dualists' assertion of the unproblematic mutual coherence of class and gender relations relies on the assumption that women at work enjoy or suffer uniform conditions and relations of production. In other words, their frameworks do not contain the analytic procedures for dealing with differences between the constraints and opportunities for action which inhere in women's relations of production.

Problematizing the unitary characteristics of 'women's work' automatically problematizes dualists' methods. In effect, the

continuities and coherencies between class and gender relations, asserted by dualists, are not borne out by the conscious realities of different women's working lives. For instance, if a woman lawyer experiences some form of patriarchal subordination, this is at least in tension with the class prestige inscribed in the status of this occupation. In short, a starting point for this study is the contention that a different frame of reference is needed, for class and for gender relations, from that incorporated into most existing methods, if our understanding of connections between these categories of social differentiation is to be advanced.

One major problem, which emerges from critical assessment of dualist analyses is, then, that there are numerous material expressions of class and gender relations which they fail to explain. For example, they do not provide appropriate analytic tools to explore differences and similarities, contained in experiences of class and gender relations, between women and men doctors in comparison with those between women and men ward nurses. Neither do they provide a framework for exploring, say, the differences and similarities contained in the gender and class experiences of women doctors and women nurses. This thesis seeks to address such problems, which arise from critical discussion of existing analyses of class and gender connections, including dualist perspectives. To do this, it attempts to develop a method of articulation of these relations which is based on a critical appreciation of a structuration approach (Giddens 1979 and 1984). This method aims to advance understanding of interconnections between class and gender relations by developing and redirecting existing approaches, including current structuration perspectives themselves. Basically, what is being suggested by this method is that an exclusive focus on coherencies, between substantive expressions and the generic principles underlying class and/or gender relations, may hinder understanding of connections between these relations. A framework is constructed in this study which highlights the possibilities of change and movement within class relations and within gender relations. That is, these relations are analysed in terms of structuration processes. This focus emphasises the properties of constitution, reconstitution, reconfiguration and redirection, constituted in every instance of the acting out of sets of

relations. These properties are examined in this study as being, in part, the outcome of the shaping, forming and informing of class and gender relations by each other. They are also examined, in sharp contrast to dualistic approaches, as being constituents of the reproduction of both forms of social differentiation.

The central substantive 'instance' developed in this thesis concerns expressions of class and gender relations in the tasks and social relations that make up secretarial labour processes and, more specifically, education associated with 'preparation' for these labour processes. In problematizing dualists' assumed homogeneity of 'women's labour', class and gender contrasts and similarities are explored in respect of different secretarial labour and education processes. In the case of the pool typist, for instance, her routine and repetitious tasks in part express the proletarian characteristics of capitalist class relations. At the same time her segregation within a female exclusive 'pool' in part expresses the subordination of women to men inscribed in patriarchal relations. However, in a different historically or contextually specific secretarial labour process there may be different as well as similar substantive expressions of class and of gender relations. For instance, practical manifestations of class and of gender relations in the pool typist's labour process could be compared with, say, those of the high level secretary commonly designated 'personal assistant'. While both class and patriarchal inequalities are expressed in both labour processes, in the case of the personal assistant she negotiates a personalized and privatized relationship with a dominant class man, and has variety and decision making responsibilities in her labour process, very different from the pool typist. In effect there are sharp differences of form, constituted in the realization of both class and gender relations, between these two gendered labour processes, each of which is commonly referred to as 'secretary'.

The proposed method of articulation seeks to explain the 'fitting together' of the differences and similarities between practical expressions of class and gender relations, such as those constituted in the two labour processes outlined above. It traces the continuities but

also the ambiguities, tensions and contradictions between expressions of class and gender relations and the generic principles underlying their respective structures. For example, personal assistants to high ranking executives exercise control over lower ranking male and female office workers, which contradicts the principles of women's uniform subordination to men. However, this may only constitute an apparent contradiction within patriarchy inasmuch as it may be explained as a reconfiguration of that structure of these relations posited in many existing frameworks. As such this framework incorporates a shift away from the more simple structure of patriarchal and of class relations presumed upon in most dualist and unifocal perspectives.

A fundamental issue, underlying the framework of the method of articulation, is the possible patterning of coherencies, incoherencies, and contradictions within and between class and gender relations. Any such pattern would constitute the non conscious, but collective, structural dimension of each of these relations. In turn, incoherencies, coherencies, tensions and contradictions, within each category of relations, would constitute complex structural forms of class and of gender relations, in comparison with the form of these relations devised through many existing approaches. A core problem, then, is explaining material instances of, say, patriarchy which, as outlined briefly above, contradict the generic rules underlying this category of relations. It is at this moment of analysis that possible interconnections between class and gender relations take centre stage. For instance, practical expressions of contradictions with the generic principles of patriarchy, expressed in the personal assistant's labour process, may be explained in terms of connections with another category of relations. That is, the power the personal assistant has over low level office men, which is closely associated with her own patriarchal subordination to an executive man, contradicts the basic principles of patriarchy. At the same time, however, pool typists do not enjoy formal power over any male office workers. Class and gender are connected here since this practical instance of a contradiction within patriarchal relations, serves to differentiate secretarial women in class terms. In other words, this conscious moment of contradiction with the generic

rules of patriarchal relations constitutes, in part, the non conscious structural form of class relations.

When analysing both the realization of class and of gender relations and generic principles of these relations, the proposed method of articulation explores, as in the example above, the possible interconstitution of the structural and cultural dimensions, within and between these social relations. That is, analysis examines substantive coherencies and incoherencies, with the broad principles of class and of gender relations, as the possible outcome of the structural interconstitution of these relations. To do this, the proposed method of articulation constructs a framework for analysing the possibly complex pathway of interconnections within and between class and gender relations. As indicated earlier, this matrix is modelled out of analytically separable dimensions of social relations. That is, this framework includes the conscious realities of class and of gender experiences constituting the cultural dimension of these relations; the patterning of these substantive instances of class and of gender relations, constituting the non conscious collective realm of experiences and, in turn, constituting the structural dimension of these relations; and the generic principles underlying each of these sets of relations. Analysis then proceeds to the possible interlinkages between these analytic dimensions, within and across class relations and gender relations. For example, a female doctor's power over male hospital porters represents a 'problem' outside the parameters of that simple structure of patriarchy devised purely in terms of the male/female dichotomy. In contrast, in an articulation perspective such examples of incoherencies within, say, patriarchy are viewed as the possible institutionalization of class differences between different categories of female hospital labour.

This study seeks to incorporate into analysis more complex structural forms of categories of relations, than those generally posited in existing frameworks. To do this, the method of articulation focusses on the non conscious patterns, constituting the structural dimension of class and of gender relations, created by anomalies, ambiguities,

tensions and coherencies, between the cultural and generic principles dimensions of these relations. Analysis proceeds by drawing together the resultant form of class relations with the resultant form of gender relations. In other words, the coincidence of specific expressions of class and specific expressions of gender subordination/superordination is investigated. This explores whether a further form emerges, constituted by the form of coherencies and incoherencies within gender relations and the form of coherencies and incoherencies within class relations.

In the main, dualist methods implicitly prioritize either class or gender relations or resort to disregarding the relevance of one or other of these relations (eg Valli 1986, Downing 1981). They tend to overlook the possibility of a distinct set of relations constituted by the two analytically separable categories of class and of gender relations. For example, Downing (1981) argues that, with the introduction of information processing technology, control of women secretaries will be converted from patriarchal to class control. She maintains that all secretaries are primarily controlled (1981) by the patriarchal subordination they all experience in respect of office men. She argues that this form of control, that is the exercise of dominance by all office men over women secretaries, will disappear when these women are confined to 'pools' of, for example, word processor operators. In the place of patriarchal control, will come machine control which is a feature of class relations. Downing's analysis does not allow for the possible concurrence of class and patriarchal control mechanisms and thereby rules out the possibility of a category of relations constituted by these two forms of social differentiation. In other words, like other analyses of 'women's work', Downing disregards the possibility that hierarchical insulation and segmentation of the sexes may constitute, concurrently, a form of patriarchy and of capitalism.

As in the case of Downing's analysis, dualist methods tend to rely primarily on deductive logic. That is, they take the generic principles of class and of gender relations and then seek only illustrative, rather than contradictory or dialectical, examples of these principles. In

contrast, an inherent feature of the proposed method of articulation is that it contains both a deductive and an inductive logic. Put another way, this method is retroductive (Sayer 1983), moving constantly between an inductive and deductive mode of analysis. Dualists' tendency towards exclusively deductive methodologies is one of the major reasons why they identify only those expressions of social inequalities which cohere with the generic principles of class or gender relations. In contrast, particularly with the inductive logic, which forms a crucial aspect of the proposed method of class and gender articulation, this study seeks to shed light on and to explain expressions of both incoherencies and coherencies with these general principles of power distribution.

The partly inductive analytic process of this study means that a central focus is substantive expressions of conscious, real, experiences of class and of gender relations. That is, the daily realities of class and gender experiences are centralized in this approach. This mode of analysis highlights women and men's conscious understanding of social inequalities and their actions and reactions to dominant forces. For example, a female factory chargehand supervises women 'on the line' (Cavendish 1982, Pollert 1981). This suggests that practical gradations and divisions within gendered occupations may be more subtle and diverse than those suggested by dualist methods, when, for example, they classify all women at work as proletarians (eg Braverman 1974). This is an important issue because it points to the possibility that in most classed and gendered social positions participants may have something to lose as well as to gain, in terms of their overall share of power, from challenging disadvantages stemming from one set of relations.

According to dualist perspectives there are only advantages for, for instance, a female factory chargehand, in amending the unequal distribution of power written into either class or gender relations. By explaining, for example, that patriarchal relations within the family determine a proletarian location for women in production (Barron and Norris 1976, Gardiner 1975, Bruegel 1982), some dualist methods suggest that the elimination of patriarchy in the home would result in amelioration of women's class relations of production. There is little analytic space for considering whether women, like the chargehand in the

factory, might experience a deterioration in their share of power with the overthrow of, say, patriarchy. For instance, in dualist approaches the question remains unexplored that if, say, the patriarchal subordination of a female chargehand to, say, a male foreman were not acted out in this production place she may lose some of her class and gender advantages over lower level male and female factory 'hands'. In contrast, this thesis explores, for example, a female chargehand's particular class advantages as being possibly acquired through conscious acceptance, acquiescence or accommodation of women's patriarchal subordination. In other words a female chargehand may be aware of disadvantages accruing from one set of relations but they may be justified, legitimised, and offset by the advantages accruing from the other set of relations. From this surfaces an apparent paradox which helps to move this analysis beyond 'dualism'. That is this present articulation perspective explores contradictions within, say, patriarchy as assisting reproduction of this category of relations. Reproduction is far more narrowly defined in 'dualism' since it is confined to coherencies within and between class and gender relations. In addition, 'articulation analysis' also explores contradictions between, for example, a female chargehand's comparatively high class power and explicit patriarchal subordination, as affording opportunities for critical reflection which influences actions of resistance. In other words, in line with a structuration approach (Giddens 1979 and 1984), the proposed method of articulation explores resistance and challenge, accommodation and acquiescence, as features of possible reconstitution, reconfiguration or redirection of a category of relations.

This study builds upon and develops structuration approaches however when, for example, the power inscribed in any one, say, labour process is explored. It does this by exploring the shaping and moving together, that is the articulation, of class and of patriarchal relations, as possibly highlighting or shielding, from the conscious understanding of individuals, each or both of these systems of social inequalities. This issue is taken up in the method of articulation in terms of the ideological effects of class and gender articulation. That is, the method of articulation explores the ideological effects of class and gender interconnections as possibly displacing, underlining or additionally advancing the outcome of actions of resistance,

acquiescence or accommodation in respect of one category of relations. This aspect of analysis concentrates on the realities of constitution, reconstitution, redirection and reconfiguration of class and of gender relations as possible outcomes of each instance of the enactment of these relations. It explores reproduction, realignment and reshaping of one category of relations in terms of human actions of challenge, submission or accommodation of relevant social inequalities. Analysis then proceeds to the 'knock-on' effects of this human agency for the form of another category of relations. In other words, reproduction, realignment and reshaping of, say, class relations may result in reproduction, realignment or reshaping of, say, gender relations.

Analysis of ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation explores, then, actions, concerned with the possible reconstitution, reconfiguration or redirection of one category of relations, as being accommodated, nullified, further redirected, advanced or reshaped by consequent or compensating reconstitution or reconfiguration of the other connected category of relations. If these possibilities are indeed the case, then ideological effects would comprise an important element of the reproduction, reconstitution or reconfiguration of social inequalities. Although at first sight it appears paradoxical, such ideological effects would mean that the outcome of the articulation of class and gender with each other, including contradictions between and within these relations, may represent a key issue in understanding both the reproduction of both forms of social differentiation as well as some of the possibilities of change as a consequence of resistance to perceived forms of these relations. In effect, the processes of reproduction of class and gender relations, illuminated in this study, differ distinctly from, and are critical of, those processes identified through a dualistic model. In other words, this analysis acknowledges human action in shaping and amending social relations, but, in contrast to dualistic approaches, simultaneously seeks to explain the frequent resultant, apparently contradictory, realities of possible inertia in respect of the fundamental change in overall distribution of power. That is, in spite of sometimes sustained resistance, resulting in far-reaching advances in a particular share of one form of power, a subordinate group may nevertheless experience virtually no amelioration in its overall share of power.

Basically, this study attempts to highlight some of the complexities of a social totality. However, it is acknowledged that the study constitutes an abstraction from social totality in that it examines only class relations and gender relations. At the same time, the thesis draws particular attention to the complex web of structural interactions between class and gender relations, by including the relations between sets of social institutions, such as school and work, in its method of articulation. Such exploration of structural interconnections between class and gender relations points to a mode of analysis which has received little empirical realization to date.

This study brings the particular problematic of the relations between sets of institutions to a method of articulation. It assumes, for example, that the realization of class in the family might shape the realization of patriarchy at work. For instance, in the case of a female doctor, her particular form of patriarchal subordination to a male hospital registrar or consultant might be dependent on, say, expressions of class relations in other institutional contexts. For instance, there may be class advantages, which cohere with her family and education background, acquired at work partly through her patriarchal subordination or partly because the working role is patriarchal in specific forms. The thesis addresses these issues by incorporating the relations between sets of institutions into its model of class and gender articulation. In particular this study analyses the cultural, structural, and generic principles dimensions of class and of gender relations as constituted in the institutional spheres of secretarial education and production.

The method of articulation used in this thesis allows for analysis of the relative autonomy of class and gender relations with respect to each other, so that neither category of relations is taken as a necessary pre-requisite of the other. At the same time, this method addresses the emergent properties of the mechanisms which connect the one with the other. For example, it explores the emergent properties contained in a practical instance of a woman's patriarchal subordination. So, for instance, a woman doctor's subordination to a male hospital registrar

may constitute not only gender boundaries imposed on her labour process, but, importantly, particular features of class differentiation, for instance, between her and male and female ward nurses, or men and women hospital porters and cleaners.

In raising the issue of a relationship constituted by two analytically separable sets of relations, this study makes problematic the relativity dimension of relative autonomy. It does this when assessing, adopting and developing its underlying structuration perspective (Giddens 1979 and 1984) to address the structural interconstitution of class and gender relations. In so doing, the study addresses a relationship which is dependent on both class relations and gender relations. However, this underlying structuration perspective acknowledges that neither basic system of social differentiation is dependent on this further category of relations. At the same time, this analysis suggests that more complex structures and processes of reproduction, than those suggested by the basic dichotomies of men/women and capital/labour as adopted particularly in 'dualism', transpire when both forms of social differentiation act simultaneously within and between different sets of social institutions.

#### SUBSTANTIVE FOCUS, ARTICULATION AND SOCIAL THEORY

In the general literature of social theory, as well as in the more specialised area of education theory, class relations and gender relations have been the focus of extensive debate in recent years. For the most part, theories have been developed which concentrate on either one of these categories of relations (eg Braverman 1974, Bernstein 1990). That is, the trend has been towards allocating priority to either class or gender relations. This results in a reciprocal peripheralization of either set of relations (eg Valli 1986). In contrast with that tendency, this exploration into the reproduction of secretarial labour power attempts to take simultaneous account of both class and gender relations. A guiding premise for this investigation is that a singular interest in either class or gender relations, following

popular trends in sociology, neglects to interpret systems of social differentiation which inter-relate in shaping the daily routines and conscious experiences of secretaries both in education and at work.

In more recent years, some analyses have acknowledged a need to problematize links between class and gender relations. As indicated earlier, theories have emerged and are in course of development, which seek to explain interconnections between these categories of relations (eg Walby 1986 and 1990, Hearn 1987). But most agree that the debate remains unresolved. For example, Hartmann, in discussing 'a progressive union' between Marxist and feminist analysis, states:

"Many problems remain for us to explore . . . what makes our task a difficult one is that the same features, such as the division of labour, often reinforce both patriarchy and capitalism, and in a thoroughly capitalist society, it is hard to isolate the mechanisms of patriarchy. Nevertheless, this is what we must do . . . The questions we must ask are endless." (in Sargent 1981:195)

The issue of whether it is appropriate to isolate class from patriarchy is at the heart of the continuing discourse on methodological development. This analysis of secretarial education and production suggests that advances in understanding class and patriarchy may be hindered by methods in which these relations are isolated one from the other. Nevertheless the method of articulation of these relations, developed in this study, does not pretend to resolve fully the disputes on theories which link class and gender relations (eg Barrett 1984). It does claim, however, to present previously uncharted empirical evidence in a new analytic mode. In so doing, it attempts to shed new light on the structure, distribution and reproduction of power. To do this, a method of articulation is developed which addresses the complexities of the structures of both class and gender relations. This results from analysis of the shaping and informing of these relations by each other. This aspect of the mechanisms and consequences of interconnections between class and gender relations has been largely neglected to date.

In the literature which concentrates on class analysis, an increasing interest has been shown in recent years in the class location of office workers. The proletarianization of white-collar labour has been debated

at some length (eg Braverman 1974, Crompton and Jones 1984). In contrast with these analyses, which tend to omit detailed scrutiny of exclusively female sectors of office labour, analysis of the class structure of female occupations, such as that of secretary, is illuminated in this study. The relations of women secretaries with other women secretaries is explored to analyse differences and similarities in the ways in which women are constituted in both class and gender relations. In other words, a new direction is taken in this study by problematizing the class homogeneity which earlier analyses have taken for granted, by virtue largely of the gender specificity of secretarial labour.

Discussions which focus on explaining the class location of office labour tend to dismiss all secretarial women as low level workers, representing the secondary sector labour force or reserve army of labour analytic categories supported by some gender analysts (eg Beechey 1977, Barron and Norris 1976). On the basis of limited empirical evidence, the assumption is made that if all secretaries are women, as is virtually the case, then they must enjoy common conditions and interests. These assumptions are underpinned by the emphasis on analysis of aggregate inequalities inscribed in class and gender relations. In contrast, by including and making central the cultural lived experiences, as well as the generic principles, dimensions of these social relations in this study, divisions amongst secretarial women are highlighted. Evidence and analysis is presented which problematizes earlier assumptions about the unitary nature of 'women's work', as well as the over-simplifications which result from an analytical bias towards, or prioritization of, either class or gender relations.

Current social theories on education are concerned with explaining connections between education and production, whether they be of the gender or class dynamics of emphasis (eg Bourdieu 1977, Bowles and Gintis 1976). In view of this interest and an emerging vocationalism in education in the shape of, for example, TVEI, it is surprising that, until quite recently, limited research interest has been shown in

vocational education in colleges of further education. Yet this sector of education has the explicit objective of fitting students to become workers in specific areas of production. Where education analysts conduct substantive research they have tended, in the past at least, to rely predominantly on compulsory primary and secondary general education (eg Grafton et al 1987). To a limited extent, this investigation sheds light on a previously neglected sphere of education and how it goes about preparing students to fit the prespecified places of secretarial production. It explores the articulation of class and gender relations in secretarial education and secretarial production to analyse the relations between these sets of institutions as a possible constituent of the articulation of these relations.

#### EMPIRICAL FOCUS

As indicated earlier, the empirical focus in this research is secretarial labour and secretarial education in England. Descriptions and analysis of the tasks and social relations which characterise secretarial work and education are discussed, as well as the overall structure of their occupational and educational contexts. Analysis focusses particular attention on the reproduction of secretarial labour power within education and the mechanisms which connect this area of education with production.

Analysis of the structure of secretarial education and of office work, as well as of the routine lives of secretaries at work and in education, is developed to explore relations between these two sets of social institutions. This data is analysed in terms of conscious realities of secretaries at work and in education, constituting, in part, the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations. A major feature of analysis concerns the patterning of these instances of secretaries' conscious experiences of class and of gender inequalities. The pattern itself constitutes, in part, the non conscious male and capitalist forces which impinge on secretaries' experiences of work and vocational education, constituting, in turn and in part, the structural dimension

of class and of gender relations. As this study is primarily concerned with the patterning of those patterns constituted by substantive instances of class and of gender relations, it is essentially a structural analysis of the reproduction of secretarial labour power. The focus in this study is the institutional context of education.

Analysis of the history of secretarial work, since its initial feminization in the latter part of the 19th Century, charts changes over time to both the structure of this area of office labour and the daily lives of secretaries at work. Contemporary secretarial labour processes are explored by contrasting the role and function of the highest ranking 'personal assistant' with that of the lower level 'pool typist'. Discussion centres on differences and similarities between these two labour processes, contained in the realization of class and of gender relations.

With regard to the institutions of education, analysis is developed on historical changes in secretarial education. From this emerges a detailed account of the system of contemporary secretarial education in England. This provides a context and background which assist understanding of the contemporary routine lives of secretarial teachers and students. A major source of empirical data on secretarial education for this study is a comparative case study of relevant courses in two sharply contrasting colleges. This case study compares in detail the institutional structures, cultures and processes of an elite private secretarial college with the procedures adopted in equivalent courses in a state college of further education. The sharp contrasts between the two institutions presents comparative critical case studies in which the experiences of secretarial students and teachers are distinguished in terms of both class and gender relations. This provides an analysis of both the complex interdeterminancies between and within the cultural, generic principles, and structural dimensions of class and gender relations, as well as of the human agency of secretarial teachers and students.

In line with the central theme of the proposed method of articulation, the broad system and daily routines of both secretarial work and secretarial education are analysed in terms of coherencies and incoherencies between and within conscious realities of class and of gender relations and their respective generic principles. In addition, analysis explores patterns of connection, between and within class and gender relations, within and between the overall system and the daily realities of secretarial labour and secretarial education. In presenting particularly extensive discussion of information on a specific sphere of 'women's education', namely secretarial education, the structures of class and of gender relations, as built into existing analyses, are problematized through detailed scrutiny of instances of the realization of these social relations.

From the analytic perspective of the empirical focus of this thesis, extensive analysis is presented of the intricacies of both the interconstitution of the structures of class and gender relations with each other, and the human agency, which together constitute the medium, action and outcome of secretarial women's consciousness. For example, historical developments in secretarial education are presented to explore changes in the organizational pattern of secretarial education, which give expression to the shaping and moving together of class and gender relations - that is to their articulation. At the same time, these organisational amendments rest also on, for example, teachers and examining boards' decisions about, for instance, the nature of the courses to be included in secretarial education. Such decisions may be informed by critical views of inequalities and a desire to resist, accommodate or acquiesce to forms of class and of gender domination. On the other hand, when focussing analysis on the daily processes of a particular course within secretarial education, particular expressions of class and gender articulation may reflect or contradict expressions of this articulation at the level of the system of this vocational education. In addition students and teachers in any specific secretarial course may, at best, have only a partial understanding of both instances of the cultural dimension of class and gender relations which are manifested in the system of their form of vocational

education, and the informing of class and gender by each other. Furthermore, from the confines of any particular course, students and teachers may not be able to penetrate fully, or be fully conscious of, those conscious decisions involved in defining the structure of secretarial education. Neither are they likely, therefore, to perceive fully the consequential forms of domination, which limit, and afford opportunities for, particular options for action available to the members of any particular course. In other words teachers and students involved in a particular course may only rarely question how their course was produced and reproduced.

Analysis of the everyday lives of secretarial students and their teachers, examined in detail in the comparative case study of this thesis, explores both the structural constraints of domination which shape their experiences, as well as the processes of human agency of the women participating in secretarial education. The realization of class and gender inequalities, at the level of the daily lived realities of secretarial education, constitute part of secretarial students and teachers' understanding of their world. The analysis centres upon differentiated experiences of secretarial education and how these constitute particular interpretations of gendered and classed social positions. The analytic focus is on judgements, by secretaries in education and in production, about challenge, resistance, accommodation or acceptance of their material forms of social inequalities. Analysis of students and teachers' interpretations and understanding of systems of social inequalities sheds light on the ideological effects dimension of class and gender articulation. That is, their awareness of class or gender advantages, for example, may justify, countermand, help to sustain, in highlighting or shielding from view, their class or gender disadvantages, as well as providing space for resistance.

The analysis of secretarial education and secretarial labour presented in this study examines, then, the forming, shaping, informing and moving together of class and gender relations, constituting articulation. That is, it explores an instance of the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations at the levels of both the system and daily routines of

secretarial labour and production. Analysis is developed to explore how the structural distribution of power of the one form of social differentiation acts on and through the structural distribution of power of the other form of social differentiation. The coincidence, of certain forms of class and of gender inequalities, is analysed as the emergent properties of the articulation of these social forms. These are explored as a further set of relations constituted by class relations and gender relations.

### STRUCTURE OF THESIS

The central problematics of explaining connections between class and gender relations, as well as developing the analytic perspective of this research, are presented in Chapter I. By discussing existing class and gender theories of production, as well as education theories, possible components of a method of articulation come to light in this chapter.

Chapter II concentrates on constructing a specific model of class and gender articulation. It draws together and develops those components of an articulation approach indicated during critical discussion of existing class and gender analyses in the previous chapter. An analytic framework is presented which extends frameworks commonly adopted by, for example, dualist methods.

The thesis proceeds by using the method of articulation discussed in Chapter II to interpret previous research on secretarial production and original research on secretarial education. Each succeeding chapter focusses analysis on a particular empirical area which represents a specific structural moment within the inter-relations constituting class and gender articulation.

Chapter III takes secretarial production relations as its focus. Empirical data drawn from developments in research on secretarial work and contemporary secretarial labour processes is re-analysed through the

previously proposed method of articulation. Coherencies and incoherencies are examined between and within the generic principles and the cultural dimensions of class and gender relations. This analysis explores the pattern which emerges from drawing together class relations with patriarchal relations as exhibited in secretarial production.

Chapter IV documents the history and current system of secretarial education in England. This chapter focusses analysis on interconstitution, within and between the structural and the cultural dimensions of class and gender relations, as realized in the system of secretarial education. Analysis presents a broad overview of the organisation of this area of vocational education within which the two colleges, used in the comparative study, can be located. Analysis examines material practices, which influence the overall shape of secretarial education, as possible constraints imposed by the forces of male and capitalist domination. In addition analysis explores actions, informing the practical design of secretarial education, which may subvert or reproduce capitalist and male domination. In turn, analysis of the system of secretarial education explores the ways in which, in itself, it shapes particular experiences of domination within secretarial education. In this respect, analysis explores differences and similarities between the formal curricula of courses which together constitute the system of secretarial education.

The comparative case study is presented in Chapter V. It examines in detail an elite private college and state technical college's institutional structures, cultures and processes. The lived realities of the daily routines of two selected colleges are analysed. Discussion centres on the forms, constituting class and gender articulation, contained in the differences and similarities between institutional cultures, structures and processes of secretarial education. This focal point, within the overall system of secretarial education, highlights substantive expressions of anomalies, tensions and coherencies with the generic principles of gender and class relations, which impinge on women's daily lives. They comprise the ideological effects of articulation. These anomalies, tensions and coherencies are also partly

constituted in students' transition to secretarial production. This is discussed when presenting analysis of the pattern of jobs acquired by students from the two selected colleges. Relations between sets of institutions are focussed upon when the realization of class and gender relations, in the varied secretarial labour processes of these specific jobs, is compared with the realization of class and gender relations in the secretarial courses which students have taken. This is analysed in terms of the pattern of connections between secretarial education and secretarial production, constituting coherencies and incoherencies within and between class and gender relations.

In Chapter VI analysis proceeds to specific issues of power contained in the patterned highlighting and shielding from the view of secretarial teachers, students and workers of the inequalities of class and of gender relations and their connections. These constitute the ideological effects of articulation. Analysis explores ideological effects of class and gender articulation as realized in the ramifications for experiences of, say, patriarchal domination resulting from accommodating, resisting or challenging experiences of class domination. In this respect human agency is analysed as working on and through the interconstitution of the structures of class and gender relations. Discussion examines in detail conscious decisions, for example to resist or accommodate different forms of social inequalities, to analyse the illuminating, disguising and suppressing, in the consciousness of secretarial students, teachers and workers, of the basic principles underlying class and gender inequalities. A particular critique is presented, at this stage of analysis, of dualist assertions that coherencies between the expressive and generic principles dimensions of class and gender relations constitute the mode of reproduction of both forms of social inequalities. In this analysis the ideological effects dimension of articulation explores both incoherencies and coherencies, between and within the two systems, as a possible patterning of opportunities for resistances, the outcome of which may reinforce or redirect each form of social differentiation and overall imbalances in power distribution. Discussion is developed on the limitations and opportunities for resistance for secretaries, generated during vocational education and

their transition to secretarial production. The specific power issues addressed in this chapter concern interest group formations and the issues which occur for group formation when attempting to change the unequal distribution of class power and gender power.

Chapter VII draws together and reviews the analysis of class and gender articulation and the reproduction of secretarial labour power. The thesis closes with a discussion of the limitations of the analytic method and research strategy adopted. Proposals for future development of this line of enquiry are also discussed in this final part of the thesis.

Finally, the Appendix centres on the strategies used to collect the empirical data which is analysed in this thesis. Discussions is developed on the process of problem definition; the restrictions and opportunities imposed on and by the empirical focus; methods adopted to obtain and record data.

## CHAPTER I

### THE ARTICULATION OF CLASS AND GENDER RELATIONS:

#### THE PROBLEM

##### INTRODUCTION

This chapter focusses on existing theories of class relations and of gender relations. The first section centres on analyses of these relations in the production context. In the second section attention turns to relevant analyses of education. Critical discussion attempts to shed light on those aspects of 'women's work and education' which these theories fail to identify or to explain. In so doing, possible elements of an alternative perspective on 'women's work and education' come to light. The underlying theme of the perspective, which surfaces during this discussion, concerns exploring connections between class relations and gender relations.

In recent years there has been increasing insistence, amongst class and gender analysts, on explaining connections between these two categories of relations (eg Crompton and Mann 1986, Walker and Barton 1983, Anyon 1983, Sherratt 1983, Meighan 1981, Hartmann 1979, Hearn 1987, Hartsock 1985, Walby 1986 and 1990). These demands arise largely from critical discussion of existing theories in which there has been a tendency to focus exclusively on one or other of these categories of relations.

This study enters the spirit of that discussion but in a new direction for social theory by, in the first instance, highlighting substantive issues which existing theories fail to address and then attempting to present an alternative approach.

Recent literature includes theories explaining interconnections between class and gender relations (Hartsock 1985, Walby 1986 and 1990). At the same time, discussion continues on appropriate methods to explore the relationship of class relations with gender relations (eg Arnot and Weiner 1987, Dale et al 1985, Eisenstein 1984). This chapter attempts to contribute to the discussion by focussing on issues which an articulation perspective on these relations would address. That is, discussion is developed on possible components of a framework of articulation. These components are then brought together and discussed in Chapter II, when a specific method of the articulation of class and gender relations is developed.

In line with the basic roots of contemporary debate, the first section of the chapter problematizes connections between class and gender relations by discussing critically, and building upon, existing analyses of these relations in the production context. Examination of these analyses indicates a tendency to concentrate on one form of social differentiation, to the exclusion of others. Such uni-focal perspectives helped to shape separate discourses for class and gender relations. The insularity, and frequently oppositional stances, which emerged in the respective debates, lead to a reciprocal peripheralization of class and gender relations in each of the theoretical discourses. The resultant analytic boundary implies the competing importance of either category of relations in informing the unequal distribution of power and control.

Many class and/or gender analysts who adopt frameworks which concentrate on a uni-focal perspective, simultaneously acknowledge, in their analyses, other forms of social differentiation within production (eg Braverman 1974). However, they neglect, for the most part, to explore whether class and gender relations reciprocally inform and transform

each other in the structure and distribution of power (eg Beechey 1977, Bruegel 1982, Braverman 1974, Edwards 1979). The effect of this is that, contrary to their explicit or implicit claims to uni-focalism, they tend to produce a dualistic approach. In so doing they focus at a high level of abstraction. That is, they generally concentrate analysis on the generic rules underlying class and gender relations. For example, many dualist analyses 'explain', but leave subsequently unproblematized, that patriarchal relations in the home ensure that women are allocated to proletarian places in production (eg Alexander 1981, Barron and Norris 1976). In overlooking the possibility of more complex inter-relations between class and gender relations, they assert a partnership of mutual coherence between these relations. However, more recent debate has challenged this assertion (eg Walby 1990) by shedding light on tensions between class and gender relations.

Along with current discourse, discussion in this section takes issue with analyses which imply that class and gender represent dual forms of social differentiation, with only tangential connections, co-existing harmoniously with each other, or vying for analytic domination over each other. This discussion also develops current discourse. It highlights a need to explore the possible interconstitution of class and gender relations. This discussion includes the possibility of a distinctive category of relations constituted by emergent patterns at points of interpenetration of these analytically separable forms of social differentiation. In so doing, it provides a groundwork for exploring, in Chapter II, the issue of 'emergence' as a possible constituent of a structuration perspective on interconnections between class and gender relations.

Some general problems emerge while discussing uni-focal and dualist analyses of class and/or gender relations in the production process. For example, many theories of production, upon which analyses of economic classes are based, remain largely untouched by gender concerns, in spite of persistent gender segregation within production (eg Goldthorpe 1983). Conversely, when using a conceptual framework with a uni-focal concentration on patriarchy, many gender analyses neglect economic relations and social class positions shared by both

men and women (eg Millett 1977). These problems coincide with the central issues of contemporary debates on class and gender interconnections. At the same time this discussion identifies possible components of a method of articulation which could develop and redirect the methods of analysis implicit in this debate. It is argued that many existing methods, including those suggested in current debate, limit explanations by concentrating on aggregate inequalities. That is, they incline towards emphasising the overall trends, tendencies and generalities, denoting, for example in respect of gender relations, the generalisation that women are subordinated to male dominance. In turn, they tend to omit analysis of the detailed specificities of women's subordination to men. Partly as a result of this focus, they frequently identify and explain only coherencies between substantive expressions of class and gender and their respective underlying principles.

Explanations of connections between class and gender relations may be advanced however when the method adopted explores and explains specificities, including anomalies, tensions and contradictions, within class and within gender relations, and in the 'fitting together' of these relations, as well as the generalisations which point to the coherencies upon which current methods tend to centre.

During discussion it is noted that, for the most part, class analyses of the production process contain only limited exploration of connections between different sets of social institutions in reproducing capitalist class relations (eg Braverman 1974, Burawoy 1979, Wright 1975). In contrast, numerous gender perspectives draw attention to interpreting the relationship between social institutions as contributing to the reproduction of forms of social relations (eg Gardiner 1975, Walby 1986 and 1990). Building upon this, it is suggested that there may be a pattern of connection between substantive expressions of class and gender relations, and their interconnections, in different institutional contexts. Relationships between social spheres, such as home, school and work, may contribute to any patterning of class and gender relations with each other, constituting in effect a distinctive further category of relations. For example, it is possible that the functioning of class relations upon the family may help to shape differences between women in

respect of their experiences of patriarchy within, say, the production process.

In respect of examining connections between sets of institutions, the literature on education provides particular insights. This literature is discussed critically in the second section of the chapter. The central pivot of this current debate is to explain the part played by education in reproducing numerous sets of social relations as played out in different sets of institutions. For example, some theories (eg Bowles and Gintis 1976) explain that the relations of education mirror or 'correspond to' the social relations of production and in so doing reproduce the class divisions of the capitalist mode of production.

Although education theories assist understanding particularly of the relationship of education with production, each theory tends to concentrate on one particular system of social differentiation. The problems associated with the prioritization of either class or gender relations, which surface in the general literature of sociology, are re-enacted in the education debate. In general education analyses fail to explore class and gender inter-connections. They provide only limited analysis of these connections. This chapter outlines and develops current critiques of education theories. It joins demands for more detailed analysis of connections between class and gender relations within education. The discussion also engages with this contemporary debate. In particular it argues for a wider analytic framework, incorporating not only connections between class and gender relations within education, but also connections between these relations as a possible component of the relations between education and other institutional spheres, such as production.

Critical discussion of existing class and gender analyses in this chapter problematizes the simple structural forms built into these perspectives. It raises questions on various practical and analytic issues which the method of articulation, developed in the next chapter, attempts to address. In subsequent chapters, this model of articulation, centring on complex forms of class and gender relations, is used to interpret a particular sphere of 'women's work and

education'. That is, the articulation of class and gender relations will be explored through analysis of secretarial production, secretarial education, and the mechanisms by which these two institutions are connected.

## 1. CLASS AND GENDER THEORIES OF PRODUCTION

### 1.1 THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Existing literature on gender explores divisions, in various sets of institutions, which result in inequalities whereby women are subordinated to male dominance. The concept of patriarchy is adopted to label and to explore various features of women's subordination to men. Numerous methods are used to analyse patriarchal relations, but the majority concentrate on a single dimension of this form of social differentiation. That is, they tend to focus on the broad principles underlying this system of social inequalities. In so doing, they emphasise the unitary characteristics of women's subordination to male dominance and tend to neglect differences between women in their experiences of patriarchal subordination. For example, they fail to identify and explain material instances of patriarchy where some women have a dominant position in respect of some men. Yet, there appear to be numerous substantive instances of women having a position of control in, for example, some men's labour processes. For instance, women teachers exercise control over male school caretakers and other teachers; women company directors, lawyers and accountants over male clerks; women doctors and ward sisters over male hospital porters; personal assistants to executive men over lower level male managers; housewives over male gardeners they may employ.

The issue of women's dominance/subordination in respect of men is contained in the tasks, material conditions and social relations in which women engage in their daily lives, constituting, in part, the expressive dimension of patriarchal relations. The expressive dimension of patriarchy is important. In the first place it consists of a reality in which practical experiences of gender inequalities can contradict the

general principles inherent in patriarchal relations. Yet, secondly, and perhaps paradoxically, as subsequent analysis will indicate, these material instances of contradictions with that hierarchy contained in the basic male/female dichotomy partly serve to reconstitute the structure of patriarchy.

Some divergent explanations of patriarchy are discussed in this section. They range from those which argue that patriarchy has autonomous characteristics and is unconnected with other forms of relations (eg Millett 1977), others which explain, for example, the location of women at the base of hierarchies of labour as being rooted in patriarchal relations (eg Bruegel 1982), to those which point to men's differential experiences of, and responses to, gender superordination (eg Hearn 1987). Many of these analyses tend to adopt a dualist approach when they establish a link between class and gender relations. In their concentration on aggregate inequalities between men and women, and between capital and labour, they focus on the coherencies and continuities within both class and gender relations, as well as in the 'fitting together' of these relations. They overlook analysis of differences, as well as similarities, in material forms of male and of capitalist domination which point to tensions and anomalies within and between these sets of relations. In contrast to such perspectives on patriarchy, Hearn and Morgan, for example, point out that:

"men too, within a society that may be characterized as 'patriarchal', may experience subordinations, stigmatizations or marginalizations as a consequence of their sexuality, ethnic identity, class position, religion, or marital status. The interplay between hegemonic and subordinate masculinities is a complex one, but should serve to underline the fact that experiences of masculinity and of being a man are not uniform."  
(1990:11)

The practical effect of dualist approaches is, then, that they fail to explain labour processes where, for instance, women exercise control over men's labour processes and experiences of labour processes, contradicting the basic principles of patriarchy. Both uni-focal and dualist methods are rendered incoherent by ambiguities constituted in, for example, apparent contradictions between the principles underlying

the patriarchal structure of power and specific substantive expressions of that structure. In other words, as suggested by Hearn and Morgan:

"a structural analysis of patriarchy, based upon distinctions between men and women, may not immediately translate into everyday practices." (1990:12)

On the other hand, it may not be a matter of isolated instances of practical contradictions of the generic rules of patriarchy. Rather, they may be of such significance to suggest that these contradictions constitute an integral part of systematic inequalities between men and women. In other words, they may thereby contribute towards a complex form of patriarchal relations. Put another way, it is important to analyse at both the level of substantive instances of class and of gender relations as well as at the level of their structural forms. What is being suggested here is that exploration is needed of the possible patterning of substantive incoherencies and coherencies with, for example, the generic principles of patriarchy. That is, the very patterning of such incoherencies and coherencies may constitute the structural form of this set of relations. At the same time, it may be impossible to explain contradictions within, say, patriarchy without reference to another category of relations. For example, the illustrations of some women's position of dominance in some men's labour processes, cited earlier, suggest that the class specificity of these men and women's positions has something to do with the contradiction within patriarchy which they exhibit. The structural form of patriarchy may, therefore, be only partly constituted in substantive instances of gender differentiation. Another part of the constitution of patriarchy may be in substantive instances of class differentiation. This suggests a complex form of gender relations, inasmuch as its structural form is not constituted merely in immediate substantive instances of gender relations.

In this section it is argued that the tendency towards uni-dimensional analysis, centring on a level of abstraction constituted by aggregate inequalities, neglects to account for the complexity of gender relations. Consequently this analytic perspective has not usually included the possibility that class relations may help to shape the

power structure of gender relations. At its starting point the discussion echoes current problematics raised, for example, by Siltanen:

"In the literature on 'gender' and social stratification, there is a tension between, on the one hand, attempts to develop an explanation of aggregate-level inequalities between women and men and, on the other hand, the recognition that neither group is homogeneous in its characteristics. Time and again the point is made that the diversity of women's experience defies treating them as an undifferentiated social grouping. Yet, arguments for the integration of 'gender' into theories of inequality are premised typically on a conception of 'gender' as constituting two social groupings - 'women' and 'men' - which have identifiable characteristics with some sort of general validity." (1986:97)

The unitary aspects of women's subordination, which are often taken as the identifiable characteristic of patriarchal relations, are particularly emphasised as a feature of radical feminist approaches (eg Firestone 1972). Even when radical feminists, like Millett (1977) and Delphy (1977), acknowledge cultural differences between women, they argue that these differences are insignificant in comparison with fundamental divisions between men and women. Millett states:

"Women tend to transcend the usual class stratifications in patriarchy, for whatever the class of her birth and education, the female has fewer permanent class associations than does the male. Economic dependency renders her affiliations with any class a tangential, vicarious, and temporary matter . . . Thrown upon their own resources, few women rise above working class in personal prestige and economic power, and women as a group do not enjoy many of the interests and benefits any class may offer its male members. Women have therefore less of an investment in the class system." (1977:38)

It may be the case that all women experience subordination through patriarchal relations within their class. However, class differences between women need to be explored as they could be important for variations in the gender experiences of different classes of women. As Walby argues:

"Patriarchy does not exist in isolation, its intersection with capitalist and racist institutions significantly affects the nature of the consequent gender relations." (1986:243)

A further problem with radical feminist approaches is that they fail to discriminate between men in respect of the constraints they are able, or choose, to impose upon women's action:

"if women are a class, then so too must men be. Such approaches (radical feminist) to men, however, raise, or express, a contradiction. To see men as a class, to 'classify' men, as in radical feminism, means that there is both nothing to say about men and yet everything to be said about all men." (Hearn 1987:22)

Different experiences of gender, for both men and women, are overlooked in radical feminist arguments because they confine analysis to the broad principles of male domination and female subordination through the universal autonomous basis of women's oppression in all forms of society. Implicit in these explanations of patriarchy is a stable and static category of relations. Exploration of any dynamism involved in the process of structuration (Giddens 1979 and 1984) of patriarchy is excluded from this framework. Implicit in this literature is a dualism constituted by two isolated systems of social categories: economic classes, and sex classes. In this perspective each form of social differentiation contains its own system of exploitation and oppression and is dominant in a particular institutional context.

Many radical feminist analyses (eg Millett 1975), in concentrating on the generalities of women's subordination to men and the autonomy of patriarchy, neglect to explore the possible diversity in the application of the stable and unchanging structure of patriarchal relations, implicit in their explanations, between different sets of institutions. As such, they imply the complete autonomy of social institutions, such as family and production. Yet, for example, women (and men) in high status occupations possess the appearance, manners, values, of an elite cultural capital, while those at the base of occupational hierarchies can be characterised by the range of cultural values inherent in working class family origins. In other words, contrary to Millett's (1977) judgement, in the context of production at least, some women do 'rise above working class in personal prestige and economic power' (1977:38). And this appears to have something to do with their inherited class cultures. When investigating the production process it is difficult to sustain any theory which is based on, or implies, the complete autonomy of the social institutions of family and production.



Whatever the nature of the relationship between family and work, in respect of the reproduction of patriarchal relations, there is some correlation between classed family cultural and economic heritage and relative ranking within production. Class heritage may be a feature of the reproduction of women's subordination within patriarchal relations, which is reproduced not only in the family but in the production process, with education acting as an intermediary agent of reproduction. In contrast with the radical feminist thesis of the complete autonomy of patriarchal relations, this points to possible connections between categories of relations and sets of institutions which contribute towards reproduction of forms of social differentiation and their linkage.

The total priority of patriarchy over capitalist class relations, implicit in radical feminist theories, is problematized by Marxist feminists. The core issue for Marxist feminists is the belief that women's subordination must be integrated with the issue of class exploitation. This perspective establishes a link between class and gender relations. However, these analysts, like radical feminists, tend to concentrate on aggregate trends illustrating coherently the generic principles of gender and of class relations. In so doing, they emphasise the coherent co-existence of the two categories of relations.

In neglecting to describe and to analyse ambiguities, anomalies and tensions between and within class and gender relations, Marxist feminists generally fail to problematize how the two forms of social differentiation act simultaneously within sets of institutions. For example some analyses suggest that gender criteria are used to allocate women to jobs with proletarian characteristics (Bruegel 1982, Barron and Norris 1976). There is relatively limited discussion of ways in which, once in this classed position, patriarchal relations help to shape women's daily experiences of work. In a similar fashion to radical feminists, these analyses tend to allocate dominance to patriarchy in the domestic context, and dominance to class relations in the production context. There is scant exploration of how, for example, gender and class may link to shape variations in the forms of male and of

capitalist domination within these institutional contexts. In other words, these Marxist feminist perspectives neglect to account for the complexity of either category of relations. For such reasons, they are often categorised as dualist theories. A similar critique of them is made by Crompton and Mann:

"In the dual systems approach we have an interesting echo of the 'multidimensional' approach to social stratification, where gender, age, race, etc are seen as independent dimensions which cross-cut each other, giving rise to a complex structure of inequality (Lanski 1966). The problem with such approaches is that societies are not built up of independent 'dimensions' or 'levels'. 'Capitalism' 'gender' 'race' are not homogeneous totalities interacting externally with one another." (1986:5)

Individual Marxist feminists have taken up categories within Marxist theory and adapted them to feminist theory. For example, Barron and Norris (1976) adopt the dual labour market concept in their explanations of gendered occupational segregation. They maintain that women constitute a secondary sector workforce, drawn into secondary sector jobs, which are characterised by low pay, lack of promotional advancement, insecurity, low level skills and lack of training. Beechey (1977) and Bruegel (1982) analyse women's waged labour in terms of capitalism's need for a reserve army of labour. They argue that, in general, women constitute a reservoir of labour which can be easily drawn into production in times of labour shortage such as during major wars, but dismissed during economic crises and periods of 'overmanning'. In addition Marxist feminists' domestic labour theories argue that domestic labour directly produces surplus value, or at least contributes to its creation, as the price of waged labour embodies the cost of reproducing the labourer in the home (Gardiner 1975). These methods link the domestic and production spheres by explaining that the attributes which women bring to the labour market, by virtue of their familial responsibilities and gender socialisation, are used by employers to select them for the secondary sector. Again, class and gender relations are allocated to different sets of institutions. They do not analyse the ways in which gender relations act on women and connect with capitalist class relations once in their production places. In essence they neglect detailed and systematic examination of

substantive expressions of class and gender relations at work in paid production contexts. In other words, as Walby asserts:

"a limitation of dual systems theory is that they do not cover the full range of patriarchal structures" (1990:7)

The domestic labour discourse, discussed above, emphasises women's market situation. This suggests an appeal to a Weberian analysis of connections between class and gender relations. In this tradition class is viewed as a phenomenon of the distribution and access to scarce goods and services through market situation. Domestic labour analyses indicate that, in general, women possess similar market situations by virtue of their market capacities and currency, such as qualifications, organizational strength, restricted availability for work. However, this analytical stance, while probably describing accurately some generalised features of the inequalities between men and women workers, does not explain adequately the origins of such inequalities. Nor does it explore or explain differences between shares of power which inhere in different women's labour processes. In contrast, Marxists traditionally seek to interpret the unequal distribution of wealth, goods and market chances in the prior distribution of the means of production, between the owners and those who have only their labour power to sell, and resultant class relations.

Generally, the concepts of a dual labour market and industrial reserve army suggest an unproblematic homogeneity of women's waged labour. The unitary characteristics of 'women's work' are not problematized because an implicit commonality in women's condition underpins analysts' concentration on the broad principles of patriarchal relations. These methods marginalise the importance of women's employment where, for instance, secretarial labour has been included in the labourforce as a central and relatively permanent feature, rather than as casual and irregular labour. As these methods contain only limited analysis of substantive expressions of class and gender relations, there is no apparent need to provide empirical evidence of the attributes they accord to women's labour. The suggestion that women's labour is characterised by, for example, low level skills, relies on inference from stereotypical assumptions rather than detailed analysis of relevant

labour processes. The attributes accorded to 'women's work' in these theories may be neither significant nor typical of, for example, women's secretarial waged labour. As Rubery and Tarling point out:

"Even if women are employed in the cyclically sensitive areas, they are also employed in relatively stable areas, for example in clerical work, and moreover in employment areas where women predominate they must necessarily form the core labourforce as well as fill the secondary jobs." (1982:53-4)

When gender analysts, seeking to expose unfairness and injustice experienced by women at work, accept commonly held definitions of 'women's jobs' they use concepts which tend to reproduce the legitimacy of this low status and devaluation. This problem is closely associated with the ways in which the theoretical task is conceptualized and the nature of the questions posed for exploration (Coleman 1990:193-4). That is, their analytic frameworks are guided by unproblematised assumptions that women are engaged exclusively in labour processes with proletarian characteristics. They thereby neglect to discriminate between women's experiences in the production context. As a result, as suggested earlier, and paralleling Hearn and Morgan:

"unexamined and continued use of the everyday categories 'men' and 'women' . . . may have the effect of reproducing the power structures that gave rise to these distinctions." (1990:12)

At the same time, while automatically prioritizing gender, in any relationship constituted by class and gender relations, there is a tendency to circularity. That is, the primacy of patriarchy over class is sustained by simultaneously reinforcing the devaluation of 'women's work'. Unless the skill and knowledge content of 'women's work' is examined, its popular ranking at the base of hierarchies within production cannot be problematized. Furthermore, where these dichotomous analytic models are incautiously universalised to account for all women's waged labour, there is a danger of over simplification which fails to expose the complexities, tensions and contradictions which may comprise the social relations of women's waged labour generally. In essence, and in a similar fashion to radical feminist theories, the domestic labour debate neglects to analyse class differences between women in the domestic (and production) sphere. However, these class differences may be crucially important because they

could help to explain the advantages and disadvantages which women from different social class origins may have vis à vis each other when they take up paid labour.

It is undoubtedly the case that for a substantial proportion of women traditional responsibilities of child rearing influence their labour market situation. However, this does not explain why some women, when entering paid employment, are allocated to a higher rank with higher status, pay and responsibility than other women. It simply serves to describe general trends, underlying social inequalities between men and women in the labour market, which connect to the domestic division of labour. Such analyses, which stress the abstract dimension of general tendencies, over-simplify, and may misrecognize, the significance of women's experiences within the production process. More specifically, they overlook differences between women in the ways in which they are constituted in both class and gender relations, both within the domestic and production contexts.

The unproblematized homogeneity of women's relations of production results mainly from an exclusive concern with the global characteristics of 'women's work'. In contrast, differences between women's relations of production may come to light when the method adopted encompasses detailed scrutiny of practical expressions of class and gender relations. That is, it may only be at this level of scrutiny that anomalies, ambiguities and tensions are exposed within class and within gender relations. Explanations would then need to be sought for the ways in which these complex elements of sets of relations constitute the structures of these relations. It is possible that anomalies, contradictions, tensions, within a particular set of social relations cannot be identified or explained without exploring simultaneously its connections with another form of social differentiation. In the light of this critique, some advances in understanding patriarchal (and capitalist) domination may come from more detailed and systematic empirical examination, than necessitated by existing methods, of areas of 'women's work' which express both class and gender relations.

Another effect of the domestic labour debate is a tendency to examine women's waged labour solely within the context of women's familial role and relations. For example, protagonists frequently accept the popular ideology that women's waged labour is an extension of their domestic role. Alexander (1981), discussing women's labour in the 19th Century, suggests that the distribution of predominantly female occupations represents an extension of the division of labour within the patriarchal family. This perspective, again, tends to reproduce stereotypical images of 'women's work'. For example, it leads to unquestioned acceptance of the 'office wife' syndrome for depicting secretarial labour. Yet, since secretaries are at work, rather than in the family, it is possible that not all aspects of the work resemble the roles and relations of domesticity. What needs to be borne in mind is that, as Scott points out in her observations on gender segregation of occupations:

"Sex-typing affects recruitment by stressing the 'appropriateness' of men and women for a job rather than their actual abilities to do it . . . It endows occupations with notions of femininity and masculinity which are not technically part of the job but become part of its occupational culture." (1986:160)

In line with Taylor's (1976:6) contention, the assumed symmetry between women's waged and unwaged labour seems too simplistic an explanation of gender division of labour in production. The empirical focus of this research provides detailed examination of the realization of class and gender relations. This level of analysis problematizes the common assumption that secretarial labour, for example, is a mirror of domestic labour. It assumes that it is essential to investigate beneath surface appearances. Importantly, detailed analysis of the conditions and relations of secretarial production provides a perspective which penetrates ideological constructs of women's labour by exploring the ways in which waged labour has a different relationship to the organisation of production than does domestic labour (Beechey 1981); the ideological factors which help to determine the status accorded to female work; social differentiation within 'women's work' which suggests that it does not necessarily have unitary characteristics. While economic relations play a vital role in the capitalist mode of

production, gender segregation of labour suggests that gender relations are also significant in production. It may be that the ideological construction of women's waged labour will only be problematized fully when analysis includes detailed exploration of substantive expressions of class and gender relations contained in the realities of the daily lives of women at work.

In their emphasis on an abstract level of analysis, focussing on aggregate inequalities, many Marxist feminists tend to assume that the gender division of labour unproblematically constitutes a simple structure of gender relations, based on the male/female dichotomy. In effect, they provide extremely limited account of the many ways in which women experience and are variously constituted in gender relations of production. However, others have drawn attention to the ways in which women are constituted in gender relations differently from each other. For example, Eisenstein (1984), in summarising the 'false universalism' characteristic of categorical thought, states:

"to some extent, this habit of thought grew inevitably from the need to establish gender as a legitimate intellectual category. But too often it gave rise to analysis that, in spite of its narrow base of white, middle class experience, purported to speak about and on behalf of all women, black or white, rich or poor."  
(1984:132)

Recognition that some of the problems contained in 'women's work' remain unexplained by existing Marxist feminist methods is also implicit in the recurrent discussions on establishing a theory to connect Marxist and feminist analysis (eg Hamilton 1978, Barrett 1984, Hartmann 1979). A major reason for this problem may be contained in an exclusive focus on an abstract level of analysis of the broad principles underpinning class and gender relations. Advances in understanding patriarchy (and capitalism) may now come from examining the complexities of patriarchy, which entails problematizing the male/female dichotomy more fully than in existing methods. Walby takes up similar issues and contends:

"I do not think it is possible to explain concrete forms of gender inequality by theorizing from macro-systems of patriarchy and capitalism alone. There are different forms of patriarchy and capitalism." (1990:45)

Walby develops an articulation perspective to examine the shaping of gender relations by class relations. However, in contrast to the articulation approach constructed in the present study, she does not explore the full implications or constituents of their interconstitution. As such, she fails to consider many aspects of the complexities of the structures of either class or gender relations which inhere in the method of articulation developed in the next chapter. In this sense, Walby's (1990) analysis of class and gender interconnections remains closely associated with a dualistic approach.

With regard to women's paid work, Walby charts women's increasing participation in production during this century and explains this in terms of both class and gender relations. She concludes that:

"the combined result of capitalist forces and feminist struggle have been primarily responsible for the change from private towards public exploitation of women's labour." (1990:59)

However, in this particular element of her analysis of the articulation of class and gender relations, Walby tends towards prioritizing the shaping of gender relations by class relations. That is, she examines in detail differences in the forms and degrees of patriarchy during the 20th Century and provides an original perspective on understanding these changes. However, her analysis of class relations is confined to underscoring existing analyses of these relations, rather than exploring the full implications, of the changes she identifies to the structure of patriarchy, for analysis of changes and stasis in class relations. For example, she explains the shaping of class relations by gender relations as follows:

"Outside the paid workplace the shift from private to public patriarchy loosened women's total commitment to domestic labour, releasing their time for paid work. The utilization of women in this way had implications for capitalist labour relations. Employers were able to take advantage both of the size of the pool of available labour and the fact that it was internally differentiated in order to depress the conditions of work. Struggles, such as that over flexibilization, are affected by the fact that labour is divided by gender . . . Gender relations affect capital labour relations." (1990:117)

This explanation of the informing of class relations by gender relations provides no advance on, and is indeed identical to, many explanations

provided by those analyses which concentrate on a class perspective on production (see Section 1.2). That is, along with many uni-focal class analyses, she implicitly emphasises the proletarian characteristics of 'women's work' and neglects analysis of the ways in which the introduction of women to paid labour made problematic, rather than simply assisting, the domination of labour by capital.

Like Walby, Hartsock (1985) also sets out to consider the construction of an adequate theory of power by which to understand the gendered, as well as class, nature of power (1985:138). Again like Walby, Hartsock addresses the gender division of labour and explicitly states:

"I propose to lay aside important differences among women and instead to search for central commonalities across race and class boundaries" (1985:233)

In so doing, and in reversal of Walby's emphasis in various areas of her analysis on gender transformations, she concludes that gender relations have fundamentally affected the form of capitalist relations. This is implicit in her proposition that the framework she posits would assist feminists:

"to produce the analyses that could amend Marx to read: 'though class society appears to be the source, the cause of the oppression of women, it is rather its consequence'. Thus, it is 'only at the last culmination of the development of class society (that) this, its secret, appear(s) again, namely, that on the one hand it is the product of the oppression of women, and that on the other it is the means by which women participate in and create their own oppression.'" (1985:262)

One of the reasons why both Walby and Hartsock are reduced to analysing the essentialism of either class relations or gender relations is that they fail to examine in detail substantive instances of class differences between women, as well as distinctions between women in their experiences of gender relations. In other words, they fail to problematize fully the male/female dichotomy. However, other analyses have explored the tasks, conditions and social relations of 'women's work' comprising, in part, the expressive dimension of patriarchal relations (eg Downing 1981, Silverstone 1974). Light is shed on differences between the relations of production of different women which point to complex coherencies and incoherencies, continuities and

discontinuities with the generic principles of class and gender relations. For example, the realization of class and gender relations in secretarial production is illuminated by Downing (1981) (see Chapter III). However, she analyses the expressive dimension of social inequalities, which constitutes her data, only in terms of the basic rules underlying patriarchal relations. In so doing she illustrates how class differences and indeed gender differences within a female category of labour can be overlooked and misrecognized.

At an early stage in her work Downing prioritizes patriarchy to the extent that any detailed consideration of class relations fades from analysis. This omission produces a serious analytic void. Various class and gender divisive elements within secretarial labour, manifested by Downing's empirical data, remain unexplained. This analytic void stems from not problematizing women's universal subordination to men, implicit in the abstract analytic level of aggregate inequalities.

Downing's work provides a clear example of the difficulties encountered in incorporating class and gender relations into a method which does not include analysis of social differences between women. When applying her model of class and gender relations to explain substantive issues of 'women's work', Downing's analysis echoes dualist perspectives as well as the problems encountered in theory development. That is, Downing automatically accepts the dominance of patriarchy over class. She loses sight of the fact that paid workers, both men and women, operate directly within capitalist class relations. Given the gender division of labour it is likely that all relations of production are informed by both class and gender relations. It may be impossible to explain how these categories of relations act simultaneously on labour processes without allowing for the complex features of both sets of relations. However, in Downing's perhaps extreme example of allocating total priority to patriarchy, interconnections between class and gender relations are oversimplified to the extent that patriarchal relations are allocated the power to eradicate class relations as an aspect of the relations of production of contemporary secretarial labour. For example, she suggests that control of secretaries is currently (1981)

exercised exclusively through their patriarchal subordination to office men. This implies that capitalist class relations do not act on secretarial labour processes.

A further general problem with gender focussed analyses of 'women's work' is that they use models which are distinctive from those used to analyse 'men's work'. Developing understanding of 'women's work' may be hindered by this double standard. For example, in contrast to interpretations of women's waged labour through the domestic labour theories of production, men's work is explored through the 'job model' (Wacjman 1982). This perspective excludes, for instance, consideration of the influence of men's familial relations and responsibilities on their waged work.

Employing two distinctive sets of categories to judge and interpret men and women's waged labour denies exploring any common experiences between the sexes. Two divorced categories, within the homogeneity of their isolated gender camps, are implicit when comparing analyses concentrating on either men's labour or women's labour. In itself, this reinforces an analytic focus on the broad principles inherent in the male/female dichotomy. In addition, this analytic double standard implies that capitalist class relations within the workplace only impinge on women's waged labour indirectly, through their unwaged domestic labour. Yet, if class acts variously within 'women's work', it may be the case that gender also acts variously. Furthermore, differences in the relations of production of women's labour processes may mean that some areas of female labour have much or more in common with certain areas of male labour than with other strata of female labour. In other words, there may be patterns to both sets of variation which, when brought together, create a further form of social inequalities, in turn suggesting that class and gender constitute specific relations where they are connected to each other.

The potential identification of a further set of relations does not necessarily entail objectivication of structures and attributing to them causal effects. Rather, it suggests a demand for a mode of analysis

which reveals aspects of class and of gender structures which may be obscured by virtue of the concepts adopted in existing analysis. Thus, the possibility of a further set of class/gender relations may have emergent properties, in comparison with opposing analyses of class and/or gender relations, inasmuch as it cannot be explained simply by 'adding together' substantive instances of class relations and substantive instances of gender relations. Nevertheless, this possible further set of relations does not necessarily have deterministic effects on material class and gender conditions, actions and relations. In contrast, it may constitute an alternative analytic interpretation of substantive manifestations of these relations.

In line with most existing gender perspectives on production, analysis of the similarities which underwrite the gender specificity of, say, secretarial labour remain of crucial significance to understanding such areas of paid labour. In particular this mode of analysis draws attention to gender structures within capitalist production. However analysis of gender segregation should not overshadow analysis of social differences within gendered occupations. For example, analysis of social differentiation within gendered occupations may indicate a pattern in which certain forms of patriarchal, and certain forms of class, subordination/superordination coincide. This would suggest that class and gender relations may, in part, shape each other's structural distribution of power.

As indicated earlier, Walby's (1986 and 1990) method of articulation supports a notion of the shaping of class and gender relations by each other. However, again as suggested earlier, she does not allow, in her analysis, for those structural complexities of each of these relations which this shaping implies and which are being suggested as components of the method of articulation in this present study. In short, Walby's analysis is ambiguous in that it does not proceed to problematizing existing explanations of the comparatively simple structures of each of these relations. On the contrary, Walby's analysis serves to underscore existing analyses of these structural forms. She does this by emphasising the static characteristics of simple structural forms when

considering the shaping of class and gender relations as a process which reconstitutes these structural forms. For example, through her model of articulation Walby goes on to expand upon that exploration of the shaping of class relations by gender relations cited earlier. That is, she explains how domestic gender relations influence capitalist class relations in production. She indicates, for instance, that when women are drawn into production, recognition of a need for women to retain their domestic responsibilities affects changes in the form that capitalist class relations take at work. However, her emphasis is on the overall patriarchal nature of class relations in production, rather than the specific forms that class domination takes in the tasks and social relations of women's labour processes:

"The patriarchal division of labour in the household does not completely determine the form of patriarchal relations in a particular society; other sets of patriarchal relations also have significance. A most important set of patriarchal relations when the patriarchal mode of production is in articulation with capitalism is that in paid work. As I have already argued, patriarchal relations in paid work are necessary if not sufficient, to the retention of women as unpaid labourers in the household. The control of women's access to paid work is maintained primarily by patriarchal relations in the workplace and in the state, as well as by those in the household." (1986:55)

In contrast, earlier discussion in this section, which centred on other perspectives on 'women's work', has suggested that women's access to, and variable distribution within, paid work may be as much a feature of class relations as of patriarchal relations, in the workplace and in the household. In other words, the components which are emerging for inclusion in this developing method of articulation are one of the features which distinguish it from that articulation approach developed by Walby (1990).

Walby's discussion points to structural tensions in the relations between the sets of institutions constituted by home and production when she explores 'rival interests':

"Capital and patriarchy have rival interests in women's labour, and the position that women hold in paid work cannot be understood without an analysis of the tension between the two." (1986:57)

According to Walby, then, the relationship between sets of institutions is an important analytic dimension of class and gender articulation. However, while she acknowledges tensions within this relationship, she nevertheless returns to the common theme of the overall, mutually reinforcing, co-existence of class relations with gender relations:

"The appropriation of women's labour by patriarchal forces within the household or capitalists within paid work depends crucially upon the ability of patriarchal forces to mobilize so as to restrict women's participation in paid work: hence the crucial significance of this set of patriarchal relations when those two systems coexist." (1986:68)

Walby emphasises the importance of class relations to understanding gender relations when she states:

"I have argued that the most important aspects of gender relations should be understood to result from the articulation of patriarchal and capitalist structures." (1986:52)

She goes on to explain:

"There are theoretical reasons for the importance of paid work for contemporary gender relations; paid work is a crucial site in capitalist relations and this is transmitted to the relations between patriarchal structures when the system of patriarchy is in articulation with capitalism." (1986:57)

However, as discussed in more detail later in this section, Walby does not expand her framework sufficiently to explore fully substantive variations in women's routine daily experiences of class and gender relations within sets of social institutions. She neglects consideration of substantive incoherencies within class and within gender relations. Along with most other gender perspectives, she tends to retain the assumption that substantive daily experiences of women's patriarchal subordination to men are wholly coherent with the generic principles underlying patriarchy.

A major problem, which is emerging from this critical discussion of existing gender methods, concerns, then, the structural form of patriarchy as posited in any framework of analysis. That is, resting and confining analysis to the case of abstracted, but nevertheless extremely numerous material instances of women's subordination to men, constitutes the frame of reference for exploring patriarchy which is

adopted in the majority of gender perspectives, including Walby's (1990) more complex approach in her method of articulation. However, this simple structural form of patriarchy, implicit in such methods, sets aside any possibility of identifying a more complex structural form of gender relations. In other words, a prior assumption that the structure of patriarchy is constituted only in coherent expressions of women's subordination to men rules out analysis of contradictions, ambiguities, anomalies, within this set of relations. Yet the complexities of the structural form of gender relations may be constituted in these very ambiguities, tensions and contradictions, as well as the coherencies upon which existing analyses centre. Although Walby (1990) draws attention to tensions and ambiguities between class and gender relations, she does not expand her framework sufficiently to explain how contradictions within a set of relations may constitute integral facets of its structural form.

What is being suggested here, then, is that a framework is needed which, at the very least, allows for the possibility of a more complex structural form of patriarchy than that generally adopted in existing methods. For instance, patriarchal relations may be complex inasmuch as they are, in part, constituted in substantive incoherencies, tensions and anomalies with the generic principles of gender relations. For example, within a gendered occupation, like that of catering labour, all women may experience some form of patriarchal subordination. This is consistent with existing focusses on a simple structural form of gender relations. But when moving analysis beyond such coherent illustrations of the global rules of patriarchy, the very differences in the form that patriarchal domination takes, for example within catering labour, may constitute, in part, differential shares of power between, say, catering consultants to male managers and women employed as 'hands' in the hamburger 'fast food' bar. Since, for example, this leaves space for some women in catering enjoying a higher share of power than some male catering workers, this is incoherent with the generic rules of women's uniform subordination to men.

If female caterers, for instance, enjoy or suffer differences between them, in terms of their overall share of power, and if this is partly constituted in their differential constitution in gender relations, then this would, at the very least, be in tension with that uniformity of women's subordination to men inscribed in the generic principles of patriarchy. In other words, substantive expressions of gender relations, considered in isolation one from the other, may, at this level of analysis, indicate unproblematic coherencies within patriarchy. Yet, using an alternative analytic perspective, these same substantive expressions of gender relations, considered comparatively one with the other, may indicate incoherencies within patriarchy.

Anticipating more detailed analysis of secretarial labour (Chapter III) a brief example from this area of 'women's work' can illustrate the comparative model which is required to illuminate incoherencies as well as coherencies within patriarchal relations. A private secretary's privatized relations with her male executive boss represents, in part, the substantive form of patriarchal subordination which she experiences (Downing 1981 - see further discussion in Chapter III). This is coherent with the generic principles of patriarchy. In contrast, however, the pool typist has no direct contact with executive male office workers, but is segregated from office men within the female exclusivity of this 'pooled' working location. In other words, the patriarchal subordination of the private secretary and pool typist takes distinctly different material forms. Furthermore, in part, her personalised patriarchal subordination to a male boss, confers upon the private secretary the informal power, for instance, to deny access by lower level male office workers to her boss. On the other hand any such power, particularly over male office workers, is completely missing from the pool typist's labour process. Put another way, the form of patriarchal subordination in the private secretary's labour process, in part distinguishes her labour process, in both class and gender terms, from that of the pool typist. This gender distinction between women employed within secretarial production, in part, contradicts the uniformity and universality of women's subordination to men inscribed in the global rules of patriarchy. On the other hand, it constitutes, in

part, class boundaries between these women secretaries. In short, then, the expression of gender relations in the private secretary's labour process, for instance, constitutes both a coherence with, and a contradiction of, gender relations. The contradictory aspect of this substantive instance of gender relations can, in part, be explained in terms of coherent class relations between women personal assistants and women pool typists. It is in this sense, then, that a specific expression of, say, gender relations may, apparently paradoxically, at one and the same time constitute the coherent realization of gender relations as well as contradictions of the global rules of patriarchy.

Discussion is now coming to the point of stressing the possible complexities of sets of social relations. To reiterate and clarify various earlier contentions, it is being suggested that these complexities are constituted in contradictions, incoherencies and coherencies between substantive expressions of social inequalities and their underlying generic principles. This analytic problem warrants emphasis particularly since, at first sight, it concerns an apparently illogical proposition. That is, it is being claimed that a substantive expression of, say, gender relations, may contradict the basic rules of patriarchy. In common sense terms, this is illogical in that if this substantive instance contradicts the rules, then it cannot constitute an expression of these rules. However, the practical example from secretarial labour, discussed above, supports the argument that a substantive manifestation of, say, patriarchy can simultaneously cohere with, and contradict, the global rules of gender relations.

The practical consequences of neglecting to analyse the full complex of tensions, anomalies, incoherencies and coherencies within gender relations, are illustrated in Walby's (1986) account of office labour. Indeed, this aspect of her method of articulation serves as a benchmark by which to distinguish it from that method of articulation which is being developed in this present study. Walby's perspective, concentrating on a comparatively simple structural form of patriarchy, means that while she identifies a hierarchical structure of male office labour she fails, for example, to examine the hierarchical structure of

secretarial labour. For instance, when referring to women's entry into office employment, Walby states:

"Segregation helped to avoid questions of the comparability of wages in terms of employment of male and female clerks since their work was not exactly the same. This left the way open for inequalities of pay to be justified on grounds of inequality in production and to incorporate the men into a hierarchy from which they benefited." (1986:154)

Walby's method does not exploit fully, then, analysing the complexities of women's lives. In essence she does not describe and explain the tensions and ambiguities which are part of women's classed and gendered social positions and may constitute important analytic dimensions of the interconnections between class and gender relations. For instance, when exploring the post-war period, Walby states:

"The expansion of part-time work and the consolidation of the distinction between it and full-time work during the post-war period saw the continuation of this patriarchal and capitalist accommodation. Women's labour was made available to capital, but on terms which did not threaten to disrupt the patriarchal status quo in the household, since a married woman working part-time could still perform the full range of domestic tasks." (1986:207)

These kinds of assertions and explanations beg the observation, for example, that some women worked full-time rather than part-time at this time. What, then, were the effects on domestic patriarchy of married women working full-time? At the core of exploring such problems is analysis of the different experiences of women at work. It may be these differences which point to ambiguities and tensions both between and also within class and gender relations. This suggests a conceptual shift, taking analysis beyond that structure constituted exclusively in substantive coherencies with the male/female dichotomy of patriarchal relations, towards analysis of a structure comprised of the patterning of different forms of patriarchal subordination, which, in turn, constitute simultaneous coherencies and incoherencies within gender relations.

Even in Walby's most recently developed analysis (1990) of class and gender articulation, she neglects to interpret class differences between women. In spite of her focussed framework on class and gender relations, she emphasises forms of social differentiation, which serve

to differentiate between women, but which lie outside her prespecified analytic perspective:

"many analyses of gender and paid employment treat women as if they were a unitary category in a way which seriously neglects divisions based on ethnicity and racism". (1990:42)

She provides no explanation or analysis of the class differences between women in terms, for example, of their incorporation into waged labour which she nevertheless identifies:

"In 1988 the majority of women are in paid employment . . . This is significantly different from the peak of the private form of patriarchy in the middle of the 19th Century when women of the middle and upper classes were less likely to be in paid work than . . . working class women of that time . . . furthermore working class women had restricted access to paid employment, with most of the best jobs barred to them on grounds of sex." (1990:193)

Many protagonists continue to adhere, then, to methods which concentrate on the commonalities of women's condition, especially within social institutions, and as such infer a unified interest between all women. These analyses reinforce a uni-dimensional focus on the abstract level of social inequalities. This automatically leaves unproblematized both the broad structure of patriarchal relations and also its material composition. These methods fail to provide explanations for distinctions within women's labour, such as those described, as we will see, by Downing's (1981) data on secretarial labour, and most importantly involve the irony that in so doing their analyses tend to reinforce the gender inequalities which they seek to confront.

In line with contemporary calls for interpreting connections between class and gender relations, the gendered class differences as well as the classed gender differences, between women, between men, as well as between men and women, need to be addressed. Advances in understanding patriarchy may come from analysing the expressive dimension of social inequalities contained in the substantive divisions between men and women, between women and women, and between men and men. Some gender analysts, like Downing (1981), already provide relevant data on women's daily experiences at work.

On the whole, gender analyses neglect to explain the different forms that the structural distribution of class and gender power takes, and to which social distinctions between women at work point. The dynamics and dialectics of class and gender relations, and the possibility of their reciprocal articulation, constituting perhaps the shifts and amendments inherent in a structuration process (Giddens 1979 and 1984), are left outside their analytic perspectives. Furthermore, they neglect to address critically the class perspectives on 'women's work' adopted in another area of debate on the production process. Yet critical examination of these class perspectives, in the following section, suggests that they shed light on important aspects of women's lives at work.

## 1.2 THE CLASS PERSPECTIVE

In this section discussion centres on class theories of production. They range from those which argue for the exclusion of women from class analysis (Giddens 1972) to those which suggest that class relations of production are transformed to proletarian status with the introduction of exclusively female labour (Braverman 1974). Like feminist analyses, when class perspectives refer to gender division of labour, they generally focus on the underlying principles of patriarchy. In the main, they fail to identify and analyse material expressions of contradictions between capitalist class relations and patriarchal relations. At the same time, within the broad class debate there is more detailed analysis and controversy about variations in the forms of capitalist domination (eg Edwards 1979, Burawoy 1979) than within parallel analyses of the structure of patriarchy.

Implicit in the controversies, about interpreting class relations as expressed in the production process, are different analytic concepts of class relations. That is, various structural forms of class relations inhere in these different perspectives on the production process. This aspect of class debate is important when recalling a major issue emerging in discussion in the previous section. That is, it was

suggested that developments in understanding patriarchy may necessitate a move, from conceptualizing the structure of patriarchy as simply synonymous with the generic principles underlying this set of relations, towards interpreting its structural complexity. It follows, then, that examination of the various models of the structure of class relations, adopted within class analyses of the production process, may indicate concepts to be appropriated in advancing understanding of patriarchal relations. In turn, this may point the way forward towards a model to explore connections between these relations.

In constructing class centred models, analysts present a perspective on 'women's work' with the potential of producing interpretations which contrast with those of gender centred models. However, in the main class analyses suffer from similar incautious generalizations about 'women's work' to those identified in the previous section on gender theories. When they refer, for example, to gender segregation within production they implicitly centre analysis on the global principles of patriarchy (eg Edwards 1979), while simultaneously critically addressing the structure of capitalist class relations. In general, class theories assume that women are engaged exclusively in proletarian labour processes (eg Braverman 1974). They fail to analyse the relations of those women's labour processes which are not fragmented, routine, repetitious and unskilled. The pervasiveness of the ideology surrounding both women and their paid labour is demonstrated by its common acceptance by two areas of social theory which, in other ways, produce conflicting interpretations of the production process.

In class debate on classification procedures, discussions on women's paid labour imply that women have a different relationship to production from men (eg Goldthorpe 1983). They also suggest that class formation is not constituted solely within the production process but within the domestic sphere, in which women have a different role from men. The debate highlights social differentiation between men and women. However, these analysts appear to be guided by dualist principles, popular in gender perspectives, which allocate class and gender to different sets of institutions (see section 1.1).

In his defence of conventional class analysis, which excludes women's occupational participation, Goldthorpe (1983:469) claims that the family is not just the unit of class 'fate' but also of class formation and class action. These class features are estimated to be directly derived from the occupation of the husband. As Dale et al (1985:386) argue, no account is taken of the wife's background, education, income and power in the labour market. If a man's occupation has a determining influence on class formation and class action, then it must be the case that a woman's occupation has important consequences, in class terms. Through their particular relations of production, women, as well as men, interpret the world of work, make sense of their experiences, and take decisions about confrontation, accommodation, resistance or acquiescence to mechanisms of power and control. Furthermore, as Walby points out:

"the idea of derived class is incompatible with any analysis in which class location is determined by the individual's market and work position." (1986:31)

Recently some analyses have incorporated women into class classifications by including married women's occupation. For example, Britten and Heath (1983) propose a method of cross-class analysis. They retain the family as the unit of analysis, but classify its location according to the occupational statuses of both husbands and wives. However, if existing classifications of occupations (eg Registrar General's Classification) are used to categorise women, this innovative step may continue to obscure women's experiences in the workplace. Gender segregation, for example, indicates that patriarchy does enter into the relations of production of 'women's work', and possibly inter-connects with capitalist class relations. Traditionally male orientated categorisations of occupations may fail to reveal relevant aspects of women's occupations to produce discrepancies in classification concepts.

Gender analysts frequently argue that women's occupations should not be ignored in class classifications. For example, Stanworth replies to Goldthorpe's defence of conventional class analysis:

"If Goldthorpe's argument begs these important questions, it also fails to consider the full significance of wives' employment not

for other members of the family but for women themselves."  
(1984:162)

However, Stanworth goes on to discuss women's occupations in global terms, contrasting women's occupations with men's occupations. In other words, her analysis exposes divisions between men and women, but takes no account of divisions between women:

"In short, women's restricted employment opportunities - their subordinate class positions - are an expression of the dominance of men over women through processes of class formation and class action, and not simply, as Goldthorpe would have it, of the familial dominance of husbands over wives." (1984:167)

An homogeneity in women's condition in production is implicit in global theories which account for women's inferior status and pay in comparison with men. This perspective fails to use class theories to demonstrate that they are relevant to explaining women's labour. Analytic prioritization of the broad principles of gender relations apparently excludes the possibility of analysing substantive expressions of social class differences amongst women. As will be discussed in Chapter III, both Downing's (1981) and Silverstone's (1974) empirical data (but not their analyses) on secretarial work suggest that, by including analysis of the realization of class and gender relations, the issue surfaces of the differential distribution of power and control between women as well as between men and women. Power distribution between women must, in part, be an expression of class relations. This demonstrates the importance of class relations (as well as of gender relations) when analysing 'women's occupations'. In the light of the widespread acceptance of social constructions of 'women's work', it may only be when the method adopted includes detailed analysis of labour processes, that features of heterogeneity are revealed. Such an analytic focus, concentrating on the minutiae of experiences and tasks which make up any labour process, is already frequently adopted when interpreting 'men's work'. This method is known as 'the labour process perspective'.

The publication in 1974 of Braverman's Labor and Monopoly Capital directed attention to the labour process as an important site of

capitalist domination and control. The Sex and Class Group's paper encapsulates the orientation of such labour process perspectives:

"The Marxist 'labour process debate' is about what happened to our experience of work as the capitalist class revolutionised the mode of production, creating the factory system and applying machinery and scientific methods of management. It is about the intensification of work and the increasing division of labour in the course of this historical shift from the appropriation of absolute surplus value (length of the working day) to that of relative surplus value (productivity of work). There have been long periods when labour movement and union strategies overlooked the struggle within the working day over work and control, prioritising the wage/hours bargain struck before work begins. The 1968/9 struggles in Europe reflected a rejection of the tyranny of the production line, raising questions about control rather than rewards." (1982:85)

Such perspectives on class relations scrutinize, then, shares of power and control inscribed in the tasks, material conditions and relations of different labour processes. This view of class relations contrasts with frameworks which analyse class relations primarily in terms of market chances, access to scarce goods and status within the labour market.

Braverman (1974) includes analysis of material expressions of capitalist class relations in his labour process perspective. He explores how managerial control strategies, within developments in the capitalist labour processes, tend towards deskilling and fragmentation of work including the creation of a completely separate process of conception. At this point Braverman brings office work into analysis and takes up the case of traditionally female secretarial labour (1974:341-6). However he implicitly analyses this data in terms of the broad principles of patriarchy, rather than as a particular material instance within, and helping to constitute, that structure. In essence, he fails to appreciate that his descriptions, of the tasks performed by secretaries, undermine his contentions (1974:301-2) about management's unproblematic transformation of all office labour processes into factory style, production lines:

"From a functional standpoint, the secretary came into existence as a device to extend the administrative scope of the entrepreneur and proprietor. Later, as the managerial structure grew, the secretary, from this same functional standpoint, came to represent

a pure expression of the Babbage principle: it was thought 'wasteful', from the capitalist point of view, to have a manager spend time typing letters, opening mail, sending parcels, making travel arrangements, answering the telephone, etc., when these duties could be performed by labor power hired at anywhere from one-third to one-fiftieth of the remuneration of the manager. But here the operation of the Babbage principle is further stimulated by the fact that the managers are organizing not the distant labor processes of subordinates, but their own labor. Since they tend to place an exaggerated value upon their own time, and a minimal value upon the time of others as compared with their own, the Babbage principle goes to work in the offices of managing executives with particular force, all the more so as it is intensified by the prestige attaching to managers with large staffs, the usefulness of a retinue of office servants for the transacting of personal matters, and other career, social and personal considerations." (1974:341-2)

Braverman fails to problematise his observation that the personal secretary is part of the manager's own labour process, or to consider that while the secretary is invariably female, the manager is usually a man (see Chapter III). The gender specificity of the two occupations which are being linked indicate that patriarchal relations enter and act on the relations of production of secretarial labour. For instance, popular images of the secretary/boss relationship suggest that associations of personalised and privatised loyalty have not totally disappeared from the contemporary office, contrary to Braverman's judgement:

"... the intimate associations, the atmosphere of mutual obligation, and the degree of loyalty which characterized the small office became transformed from a prime desideratum into a positive liability, and management began to cut those ties and substitute the impersonal discipline of a so-called modern organization . . . its own special commitments to its office staff were severed, one by one, as the office grew." (1974:305)

The acting out of women's subordination, written into gender relations, may have prevented the transformation of the secretarial labour process into routinized work, cut off from direct ties with management. This suggests that gender relations can influence forms of class domination. On the other hand, as Downing's data (1981) (see Chapter III) demonstrate, there are pools of women copy typing whose labour process fits neatly into Braverman's class theory of the redesign of the automated office. The questions which surface are whether there are

distinctive features in labour processes subsumed under the generic label 'secretarial work' which suggest that class acts variably within secretarial labour; whether any class differences connect with gender to shape differential experiences of gender relations; as similar technical skills are entailed in all secretarial labour processes, what criteria are used to allocate women to class differentiated labour processes? In contrast with the tendency to analyse only substantive coherencies with the generic principles of class and of gender relations, these questions can be pursued initially through more critical analysis of the expressive dimension of these relations. Explanations are then required for how practical expressions of social inequalities constitute, and perhaps amend existing frameworks of, the structures of class and of gender relations.

In prioritizing class relations, Braverman assumes throughout his discussions an homogeneity in women office workers' class relations of production, while simultaneously castigating others who fail to differentiate sufficiently within 'white-collar employees' (1974:349-50). Perhaps Braverman is so entrenched in the traditional male orientation of class analysis that he would himself be 'alarmed' at the proposition that it may be equally convenient, but unrealistic, to allocate all female secretarial labour to the same class grouping.

Citing Braverman and others, the Sex and Class Group's paper states:

"But while these do refer to women now and again as a specific category of labour, we find that the politics of gender, in reality quite raw and disturbing in the workplace are somehow invisible in the debate." (1982:85)

In answering their own question of 'what is missed out?' these authors revert to focussing on the generic principles of gender relations, rather than confronting the issue of patriarchy on the terms of the theory to which their criticism relates. Reversion to what could be termed an orthodox Marxist feminist approach signals a lack of appreciation of the valuable insights into women's waged labour which can be afforded by a more detailed appraisal of the meaning and

understanding of 'women's work' to be acquired through a labour process perspective.

Crompton and Mann also criticise Braverman's framework of analysis:

"Braverman's analysis therefore . . . did suggest that some of these places might be gendered. This solution however raises problems for any argument which seeks to identify 'class position' with position in the social division of labour. Logically it is the position which should 'determine' rather than the characteristics of the individual who fills it. However if positions are in fact 'gendered' - in the sense of being either 'male' or 'female' occupations - then gender 'overdetermines' position". (1986:4)

However, Crompton and Mann's argument can only be sustained if gender 'determines' a common class position within the mode of production for all women. On the contrary, it is equally possible that, while confining women to gendered occupations, within these gendered categories there are hierarchical structures, and that class acts variously in allocating women to these ranked places. Crompton and Mann tend to neglect analysis of this aspect of 'women's work'.

Sharper criticism of Braverman's work is that he neglects to account for worker resistance in the organisation of work. In other words, he neglects the dialectics and dynamics which may reshape class relations. Few Marxists deny the effective dominance of the capitalist class, but many incorporate into analysis the challenge posed by workers to this domination. This debate is concerned with analysing shifts and amendments within class relations and the manner in which capital's dominance needs to be continuously re-asserted, redesigned and reformed. For instance, Burawoy (1978) notes that Braverman:

"presents capitalism as a process of becoming, of realizing its inner essence, of moving according to its imminent tendencies, of encompassing the totality, of subordinating all to itself, and of destroying all resistance." (1978:249)

While Burawoy (1979) acknowledges proletarian resistance, he maintains that all work relations involve co-operation and that it is an unbalanced approach to stress only conflict. Attention is drawn to the social relationships which generate the conditions of control and workers' compliance with management's control strategies.

Burawoy limits the possible analytic dimensions of the dynamics of capitalist class relations by neglecting to explore the ways in which gender segregation may contribute to workers' acceptance of the employment contract. Gender division of labour may not be a necessary feature of capitalism, but may be part of the process of gaining workers' consent to capitalist control strategies. Segregation of men and women into different occupations emphasises differences in status and role which facilitate, at the least, informal social relations within the workplace to be informed by gender relations. For example, there may be instances where a man in a formally subordinate class location to a woman will use statements, stemming from patriarchy, to assert some measure of domination over this woman. In Burawoy's terms, the gender aspects of workplace relations may constitute a 'game' which appears to free individuals from formal, ostensibly non gendered, rules which derive from capitalist class relations. In this sense, gendered work place cultural relations can buttress class structural relations in facilitating the consent of workers to those capitalist class relations, but in this case through another category of relations. Burawoy argues that the labour process produces a framework of informal rules and relationships which workers adopt to gain meaning from their working lives, but he does not account for the ways in which gender may be an integral feature of this framework.

In a similar vein to Burawoy, Edwards (1979) integrates the constructive component of workers' resistance in shaping the form, content and relations of the labour process. His analysis incorporates the notion that the conscious understanding, awareness and human agency of subordinate groups help to shape the pattern of power relations. He concludes that various control mechanisms have succeeded in diminishing worker resistance. Edwards stresses managements' control strategies of dividing the working class and, like Walby (1990) (see Section 1.1), recognises both racism and sexism as divisive features (1979:177 and 197).

Edwards acknowledges patriarchy, then, as a constituent of control procedures, but only in terms of the divisions thereby created within

the proletariat. He does not explore whether patriarchy creates divisions within the dominant classes. Furthermore, in line with gender centred methods, he only attributes causality of sexism to social phenomena outside the production process and within the domestic context. Patriarchy at work must constitute an aspect of gender relations, but it is not necessarily identical to patriarchy at home. At work gender relations must have a relationship with capitalist class relations, since they both have a direct bearing on the relations of production. Some of the problems for women, associated with patriarchy, must be created and reproduced away from the domestic context, within the mode of production. In explaining sex-stereotyping of occupations Edwards does no more than echo feminist debate. He posits women's unwaged labour as the main cause of women's location in the secondary labour market, likening 'women's work' to the domestic tasks of housewives, and, along with many feminist perspectives, he thus reinforces the devaluation of 'women's work'.

In omitting analysis of substantive expressions of gender relations, Edwards' interpretation of 'women's work' fails to examine how patriarchal relations may operate as control mechanisms within production and connect with the class relations which he examines in some detail. For example, he identifies substantive differences in the class relations of secretarial production, but neglects to consider how these may coincide with different forms of patriarchal domination of secretarial labour. It is possible that any patterning of the different functioning of class and gender could include control mechanisms in which, for instance, the disadvantages accruing from one form of social differentiation are offset by and buttress the advantages stemming from the other, connected, form of social differentiation. Furthermore, Edwards fails to explain some of his own data on office work which reveals important differences in the labour processes at different levels of women's office work (1979:179). His explanations of women's office labour join all women within a unitary group, yet his data indicate vital distinguishing features in the control mechanisms of different levels of secretarial labour.

Along with Downing (1981), Edwards' (1979) analysis of secretarial labour is confusing because no explanation is provided of the variations in the labour processes of secretaries which their data describe. One aspect of these variations is that secretaries come into contact with men for whom varying degrees of patriarchal domination are written into their formal work contract. For example, some secretaries function at work as the 'hand maidens' of male executives. Other secretaries, such as pool typists, have no direct contact with these executive men. This points to differences in the patriarchal relations which these women experience within secretarial production. This may have implications for aspects of their labour process which at first sight have little to do with gender, such as fragmentation of tasks. A network of complicated links and separations, between women, between men and women, and between men, informed by and constituting both class and gender relations, emerges as a crucial issue when areas of 'women's work', such as secretarial labour, are examined in a fashion which penetrates beneath the obvious gender specificity of the occupation.

The male managers to whom higher level secretaries are assigned present a particular difficulty in class classification procedures. For the most part, managers are not themselves the owners of the means of production, but carry out control functions required by owners. While managers are formally propertyless, their involvement in the functions of capital separates them from the working class. If some secretaries are part of these managers' labour process (Braverman 1974), their class location is equally problematic.

The class location of managers is examined by Wright (1975) who concludes that they inhabit a contradictory class position, since they share features of more than one class location. Wright's thesis focuses on the ambiguities entailed in certain categories of labour processes. This model, if utilised in respect to secretarial labour, could draw attention to far-reaching ambiguities in these women's relations of production. In line with other class analysts Wright fails to incorporate patriarchal relations into his method. However, the fundamental tensions in this sphere of women's work may stem, in no

small measure, from the features of differentiation within secretarial production which point to connections between class and gender relations. An apparent contradiction arises, for example, when, through tight patriarchal control, secretaries allocated to an individual male manager appear to be in a patronised 'proletarian' location, yet in class terms they participate in the control structures and strategies of capitalists and their agents. Explanations for these complex features of women's relations of production are required. For example, the ideology of gender appears to legitimise secretarial women's material subordination to male office workers in the same class location. However, it simultaneously appears to mask the class relations and consequences of this subordination as well as the differential class relations in various categories of the work.

Unlike many analyses which centre on gender relations, the various perspectives on class relations, discussed above, bring to the fore complexities which possibly constitute the structural form of class relations. That is, class focussed perspectives introduce the concept of contradictions, ambiguities and tensions, as well as coherencies, within class relations, as features of the structure of these relations. On the other hand, in general, they neglect exploration of contradictions, ambiguities, coherencies and incoherencies, between class relations and other forms of social differentiation, such as gender relations, which nevertheless act on labour processes simultaneously with class relations. With this omission, class analysts fail to conceive of the complexities of class relations as being, in part, constituted in the interconstitution of different categories of relations. In other words, it is highly likely that they underestimate the complex nature of the structural form of class relations to which they nevertheless draw attention.

Even those class analysts who focus particularly on the complexities of class relations tend simultaneously to assume a comparatively simple structural form in respect of gender relations. Indeed, both class and gender analysts, who refer to the gender division of labour within the capitalist mode of production, focus almost exclusively on the broad

principles underlying patriarchal relations. As a result of this methodological bias they fail to analyse the complexities of the daily realities of women's working lives which give expression to these systems of social inequalities as well as possible opportunities for resistance. In addition, the undifferentiated categorisation of all women within either unitary class or unitary gender locations remains largely unproblematized. Dale et al (1985) rightly point out that:

" . . . occupations such as office and secretarial work . . . in which few men are employed, tend to be classified without sufficient distinctions being made between jobs calling for very different levels of skill." (1985:388)

Downing (1981) and Silverstone's (1974) empirical data (detailed in Chapter III) support Dale et al's later contention when criticising Occupational Unit Groups:

"For some jobs this provides inadequate discrimination . . . for instance Unit No. 141 contains all typists, shorthand writers and secretaries and therefore combines the most junior members of the typing pool with the personal secretary to the Managing Director." (1985:391)

During discussion of existing class and gender perspectives of production some discriminating aspects within secretarial labour have emerged as issues which are possibly aligned to the dynamic meshing together of the structures of class and patriarchal domination. In explaining how these forms of relations may connect with the relations of institutions outside production, some analyses suggest that class and gender relations of production are reproduced not only within production but elsewhere, in other spheres of society, such as education. For example, within Burawoy's (1979) expanded concept of the labour process, factors not directly visible at the point of production contain control strategies. For instance, the employment relationship includes selection procedures, training requirements, credentials, as well as various mechanisms of socialisation. These features of the labour process are the central concern of education and constitute substantive issues which are taken up and explained by traditional reproduction theory. In this perspective secretarial vocational training courses are linked with the secretarial production process and emerge as a possibly significant factor in the reproduction of legitimised control within the

female office workforce. To an important extent, the control of work and the secretarial workforce may be achieved for capital away from the point of production, divorced from the office, and within educational institutions and the home.

If substantive issues of secretarial production can be explained in terms of the linking of class with gender, then these forms of relations and their interconnection may be reproduced, in part, during vocational preparation for the work. The relationship between secretarial education and secretarial production may itself constitute another analytic dimension of the reciprocal articulation of class and gender relations. The question of how the problems involved in analysing links between class and gender relations may be connected with issues concerned with linkages between sets of institutions is discussed in the following section on education theories. These theories focus, in part, on the reproduction, within education, of the class and gender relations of production as interpreted in those analyses of the production process discussed in this section.

## 2. EDUCATION AND THE REPRODUCTION OF CLASS AND GENDER RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION

### 2.1 GENDER PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION

In general, current education analyses focus on the reproduction of systems of social inequalities in the structures and processes of education. In dispelling any notion of the complete autonomy of education, they highlight connections between sets of institutions. However, there is a tendency to concentrate on the reproduction of one category of relations which, in any particular focus, reciprocally marginalizes class or gender relations and consequently their possible interconnections. In outlining gender perspectives on education in this section, critical discussion of the exclusivity of this methodological

focus argues that it severely limits exploration of the more complex features of patriarchal relations, including their being shaped by class relations.

Much of the early literature on gender-in-education catalogues sexist practices within schools (eg Deem 1980, Byrne 1978). This suggests that both the source and solution to gender discrimination lies in unmasking these procedures. This literature sheds light on the expressive dimension of gender inequalities in that it explores daily schooling practices in which women's subordination to men is acted out. However, it replicates the general literature on gender in that it centres analysis on substantive coherencies with the broad principles of patriarchy. In effect analysis fails to discriminate between the gender experiences of different classes of women within education. In addition, like general gender analysis, where education analyses move beyond the boundaries of the school, they concentrate on causal connections with the gender division of labour in the domestic sphere rather than production. They generally fail to explain how education may mediate between the class and/or gender relations of domestic life and those of their students' occupational destination. Furthermore, by ignoring the gender relations of production, many gender-in-education perspectives imply, by default, that patriarchy does not constitute a power structure of the capitalist mode of production.

When revealing sexist practices in schooling there is some divergence of focus. Some (Sharma and Meighan 1980) argue that education reinforces the gender labels of the general culture in socialising boys and girls into a pattern of differentiated roles for men and women. Byrne (1978) and Deem (1980) show how the procedures and processes of education guide female students to gender stereotyped occupations. Others (eg Spender and Sarah 1980) contend that schools, through closure procedures, limit the options available to female pupils. Deem (1978) is representative of other investigators (Spender and Sarah 1980) into the effects of mixed sex classrooms. She contends that teachers react differently to boys and girls.

Gender analyses of education, in the vein outlined above, neglect to explain why some girls learn different subjects, have different timetables, and are located in different kinds of schools, in comparison with other class differentiated girls. These gender analyses, along with other gender perspectives, seem reluctant to point out social differentiation between women. As Arnot and Weiner (1987) explain:

"Each (feminist educational critique) looked at the 'problem' of female education in different ways and took different routes in researching and theorizing the structures and processes of schooling, choosing distinctive topics and methodologies for research . . . But many also were confused about how to bring together the wealth of information available and to use it to formulate coherent educational policies. Some even felt it divisive to describe work on gender as belonging to discrete traditions and perspectives. They felt that the ultimate aim of all work on gender, namely greater equality for women, was too important to be analysed as containing theoretical (and perhaps damaging) divisions (Whyld 1983)". (1987:12-13)

There are, however, possibly crucial differences between the educational experiences of different classes of women. As Wickham (1987) points out, the opportunities open to a middle-class woman are likely to be substantially different from those offered to a working-class woman. Yet, there has been limited examination of middle and dominant class women's experiences in education, in comparison with the emphasis given to examining working class women's education. For example, Sharpe (1976) identified school girls' choice of occupations as:

"all the chosen careers were safely in the realms of 'women's work'" (1976:161)

However, her investigations were confined to working class school girls. It is possible that those school girls who view their careers as being located in non gendered occupations, such as law and accountancy, come predominantly from middle and upper class families. The education process for these higher class women may deliberately steer them away from gender specific occupations. It is potentially, then, a feature of class, gender, or a combination of class and gender, distinctions amongst women that possibly determine, for example, that certain classed categories of women are filtered towards subjects which exemplify gender specificity in their female exclusivity.

Recently some gender-in-education analyses have recognised class differences which influence patterns of gender relations. For example, Anyon infuses the education debate with consideration of variations in gender relations when she states:

"There are subtle class differences in the ideology of what is appropriate female behaviour and in the contradictions between femininity and self esteem for women of working and professional classes." (1983:20)

Anyon is suggesting, then, that gender relations may be shaped by class relations. Walker also draws attention to the possible reciprocal articulation of class with gender when pointing out the pitfalls of ignoring class differences amongst women:

"Theoretical generalizations about the form of patriarchal domination in specific settings must be received cautiously and inspected to determine at which level of class formation they apply. More importantly, interventionists will have to struggle with the problem of determining if they are directing their programmes at all women, at specific class groups, and crucially, if the possible unintended consequence of programmes of action aimed at one class group is an exacerbation of the problems of gender differentiation being experienced by another, different class group." (1983:5)

In discussing the reproduction of the female labourforce, Sherratt also points to the importance of analysing class differences between women. She problematizes the assumed unitary nature of 'women's education':

"The message given by schools is a message whose content can only be understood in the context of class control as well as gender control. The socialisation experiences of working class girls and middle class girls . . . have always differed enormously and still do." (1983:48)

Arnot and Weiner (1987), also criticise existing gender analyses of education:

"Discussions of girls' underachievement, for instance, did not consider the different achievements of middle- and working-class girls . . ." (1987:13)

As suggested earlier, in neglecting class differences between female students, investigations are usually confined to working class culture and as Brah and Deem point out:

"Conveniently, sociologists have forgotten to study middle class youth in any significant measure." (1986:69)

For example, studies of youth working class cultures, including the culture of the school, suggest that there are deep gender divisions, which separate boys and girls culturally (Willis 1977, McRobbie 1978, Jackson 1978, Connell et al 1982). However, research into gender differences in the culture of middle class adults (Edgell 1981) explains that gender divisions are as significant a feature of the culture of this class group as that of the working class. Further consideration needs to be given, then, to the distinctions and similarities in female culture amongst women in different classes, in order to analyse how class specificity may influence the specificity of gender culture. Investigations in this vein should avoid the double standard often applied to explaining young men and women's cultural differentiation: male youth culture is automatically linked to the culture of work, and that of their female counterparts to the culture of domesticity.

The issues discussed above suggest that methods are needed which include a number of possible analytic dimensions which may, together and in part, constitute connections between class and gender relations. For example, discussion so far suggests that more attention, than in existing methods, needs to be given to material conditions and social relations of education, which realize structural forces of class and gender domination. That is, attention should be given to analysing the expressive dimension of both class and gender relations. As when discussing analyses of the production process (Section 1 above) exploration is then necessary of how specific instances of the realization of class and gender relations in education constitute these power structures. In other words, exploration should address substantive expressions, within education, of coherencies and incoherencies with the broad principles underlying these social inequalities. Analysis needs then to consider these material instances of class and gender relations as possibly, in part, and on the surface paradoxically, constituting the form of these power structures. The drawbacks of methods, with more limited analytic approaches than are being suggested, are implicit in Wallace's (1987) critique of a double standard in interpreting male and female youth cultures:

"In general, then, accounts of male youth have concentrated upon their social reproduction in the 'public' sphere of school and the labour market, whilst accounts of female youth have shown how this is crucially related to the social reproduction of the 'private' sphere of the home. We do not know to what extent the private sphere affects masculine expectations." (1987:240)

In spite of the general validity of this criticism, some empirical research has been conducted into the social reproduction of feminine culture in the 'public' spheres of education and production. For example, Valli (1986) analysed secretarial education and labour in the United States. She explains that class and gender relations are reproduced in this sector of education, but the general line of her analysis prioritizes patriarchy. She neglects to examine the ways in which class acts variously upon this gendered category of education and labour. In her emphasis on producing a feminist theory of capitalism, Valli concludes that capitalist class relations entail a hierarchical division of labour but that patriarchal relations ensure that women are allocated only to the lowest level locations of the overall class structure. This conclusion, uncritically supporting analyses which highlight and confine explanations to the dimension of the broad principles of patriarchy, fails to account for those secretarial women who are not in the lowest ranks within production. Analyses which prioritize the generic principles of gender relations, appear to be enmeshed in a class specificity in that they are able to explain only proletarian areas of women's waged labour.

Valli's data is drawn from one distinctive area of secretarial education and production. That is, it represents only one classed sphere of secretarial education. She was not able to analyse, in terms of this evidence, reproduction within education of social differences within a range of secretarial relations of production. Her framework omits, for instance, the issue of the reproduction in education of the relationship of women secretaries with other women secretaries. On the contrary, Valli explains the part played by traditional gender issues, such as femininity, in securing for women exclusively proletarian office jobs.

For example, Valli observes that during their schooling for secretarial work:

"Students were informed in numerous ways how important it was to cultivate a feminine, even provocative, appearance if they were serious about getting a job." (1987:203)

She goes on to discuss the ways in which the messages of secretarial education, are renegotiated by female students. In this sense, she takes issue with analyses which reinforce women's subordination to men by suggesting the passive acceptance of relevant inequalities by women. Implicit in her method is exploration of the human agency of secretarial women and the ways in which their actions inform, and have consequences for, structures of both class and gender domination. In respect of connections between education and production, Valli explains that the relations of secretarial education do not constitute a mirror image of the relations of secretarial production, because:

"schools are 'semi-autonomous' organizations, having needs, rules, practices and structures that schooling brings about itself, without recourse to its relation to the economic sector."  
(1987:209)

She goes on to state:

"But these strong pulls to be co-operative, logical and productive workers do not mean that the social relations of labour are reproduced unproblematically. Tensions and conflicts are built into both capitalist and patriarchal relations, so that even over an issue like pay, for instance, where students' knowledge of pay scales (and relations between worker pay and company profits) was highly constrained, room for questioning, insight and bargaining was definitely present." (1987:209)

Valli therefore identifies features of secretarial education which are problematic in that they contradict theories of coherent reproduction within education of the class and gender relations of production. However, she omits the possibility that there may be tensions and conflicts not only within categories of relations but also between them, when comparing their manifestation in education and in production. In restricting the analytic dimensions of the dynamic process which she identifies, Valli neglects to explore, for example, renegotiation of expressions of class relations in education, as possibly having ramifications for expressions of gender relations in production. In other words, she does not include the possibility that a dynamic and

dialectical relationship, between class and gender relations, is constituted, in part, in the relations between education and production.

Valli's method fails to analyse the possible interconstitution of class and gender relations. On the other hand, her analysis avoids the criticism, levelled at many other gender analyses of education, that female students are totally passive agents who assimilate the overt and covert gender messages of schooling in an unmediated fashion. Yet, as Valli's data and interpretation indicate, at the very simplest level, all knowledge is mediated by the acquirer, even if this is an unconscious act. Interconnections between class and gender relations may include the manner and extent to which women consciously reject, filter, renegotiate, resist, accommodate, misrecognise, or accept gender related (as well as class related) knowledge and processes. Unless analytic space is created for this feature of women's education, the framework automatically implies the complete stability of gender relations and the total impotence of the women involved to amend these relations. Furthermore, analyses which suggest the stability of gender relations also rule out the possibility that changes in the forms of class subordination/superordination can have ramifications of change for gender relations, where they are linked. On the other hand, there is no reason why the relationship of class relations and gender relations should be one-way (Hearn 1987:40).

Although relevant methods have yet to be developed, there are now demands to investigate the active part played by women in shaping gender relations. Walker and Barton note that there is:

" . . . a fairly powerful call for an increase in emphasis in the analysis of gender relations and education upon the 'active response' individuals make to the social conditions in which they live . . . this response needs to be conceptualized not merely in terms of the typical reactions girls (and boys) make to the messages about gender relations they receive inside and outside of schools, but also, and more particularly, in terms of the contradictions embedded within the origins, the form and the content of these messages and in terms of these messages being resisted." (1983:ix)

Earlier Kelly and Nihlen had made a similar point:

"So much research has gone into examining how schooling, staffing and curriculum differentiate male from female that we have very little real knowledge about whether girls accept what the schools teach. Instead we find a confusing literature examining whether girls internalize school messages, which is inconclusive and rests on an assortment of evidential bases. Some of it suggests that girls either ignore the sex role messages of the schools or renegotiate them." (1982:174)

Anyon asserts that:

"contrary to the myth, women - and girls - actively struggle to come to terms with or to transcend, the conflicts in being female." (1983:21)

These demands suggest that a new direction for gender analysis of education may be emerging, which concentrates on the opportunities for action and consciousness of women. While this points the way to viewing patriarchy in terms of a dialectical, dynamic set of gender relations, there is the danger of neglecting the gender (and class) constraints which contextualise these women's conscious and unconscious actions. Sharp and Green (1975) underline this risk, when discussing the problem of 'emergence':

"societies reveal structures and processes which are not reducible to the simple sum of the actions of individuals looked at qua individuals (Durkheim 1951) . . . It is necessary to situate the individual in a social context, to be able to say something about that context in terms of its internal structure and dynamics, the opportunities it makes available and the constraints it imposes, and at the same time to grasp that essential individuality and uniqueness of man that evades any total categorization." (1975:17)

Furthermore, if theories of gender in education neglect to problematise that consciousness of women, which is now beginning to be integrated into analysis, there is the danger of assuming that the understandings, meanings and views, on gender relations, held by women in education, represent the 'reality' of the structure of these relations. For example, Sharp and Green point out that:

"Simply to dwell on the surface structure of consciousness may mask the extent to which such consciousness may conceal and distort the underlying structure of relationships (Lucaks 1971, Godelier 1972) (1975:22).

They reinforce the need to problematise consciousness when observing:

"The actors may be conscious of (these) constraints but need not necessarily be so. They may be subconsciously taken for granted, or unrecognised, but the situation will present them with contingencies which affect what they do irrespective of how they define it. Thus the social observer cannot necessarily base his understanding of the social world simply on the flow of consciousness of the actor." (Sharp and Green 1975;22-23)

Gender centred analyses present valuable descriptive data on sexist practices within education. They provide useful leads as to the areas in which gender relations may be enacted and reinforced in education, but insufficient analytic tools to comprehend fully the nature of these processes or their links with other power relations either within or outside education. Divisions between men and women generally, remain important in theories of gender. However, advances in understanding gender may come from exploring substantive expressions of social inequalities and the ways in which, within women's areas of education, gender relations take the same or different forms in different social classes; how gender mediates between men and women within the same social class as well as between different social classes. These problems suggest that gender issues cannot be totally divorced from class issues. They also point to the importance of moving towards an analysis which incorporates understanding the dynamic inter-relations constituted in the links between power structures in various social settings. For example, Cockburn, when discussing workplace organizations, points out that:

"individuals act as vectors of power across the boundaries between the organization and the outside world and to which individuals bring their own ideas, partly though not entirely generated outside the workplace, to influence organizational outcomes." (1990:86)

Discussion of existing gender-in-education analyses suggests, then, that class and gender differentiation are not incorporated into different processes as separate issues. To understand these forms of power relations, and to suggest ways in which they may be amended, the connections between them need to be analysed. As Brah and Deem contend:

"We feel that there is a pressing need in education to tackle . . . gender and class inequalities because as Taylor (1984) argues 'each issue contains the oppression of the other'. This is not to suggest that one should be subsumed under the other but rather strategies should be devised which take account of both the

relative autonomy of one from the other and the close link between them." (1986:77)

To date few of the gender methods adopted to analyse education have included systematic analysis of class inequalities. Perhaps with an implicit desire to reinforce recognition, of the implications for all women, of patriarchal relations, gender analysts hesitate to highlight class differences between women which are reproduced in education. But if women are constituted in both class and gender relations differently from each other, some analysis of the part played by education in reproducing these inequalities is needed. In particular, substantive expressions of these divisions will be part of the conscious educational world experienced by women which will, in part, guide their actions and reactions to dominant class and male forces. Put another way these practical experiences will have their ideological effects in that they help to shape women's views of both themselves and also of forms of social differentiation.

Most gender perspectives of education are constrained by their uni-dimensional analytic focus which excludes giving any special attention to class relations. In contrast, an extensive literature centres on a class perspective of education. This literature incorporates more complex approaches to analysing education than those implicit in most gender perspectives. These approaches could provide analytic tools to assist understanding not only of the reproduction of class relations, but also gender relations. The next section turns to outlining and discussing this class-in-education debate.

## 2.2 CLASS PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION

A common starting point in class-in-education theories is that knowledge and its transmission is neither neutral nor value free, but socially constructed. In the selection, organisation, distribution, evaluation and transmission of knowledge vested interests are involved. They broadly serve to legitimise and reproduce aspects of class relations. Although interpretations of the connecting processes differ, emphasis is

placed on linkages between education and production. Connections between these two sets of institutions are stressed. Analysts contend that theories should move beyond traditionalist concepts, which, as Giroux maintains, imply that:

"schools exist beyond the imperatives of class and power and appear as self-contained islands neatly severed from the socio-economic forces of the outside society." (1981:92-3)

The theories outlined in this section provide differing explanations of the class relations of education. These methodological and conceptual differences are important. They point to some constituent elements of an alternative perspective on education which is based on analysis of class and gender articulation. In respect of problematizing connections between sets of institutions, as an analytic dimension of understanding links between forms of relations, class-in-education theories explain mechanisms which connect education with production. On the other hand, when concentrating exclusively on class relations, these analyses neglect other categories of relations which contribute to the differential distribution of power in both the education and the production process. In the exclusivity of this focus, they fail to incorporate the breadth of analytic dimensions which may comprise the compounding complexities of connections between, for example, education and production.

Within the mainstream class-reproduction-in-education debate, a major methodological division has emerged. Some proponents take their main problematic as education's contribution to simple, coherent social reproduction, infused with the logic of stability and consensus (eg Bowles and Gintis 1976); others concentrate on conflict and resistance to elite domination within education (eg Giroux 1981). The latter group rejects apolitical, functionalist, consensus based models. In contrast they highlight the political nature of education in reproducing the inequalities of wealth and power inherent in existing capitalist society. They make central human agency and the problems posed to dominant interests by confrontations which challenge inequitable power relations. Implicit in these perspectives is exploration of changes and shifts within class relations. Nonetheless they do not generally

include the possibility that such changes and shifts within class relations may be explained, in part, by the shaping, informing and moving of these relations by gender relations.

When discussing features of education which contest the unequal sharing of class power in production, current class-in-education-theories are rendered confused by the limitations of their analytic dimensions. For example, they simplify the options available to teachers and students. Decisions about accommodation or contestation of inequalities within education may result from the competing requirements of reproducing differential, and inequitable, power relations such as class and gender. Indeed the complexities involved in reproducing different systems of social differentiation may obscure any such practical choices. Similar limitations of analytic frameworks which oversimplify the options available, for example to teachers, are illustrated by Sharp and Green (1975) when developing an alternative conceptual model:

"The perspective which we are advocating is one which attempts to situate teachers' world views and practices within the context of social and physical resources and constraints which they may or may not perceive, but which structure their situation and set limits to their freedom of action through the opportunities and facilities made available to them and the constraints and limitations imposed on them." (1975:30)

Certainly, in contrast with the clearcut options of challenge or submission, represented by the two distinctive methods of many current class perspectives, where class and gender are linked the choice may be more complicated. If class and gender help to shape each other's structure of relations, any decision to contest the inequalities inherent in one set of relations, may result in amendments not only in that form of relations but also in the effects, forms and degrees of domination written in to the other, connecting, set of relations.

The different, but even when taken together, still limited, analytic focusses of the two main areas of debate on class-in-education generally over-simplify even their own, necessary, abstractions from a social totality which is complex. That is, part of this complex social totality is constituted in daily routines and activities rooted in the

simultaneous reproduction of various forms of social differentiation. For example, the technical sphere of further education reproduces workers who take up places within the mode of production. To the extent that its graduates readily fill such production places, this sector of education contributes to unproblematic reproduction of the specificities of preordained relations of production. At the same time, this education is involved directly with social relations, curricula contents and personnel, relating to positions within production which enjoy a gender specificity as well as a class specificity. That is, teachers in vocational education are explicitly concerned with skills, knowledge, attitudes 'required' in production. At the same time they are concerned with broader education issues, which may be coherent with, or in conflict with, the overt 'needs' of specific places of production. In this sense, the very complexities, involved in decisions they make about the processes and structures of their area of education, may be more readily available to them, than is the case for teachers in general education. This may result in tensions, for, for instance, teachers and examiners when they make decisions on structures and processes of, for example, secretarial education. Such tensions may find their roots in reproducing two analytically separable forms of relations simultaneously.

One aspect of coherencies between education and production, highlighted in most class-in-education theories, is that in vocational courses subject content is clearly guided by the skills and knowledge deemed essential in the anticipated work destination of its student body. In this sense there must ideally be a degree of correspondence between education and production. However, class analyses investigate beyond formal curriculum content to explain how education reproduces capitalist class relations. For example, according to Bowles and Gintis (1976) the social relations of the school and classroom mirror the social relations of the workplace. The ultimate outcome is that schooling reproduces the social and class divisions deemed functional for production and legitimation of capital and its institutions. In other words, Bowles and Gintis accord primacy to the form of socialisation rather than the content of the formal curricula of education.

Bowles and Gintis argue that education reproduces the labour power essential to capital accumulation, by providing prospective workers with the technical and cognitive abilities required for adequate work performance. This education is differentially distributed by selection procedures which distinguish students on class and gender lines. Bowles and Gintis' argument implies that students are divided from each other on the grounds of either class or gender. However, all students enjoy, simultaneously, a classed and gendered social position. It is likely that divisions amongst them, in terms of their groupings and curricula contents, for example, are not based on only one of these social positions. The complexity of divisions reproduced within education remains outside the analytic parameters of Bowles and Gintis' framework.

According to Bowles and Gintis, a further function of education is the reproduction of forms of consciousness, values and dispositions necessary for the maintenance of social relationships and institutional organisation, which facilitate capital accumulation. From these arguments, it becomes clear that, in their model, education is totally dominated by the mode of production. This framework provides little scope for considering whether, in some respects, education has autonomous characteristics. The main thrust of the critiques of Bowles and Gintis' theories centres upon the mechanical determinism of this approach and the apparently unproblematic manner in which dominant interests are maintained. Giroux (1981) summarises numerous criticisms levelled at the correspondence theory:

"Critics have pointed to its overly determined model of causality, its passive view of human beings, its political pessimism and its failure to highlight the contradictions and tensions that characterise the workplace and school." (1981:93)

However, even these critiques of Bowles and Gintis' correspondence theory neglect to explore the more complex features of reproduction of social inequalities. For example, while encouraging account to be taken of the active part of subordinate groups in shaping class relations, they neglect consideration of, for instance, any 'knock-on' effect to gender relations. If amendments in one category of relations influence the form and content of another set of relations, as realised within the

same or another sphere of society, perhaps in an intentional, though more probably in an unintentional way, then some explanation of the mechanisms of this connection is required.

The issue of the complexities of links between education and production, raised by the critiques of the correspondence theory, are particularly pertinent in the case of vocational education. Vocational education operates explicitly within the contours of (amongst others, such as race) the class and gender divisions of the capitalist mode of production. As technical colleges retain the characteristics of an educational institution, rather than workplace institution, distinctions between college and work must incorporate differences between the relations of education and the relations of production. However, in dealing with the specificities of particular occupations, informed by class and gender relations, in both production and education these relations may be linked. Analysis of differences and similarities, in the connections between class and gender, when comparing the educational and production contexts, may contribute to understanding both the ways in which class and gender are linked and the incorporation of connections between education and production as a further important analytic dimension of this linkage.

In contrast to Bowles and Gintis' theory of the mirror image of the class relations of education and of production, analyses which concentrate on cultural reproduction place greater emphasis on the autonomous characteristics of schooling. In this latter case the focus is on issues such as social control. These analyses centre on either extrapolating the principles underpinning the structure and transmission of the cultural tone of educational institutions or on how school culture is produced, selected and evaluated.

Through his structural analysis, Bourdieu (1977) explores social and cultural reproduction. He considers that educational institutions are influenced only indirectly by more powerful economic and political institutions. Rather than explicitly imposing docility and oppression, education reproduces power relations by participating in producing and

differentially distributing the dominant cultural capital. A degree of relative autonomy from production is attributed to education, which contrasts with Bowles and Gintis' model of reproduction. For Bourdieu cultural capital includes sets of meaning, qualities of style, modes of thinking, types of dispositions, which constitute the cultural unconscious and are the inheritance of family background, and distinguished by the class determined boundaries between these families.

According to Bourdieu, education reinforces and confirms the unequal distribution of cultural capital amongst its students. He states:

"The educational system reproduces all the more perfectly the structure of the distribution of cultural capital among classes . . . in that the culture which it transmits is closer to the dominant culture and that the mode of inculcation to which it has recourse is less removed from the mode of inculcation practised by the family . . . the appropriation of the culture . . . depends on the previous possession of the instruments of appropriation . . . and which in a society divided into classes are very unequally distributed among children from different social classes."  
(1977:493-4)

One major problem with Bourdieu's model is that his structural analysis implies the homogeneity of class cultures. This leaves no space for investigating gender distinctions within these cultures. On the other hand, there is the problem of whether there is a cultural context to womanhood that is universal, or whether there are important class variations within the culture of this gender grouping. At the same time, Bourdieu does refer to varied occupational cultures which must form an aspect of vocational education. In this respect, he maintains that:

"the gradual rationalization of a system of teaching geared more and more exclusively to preparation for an increasing variety of occupational activities could threaten the cultural integration of the educated class if, so far as class is concerned, education, and more particularly what is known as general culture, were not at least a matter for the family as for the school . . . Intimacy and fellow feeling, congeniality, based on a common culture are rooted in the unconscious and give the traditional elites a social cohesion and continuity which would be lacking in elites united solely by links of professional interest." (1971:197-8)

This suggests that vocational education may be as much concerned with reproducing the dominant cultural capital as with developing skills and

knowledge associated with specific labour processes. At the same time, this also introduces a further problematic in respect of vocational education. This area of education offers courses relating to occupations which are themselves divided into class specific categories. For example, in Construction Studies Departments courses for bricklayers and surveyors are provided. Bourdieu does not extend his analysis to consider whether being located in a specific vocational area provides a uniting culture between class distinctive levels of, for instance, construction departments, and how this occupational culture connects with the possibly distinctive class culture of these students' family backgrounds. In short he does not include detailed examination of the realization of class and gender relations which could expose a complex of differentiation and uniting processes within and between broad class cultures.

Bernstein's (1975 and 1990) theories also focus on structural analysis of the cultural reproduction of class relations. In the initial (1975) stages of developing his model of analysis, Bernstein concentrates on schooling's role in creating and legitimising the form and content of the communicative and symbolic resources of dominant groups. In contrast with correspondence theorists, he examines the internal qualities of schools which contribute to the lived experiences of classed and gendered actors. Bernstein demonstrates that curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation comprise message systems, the structural underpinnings of which reflect models of power and control existing in wider society. He introduces the concepts of classification and framing to demonstrate the construction and maintenance of boundaries. However, more extended analysis of the minutiae of activities, experiences and processes of specific areas of education, might expose boundaries and divisions which were more diffuse and complex than those suggested by Bernstein.

Bernstein (1990) develops a more complex model of education in his later work. To a certain extent, he posits less stable and less simple boundaries in his refined perspective. That is, along the lines of structuration process approaches (Giddens 1979 and 1984), he accounts

for 'cleavages, contradictions and dilemmas' (1990:33) within education as possible components of reproduction, as well as of possible components of redirection of categories of social relations;

"But the transmission/acquisition systems the thesis projects do not create copper etching plates in whose lines we are trapped. Nor are the systems, grids, networks, and pathways embedded in either concrete or quicksand. The transmission/acquisition systems reveal and legitimate the enabling and disabling functions of power relations which they relay and upon which they rest." (1990:6)

Additional developments in Bernstein's framework (1990) arise with his frequent reference to systems of social differentiation, such as race and gender, in addition to the class relations which were the exclusive focus of his earlier framework (1975). However, despite acknowledgement of other categories of relations, Bernstein tends to retain the prioritization of class relations. For example, he states:

"This paper has concentrated on the development of a model for understanding the process whereby what is regarded as a basic classification (class relations) is transmitted and acquired by codes that differentially, invidiously, and oppositionally, position subjects with respect to both discursive and physical resources. Whether gender, ethnic, or religious categories (or any combination) are considered, it is held that these, today, speak through class-regulated modes, and it is the manner of the reproduction of the latter that has been the concern of this paper." (1990:47)

Contrasting with Bernstein's framework (1990), it may be that not only does gender 'speak' through class, but that class 'speaks' simultaneously through gender. It may be when both the distinctions and blurring of diffuse boundaries in education are highlighted that such complex interconnections of categories of relations, within and between sets of institutions, can be explained. Again, analysis of vocational education may provide relevant data expressing these complexities of boundaries. For example, this area of education is set apart from other education in its concentration in colleges of further education. This boundary facilitates a general low level of ranking for vocational courses within the hierarchies of education. Yet some vocational courses require applicants to have obtained a university degree before applying for entry, while for other courses there are no formal entry qualifications. These varied selection mechanisms also operate within specific vocational areas such as secretarial education (see Chapter

IV). The legitimacy of variations in the hierarchical structure of vocational education needs to be problematized, to question whether this structure facilitates concomitant ranking of the student graduates within production. If the subtle gradations have a bearing on both class and gender relations, then they may help to explain how class acts within gendered sectors of education and labour and how differential gender relations can have class consequences. Such analysis may simultaneously indicate the importance of connections between vocational education and production to exploring the informing and moving together, in reciprocal articulation, of class and gender relations.

Problematizing connections between class and gender relations may highlight cultural ambiguities, as well as social complexities, of the procedures and practices of education, in addition to tensions and anomalies in the links between education and production. These may constitute part of the cultural realities of students and staff. In contrast to existing methods, understanding of such complexities may be developed by including, as a central issue of any method, analysis of substantive expressions of these forms of social differentiation.

Giroux (1981 and 1983) focusses on tensions and anomalies of social processes. However, he does not address the particular meanings about class and gender inequalities reproduced in specific educational contexts. In other words, his method excludes the analytic dimension of ideological effects of class and/or gender reproduction. Nevertheless, he emphasises complexities of contradictory practices in which schools legitimize and reproduce the social relations of production. He suggests that contradictions illuminate the manner in which both teachers and taught often reject, renegotiate and resist the dominant messages of schooling. He presents this point forcefully in his criticisms of other education theories:

"There is little understanding of the contradictions and social spaces that promote oppositional tendencies and behaviour in schools . . . Students and teachers do not simply comply with the oppressive features of schooling . . . in some cases both groups resist; in some cases they modify school practices. In no sense do teachers and students uniformly function in schools as simply the passive reflects of the logic of capital. In other words, these

radical accounts fail to understand that while schools serve the interests of capitalism they also serve other interests as well, some of which are in opposition to the economic order and the needs of the dominant society." (1983:58)

Had Giroux gone on to give more detailed consideration to the 'other interests' which support dominant interests, he might have examined gender relations. However, he fails to give any special attention to gender issues. Furthermore, he neglects the analytic dimension of ideological effects in which gender relations of education may blur or highlight the apparent contradictions between the class relations of education and production which he identifies.

Developing Giroux's analysis, Sharp and Green (1975) concentrate their analysis of 'child centred progressive' primary education on the ideological effects contained particularly in the reproduction of class relations. Their analysis indicates that the meanings and understandings about social structures, expressed consciously by teachers, may add to, and further complicate, those contradictory practices explained by Giroux (1981 and 1983) as reproducing and legitimating capitalist class relations. For example, Sharp and Green maintain that:

"the character of interaction and the perspectives of the actors involved may camouflage the real structure of relationships in which groups are embedded. Whilst educators and parents may view the educational system as the locale where talent is developed and individual needs responded to, its 'real' function may be very different and related more to the social demands of established interests in the macro structure than to the requirements of individual pupils". (1975:324)

In their analysis, Sharp and Green state that they examine the ways in which macro level structural 'forces' (1975:vii) influence classroom practice, but their discussion tends to concentrate on the reproduction, in education, of capitalist class relations. In this respect, they imply the dominance of class relations over other forms of social differentiation. For example, when arguing that social control in the school involved the initiation of teachers and pupils into appropriate attitudes and modes of action, as well as the operation of constraint against those who challenged established interests, they go on to say:

"Such processes are typical of the way in which ideological legitimation of the stratification system is articulated" (my emphasis) (1975:221).

Sharp and Green provide virtually no analysis of, for example, the reproduction of gender relations in education. Yet their data reveals some of the complications for, for example, teachers in reproducing, perhaps unconsciously, both systems of social differentiation. For example, the classrooms they observed contained both boys and girls and they noted that Mary was close to 'the teacher's conception of the ideal pupil' (1975:154). Sharp and Green neglect analysis of this apparent contradiction of patriarchal relations in which it would be supposed that a boy pupil would be at the top of the social hierarchy which differentiates between pupils.

Occasionally, then, when cataloguing inequalities, class theorists make the addition of gender to the class category, but almost as an afterthought. Analysis of patriarchal relations does not therefore generally constitute an analytic dimension of these methods. The conceptual tools of the literature on class-in-education can be helpful when analysing gender inequalities. Nevertheless most existing analyses apparently consider that no special attention needs to be given to the issue, nor connections made between class and gender relations.

### CONCLUSIONS

To a very large extent existing methods of class and/or gender analysis focus on the characteristics of class and gender relations separately in their abstract dimensions. That is, they tend to focus on the general principles underlying these social relations, rather than detailed examination of their various forms of realization. The tendency is to explain the aggregates, trends, averages of systems of social inequalities, particularly in respect of 'women's work and education'. Important problems surface from this uni-dimensional structural focus. These problems are contained in similarities and distinctions between expressions of class, and between expressions of gender relations which,

as has been argued, may nevertheless constitute their respective broad structures. For example, it may be the case that specific material expressions of class and gender relations do not, contrary to the implications of many existing methods, mirror in every detail the aggregates and trends of domination as constituted in coherencies with the generic rules of these sets of social relations.

Extended and systematic analysis of specific expressions of class and of gender relations is largely ignored in existing methods. Yet in this analytic dimension of class and gender relations tensions, ambiguities and anomalies, as well as coherencies, may come to light between material expressions of class and gender relations and their respective underlying principles. The major problem, which arises when critically discussing existing methods, is that these perspectives tend to explain reproduction of class and of gender relations only in terms of coherencies within categories of relations and in the 'fitting together' of different relations. They provide little analytic space for identifying, or understanding as possibly part of the process of reproduction, ambiguities, tensions and anomalies between and within systems of social inequalities.

It has been argued in this chapter that incoherencies as well as coherencies, within and between class and gender relations, demand explanation. Furthermore, it has been argued that the anomalies, tensions and ambiguities which comprise these incoherencies may, in part, constitute connections between class and gender relations. They may, in addition, contribute towards accounts of reproduction of social structures as being contained in dynamic, dialectic processes. This discussion has, therefore, joined with, and underlined, current discourse which calls for more detailed analysis of interconnections between class and gender relations. At the same time, critical discussion of both existing methods as well as methods implicit in the debates on class and gender interconnections, has pointed to various possible components of a method of articulation which would redirect and move beyond current discourse.

The overriding problem, then, which surfaces from critical exploration of existing class and gender analyses, concerns the forms that the structure of class relations and the structure of gender relations take

in these methods. Gender analyses generally confine analysis to exploring coherent instances of women's patriarchal subordination. The simple structural form, and mode of reproduction, of gender relations, implicit in these frameworks, remains unproblematic by virtue of the restrictions that this methodological stance places on their analyses of expressions of women's subordination to men. In essence, they neglect examination of the relations between women, and consequently the different forms of gender relations experienced by different classes of women. Discussion in this chapter has indicated the possibility of a complex structural form of patriarchy, constituted in coherencies, incoherencies, contradictions and tensions between the generic principles and expressive dimension of gender relations.

The differential distribution of power amongst women, may, then, be a feature of the different forms of patriarchal subordination that women experience. However, gender relations, in their global dimension differentiate between men and women, rather than between women and women. Therefore, this differential distribution of power between women cannot be the exclusive preserve of gender relations. It is at this stage of analysis that methods which isolate gender (or class) relations become particularly problematic. In other words, the complex structural form of patriarchy may neither come to light nor be understood, unless the method adopted includes simultaneous examination of another system of social differentiation. In turn, the informing, shaping and moving together of class and gender relations, constituting a possible further category of relations, may not come to light until the framework adopted incorporates the possible complexities of each set of relations. In other words, the model which is being suggested needs to allow that class relations, in part, constitute the structure of gender relations and vice versa. This indicates a distinct move beyond a dualistic perspective on connections between class and gender relations which relies on an assumed partnership, rather than interconstitution of these relations.

Existing class analyses adopt diverse perspectives to interpret these relations. They include some of the complex structural forms, in their

class methods, which are being suggested as appropriate tools for analysing patriarchal relations. Nevertheless class analysts may be misrecognising or not recognising some particular forms within the complexities of class relations, inasmuch as they tend to disregard detailed analysis of gender relations. For example, their methods do not allow for the part played by different forms of patriarchal subordination in possibly allocating different shares of class power amongst women.

Two vital potential components, of a method of articulation of class and gender relations, have been illuminated during this discussion. These are: a complex structural form of patriarchal relations, and a complex structural form of class relations. At the same time, it has been suggested that exploration of these complexities may only be developed when taking simultaneous account of both class relations and gender relations. In short, gender differences between women appear paradoxical and an analytic illogicality, without reference to another form of social differentiation, such as class relations. On the other hand, class differences between women remain largely unexplored in existing class analyses. In addition, class analysts tend to overlook gendered class differences between the same class level of men and women. Class analyses are, therefore, severely restricted by their limited references to gender relations.

Indications that the proposed complex structural forms of class relations and of gender relations cannot be sustained without simultaneously referring to both systems of social inequalities automatically implies connections between these relations. That is, this argument is emphasising initially the complex coherencies and incoherencies within both class relations and gender relations. The argument then runs that these complexities may not emerge in analysis until a method is developed which examines connections between class and gender relations. In turn, it has been suggested that the connections between these relations may reside in the patterning of different forms of class relations with different forms of gender relations, which, in turn, constitute the complexities of class relations and the

complexities of gender relations. In other words, there may be a systematic coincidence of certain forms of patriarchal subordination/superordination with certain forms of gender subordination/superordination. This would indicate that the complex structural form of patriarchy is, in part, constituted in the structure of class relations and vice versa. That is, class and gender relations may reciprocally shape, form and inform each other's structure, constituting a pattern of specific gender/class forms. These prior assumptions, which underpin the model of articulation to be developed, necessarily move this analysis beyond the unproblematic coherent reproduction of class and of gender relations which inheres in most dualists' approaches on connections between class and gender relations.

The task remains of developing a specific model of analysis for class and gender articulation which would address the substantive and analytic problems raised in this critical examination of existing class and gender perspectives on production and on education. The aim of the next chapter is to propose a method of articulation which can then be used, in following chapters, to interpret expressions of class and gender relations, and their inter-connections, in secretarial production and secretarial education.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ARTICULATION OF CLASS AND GENDER RELATIONS:

#### A METHOD

##### INTRODUCTION

Attention now turns to building the expanded framework of analysis suggested during critical discussion of existing class and/or gender analyses in the previous chapter. A method of articulation is proposed in this chapter. This method centres on the forming, informing, shaping and moving together of class and gender relations. Put another way, the method explores the articulation of these relations with each other. In contrast to uni-focal and dualist methods of mainstream debates, this method focusses on the coherencies, incoherencies, tensions and anomalies both within and also between class and gender relations. The method indicates that complex forms of class relations and of gender relations come to light as a result of analysis of the meshing together of these two analytically separable sets of relations.

The analytic perspective, which is discussed in this chapter, seeks to provide explanations for anomalies, tensions and contradictions within both class and gender relations and in the 'fitting together' of these relations, in addition to the continuities explained by existing methods. In this respect the proposed model takes up the issue of analytically distinguishable dimensions of categories of relations, constituted on the one hand by the structures of class and of gender

relations and, on the other hand, by substantive moments of the realization of these relations. The framework goes on to explore the possible interconstitution of these analytic dimensions both within each category of relations and between these relations. This leaves space for a shift in analysis, from current assumptions as to the comparatively simple structures of class and of gender relations, towards more complex forms of these relations. The emergent pattern, constituted by points of interconstitution of class with gender relations, is examined. This indicates the possibility of a distinctive category of relations, constituted by class relations and gender relations. In constructing the framework of articulation in this chapter, this distinctive set of class/gender relations 'emerges' particularly clearly when exploring the relations between sets of social institutions, such as school and work.

The proposed method is based on a structuration process perspective (Giddens 1979 and 1984). That approach centres on reproduction of social systems in terms of their constitution, reconstitution and reconfiguration. As such, the underlying structuration approach of the proposed model restricts analysis to reproduction of class and gender relations, rather than to their possible re-structuration or de-structuration. At the same time, and in sharp contrast to dualistic approaches, structuration theory (Giddens 1979, 1984) stresses the fluidity of structural forms. This focusses the proposed model onto the complexities of class and gender relations, which, as discussed in Chapter I, may develop our understanding of connections between these sets of relations.

In structuration perspectives the concept of 'duality of structure' is adopted, which emphasises that:

"structure is reconstituted in each instance where a pervasive and enduring procedure is reproduced" (Cohen 1989:46)

The interconstitution of human agency and structure is central to the notion of 'duality of structure'. In this respect, attention is drawn to reconfiguration, as well as to unproblematic reproduction, of social systems. That is, it is not assumed that reproduction is guaranteed, inasmuch as human agency always entails the possibility of acting to subvert or challenge this reproduction. Nevertheless, in so far as existing discourse has yet to explore re-structuration or de-structuration processes, implicit in the current concept of

structuration is the assumption that such challenges contribute towards reproduction of social systems.

A structuration approach takes into account structural constraints, which limit choices for action. It takes simultaneous account of conscious understanding and critical interpretations of social inequalities by subordinate groups, which, in part, guide their action and reaction to dominant forces. Development of a structuration perspective, in the proposed method of articulation, stems primarily from exploring the constitution, in part, of one category of relations by another category of relations. This perspective differs in some important respects from Giddens' original structuration theory (1979, 1984). For example, here the proposed method of articulation conceives of shifts, movements and amendments - that is, reconstitution, reconfiguration and redirection - of one particular category of relations as, in part, a possible outcome of its being shaped by another category of social relations. In other words, the constitution, reconstitution, reconfiguration, redirection, of a particular system of social inequalities may, in part, be contained in its connections with another system of social inequalities, as it is realized in the interconstitution of human agency and structure within a category of relations. In contrast, as later discussion will indicate, Giddens (1979, 1984) confines his notion of agency to social praxis and human agency, rather than structures. In short, he does not allow for the possibility that, say, reconfiguration of a particular set of relations may assist reproduction, or indeed redirection, of another, connected, set of relations.

The framework which is discussed attempts to take simultaneous account of both class and gender relations. It poses problems emphasising the very complexity of the mechanisms which link class and gender relations within and between sets of institutions. Examples of women's education and labour processes are posited as representing the appearance of puzzling characteristics (in terms of uni-focal and dualist methods) of class and gender forms. A method of articulation is developed, which seeks to shed light on these 'puzzling' phenomena by exploring a set of social relations founded upon the dynamic fusion of class and gender relations. In so doing, it moves beyond 'dualism', by examining reproduction as a characteristic of the patterning of coherencies, incoherencies and

anomalies, between and within class and gender relations, as distinct from the simple coherencies upon which dualists tend to rely to explain processes of reproduction. This method problematizes, for example, substantive expressions of patriarchy which, at one and the same time, cohere with and contradict the basic principles of this form of social differentiation. For instance, it explores, say, a woman teacher's labour process and explains that her patriarchal subordination to a male headteacher coheres with the general rules of patriarchy. At the same time, her patriarchal subordination is part of a process by which she gains class control over lower ranking men and women's labour processes, which functions to contradict these same principles of patriarchy. A model is presented which traces the origins and consequences of such complex analytic features of substantive expressions of class and of gender relations. This model centres on the possible pathways of interlinkage, constituting the interconstitution of class and gender relations, where the one power structure acts on and through the other power structure and vice versa.

## 1. A METHOD OF ARTICULATION

### 1.1 DEVELOPING A STRUCTURATION PERSPECTIVE

The model of class and gender articulation, presented in the next section, is derived from, but also develops, a structuration perspective (Giddens 1979 and 1984). The structuration framework of this model tries to explore the articulation of class and gender relations - that is the forming, shaping, informing and moving together of these relations - by centring on the interconstitution of analytically distinctive dimensions of these relations. In this model the terms 'culture' and 'structure' are used to label two of these analytic dimensions of social relations. The same terminology is frequently adopted in existing methods. However, in developing an alternative approach, to that of most existing methods, the concepts implicit in this usage of 'culture' and 'structure' differ in several ways from those implicit in conventional usage. To expand upon these differences, and to discuss the structuration approach underlying the proposed method of articulation, then, in the first place, the concepts inherent in the more common usage of 'culture' and

'structure' are discussed. Discussion then proceeds to the concepts implicit in their usage in this method of articulation.

It was noted in the last chapter that in many analyses, which focus on class and/or gender relations, explanations centre on a high level of abstraction. When dualists, for example, emphasise the generic principles of class and of gender relations they automatically focus on the force of structures of capitalist and male domination in shaping, for instance, the experiences of women at work. That is, they tend to adopt a structuralist approach. In his critique of structuralism, Giroux states the issue well:

". . . in the structuralist perspective human agents are registered simply as the effect of structural determinants that appear to work with the certainty of biological processes. In this grimly mechanistic approach, human subjects simply act as role-bearers, constrained by the mediation of structures like schools and responding primarily to an ideology that functions without the benefit of reflexivity or change." (1983:136)

Giddens rejects structuralist approaches on similar grounds:

"some very prominent schools of social theory, associated mainly with objectivism and with 'structural sociology' . . . have supposed that constraints operate like forces in nature, as if to 'have no choice' were equivalent to being driven irresistibly and uncomprehendingly by mechanical pressures." (1984:15)

Distinctly similar effects of their own structuralist perspectives, to those described by Giroux and Giddens, are visible in dualist approaches to understanding class and gender connections. For example, dualists do not generally examine in detail whether women workers' human agency, guided by critical views on their experiences, has repercussions for forms of class and of patriarchal domination. The active participation of, for instance, women workers in reproducing and perhaps amending, class and gender relations, and the relations between them, is largely omitted from dualists' frameworks. The predominantly structuralist approach, used by dualists, tends to suggest that the experiences, awareness and actions of women at work are predetermined, predictable, and that reproduction of class and of gender relations is guaranteed and adequately explained in terms of the constraints imposed by, and constituted in patterns of, male and capitalist domination. Implicit in dualists' usage of the term 'structure' is, then, the notion that patriarchal and capitalist domination can simply be 'added together' as, apparently, the sole determinants of women's conditions, experiences and actions.

One of the major problems associated with dualist methods is that they provide scant leverage on explaining differences and similarities between particular moments of either class or gender power, as constituted for example in different women's labour processes. Indeed, these render extremely problematic dualists' assertions that coherencies within and between class and gender relations constitute their respective modes of reproduction. Power here has to do with boundaries, constituting class and gender formations, which in practice limit choices concerned with both material conditions and options for action. However, even subordinate groups, while probably severely restricted in their range of options, have some power since they are necessary participants in relations of domination and subordination. Inherent in the concept of structure in dualist approaches is a denial of the potential power, although severely limited, of subordinate groups to change forms of class and gender relations. In contrast, the term 'structure' is used, in the proposed method of articulation, in a fashion which acknowledges the opportunities for action, although unequal and thereby constituting relations which are likely to be fraught with tension, of both dominant and subordinate class and gender groups. 'Structure' is used in this method to refer to the forms created by substantive instances of class and of gender relations. These substantive instances include contradictions, tensions, ambiguities, incoherencies and coherencies with the generic principles of class and of gender relations. As such the usage of 'structure' does not imply the absolute domination of male and capitalist forces in all instances of social relations, nor the total impotence of subordinate groups, as sometimes suggested by structuralist approaches. Instead, and in line with a structuration approach, the proposed method:

"resists the polarities of both a thoroughgoing determinism and unqualified freedom while preserving all possibilities between these polar extremes" (Cohen 1989:26)

While dualists generally centre on a structuralist understanding of class and gender relations, underpinned by a focus on the broad principles underlying these social relations, they sometimes refer to the practical realization of these social relations. For example, many refer to practical expressions of class relations when they state that 'women's jobs' are characterized by low pay, low status, low skill, insecurity (Gardiner 1975, Bruegel 1982). However, such examples of

the realization of class and gender relations make reference to depersonalised, empty places of production, in line with dualists' structuralist stance. Their analyses of the realization of class and gender relations do not shed light on the active participation, by the occupants of these production places, in shaping their own particular relations of production. All too frequently, then, dualist analyses exemplify Giroux's critical assessment of structuralist approaches:

" . . . domination appears in structuralist accounts as an all embracing, one-dimensional construct that exhausts the possibility of struggle, resistance, and transformation. The moments of self-reflection, active participation in the structure of domination, or conscious refusal are not only played down, they are virtually ignored." (1983:137)

Paralleling Giroux's criticism, and suggesting a move away from essentially structuralist approaches to understanding class and gender interconnections, Pringle points out that:

"Class is more than a collection of occupational groupings or of individuals with a shared rank in a distribution of specified goodies. If we shift the emphasis from classificatory exercises to look at meaning and experience, then questions about people's social origins, their families, lifestyles, culture and consciousness, come into the picture. The meanings of terms like working and middle class change constantly . . ." (1988:199)

One of the major problems with dualist analyses is, then, that they have tended to marginalize consciousness and human agency. In effect they have taken little heed of the insights into class and gender relations, and their interconnections, afforded by culturalist approaches.

Implicit in the usage of the term 'culture' in culturalist perspectives is the primacy of experience, awareness, meaning, consciousness and human agency. In essence culturalist approaches highlight the opportunities for action, although unequal, of subordinate groups.

Giroux again puts the case well:

" . . . (one) assumption underlying the culturalist perspective (is) their strong emphasis on the importance of human agency and experience as the fundamental theoretical cornerstone of social and class analysis." (1983:126)

He goes on to explain:

"The nature of class domination is viewed not as a static, one-dimensional imposition of power by ruling classes. Instead, ruling-class domination is seen as an exercise of power that takes

place within an arena of struggle . . . struggles between dominant and subordinated classes, while taking place in conditions that favor the ruling class interests, are never tied to the logic of predetermined consequences." (1983:127)

The stable, uncomplicated, coherent continuities within class and within gender relations, and in the 'fitting together' of these relations, asserted or implied by dualists, results mainly from not addressing systematically issues such as human agency and experience. As such they leave unproblematized the simple structural forms, and unproblematic coherent reproduction, of class and of gender relations built into their methods. In addition, there is scant analytic space in these methods for exploring the reconfiguration of class or of gender relations. It may be that these issues are virtually ignored because dualists generally focus on a high level of abstraction and tend not to problematize fully the realization of these categories of relations. In turn, as a consequence of this focus, dualists tend to polarise and prioritize the mutuality of class and gender relations and leave largely untouched any contradictions, ambiguities and tensions between and within these relations. Indeed, this emphasis on the mutuality of class and gender relations is incongruous in the face of many feminist methodologies (see Chapter I) which assume the dominance of patriarchy over class relations.

The method of articulation, discussed in the following section, seeks to explore and to explain more complex patterned forms of both class and gender relations compared with dualists' assumptions about the forms of these relations. This method explores structural inequalities within one category of relations as possibly playing a role in reproducing or amending the structural inequalities of another form of social differentiation. However, the method of articulation which is proposed does not favour either a structuralist or culturalist approach. Neither does it posit a classist or patriarchal priority. Instead it takes as its base, and develops, a structuration perspective (Giddens 1979 and 1984). Giddens begins his theory of structuration by explaining:

"The concept of structuration involves that of the duality of structure, which relates to the fundamentally recursive character of social life, and expresses the mutual dependence of structure and agency. By duality of structure I mean that the structural

properties of social systems are both the medium and the outcome of practices that constitute those systems." (1979:69)

When analysis adopts a structuration perspective then the common intention is to take account of both the largely non-conscious structural constraints which limit the available options for particular action, say of subordinate groups, (though true of superordination, too), as well as the subjective consciousness about conditions of inequality which, in part, 'informs' human action. As Giddens (1979) indicates, a central focus of structuration is the interdependence of agency and structure in which these analytic dimensions of social relations mutually constitute each other. This approach explores material experiences of social inequalities as both the expression of structural constraints as well as the outcome of actions based partly on subjective interpretation of experiences of inequality. In this respect, Cohen explains that:

"Structuration theory's emphasis upon praxis involves a 'decentering' of the subject in favour of a concern for the nature and consequences of the activities in which social actors engage during their participation in day to day life". (1989:11)

In a structuration framework agency and structure are analysed, then, as being in reciprocal 'articulation'. The one presupposes the other and they are in a relationship of constant inter-determinancy. That is, 'structuration' explores the fitting, shaping and moving together (the inter-relations) of structure and agency as a possible property of the reproduction, or 'recursivity' of social systems. However, the problem which surfaces here concerns the possibility that the structuration process of a particular category of relations could result in coherencies, incoherencies and tensions in respect of its 'fitting together' with a different category of relations. This problem is largely ignored in existing discussions on structuration (Giddens 1979, 1984, Cohen 1989) by virtue of their focus on developing concepts, ideas, an ontology, of the constitution of social life. In other words, structuration discourse concentrates on assumptions which inform analytic models rather than the adoption of any such model to explore specific categories, components or contexts of social life. For example, Cohen points out that:

"Structuration theory is designed to address a set of issues that arise before decisions are made on the kinds of knowledge it is

appropriate to pursue . . . at the start of their work most social scientists already have made certain assumptions of an ontological nature about the social world which shape their epistemological and methodological decisions as well as their definitions of empirical problems." (1989:1-2)

The aim of this section is to discuss the possible use of key insights, concepts and ideas, provided by the structuration discourse, in constructing a particular method of articulation in the following section. However, issues arise when attempting to build a specific model of analysis which indicate possible contradictions between the assumptions made in respect of this model and those considered by Giddens (1979, 1984) as appropriate to a structuration perspective. For example, the issue of possible tensions, contradictions, anomalies and coherencies between sets of relations is not addressed, and appears to be rejected in the standpoints of structuration theory. On the other hand Hearn and Morgan, for example, indicate the possible importance of tensions and anomalies, as well as continuities, between and within sets of relations, when they state that:

"a critical examination of the distinction between agency and structure may be necessary in order to develop further the critical analyses of masculinities and of the diversity of men's responses, including the ways in which some men are themselves beginning to provide (for) a critique of the gender order of which they themselves are a part." (1990:13)

In attempting a distinct shift beyond, in particular, dualistic interpretations of reproduction of class and gender relations, some elements of the proposed model of articulation draw upon assumptions about the constitution of social categories, which differ from Giddens' (1979, 1984) basic concepts about the constitution of social life. On the other hand, other elements of this model confirm and use the concepts developed in structuration theory (Giddens 1979, 1984, Cohen 1989). For example, in line with a structuration perspective, one aspect of the method of articulation, developed in the next section, explores how power works on human action. Another aspect, although not constituting its initial focus, explores how power works through human action. The structuration approach of the framework of articulation completes the circle of analysis by exploring how, when power works through human action, even within the constraints contained in power working on human action, there is the potential for change to the forms that power structures take.

In sharp contrast to dualistic analysis, but in line with structuration theory, constitution, reconstitution, redirection and reconfiguration of

class and of gender relations are inherent analytic themes of the proposed method. Central to the concept of, say, reconfiguration, used in the proposed model, is the view that class and gender by no means function harmoniously alongside each other, as suggested in 'dualism'. On the very contrary, they forge ambiguities, tensions, contradictions, as well as certainties and continuities, within and between these systems of relations. If this is indeed the case, then this view displaces the underlying assumptions of 'dualism', since these provide neither the analytic tools for illuminating these complexities, nor any means of exploring their position in respect of the reproduction of social systems. For example, the structuration framework opens space for exploring, in a very different way from any dualistic approach, the constant supervision of pool typists as constraints imposed through the structure of class domination. When these typists find ways of circumventing this tight control, by, for example, reading magazines hidden in desk drawers (see Chapter III), they demonstrate actions which appear to move the boundary 'goalposts' imposed by dominant capitalist forces. However, in effect their actions only superficially amend the practical constraints that dominant class forces seek to impose on them. That is, 'in reality' the typists' actions realize the reconstitution of class relations rather than their redirection. Basically, this aspect of analysis highlights the two-sided nature of power in class relations. For instance, these secretarial women retain some sense of power in spite of the limitations on their range of options for action especially in respect of concerted actions to change structures.

Adoption of the framework of structuration means, then, interpretation of both material conditions, human consciousness and action, and also the consequences of human action on the structures which constrain and partly define its context as patterns of opportunities to act. That is, in line with structuration theory, this perspective views social relations as a process rather than a static system of domination. Reproduction of social systems is emphasised and is conceived in terms of the 'making', 'remaking' and 'reshaping' of structures. Indeed, this is the basic benchmark which distinguishes the proposed model from, and moves analysis beyond, dualistic approaches. Furthermore, the proposed perspective discourages the hypostatisation of abstract forces (Cohen 1989:17). That is, it challenges the implications of structuralist approaches which endow structures with a

status apart from the activities that are subject to its influence (Cohen 1989:71). In other words, a basic tenet of a structuration perspective is that material existence and causal agency are not ascribed to analytic abstractions, such as structures, or to class or gender categories. Giddens reinforces this point (as well as the conceptual embracing of reproduction in structuration theory) when he states:

"the essential recursiveness of social life (is) constituted in social practices: structure is both medium and outcome of the reproduction of practices." (1979:15)

And Cohen underlines Giddens' views on the hypostatization of structures and a need for methods which centralise human action:

"The routine repetitions of institutionalised modes of interaction between agents is not something apart from the patterns they form; it is the very stuff of which these patterns are made." (1989:77)

Identifying and explaining human action and reaction as a primary force in the patterning of social relations between dominant and subordinate groups, in line with the conventions of structuration theory, focusses on reproduction and does so in terms of the fluid properties of constantly shifting and reshaping social relations. However, the method of articulation, which is developed in the next section, begins to redirect structuration perspectives when it explores the issue that in the very acting out of social relations, 'emergent' patterns, constituted by the coincidence of certain forms of class power and certain forms of gender power, may be constituted, reconstituted and reshaped.

The proposed method of articulation builds upon a structuration perspective by incorporating its basic themes into exploring interconnections between class and gender relations. However, one problem which surfaces stems from the fact that structuration theory deals with an ontology of social life as a whole<sup>(1)</sup>. When using this perspective for substantive exploration, analytic abstractions from this social totality are a prerequisite to defining the practical problems to be explored. In this regard, the proposed method of articulation defines its area of concern as class relations and gender relations. That is, in line with structuration discourse, it assumes the reproduction of both sets of social relations. Indeed, the basic problematic, upon which this method of articulation focusses, is whether class relations make a systematic difference to the forms of gender relations assumed in existing frameworks, and whether gender relations make a systematic difference to the

forms of class relations they posit. In other words, contrasting with Giddens' (1979, 1984) basic concepts of structuration, this method does not centre initially on human agency to explore constitution, reconstitution, or shifts and amendments, of a particular category of relations. On the contrary, it starts by presupposing that human beings act out relations which are patterned both in the form of 'economic' relations and in the form of relations between men and women<sup>(2)</sup>. This proposed method then proceeds by redefining (in comparison with existing analyses of these relations) those actions and social interactions which may count as constituents of class relations and of gender relations. In so doing, it problematizes existing definitions of the form and content of both of these structures. That is, emphasis is given, in the first instance, to exploring the structural forms of class relations and of gender relations. However, this emphasis on 'structures' does not imply their hypostatization. In contrast, class and gender structures are taken to be analytic abstractions which can only 'exist' in terms of the various human actions and interactions which are identified and in which they are constituted. In this sense, then, this approach is consistent with Giddens' (1979, 1984) claims that structuration theory centralises social praxis and human agency.

As a result of its prior assumption about the possible need to redefine class<sup>(3)</sup> and gender actions and social interactions, the proposed model of articulation focusses on the coherencies, incoherencies and tensions within class and within gender relations. These are conceived in terms of the outcome of the shaping and moving together of these two systems. That is, even at the initial stage of the proposed method, this approach indicates a redirection of those configurations, of class and of gender relations, commonly assumed in 'dualism'.

This analysis transforms and transcends existing dualists' methods by developing its own particular structuration approach. That is, it displaces dualists' assumed simple structural forms of class relations and of gender relations, and their assumed unproblematic reproduction of these relations. The fundamental development, in respect of the structuration framework, arises from examining whether the structuration process of a particular form of social differentiation may, in part, be understood as the outcome of its inter-connections with another category of relations. That is, developing Giddens (1979, 1984), the interconstitution of agency and

structure may not be the only constituent of constitution, reconstitution and reconfiguration of a set of relations. Thus, the form of a particular system of social relations may, in part, be constituted and reconstituted in its interconstitution with another system of social relations. These inter-connections may constitute a particular mode of agency, referred to in this method as 'structural agency'. Put another way, the structure of social inequality of one form of social differentiation may act both on and through the structure of social inequality of another form of social differentiation. The problem here, of course, is that, as discussed earlier, Giddens (1979, 1984) attributes causal agency only to human beings and disclaims any such causal efficacy for structures. To clarify how a perspective which adopts concepts from structuration theory can concurrently conceive of structural properties which are rejected in this same theory, then, in the first place, the concept of structural agency will be discussed more fully.

Structural agency, as used in the proposed model, assumes that in specific material instances of the imposition of constraints onto subordinate groups by, say, the structure of dominant male forces, those constraints may be shaped by the concurrent constraints of, say, the structure of capitalist dominant forces. Furthermore, if there is a pattern, contained in different instances of structural agency, the interaction of class and gender relations may constitute a further category of relations. For example, a female doctor's actions may be constrained in terms of her patriarchal subordination to a male hospital consultant or registrar. That is, there are probable differences in the class experiences of male and female doctors, by virtue of the gender distinction, in spite of their apparent common class position. At the same time, this moment of patriarchal relations is likely to be very different, in material form, from, for example, the patriarchal subordination experienced by a woman hospital cleaner or nurse. The different class positions of the woman cleaner, nurse, and doctor, and, therefore, these women's differential constitution in class relations, would indicate another component of the patterning of variations in class and variations in gender experiences, as expressed in these labour processes.

The illustrations of material instances of class relations and of gender relations, discussed above, indicate that class relations are, in part,

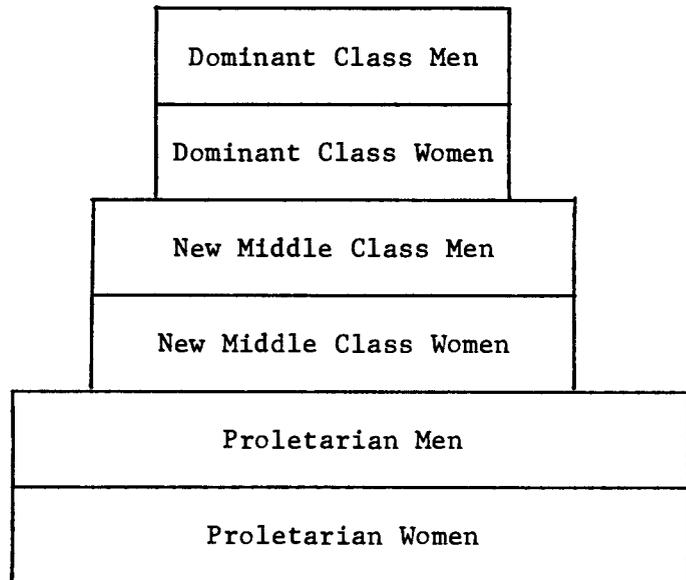
constituted in substantive instances of gender relations. For example, class relations between the woman doctor and woman hospital cleaner are, in part, constituted in these women's different experiences of patriarchal subordination. In addition, and in a similar fashion, gender relations are, in part, constituted in substantive instances of class relations. This would mean that the structure of class relations, for instance, is an analytic category which is comprised of more than substantive instances of class actions and interactions. In other words, a complex form of relations is posited inasmuch as this structure is constituted not solely in material expressions of class relations, but also in material expressions of gender relations. Put another way, the form that class relations take is more than the sum of material instances of these relations. In a similar way, the proposed model of articulation conceives of the possibility that the structural form of gender relations is constituted not only in material expressions of these relations but also in material expressions of class relations. This represents a further advance on 'dualism' inasmuch as dualistic models view class as being constituted solely in material expressions of these relations, and gender relations solely in material expressions of this system of social differentiation.

The complex forms of class relations and of gender relations are viewed, in the proposed model of articulation, as the patterning of different moments of structural agency between class relations and gender relations. Moreover, this indicates an 'emergent' form of relations, constituted by class relations and gender relations. This emergent form is referred to, in the articulation model, as class/gender relations. These relations are constituted in the patterning of points of interconstitution of class relations with gender relations. These relations constitute an emergent form inasmuch as the resultant overall pattern, constituting class/gender relations, is more than the sum of the component parts, namely class relations and gender relations. In effect, class/gender relations are characterised by classed gender relations and simultaneous gendered class relations. In consequence, the unequal distribution of power, in respect of class/gender relations, takes the basic form shown in the following model:

Figure 1

FORM OF CLASS/GENDER RELATIONS

High Degree of Power



Low Degree of Power

In contrast to Figure 1 above, a dualistic model would place all women at the base of this pyramidal structure. The model above surfaces when analysis assumes the possibilities of both 'structural agency' between class relations and gender relations, as well as of an 'emergent' form of relations. However, among the precepts of structuration theory is the rejection of both 'structural agency' and 'emergence'. Cohen, for instance, disallows the possibility of any 'agency' for 'structures' when he states:

"In the first place, structural properties of systems never exist all at once, but instead continually disappear and reappear through the ongoing course of system reproduction. In the second place, structural properties . . . do not retain any powers of agency".  
(1989:202)

Regarding 'emergent properties of structures', he contends that:

"structuration theory has a non-emergent view of social patterns."  
(1989:90)

His arguments supporting the exclusion of 'emergence' from structuration theory include:

"the problem is (that when) the existence of influential emergent properties is postulated . . . no mention is made of the process

through which emergence occurs . . . This absence of an account of processes, means, or mechanisms through which emergent properties are generated (means that) as matters stand, in most accounts the properties of morphological patterns seem to emerge out of thin air" (1989:73).

However, the argument, which is being mounted in this section, attempts to maintain that the concepts of structural agency and emergent properties, as adopted in the proposed articulation model, are entirely consistent with its underlying structuration approach. In the first place, the complex forms of class and of gender structures, which are explored, are not objectified and attributed causal properties in themselves. Rather they are conceived entirely in terms of various material instances of actions and social interactions. These patterns of actions and social interactions constitute complex forms of class and of gender relations primarily in comparison with existing explanations of their structural forms. That is, the very processes and material conditions which constitute these complex forms are explored. In turn, these complex forms of class and of gender relations are viewed as the outcome of the patterning of different instances of structural agency between these relations. However, structural agency is used as a concept with analytic validity rather than material, causal validity. That is, instances of structural agency are at all times explored in terms of the human actions and interactions in which they are constituted. It is, for example, assumed that gender specific actions and social interactions, in part, constitute the structural form of class relations. Human agency is, thereby, not denied by the notion of structural agency which is adopted.

The patterning of particular material instances of class relations with particular material instances of gender relations indicates a further category of relations. This class/gender set of relations 'emerges' from the material interaction of the two forms and comes to light as a result of analysis of the complexities of these structural forms. The very patterning of material moments of class and material moments of gender actions and social interactions suggests that the share of power inscribed in any particular, say, labour process cannot be accounted for by simply 'adding together' the inherent class constraints and gender constraints. Put another way, class and gender articulation constitutes

an emergent further system of relations inasmuch as class is 'gendered' and gender is 'classed', which gives rise to a specific, distinctive, pattern of power distribution (see Figure 1 above).

By returning to the theme of reconfiguration as a property of reproduction of sets of relations, central to structuration theory and constituting a fundamental advance on 'dualism', this adds weight to the contention that structural agency and emergence are appropriate methodological concepts for developing a model of class and gender articulation. For example, most analyses explain changes and amendments to the pattern of unequal distribution of power, within the category of relations upon which they focus, in terms of the human agency of subordinate groups. Edwards (1979), for example, highlights the conscious awareness and actions of subordinate class groups when he states:

". . . the task of extracting labor from workers who have no direct stake in profits remains to be carried out in the workplace itself. Conflict arises over how work shall be organized, what work pace shall be established, what conditions producers must labor under, what rights workers shall enjoy and how the various employees of the enterprise shall relate to each other. The workplace becomes a battleground, as employers attempt to extract the maximum effort from workers and workers necessarily resist their bosses' impositions." (1979:13)

Such analyses neglect to consider in detail the outcome of such conflict. That is, they do not address changes and alterations within, for instance, class relations, as possibly constituting a reconstitution of, say, class relations. In contrast, and in shifting distinctly beyond dualistic interpretations of coherent, unproblematic, reproduction, the structuration approach of the proposed method of articulation attempts to preserve analysis of alterations within power structures as potentially reproducing, while redirecting, that system of social differentiation. However, at the same time, implicit in the method of articulation developed in the next section, is an amendment of Giddens' (1979, 1984) structuration theory. This development concerns structuration theory's possible partiality of explanation, when its concepts are adopted in substantive explorations, of both the source and outcome of shifts and movements within prespecified relations. In essence, and contrasting with structuration theory, the concept of structural agency suggests that there may be outcomes of human agency in respect of a specific form of social differentiation,

not only in terms of the 'making' and 'remaking', in a structuration process, of that particularised set of relations, but of another, connected, set of relations.

If, in human agency, 'human' refers to consciousness and 'agency' to a potential force for change, then in 'structural agency', 'structure' refers to the pattern of instances of subordination and domination and 'agency' to a potential force for change to structures of social differentiation, constituted in dynamic movements within these patterned forms. In this concept of structural agency clearly the pattern of domination and subordination of, say, class relations cannot be a force for change within this category of relations, but only in its interconnections with another form of social differentiation. In the proposed method of articulation, then, the concept of structural agency explores causal connections, grounded in social praxis, between, say, class and gender relations, for their respective forms of domination and subordination. In other words it explores the pattern of domination and subordination of the one as influencing the pattern of domination and subordination of the other and vice versa. Such structural agency would reside in the extra-conscious dimension of social relations upon which structuralist analyses focus.

The method of articulation, to be developed, conceives that in instances of structural agency class and gender relations shape each other's structure of power, which, in turn, constitute complex forms of class relations and of gender relations. This potential shaping of class and gender by each other is central to the notion of articulation adopted in the model proposed in the next section. In contrast, Giddens (1979, 1984) adopts the term 'articulation' to refer only to linkages rather than the inter-constitution, that is, the moving together, shaping, forming or informing, of different actions and social interactions. For example, Cohen maintains that in structuration theory:

"the way in which various types of interaction are linked or articulated across space and time in diverse locales takes on considerable importance." (1989:93)

Using 'articulation' in this sense implies smooth, unproblematic linkages. This appears to rule out incoherencies, tensions,

contradictions, as constituents of this process of linkage. In contrast, in the proposed model of articulation, it is assumed that 'linkages', in this case between specific categories of relations, may give rise to tensions, incoherencies, as well as coherencies, within and between these relations. In other words, Giddens' concept of articulation differs from that adopted in the following model of articulation, since he views 'articulation' as 'binding' interactions "through which the institutional articulation of system occurs across the 'deepest' reaches of time-space" (Giddens 1984:185).

Although concentrating initially on structural agency, as indicated in earlier discussion, the proposed method of articulation does not neglect human agency. Indeed it explores human agency, in the realities of practical limitations on and opportunities for resistance, acquiescence, accommodation or acceptance of forms of domination, as being an integral and necessary component of structural agency. That is, it explores structural agency as working on and through human agency. In this sense, along with Giddens' structuration theory, social praxis is a central assumption. At the same time, the concept of structural agency remains the core issue in developing this method's structuration approach. This redirected structuration perspective seeks explanations for problems about class and gender relations posed, for example, by Pringle:

"Classes are always already gendered while men and women experience their gender in class terms. We need therefore to situate class in the context of patriarchal relations. It is as if there were not one set of class relations but two, superimposed on each other and obviously meshing. More is involved here than acknowledging that there are divisions within classes." (1988:199-200)

In line with Pringle's assertion, the proposed method of articulation seeks 'to situate class in the context of patriarchal relations'. However, it develops Pringle's position by simultaneously situating patriarchy in the context of class relations. In so doing, it brings to the fore a complex of incoherencies and coherencies, between and within class and gender relations, and explores these as aspects of the reproduction of these social systems. When, as in Pringle's assertions, dualists prioritise either set of relations, these possibly complex features of reproduction, of class and of gender relations, remain firmly outside their analytic parameters.

To some extent Giddens' (1979, 1984) structuration theory comprises a synthesis of structuralist and culturalist approaches. That is, he highlights a concept of 'structure' of, say, capitalist class relations, which centres on the dominant class forces which constrain a subordinate class group's experiences and opportunities for action. He concurrently highlights a concept of 'culture' of, say, this category of relations, which focusses on consciousness, action and human agency, particularly of subordinate groups, in shaping social relations. However, when adopting the concept of structural agency, in this redirected structuration approach which underpins the proposed method of articulation, the terms 'culture' and 'structure' are not used in these now conventional senses.

It has already been argued that 'structure', as used in the method developed in the next section, does not only refer to constraints, but also to the possibilities and opportunities for action by subordinate groups. The 'culture' or 'cultural dimension' of class and gender relations means, in the proposed method of articulation, substantive expressions of these forms of social differentiation. 'Culture' here is concerned with exploring and contrasting different structural moments of the global principles of class and gender relations. In the proposed method of articulation space is allowed, rather than, as in dualistic models, being denied, for the possibility that in the very contrasts and similarities between different structural moments, substantive expressions of class and of gender may, apparently paradoxically, contradict the generic principles of their respective relations. For example, a woman solicitor may be subordinate to a dominant class male, who is a partner in this legal firm, which coheres with the basic rules of patriarchy. At the same time, she exercises control over, for example, male clerks employed in this law practice, which contradicts these same principles of patriarchy. Analysis of this labour process constitutes exploring a 'structural moment' in that the analytic spotlight is on a specific material instance of the realization of class and/or gender relations.

The emergent dimensions of structural agency assume that there is 'something important' to reveal, which is indeed masked in dualistic approaches, about the fact that class and gender can act simultaneously, for example, on labour processes. That is, since the characteristics of

division of the one contrast distinctly with those of the other, this concurrence must mean that it is possible to identify tensions and ambiguities within each category of relations. For example, in areas such as education, the majority of classroom teachers are women, yet the majority of 'Heads' are men, promoted from the ranks of teachers. The patriarchy which surfaces, in the gender inequalities of this promotion process to 'Head', is in tension with the class equality between men and women employed as classroom teachers. Therefore, an inherent feature of structural agency must be complex forms of social relations, constituted in the coherencies, incoherencies, tensions, anomalies and contradictions within and between class and gender relations. These complexities come to light as a consequence of moving analysis beyond the coherencies, within categories of relations, implicit both in the common usage of 'structural expression' and also in the concepts adopted in 'dualism'.

The particularized usage of 'structure', 'culture' and 'structural agency' indicate that the fundamental issue of the method of articulation, developed in the following section, is exploration of a social totality which is complex. This complexity is implicit in exploring whether class and gender are significant in structurally constituting each other. The proposed model assumes that class and gender articulation may constitute a distinctive emergent category of relations, as constituted in specific instances of structural agency between them, which, in turn, is constituted in the interconstitution of their respective cultures and structures.

If class and gender systematically shape each other's structure, constituted by the patterning of different instances of structural agency, then a core issue of structuration theory, concerned with interdependencies between the analytic categories of culture and structure, arises in a more complex form. In the case of analysing inter-relations between two analytically separable categories of relations there are two identifiable cultures and structures to take into account. This development in a structuration perspective means that the proposed method of articulation explores whether the interconstitution of culture and structure resides not only within categories of relations but also between them. This would mean that, for example, the cultural or structural dimensions of class relations

may, in part, constitute the cultural or structural dimensions of gender relations and vice versa. In other words, this development in a structuration approach represents simultaneously an advance beyond 'dualism' in that it explores reproduction of a category of relations as, in part, being contained in the constitution, reconstitution or reconfiguration of another, analytically separable, category of relations. That is, even at its starting point, the proposed model displaces dualists' underlying views of reproduction as being contained only in coherencies between and within class and gender relations. The precise framework, which may assist understanding of the complex interconstitutions, discussed in this section, is now explored in respect of providing detailed account of the analytic dimensions of the proposed model of articulation.

## 1.2 A MODEL OF ARTICULATION

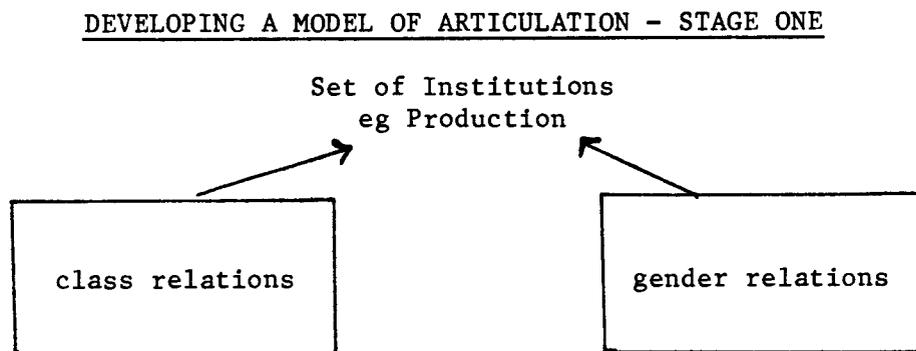
In this section a specific model is presented. It adopts the structuration perspective discussed in the previous section. In developing this model, a complicated matrix of the possible interconnections between class and gender relations is constructed. The model of articulation centres on the emergent properties of these interconnections when it draws together the resultant form of class relations with that of gender relations to explore whether a further distinctive form emerges. This emergent set of relations, founded upon the analytically separable categories of class and of gender relations, is labelled 'class/gender relations' in the model of articulation.

Uni-focal and dualist methods tend to omit or prioritize either class relations or gender relations. However, as noted in Chapter I, class relations act directly upon, or are expressed in the actions of, all participants in the production process, both men and women. As many areas of production exhibit a gender exclusivity, gender relations enter the arena of production simultaneously with class relations.

Furthermore, in occupations where both men and women are employed, horizontal and vertical gender divisions limit women's promotional prospects to the highest grades (Crompton and Jones 1984). The relations of production of all labour processes are likely to express, then, both class and gender relations. In other words, it is unlikely

that the relations of any labour process can be understood, sociologically, exclusively or primarily by either class or gender relations. Contrasting with uni-focal and dualist methods, therefore, a method of articulation attempts to take simultaneous account of both class and gender relations in order to specify and analyse their complex forms. The model below represents, then, this first component of a method of articulation:

FIGURE 2



Exploration of, say, the tasks and social relations of a specific labour process can illustrate the assertion that class and gender act simultaneously. For instance, some women in the health service are confined with other women to tasks such as cleaning hospital wards or serving teas to patients. They are cut off from direct contact with executive men, such as doctors and hospital managers, and from lower level men, such as porters. This, in part, expresses the subordination of women to men inherent in patriarchal relations. At the same time, their routine, repetitious and limited tasks express, in part, the proletarian characteristics of capitalist class relations. Analysis in this vein illuminates the practical constraints by which the pattern of domination and subordination of class and of gender function in this labour process. That is, features of labour processes such as fragmentation of tasks, remuneration, control over own and others' labour process, physical conditions, responsibilities, constitute instances of the realization of systems of social differentiation. They represent the class and gender constraints imposed on the actions of, for example, women at work. As discussed in the previous section, this expressive dimension of class and gender relations is referred to, in

the proposed method of articulation, as the cultural dimension of these forms of social differentiation.

Both class and gender uni-focal analyses, which focus on the production process, often explain that women are allocated to jobs with proletarian characteristics (eg Braverman 1974). Brief analysis of female hospital cleaners' labour process above appears, at first sight, not to disrupt either of these uni-focal perspectives. This is because, in these women's labour process, there appear to be coherent continuities between the cultural dimension of class and of gender and the respective structural principles underlying these relations. In addition, there appears to be coherence between the classed and gendered social positions of these women hospital cleaners. On the other hand, not all women at work in the health service are hospital cleaners. Some, for instance, are ward sisters. The question arises, then, as to whether and how class and gender function in this latter stratum of the health service. For example, the ward sister is in direct daily contact with dominant class male doctors or hospital registrars, with whom the ward cleaners have no direct contact. This suggests differences from the women cleaners in the ward sister's experiences of gender relations. In addition the ward sister undertakes a variety of tasks and has responsibilities, including control over her own and others' labour processes, which are missing from the ward cleaners' labour process. This suggests differences in their respective experiences of class relations and possible real tensions in experience. For example, the ward sister may be conscious of ambiguities constituted in her class and gender experiences. For instance, she exercises a high degree of class control over the medical and routine functions of her ward, but when the doctor 'makes his round' she has, partly in terms of her patriarchal subordination, to defer to his decisions. On the other hand, the highly ritualised culture of hospital life may displace this tension expressed in the class and gender social positions of the ward sister.

In contrast to analysis of women hospital cleaners' labour process, when analysing the ward sister's labour process, there does appear to be some, though small, disruption of uni-focal and dualist analyses of the

production process. This disruption stems essentially from identification of contradictions between and within class and gender relations. For example, the ward sister may only be subordinate to men from the dominant class. For instance, she exercises control over male hospital porters<sup>(4)</sup>. Given the 'normality' of women's subordination to men, male porters may resent and resist the ward sister exercising control over their labour process. In other words, this control is an expression of class relations which functions to contradict the basic principles of the male/female dichotomy underlying patriarchal relations. On the other hand, her class power over lower level male porters, female cleaners, male and female nurses, may be closely associated with her patriarchal subordination to a male doctor. The ward sister and the male doctor or hospital manager all have enhanced class power vis à vis low level hospital workers, but it is distinguished along the gender divide.

The gendering of class relations, between the ward sister and male doctor or hospital manager, and consequent possible distinctions in their class power, may produce tensions in the relations between this man and woman. On the other hand, these tensions may be displaced by humour in their necessary face-to-face social interactions 'on the ward', as well as by ritualised gender segregation of the occupations of nurse and doctor. In essence, relations between the ward sister and male doctor may constitute a material tension with the basic rules of capitalist class relations since, viewed in isolation, these are indifferent to gender distinctions. In other words, women's gender subordination to men within the same class grouping may constitute a reconfiguration of that form of class relations assumed in many existing analyses, in that it introduces differences in class power between the same class level of men and women. For example, the class power, inherent in the ward sister's labour process, is diminished in comparison with that of male doctors by virtue of her gender subordination to these men. Yet, such gender subordination/superordination, within each class grouping, lies outside that configuration of class relations assumed in many uni-focal and dualist methods of analysis.

Uni-focal and dualist methods tend to identify and explain only coherencies between and within class and gender relations (see Chapter I). They do not provide the analytic tools for either exploring or explaining tensions and anomalies, like those identified when analysing, say, the ward sister's labour process. Comparisons between the material forms of male and capitalist domination in the labour processes of different categories of, say, women hospital workers suggests that these systems of social differentiation may be more complex than suggested in uni-focal and dualist perspectives. In other words, a prior analysis of the cultural dimension of class and gender relations may result in different explanations of the structural forms of these categories of relations from methods which omit detailed examination of this functioning of class and of gender relations.

On the grounds of the arguments above, analysis of the cultural dimension of class and gender relations is a central focus of a method of articulation. This constitutes a distinct methodological departure from 'dualism' since in dualistic approaches close scrutiny of instances of the realization of class and gender relations is virtually ignored. However, brief examples, of analysis of hospital labour processes above, illustrate that it is only when comparing at least two labour processes, that, for instance, the high class power of the ward sister, in comparison with women hospital cleaners, nurses and male hospital porters, and that the differences in the ways in which women hospital workers are constituted in patriarchal relations, come to light. Each labour process constitutes a structural moment in both class and gender relations, in that each expresses constraints imposed by the structure of dominant forces of both forms of social relations. On the other hand, there are both similarities and differences, in the material forms of class and gender domination, within these labour processes. The realization of these differences and similarities, constituted in the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations, can only surface when at least two structural moments are explored through analysis of simultaneous, but contextually distinctive (in terms, in this case, of different labour processes within the same sphere of production), substantive expressions of these systems of social differentiation. Indeed, such analysis may be even more effective when incorporating additional labour processes. For example, the brief examples above, from hospital labour, suggest possibilities

for comparing gender and class similarities and distinctions, within and between, male and female doctors, male and female nurses, male porters and female cleaners.

In the context of analysis of the production process, it appears that, even in terms of a relatively simple two-way comparative model, the women hospital cleaners and ward sister's labour processes are examples of appropriate comparative structural moments for exploring class and gender articulation. In this comparative model, the gender specificity of the two labour processes suggests, at first sight, similarities in these health service women's experiences of gender relations, as well as coherence between the cultural and structural dimensions of patriarchy. That is, they are both located in a distinctly gender segregated occupation. At the same time, the sharp differences between their hierarchical ranking indicates distinctive class relations acting on each of these categories of hospital labour, suggesting coherencies between the cultural and structural dimensions of class relations.

Discussion above has argued that detailed scrutiny of gender segregated areas of production can reveal distinctions between women in terms of their gender experiences, as well as distinctions between them in their relations with their male class peers. These class and gender distinctions suggest that there may be a pattern in which certain moments of patriarchy coincide with certain moments of class relations. This may be the case not only in respect of the structure of the health service, but for other areas of production which exhibit gender segregation. For example, in large department stores women departmental manageresses or buyers have a higher degree of class power than women counter assistants<sup>(4)</sup>. However, the organizational structure of the reatall store may confer manageresses and buyers with high class power, in comparison with counter assistants, only in conjunction with women's patriarchal subordination to men. Indeed, a particular woman may become a manageress partly because she acts out gender relations between her and the floor manager or owner of the store in a different fashion from those between her and male counter assistants, handymen or storemen. Other women may, in contrast, be confined to the counter partly because

they are unaware of, or unwilling or unable to, act out their relations with men in this way. Criteria, such as professional qualifications and experience, will undoubtedly be adopted to allocate women (and men) to different hierarchical positions within the department store. Nevertheless, classed gender cultures may have a significant bearing, not only on the level of qualifications, education and experience previously obtained, but also on the 'appropriateness' of their attitudes towards and demeanors within class and gender differentiated relations of production. For example, the manageress may underline her own patriarchal subordination and confirm her relative high class power when, for example, she acts and reacts in a fashion which reinforces the patriarchal domination of, say, the floor manager or owner of the store. Put another way, the manageress's particular cultural form of patriarchy may specify her particular cultural form of class relations.

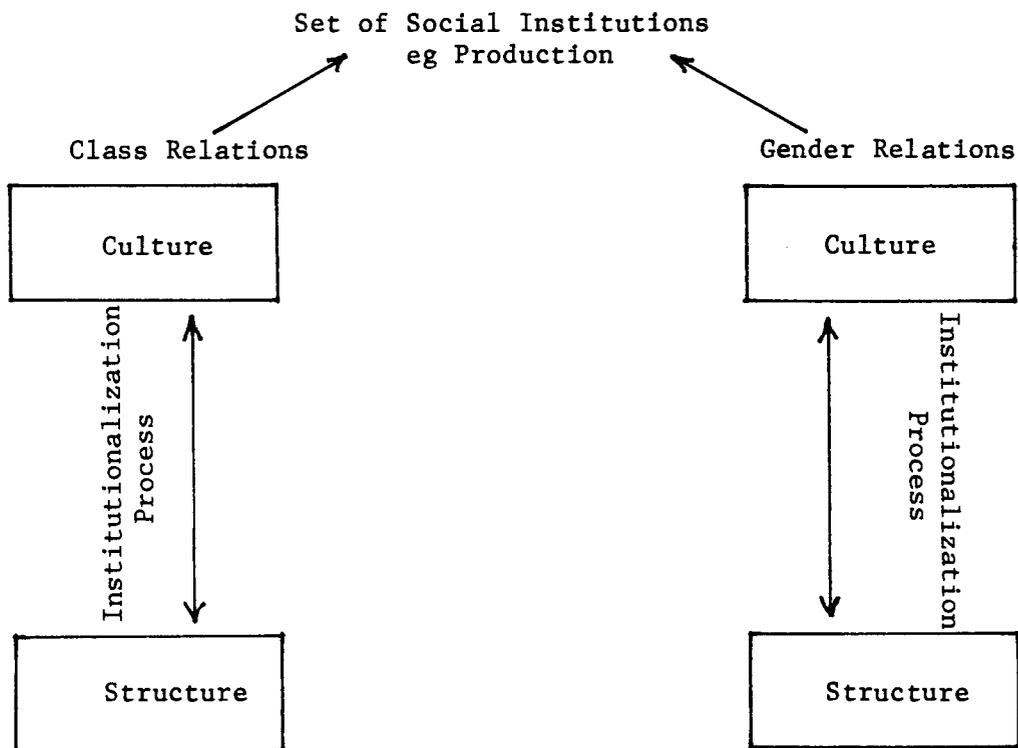
Taking another example, it may be, for instance, that the overt femininity inscribed in the air hostess's labour process specifies the cultural form of class relations in this labour process. That is, she may be conferred class control over, for example, airport women cleaners, ground hostesses and male baggage handlers partly because she adheres to that cultural manifestation of patriarchy expressed in her explicit femininity. In other words, an institutional pattern associated with the cultural dimensions of class and of gender relations would suggest that these relations specify the form of realization of each other. Exploration of the systematic ordering and patterning, constituting this mutuality of class and gender relations, and identification of emergent properties of social relations at points of such articulation, should therefore be a component of a method of articulation.

This method of articulation assumes a basic structuration perspective particularly when analysing the interconstitution of the cultural and structural dimensions of class and of gender relations. It explores mechanisms by which analytically separate dimensions of systems of social differentiation, in part, constitute each other. Therefore the method of articulation needs to consider not only instances of the

cultural dimension of class and of gender relations, but also the pattern by which they constitute the structure of class and of gender relations. It is being suggested here that, in line with existing analyses of class and gender structuration, practical instances of class and of gender relations set up, in part, the form of their respective structures. This constitutes one element of an institutionalization process of these relations. In turn, the form of class relations and of gender relations, sets up pre-conditions for each cultural instance of these respective relations, constituting another part of the institutionalization process of sets of relations. In other words, the method of articulation includes analysis of the interconstitution of culture and structure within each category of relations as set out in the model below:

FIGURE 3

DEVELOPING A MODEL OF ARTICULATION - STAGE TWO



The term 'institutionalization process', figuring in the above model, refers to recurrent regularities, rather than uniformities. For example, it is assumed that the institutionalization process,

constituting the structural dimension of class and of gender relations, is contained in recursive, sustained sequences of social interactions rooted in economic relations and relations between men and women<sup>(2)</sup>. In line with the central concept of structuration, discussed earlier, this term presupposes and concentrates on, then, the reproduction of each of these sets of relations. In other words, as Cohen maintains, reproduced practices exhibit a certain degree of consistency that allows them to be conceived as institutionalized regularities (1989:39). On the other hand, the practices which constitute the form of these institutionalized regularities are not necessarily uniform across different contexts or historical moments. An indefinite variety of actions and social interactions, differentiated according to specific social situations or time, constituting the cultural dimensions of class or gender relations, may, in turn, constitute the institutionalization process of both of these relations.

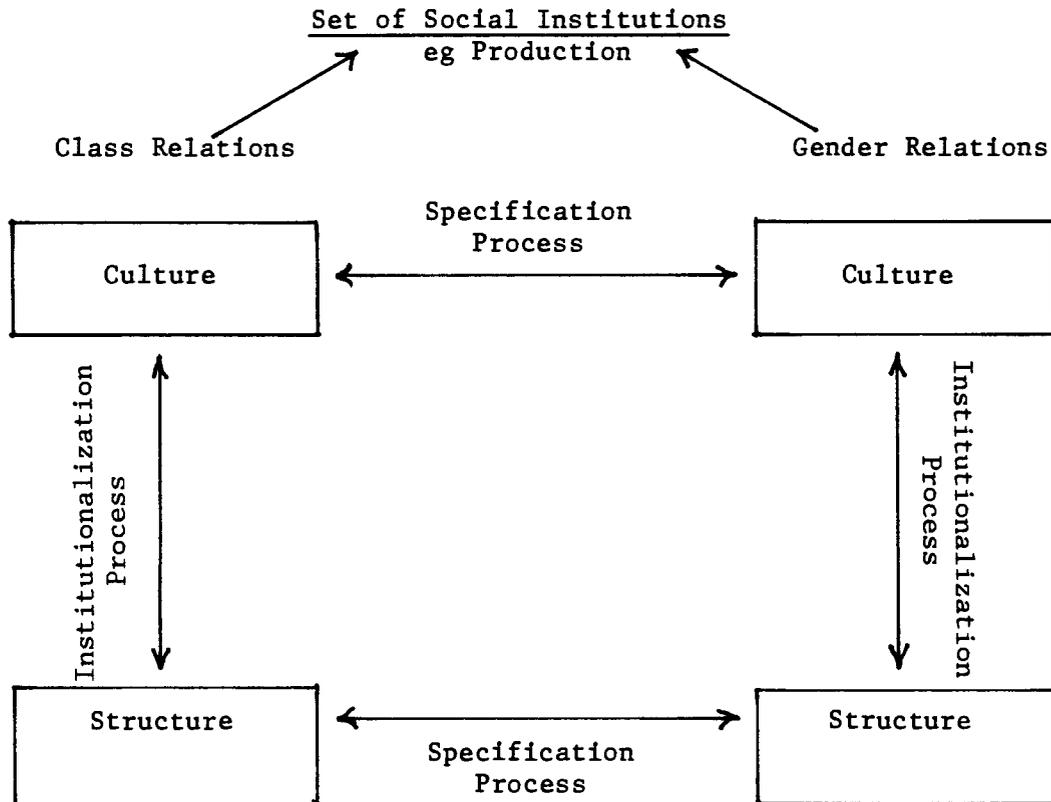
It was argued in the previous section that dualist and uni-focal methods are often classified as structuralist analyses. That is, they tend to allocate primacy to the structure of dominant forces of men and capitalists in explaining these categories of relations. It is important to make clear, then, that, while the method of articulation may also ultimately be classified as structural analysis, it does not focus exclusively on the structural dimensions of class and gender relations. In other words, it does not ignore social praxis, nor does it centre exclusively on the constraints on action which inhere in, for instance, women's labour processes. It is a structural analysis only inasmuch as it is concerned with identifying and explaining any systematic patterned forms constituted in the 'fitting together' of class and gender relations. For example, expressions of class and gender relations in two structural moments within the health service, within air transport and within retail labour were referred to above. They constitute analysis of the cultural dimension of articulation since contradictions and coherencies between the analytic dimensions of one category of relations inform contradictions and coherencies between the analytic dimensions of the other category of relations. In other words, they constitute specific instances of structural agency. But the patterning, contained in this cultural dimension, need not, at this

stage of analysis, take up the issue of consciousness and actions of, for example, women at work. Culture here is not therefore being used in its conventional activist sense to highlight awareness and human agency as the prime force in shaping social relations.

Articulation is, in part, then, about the form constituted by the links and insulations, contained in the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations. Another element of this pattern is the interconstitution of the structural dimensions of these relations. This discussion has come to the point of suggesting analysis of the interconstitution of the cultural dimension of class relations and the cultural dimension of gender relations; and also analysis of the interconstitution of the structural dimension of class relations and the structural dimension of gender relations. That is, a particular cultural expression of class relations may, in part, specify a particular cultural expression of gender relations and vice versa. And a particular structural form of class relations may specify a particular structural form of gender relations and vice versa. In other words, inter-connections between the cultural dimension of class relations and of gender relations constitute part of a specification process. In addition, inter-connections between the structural dimensions of class relations and of gender relations constitute another element of a specification process. In short, additional connections, between these two analytically separable dimensions and categories of relations are now entering the model of analysis, as shown when comparing Figure 3 above with Figure 4 below:

FIGURE 4

DEVELOPING A MODEL OF ARTICULATION - STAGE THREE



The problem of explaining the specification process of the structural dimensions of class and gender relations can be addressed, in line with structuration theory (Giddens 1979, 1984), by returning to the cultural dimension of these forms of relations. For example, as will be discussed below, in the catering industry the labour processes of both 'scullery hands' women and women cooks contain expressions of class and of gender relations. They must both, therefore, logically exhibit coherencies between the respective cultural and generic principles dimensions of each category of relations. In other words, they constitute structural moments inasmuch as they manifest constraints imposed by the structural forces of gender and class. On the other hand, they each concurrently manifest contradictions, tensions and anomalies between their respective cultural and generic principles dimensions. For example, anomalies, between cultural and underlying

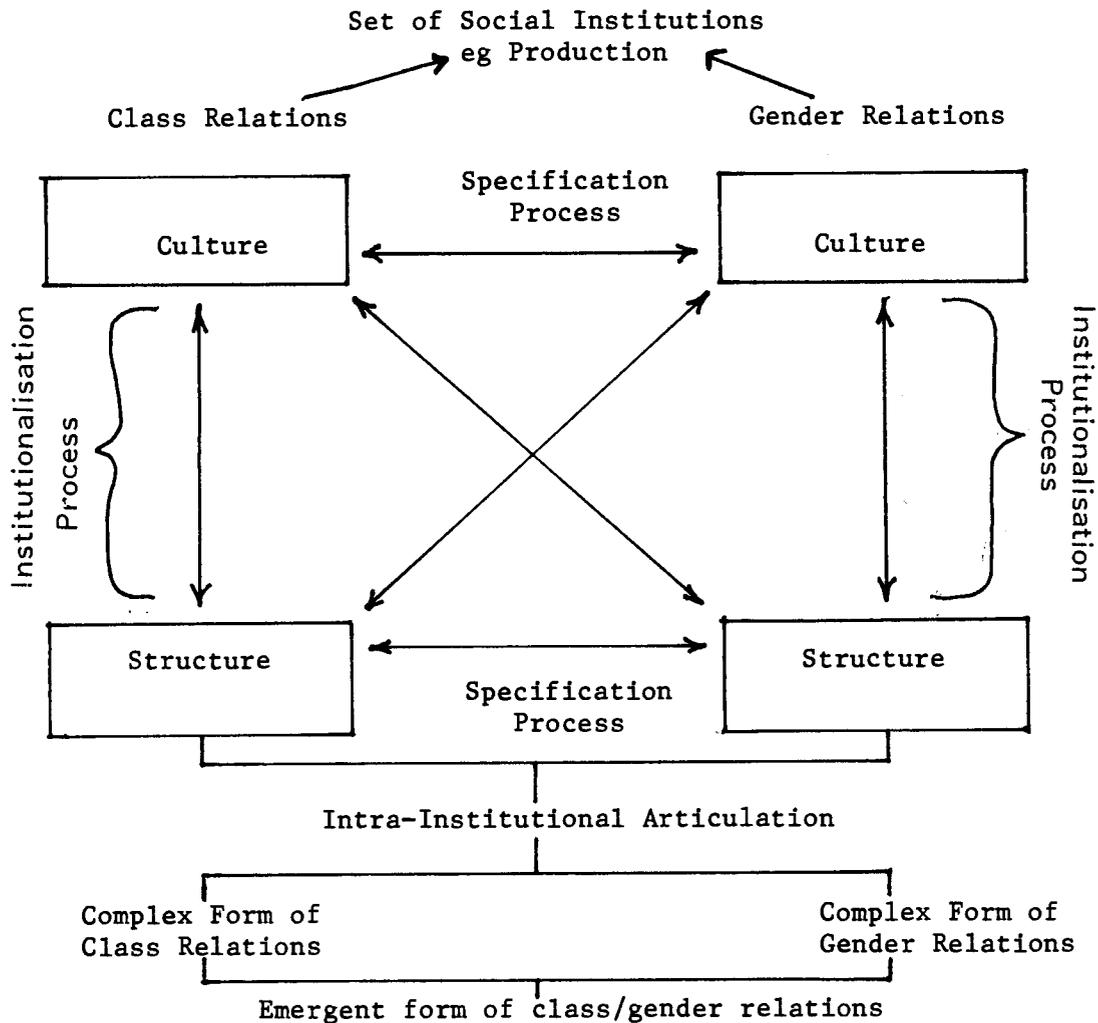
principles dimensions of patriarchy, are contained in the woman cook's subordination to the maître d' by virtue of the class control she acquires, over, say, women 'scullery hands'. The women 'washers up' in the scullery have little direct contact with the maître d', while the cook is in daily contact with him. In other words, these women are not uniformly subordinate to male domination. This anomaly within patriarchy may only become visible when the form that patriarchy takes in this cook's labour process is contrasted with the form that patriarchy takes in the 'scullery' women's labour process. However, this substantive instance of an anomaly with the general principles of patriarchy links with the structure of class relations. In effect, in the case of catering labour, this example of an incoherence within patriarchy helps to reinforce class distinctions between women catering workers. In other words, it constitutes part of the structuration process of class relations within the catering industry's management structure. In short, class relations, in this case between women in the catering industry, are in part constituted in distinctions between their gender experiences. These distinctive expressions of gender relations are part of the recursive actions and social interactions which form the pattern of, or institutionalize, class relations. That is, part of the institutionalization process of the structural form of class relations is contained in cultural instances of gender relations. In turn, the structural form of class relations is part of an institutionalization process of the cultural dimension of gender relations.

It follows from the discussion above that another part of the institutionalization process of class and gender relations concerns inter-connections between the cultural dimension of class relations and the structural dimension of gender relations and vice versa. Therefore another element of a method of articulation should be analysis of the interconstitution of the cultural dimension of patriarchy and the structure of class relations and vice versa. This aspect of the institutionalization process of class relations and of gender relations constitutes further analytic connections to be incorporated into the developing model of articulation. Identification of this complex institutionalization process indicates that the form of class relations

may specify the form of gender relations and vice versa. Together, these analytic processes provide an account of the complex structural forms of class relations and of gender relations, as constituted, in turn, in the articulation of these relations within a set of social institutions. These are complex forms of these relations inasmuch as each comprises more than the sum of their respective separate cultural parts of class or of gender relations. In turn, a patterned form may come to light, constituted in the coincidence of specific instances of class relations and specific instances of gender relations. Such a pattern was indicated earlier when discussing, for example, the female cook, ward sister, store manageress, and air hostess's labour process. This very patterning would suggest a further emergent form of relations, which is more than the sum of class relations and gender relations. Therefore the model is now developed to that shown below:

FIGURE 5

DEVELOPING A MODEL OF ARTICULATION - STAGE FOUR



Development of a model of articulation, to this stage, has indicated the complexities of the structure of class relations and of gender relations. Discussion now turns to the issue of explaining the coherencies, anomalies, tensions, incoherencies, which comprise the complexity of a specific form of social differentiation. For example, from discussion of the ward sister, air hostess, store manageress, and woman cook's relations of production, it appears that anomalies within patriarchy buttress, and help to reproduce, the basic structure of class relations. In itself this is an important development in analysis

because such contradictions tend to render uni-focal and dualist methods incoherent. Nevertheless more detailed investigation of this aspect of interconstitution, that is between cultural and structural dimensions of different forms of social differentiation, raises further problems. For instance, taking the examples from catering labour cited above, when analysing the cultural dimension of class relations in these labour processes, there are also apparent anomalies, as well as coherencies, within class relations. That is, the discussion earlier suggested that incoherencies within gender relations help to institutionalize coherent instances of the underlying principles of class relations. At the same time in this current discussion it is now suggested that the particular cultural moments of class domination, constituting distinguishing features between catering women's labour processes, can simultaneously be incoherent with the basic principles of this class structure. This incoherence within class relations is exhibited in the gendered class distinctions between, for instance, 'scullery' women and male kitchen porters, as well as between women cooks and maîtres d'. Because this aspect of analysis centres on exploring the practical applications of systems of social differentiation, it constitutes analysis of the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations. However, in contrast to the earlier examples of analysis of this cultural dimension (see Figure 4), in this instance the focus is on connections between and across the cultural and structural dimensions of class and of gender relations (see Figure 5).

The issues discussed above are contained in the cultural dimension of class and gender relations. They are also part of the problem of the interconstitution of the cultural dimensions of class and of gender relations with their respective structural dimension. That is, the cultural dimensions of class and of gender relations manifest incoherencies, as well as coherencies, with their respective underlying principles, which discussion earlier has suggested are components of the structural forms of each of these relations. For example, it was suggested earlier that incoherencies within a category of relations could be explained as constituting an aspect of coherencies within another, connected, category of relations. From the brief analyses of

various labour processes above has surfaced a notion of the complicated inter- and intra-connecting links between and within class and gender relations. This complex web of interconnections between systems of social inequality (see Figure 5) must constitute a core problem which is to be taken up in a method of articulation. This discussion has also suggested that class and gender relations may not only mutually specify each other. In addition to this mutuality, social actions and interactions, constituted in a particular set of relations, may also form, shape and amend the configuration of another structure of power at any instant. That is, each substantive instance of this reciprocal shaping constitutes structural agency. Any patterning of such substantive instances of structural agency constitutes articulation. As a result, analysis of the mechanisms which link the cultural dimensions of class or gender relations, within and across their structural dimensions, may indicate reconstitution or reshaping of both sets of relations, which, in any such cases, constitutes structural agency. However, once again we must point out that structural agency does not hypostatise these structures, since in all cases the shaping and informing of class and gender relations, by each other, is grounded in social praxis.

It has been argued, then, that the articulation of class and gender relations is, in part, contained in one practical instance of structural agency, which itself is constituted in social actions and interactions which comprise the interconstitution of the cultural and structural dimensions of either category of relations. However, earlier developments in this method of articulation have argued that at least two such structural moments must be explored. By comparing analysis of cultural and structural interdependencies manifested in, say, the woman cook's labour process with similar analysis of, say, the 'scullery' women's labour process, similarities and distinctions in instances of structural agency, contained in the linkage between cultural and structural dimensions of forms of social differentiation, may come to light. For example, catering labour is organized into gendered hierarchies. In spite of this gender specificity, however, earlier discussion indicated that the 'scullery' women's form of patriarchy may

cut them off from their male class peers. In contrast, that of the cook may provide an associative class bonding between her and the male restaurant manager in comparison with class cleavages between the scullery women and this restaurant manager. This element of analysis compares the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations at two structural moments constituting, in part, the specification process between these relations. It then focusses on the patterning of the interconstitution of culture and structure within and across class and gender relations constituting, in part, the institutionalization process within and between these relations. That is, it explores the recurrent regularities of practices within and between class and gender relations. This emergent pattern constitutes a specification process between the structural dimensions of class and of gender relations which is, in turn, constituted by different instances of structural agency.

One element of the possible form, created by drawing together the pattern of class relations with the pattern of gender relations, is constituted, then, in the ways in which particular instances of the cultural dimensions of class and gender relations connect with the structural dimensions of these social relations. These connections constitute, at one and the same time, coherencies and incoherencies within class and within gender relations. These, in turn, point to the very complexities comprising the configuration of class relations and the configuration of gender relations. Again in turn, the systematicism implicit in any patterned form, contained in the contrasts and similarities of different structural moments of structural agency, would imply a further set of relations constituted by these analytically separable forms and dimensions of class and gender relations.

The very complexity entailed in the simultaneous reinforcing of the basic principles of class and gender and contradicting of these principles, suggests that class and gender articulation is about more than the one contributing to unproblematic reproduction of the other. Rather, it seems to be more about the mutual reconstitution and reshaping of sets of relations, which could constitute their reproduction, reconfiguration or redirection. For example, the apparent

disadvantages of the overt patriarchal subordination of the ward sister must be set against her class advantages over women hospital cleaners. For instance, in gender terms the ward sister appears to be highly constrained in her actions by the control exercised over her labour process by male doctors. On the other hand, in class terms she exercises a high degree of control over male and female nurses, porters, cleaners' labour processes. Viewed in isolation one from the other, sharply contrasting assessments would surface in respect of the power and control inherent in the ward sister's labour process. The contrasts between class focussed and gender focussed assessments of the power and control inherent in a given labour process, such as that of the ward sister, and that assessment made through an articulation perspective suggest that a method of articulation is about the emergent properties of the mechanisms which connect class and gender to each other. These emergent properties can be explored by analysing moments of power which cannot be explained by isolating and confining analysis to a specific coherent instance of class relations and a specific coherent instance of gender relations.

It is being suggested, then, that cultural moments of power reside in the complex interconstitutions between and within the cultural and structural dimensions of class and of gender relations. For example, it is possible that the female cook manipulates a complex working situation in which she has sufficient power to supervise male waiters, probably more power over female scullery hands and male kitchen porters. At the same time, she is supervised by and probably takes orders from the male maître d'. Such moments of power can be viewed as both the medium and outcome of class and gender articulation. The specificities of power at any particular moment are dependent on the shaping, moving and informing of class and gender relations by each other. In turn, this specificity of power may help to shape the specificity of power at another structural moment. In other words, there may be a class/gender form to different moments of power (see Figure 1, Section 1.1 above). In addition, as moments of power illuminate options for action of, say, occupants of production places, they shed light on both complex structural constraints as well as on the human agency analytic

dimensions included in structuration theory (Giddens 1979, 1984, Cohen 1989). However, in this method of articulation, human agency is analysed as the medium and outcome of emergent patterns of structural agency, rather than the medium and outcome of the structural pattern of domination and subordination written into one particular form of social differentiation, such as class or gender relations.

When referring earlier to the moment of power contained in the woman cook's labour process, it was suggested that class and gender articulate to shape amendments in each other, which present an overall share, or specific moment, of power. It was suggested that the cultural specificities of class and of gender involved in this overall share of power, represent, in part, tensions and anomalies with their respective generic principles. This structural shaping of specific class and of specific gender inequalities, within a cultural moment of power, suggests that the advantages accruing from the one form of social differentiation may offset the disadvantages accruing from the other. For example, a woman may be conscious of her own particularized direct patriarchal subordination to a male boss, but she may understand this to be part of a process by which she is conferred with class advantages over other women and some men. Her class position is, from the viewpoint of lower level men and women, legitimated by her patriarchal subordination. In short, she and others may understand that, in terms of her overall share of power, her particular patriarchal subordination is offset (in her consciousness) by her class advantages over other women and some men. That is, the interconstitution of class and gender relations may legitimise, justify and contribute to reproduction of, or patterns of resistance to, the social inequalities inscribed in each set of relations. In other words, class and gender articulation may produce ideological effects. This ideological effects dimension, which is being proposed as a constituent of a method of articulation, may have implications for the conscious understanding and actions of, for example, participants in labour processes.

The concept of ideological effects, as adopted in this model of articulation, centres on the pattern of legitimating, obscuring and

highlighting, in any individual's consciousness, of the social inequalities of class and of gender relations. In other words, in line with structuration theory (Giddens 1979, 1984), it is used to explore social praxis. For example, an air hostess's high class power, in comparison with ground hostesses and airport cleaners, may mask the generic principles of patriarchy in which women are uniformly and universally subordinate to men. This material incoherence with the generic rules of patriarchy, exhibited in her labour process, may represent a shift in the structural form of patriarchy. However, at the same time, it may mean that this air hostess is unlikely to challenge or resist her patriarchal subordination to the male pilot and cabin crew, inasmuch as she is conscious of her distinct class advantages in respect of women airport cleaners and ground hostesses and unaware of any generalised subordination of women to men. In other words, the ideological effects dimension of class and gender articulation indicates that within the category of relations constituted by class and gender relations, there is the possibility that advances in overcoming the inequalities of either class or gender may be countermanded by shifts in the structure of power distribution of the other, connected, form of social differentiation, or, on the other hand, allow space for resistance and challenge.

So far, this discussion has argued for developing a method of articulation, which explores both the cultural and structural dimensions of class and gender relations within social spheres, such as the production process. To summarise this discussion it has been indicated that the four following analytic dimensions should be included in this method:

1. the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations
2. the structural dimension of class and of gender relations
3. connections between (1) and (2) constituting specifications of forms of class and of gender relations
4. specific moments of power within the connections between the complex forms of class and of gender relations.

When adopting each of the above analytic dimensions, which thus far make up a method of articulation, it has been indicated that, for example, within health care, air transport, retail and catering labour different women enjoy or suffer a greater or lesser overall degree of power from other class differentiated women in the same occupation. These examples from gender specific occupations have several common features. For instance, those women in the higher ranks of these occupations all appear to exhibit a specific cultural acumen. That is, ward sisters, female cooks, air hostesses, store manageresses, employ a mode of speech, dress, values, manners, which, while gendered, are associated with the middle or elite classes. In contrast, that of scullery hands, hospital and airport cleaners, shop assistants, while also gendered, appears to cohere with the range of cultural values associated with the proletarian class. It is possible that, as suggested by Bourdieu (1977) (see Chapter I) these gendered, class differentiated, cultures are developed in these women's family and educational backgrounds. These may contribute significantly towards their allocation to class differentiated places within gendered occupations and to their consequent different experiences of gender relations in the production context. In other words, the articulation of class and gender within sets of social institutions may be partly constituted in the relations between sets of social institutions. This issue needs, then, to be incorporated into the model which is being developed.

When exploring relations between sets of social institutions, the term 'institution' is used in a distinctly different way from earlier references to 'institutionalization processes'. At this juncture, sets of 'institutions' refers to organizational locales or social spheres, such as the domestic arena of family life, or production, or education. In contrast, 'institutionalization' was adopted earlier to mean the enduring repetitions of customary practices and routines. The issue now to be discussed is whether recurrent sequences of class and gender relations, and their interconnections, as constituted in institutionalized processes within sets of institutions, is, in part, also contained in the relations between sets of institutions. The

empirical focus of the developing model of articulation will, in this discussion, centre on the institutions of production and education.

Traditionally reproduction theories, such as those adopted for many analyses of education, have pointed to continuities between the forms of class and of gender domination in different social spheres (see Chapter I). However, earlier discussion indicated that incoherencies, as well as coherencies, within and between class and gender relations, are features of both reproduction and opportunities for resistance to both forms of differentiation. It is possible, then, that incoherencies as well as coherencies, within and between class and gender relations, across sets of institutions, may in part explain resistance to, as a feature of the reproduction of, these relations. In other words, a method of articulation would explore whether the relations between social spheres are more complex than suggested in many existing analyses of reproduction. At the same time, the method makes no assumptions about necessary directionality and outcomes of power.

In earlier developments of a model of articulation, within a particular set of institutions, it was suggested that the outcome of the forming, informing and shaping of, say, gender relations by class relations may be reconfiguration or reconstitution of this set of relations. However, it is now being argued that there may be incoherencies, as well as coherencies, between, say gender relations as expressed in different sets of institutions. This would mean that if, for example as discussed more fully below, articulation within one set of institutions resulted in the reconfiguration of, say, gender relations, then contradictions between expressions of these relations in different sets of institutions, could, for instance, assist reconstitution of the original form of gender relations. In other words, the possible outcomes of class and gender articulation may not be fully available unless analysis incorporates the relations between sets of institutions. Indeed, it may only be at this different level of analysis that the particular characteristics of a distinctive form of class/gender relations emerge.

Issues, pertaining to the relations between sets of social institutions, surface when, for instance, considering areas of vocational education. Presumably, for example, all catering education will equip women enrolled on these courses with fundamental skills, such as cooking a basic meal. On the other hand, some of these women become business hospitality consultants, in prestigious organisations. For example, they can be seen at important sporting events, such as Wimbledon, Henley, the Derby, and at cultural events such as Glyndebourne, arranging the catering and 'hostessing' the hospitality marquees rented by major companies for entertaining their clients. In contrast, some of these women become waitresses or kitchen hands in 'fast-food' bars. What are the criteria that employers use, then, to allocate these women to production places which apparently have sharp distinctions, between their moments of power and broader structures of power, constituted (as has been argued in respect of various areas of production) in the articulation of class and gender relations? In line with the basic analytic dimensions of a method of articulation, as already established in this section, the initial answer to the question may reside in analysis of the structural and/or cultural dimensions of class and of gender relations, as expressed in catering education. The model developed thus far also suggests that the answer lies in analysis of the structural pattern connecting cultural instances of structural agency within education to this education's overall structure.

In respect of the structure of catering education, newspaper advertisements indicate that the structure of this sphere of education is composed of both exclusive 'cordons bleus' private courses and evening classes in local state adult education. The class specificity of these different avenues for catering training may be one of the underlying factors which determine that some catering women gain or confirm class advantages over other catering students. This would suggest, for instance, structural continuities when comparing forms of class domination in education and in production. It would also suggest that the basic class structure is perhaps reproduced through procedures which allow social class mobility for some women.

To return to a basic precept of a method of articulation, analysis of any set of social institutions should include analysis of at least two simultaneous structural moments of class and of gender relations. So, in investigating catering education, these could be, for example, analysis of a course in an adult education institution and analysis of an elite private course. The full range of analytic dimensions (see Figure 5 above), constituting that part of a method of articulation developed earlier when discussing various areas of production, would then be applied to analysis of the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations as expressed in these two catering education courses. At this stage, then, analysis would once again be confined to one social institution, which in this instance is education. In other words, the model, presented in Figure 5 above, would be utilised in respect of another set of social institutions, such as education.

The next step of a method of articulation is analysis of contrasts and similarities of the forms of class and of gender domination in, for example, the education and production contexts. This would mean, in the case of analysis of the reproduction of catering labour power, exploring:

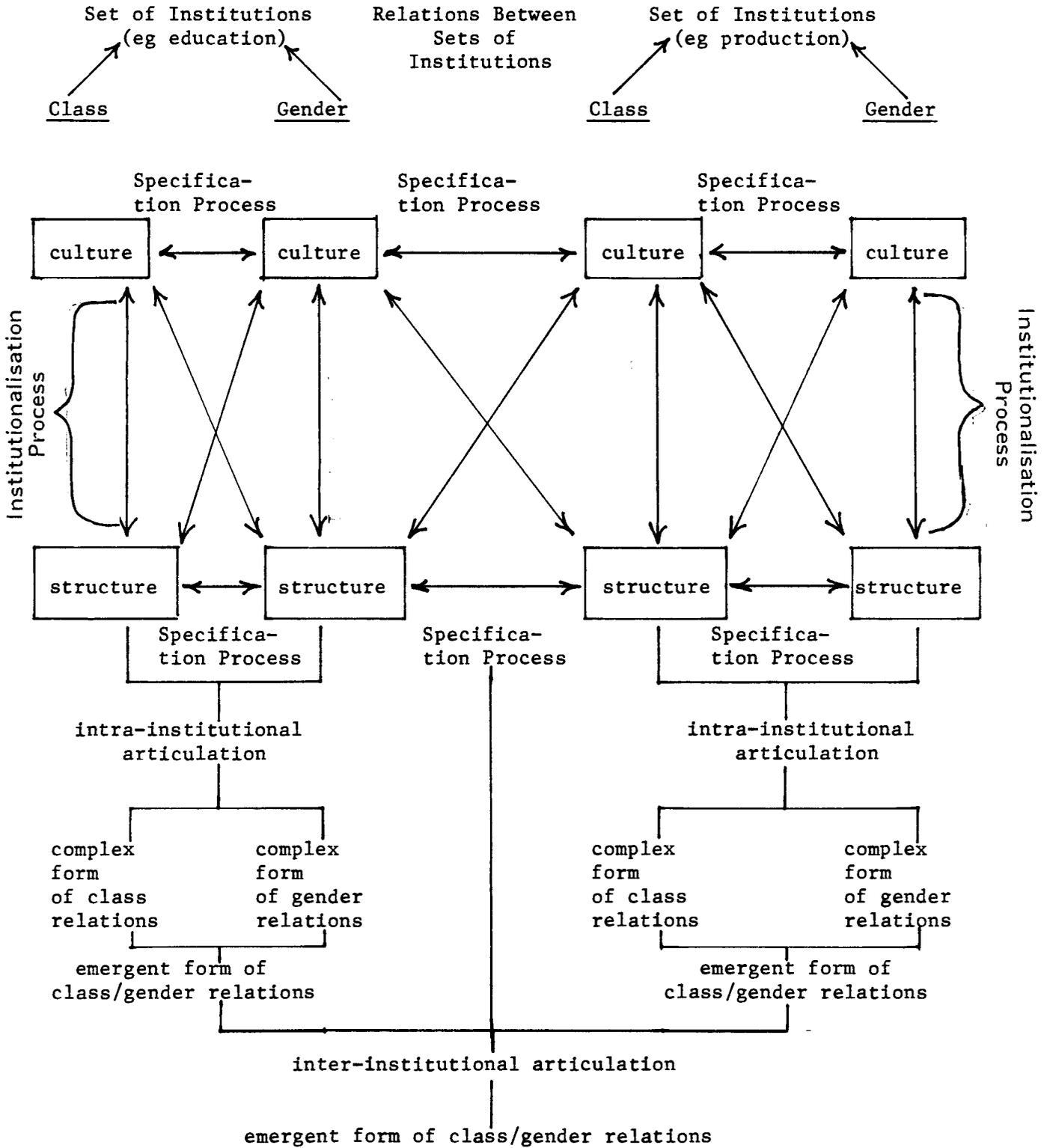
1. discontinuities and continuities between the cultural dimension of class and/or gender relations as constituted in the daily realities of education and of production
2. discontinuities and continuities between the cultural dimension of class and/or gender relations as constituted in the structure of catering education and in the structure of catering production
3. discontinuities and continuities between the cultural dimension of class and/or gender relations as constituted in the structure of catering production and in the daily realities of education and vice versa.

Basically, this discussion is suggesting developing the earlier model (see Figure 5) to incorporate analysis of class and gender articulation within at least two different sets of social institutions, as well as the relations between them. Exploring the relations between social

spheres would include analysis of both the specification processes and institutionalization processes of class and of gender relations. That is, cultural moments of class and of gender in education may specify cultural moments of class and of gender in production and vice versa. The structural form of class and gender in education may specify the structural form of these relations in production. In addition, the structural form of class relations in production may, in part, institutionalize particular moments of gender relations in education and vice versa. In addition, particular moments of gender relations in education may, in part, institutionalize a particular form of class relations in production and vice versa. In short, the emerging model now takes the following form:

FIGURE 6

DEVELOPING A MODEL OF ARTICULATION - STAGE FIVE



(NB The model above now represents full development of a method of articulation)

Contradictions, as well as coherencies, between and within class and gender relations, as realized in education and in production, could surface when applying the model above. For instance, at an adult education institute, with, as has been discussed, its subordinate class connotations compared with a private college, it is possible to learn about 'cordons bleu' cookery. This is likely to constitute part of the knowledge required in the labour process of the high status catering consultant to 'big business'. At the same time, class differentiation within the structure of catering education, suggests that it is more likely that the private course student will be allocated to the class prestigious consultancy post and the state adult education student to the proletarian fast-food post. For example, the women organising business hospitality at sporting events, referred to earlier, have the appearance, self confidence, manners associated with an elite cultural capital. This suggests that they come from family backgrounds which could afford the fees involved in attending private 'cordons bleu' courses. In contrast, women employed in the kitchens of the local MacDonald's or Wimpy Bar, exhibit the manners and appearance associated with a proletarian cultural capital. This suggests that they are likely to have received their education in the state sector.

There are indications, then, that the form that class took, expressed, say, in the subjects studied in the adult education institution, could contradict the form in which class is expressed by the tasks of fast-food 'hands'. That is, the adult state education student has possibly learnt 'cordons bleu' skills which are not required in the fast-food establishment to which she is likely to be allocated. This suggests that possible resistance by the fast food worker to her class relations in production may be heightened by virtue of the contradiction, in production, of expectations about this work generated, in education, in terms of the subjects she has studied. However, this discontent may be rendered confused to the fast food employee, by virtue of the fact that the specificity of this production place coheres with the class specificity of her vocational education, in that it was in the state system.

Analysis, through a method of articulation, of the relations between sets of social institutions addresses the same issues of ideological effects and reproduction as analysis within social spheres. That is, in line with the concept of ideological effects developed earlier, the legitimating, justifying, highlighting or obscuring of class and/or gender relations to, for example, an individual engaged in the education process, may contribute towards the legitimating, justifying, highlighting or obscuring of these relations when she takes up her place in production. This potential ideological effect produced by class and gender articulation may assist reproduction or reconfiguration of each of these sets of relations. In particular, the illustrations from catering education, discussed below, suggest that immediate reconfiguration of the structure of class and/or gender relations within education assists reproduction of the original structural form of each of these categories of relations in the context of production. This element of analysis adds to the web of links between and within class and gender relations, in comparison to analysis confined to one institutional context. This is judged important because it appears that the constitution of a set of relations comprising class and gender relations, arises from the emergent properties which are, in part, constituted in the very complexities of the mechanisms which link class relations with gender relations.

The ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation across sets of institutions can be illustrated by those moments of power, contained in the structural connections between catering education and catering production. That is, coherencies and incoherencies, constituted in comparative expressions of class and/or gender relations, in education and in production, may mask or highlight systems of social inequalities and their interconnections. For example, lack of explicit training in, or rejection of, or an inability to comprehend, the 'feminine skills' deemed essential in the catering consultant may debar the adult education student from direct entry to this category of catering labour. On the other hand, she may consciously not wish to participate in that apparently ubiquitous direct patriarchal subordination entailed in the business consultant's labour process as

demonstrated in the social interactions between hospitality hostesses and businessmen at the sporting events referred to earlier. She may feel that she has gained an advantage over the consultant, in terms of patriarchal subordination, which may mask class differences between these women. On the other hand, her conscious understanding of patriarchal subordination may encourage her to challenge the use of 'femininity' as a criterion for high rank in catering production. Indeed, the gendered cultural acumen of women serving 'fast food' indicates that they have rejected, or are unaware of, that class differentiated, but still gendered, cultural capital demonstrated by the business hospitality consultant. This may be the case in spite of relevant knowledge and skills being incorporated in the curriculum of state catering education. At the same time, however, the classed gender culture of the fast food bar woman is, in part, ensuring her retention in a proletarian location. In other words, challenges to their patriarchal subordination, by state college catering students, may reconfigure this set of relations in education. On the other hand, this may support reproduction of class relations in production.

One of the most important features of this proposed method of articulation is that it approaches the issues surrounding connections between class and gender relations in terms of a structuration process. As a result, it focusses on the complexities of the structural form of class and of gender domination, whereas uni-focal and dualist methods focus on simplified structural characteristics of these relations. The reasons for the importance of the structuration process approach are possibly most clearly identified when considering the ideological effects dimension of articulation. These particular ideological effects would not surface without some recognition of the dynamism inherent in the potential changes and movements within sets of relations at the heart of a structuration process approach. This aspect of analysis addresses problems, such as, in whose interest is it that the forms of class and of gender domination have reconfiguration properties? It begins to explore these issues in terms of the reproduction of class and gender relations and their interconnections, as well as opportunities for resistance to both forms of domination.

Analysis of ideological effects explores, then, the crucial importance of the very dynamism inherent in instances of structural agency constituting, in part, the articulation of class and gender relations. It addresses the issue of the possible reciprocal buttressing and the possible reciprocal reconfiguration of both forms of social differentiation. In addition, it suggests that there may be a patterning of instances of mutual buttressing and reconfiguring of class and gender relations which constitutes an important component of an emergent form of class/gender relations. In turn, analysis of the pattern created by different instances of structural agency, within which ideological effects are located, can explain ambiguities, tensions and anomalies as integral constituents of both reproduction of, and opportunities for resistance to, both forms of social inequality.

In illustration of analysis of ideological effects, as contained in a method of articulation, if both class and gender are simultaneously reproduced within the production process, then the distinctions between the basic dichotomies of these relations suggest that women's subordination will only operate within class formations. In other words, contrary to the general implications of dualist analyses, women are likely to be constituted in gender relations differently from each other, partly in accordance with their class position. This would produce substantial variations in the gender relations of production experienced by different classes of women. Classed distinctions in women's experiences of patriarchal relations may then splinter and mask the homogeneity implicit in the general principles underwriting women's subordination to men. At the same time, in reproducing gender relations, gendered distinctions would be discernible in the nature of class power within any class formation. For these reasons, when analysing specific moments of power, notable exceptions and apparent contradictions to the dominance or subordination inscribed in any one set of relations will be readily identifiable. It may be that these very exceptions are part of the conscious understanding of social inequalities of, for example, women at work. In other words, they would, in part, constitute human agency in that they guide actions of

resistance, challenge to, or collusion and acquiescence in, the unequal distribution of class and/or gender power.

In essence the various analytic dimensions of a method of articulation explore how individuals could be allocated to very different groupings, having diverse relative power according to the analytically separable forms of class and gender divisions. It proceeds by exploring how, through such social complexities, individuals take on, consciously or unconsciously, a distinctive identity. At the same time, this method creates analytic space for these identities to be characterised as coherent, contradictory, or confrontational. Nevertheless, in the cultural realities of daily life, including life passage through different sets of social institutions, this identity may be almost devoid of conscious understanding of the starkest contradictions involved in defining and contrasting their social position in class and gender terms. For example, the social construction of gendered skill categories, such as cooking, indicates a stark subordination of all catering women, including those engaged as entertainment consultants to 'big business'. At the same time, these women gain economic advantages over other catering women, as well as many men, in this prestigious location within catering. That is, there appear to be sharp, and clearly visible to these women, contradictions between their classed and gendered social position. Articulation, then, is, in part, about explaining how such possibly stark contradictions between any individual's classed and gendered social positions are worked out in the realities of their lives.

## CONCLUSIONS

The method of articulation, developed in this chapter, highlights the complexities of cultural realities in which class and gender relations act simultaneously, for instance, on labour processes. An inherent and central feature of this method is the constitution, reconstitution, reconfiguration of both class relations and gender relations. The proposed method of articulation calls for a framework which centres on the complicated network of interconnections within and between class and gender relations. This includes analysis of both the institutionalization and specification processes within and between class and gender relations. The network of interlinkage of the framework of articulation is, in part, constituted in the interconstitution of the cultural and structural dimensions within and between class or gender relations. This method explores the patterning of class with gender relations, consequent upon material instances of structural agency. It posits emergent properties of these moments of structural agency as potentially constituting a further form of relations. This surfaces when drawing together the forms of class and of gender relations, which, in turn constitute a set of relations comprised of class relations and gender relations.

It is not suggested that the analytic dimensions incorporated into the particular model of articulation, discussed and developed in this chapter, are exhaustive. However, in the initial stages of developing a method of articulation, constrained by the practical circumstances of conducting research, it is necessary to pinpoint and select out particular analytic dimensions. For example, it is possible that other categories of relations constitute relevant additional analytic dimensions, in that they may articulate with the two selected systems of class and gender relations. At a later stage, building upon the framework of analysis of this study, it may be pertinent to explore how systems of social inequalities, such as age, race, ethnicity, articulate with the articulation of class and gender relations. Understanding of

dynamic structuration processes will also, no doubt, be advanced when analysis expands upon the two sets of institutions selected in this study as possibly inter-connecting and, in part, constituting this process. In this early developmental stage of a method of articulation it is judged merely as appropriately manageable to select out the institutions of production and of education.

In spite of its recognised limitations<sup>(5)</sup>, the proposed method of articulation builds upon and develops current discourse on class and gender connections. In particular, it moves beyond 'dualism' by, in the first place, assuming far more complex forms of both class and gender relations than those simple forms, constituted in coherencies between and within these relations, built into dualistic approaches (see Chapter I). In the second place, these complex forms of class and gender relations bring to the fore possible flaws in dualists' assertions or implications about the processes of reproduction of these sets of relations. This model of articulation views reproduction of systems of social relations as a distinctly different process from that of 'dualism'. That is, it posits coherencies, incoherencies, anomalies and contradictions, between and within class and gender relations, as possibly crucial elements of reproduction, as distinct from dualists' exclusive reliance on coherencies to explain this reproduction process. In addition, incoherencies and anomalies, within and between class and gender relations, could, in dualistic analysis, only be categorised as redirection or displacement of these systems of relations. This present model is, however, inherently critical of this stance, since, in sharp contrast, it presumes that such anomalies and contradictions may be part of the mode of reproduction, rather than necessarily redirection, of class and gender relations. Nevertheless, the development of this particular method of analysis accords with, and builds upon - in that it provides a specific detailed analytic framework for - recent demands for a change in emphasis from existing methods. For example, it underlines, and provides a specific mode of analysis for, Beechey's (1983) theoretical realignment:

"The shift which I am advocating has major implications which should be stressed. It suggests that we need to analyse occupational segregation and the processes of gender construction within the labour process itself. Women's position within the occupational structure cannot simply be 'read off' from an analysis of the sexual division of labour within the family as a number of feminists (myself included) have suggested in the past." (1983:43)

The proposed method of articulation responds to and develops Beechey's (1983) theoretical realignment. In particular it provides a perspective for understanding substantive problems often highlighted in the discourse to which Beechey (1983) contributes. For example, Dale et al (1985) have pointed out that secretarial labour is more complex than analysis through existing methods would suggest. Downing's (1981) empirical data on secretarial labour supports Dale et al's (1985) contentions that it is inappropriate to classify all secretaries within a unitary class category. However, Downing's uni-dimensional structural analysis groups all secretaries into an undifferentiated occupational category on the grounds that all the women experience some form of patriarchal subordination. In Chapter III Downing's data is re-analysed in accordance with the method of articulation developed in this chapter. In contrast to Downing's analysis, this methodological approach highlights and explains differences between women's experiences in the secretarial production process.

After analysing secretarial labour in Chapter III, Chapters IV and V proceed to analysis of the culture and structure of secretarial education. Analysis is developed on the structural mechanisms which link two sets of institutions, namely secretarial education and secretarial production. Chapter VI turns to particular issues of power and analyses moments of power contained in the complex structure of class and gender interconnections within and between secretarial education and secretarial production. At this stage, analysis centres on the different cultural meanings about systems of social inequalities distributed as part of the reproduction of secretarial labour power in education. This analysis focusses on the ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation in the context of the relations between secretarial education and production. Taken together, each of the following chapters contributes towards understanding the interconstitution of class and gender relations by highlighting specific substantive instances of structural agency. The overall patterning of instances of structural agency is stressed when, in Chapter VI, focussing on the ideological effects dimension of class and gender articulation. Broadly in this analysis of the reproduction of secretarial labour power, it is argued that the patterning contained in different instances of structural agency points to the systematicism implicit in a distinctive category of class/gender relations.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER II

(1) Structuration theory, as such, focusses on the fundamental processes and properties, constituting social life, which are realized in various ways in different circumstances or at different historical moments. It does not, in itself, explore specific substantive manifestations of the constitution of social life. In other words, structuration discourse does not address, for example, the contribution of particular forms of social differentiation, such as class and gender relations, to the constitution of society. On the contrary, structuration theory explores the broad underlying characteristics of social reproduction, that is of 'social life as a whole', as Cohen confirms:

"A primary consideration in the formulation of ontological concepts . . . obviously must be to allow the widest possible latitude for the diversity and contingencies that may occur in different settings." (1989:17)

He goes on to stress the extremely broad ground occupied by structuration discourse when he states:

"The structurationist ontology is addressed exclusively to the constitutive potentials of social life: the generic human capacities and fundamental conditions through which the course and outcomes of social processes and events are generated and shaped in the manifold ways in which this can occur." (1989:17)

(2) 'Economic relations' are explored in the proposed model of articulation in terms of capitalist class relations. In this respect, analysis centres on those aspects of power and control which are associated with the means of production. Economic relations are viewed as originating in the fundamental division between the owners of the means of production and those who sell their labour power to these owners. At the same time, however, analysis uses a broad definition of capitalist class relations inasmuch as it explores substantive features of these relations such as status, remuneration, wealth, culture.

'Relations between men and women' are explored in the proposed model of articulation in terms of gender relations. In this respect, analysis centres on those aspects of power and control originating within the domestic family, but which are also enacted in other sets of institutions, such as education and the production process. This analysis explores formal as well as informal social interactions between men and women, in addition to gender cultures. When analysis indicates an instance of the domination of women by men, then the term 'patriarchal relations' is adopted. On the other hand, where detailed exploration of specific contexts and manifestations of relations between men and women has yet to be conducted, or where analysis indicates a dominant position of women in respect of men, then the term 'gender relations' is adopted.

(3) At this stage in the discussion, it is being suggested that class actions and interactions may, in part, constitute the structure of gender relations and vice versa. This points to a complex concept of 'class' and of 'gender', surfacing with this development of an articulation perspective on class and gender inter-connections. At the same time, some of the more orthodox views (see Chapter I) on class and on gender relations are adopted in this study, particularly to explore the realization of these relations in secretarial labour and education processes (see Chapters III-V). Discussion in Chapter I indicated that there appears to be more controversy over views of class underpinning different frameworks of analysis than those of gender. It is, therefore, necessary to outline briefly the concept(s) of class used in this present study to analyse reproduction of secretarial labour power.

When analysing secretarial labour and education processes, as indicated in (2) above, a broad based definition of class is adopted. Basically, analysis centres on actions, status, power, control, associated with the capitalist mode of production, as realized in the social relations, tasks, authority, expressed in each labour and education process which is examined. Analysis explores both the constraints imposed on secretaries' actions and also the opportunities for action which inhere in their relations of education and of production. Later analysis, in Chapter VI, proceeds to incorporating consciousness and meaning into this concept of class when analysis explores the understandings and awarenesses of systematic class (and gender) inequalities, on the part of secretarial teachers, students and workers. Basically, adoption of this concept of class provides analysis which supports rejection of that concept of class used in class classifications (eg Registrar General's Classification of Occupations). This reinforces those reservations about current classifications of occupations discussed in Chapter I, Section 1.2. In other words, the concept of class used in this analysis of secretarial labour and education processes indicates that secretarial work is by no means a unitary occupation, contrary to its classification in occupational tables (eg Registrar General's Occupational Tables).

A basic tenet underpinning the fundamental concept of class used in this study is, then, that existing occupational classifications need to be problematized. On the other hand, at specific points in this study these classifications of occupations are, themselves, used in an unproblematic fashion. For example, in Chapter V they are used to classify secretarial students according to their social class familial origins. This is in spite of the fact that severe reservations on the validity of existing occupational classifications is contained in the main concept of class adopted in this study. However, it is assumed that the various occupations of the fathers of these students do indicate, very broadly, the differentiated familial economic wealth and culture which, in part, contributed to students' specific location, particularly in respect to being in either an elite private college or state technical college. It is simply a matter that practical constraints on this empirical investigation (see Appendix) precluded more detailed enquiry into the family backgrounds of secretarial students and the adoption of the main concept of class used in this study in respect of that set of social institutions constituted, in part, by these families.

(4) The categories of 'women's work' discussed in this chapter are used to problematize some of the implicit assumptions underpinning current

analyses of class and gender relations. Empirical data is not cited as the evidence used later in this analysis concentrates exclusively on secretarial labour. In this chapter, the labour processes discussed are hypothetical examples, though underpinned by 'commonsense' understandings.

A problem which surfaces here is that the ideology of gender leads to the common acceptance that women are, by and large, confined to routine, repetitious labour processes, with extremely little control over their own and others' labour processes. On these grounds, the examples provided in this Chapter may be rejected as unrepresentative exceptions to the general 'rules' for women's paid labour. On the other hand, it is clear that a not insignificant proportion of women are employed as, for example, doctors, teachers, lawyers, cooks, personnel officers, while other women are cleaners, clerks, nurses, maids, 'washers-up', 'check-out girls'. What is being suggested in this discussion is that analysis is required of the clear differences in status, pay, tasks and social relations between these distinctive class categories of women's labour. In other words, an initial contention of this study is that class and gender analyses are flawed when they presume upon the homogeneous proletarian characteristics of all, or the vast majority of, women's labour processes.

(5) As indicated earlier in this chapter, additional recognised limitations, of this model of articulation, are contained in the analytic emphasis on reproduction of class and of gender relations, as against incorporating into analysis any possible re-structuration of these sets of relations. However, as indicated when discussion in this chapter compared this 'articulation model' with a dualistic approach, any identification of re-structuration may be flawed if such analysis over-simplifies or misrecognises the respective structural forms of these relations. That is, if, as in a dualistic model, analysis proceeds from the assumption of a simple structural form of class and of gender relations, then any reconfiguration of either or both of these forms of social differentiation may be categorised as re-structuration. In contrast, this discussion has suggested that when assuming more complex structures of class and gender relations, such reconfiguration may, in effect, contribute to reproduction of either or both categories of relations, and constitute thereby components of structuration, rather than re- or de-structuration. It is on these grounds, that the analytic limitations are judged as appropriate at this stage of developing an articulation perspective on class and gender connections. That is, these analytic limitations, in themselves, help to move this analysis beyond that of 'dualism'. In effect, they serve to critique dualistic perspectives by highlighting the need for extreme caution when analysing reconfiguration of sets of relations as actual or potential displacement of social systems. This is of crucial importance because this stance contrasts with the implicit and explicit assumptions about, for example, the issues and outcomes of actions of resistance in reconfiguring sets of relations (see Chapter VI, section 1) built into many existing models of analysis.

While concentrating, then, on forms of class and gender relations, analysis does refer occasionally to degrees of class and gender power. However, this is only to the extent that differential degrees of power are de facto written into these sets of relations, rather than analysis of changes or stability in the unequal distribution of power between the dominant and subordinant groups which constitute these relations.

## CHAPTER III

### SECRETARIES AT WORK

#### INTRODUCTION

The method of articulation, developed in the previous chapter, is used, in this chapter, to analyse secretarial work. The cultural dimension of class and gender relations is explored in respect of secretarial labour processes and the structure of this occupation. Analysis explores mechanisms which link substantive expressions of class and gender relations between different secretarial labour processes, between secretarial labour processes and their occupational structure, and with the generic principles underlying these relations. This analysis focusses on the patterning of class relations with gender relations, constituted in these links, which, in turn, constitutes structural articulation of these relations. In so doing, this analysis identifies specific complex structural forms of class relations and of gender relations, in the context of secretarial production.

Exploring the evolution of the current structure of secretarial production, in the first section of the chapter, examines changes over time, constituted in substantive expressions of class and/or gender relations. So, for example, as a distinctive hierarchy developed in the 1950's, social differentiation between women secretaries became

discernible. In material terms, this structure of divisions between secretaries was constituted formally in class distinctions which, in turn, gave rise to distinctions in the gender experiences of classed categories of secretarial labour. Detailed analysis to follow will suggest that changes, constituted in expressions of patriarchal relations, came about as an informal consequence of changes constituted in expressions of class relations. These changes unproblematically constitute, in part, the structure of class relations. In contrast, some of the consequential changes in expressions of patriarchal relations introduced incoherencies with the generic principles underlying patriarchal relations. They represent an instance of structural agency, inasmuch as they are constituted in the shaping of gender relations by the structure of class relations. Analysis of changes to the structure of secretarial production, over time, indicates, then, the forming, informing, contradicting and moving together, that is the articulation, of the structures of class and gender relations, as realized in various cultural instances of structural agency.

Analysis of the structure of secretarial production provides a background perspective which renders particular significance to current practices. For example, differences between contemporary labour processes are brought into sharp relief when compared with the relative homogeneity of secretarial production when women first entered the administrative area of production at the end of the 19th Century. These differences, as well as the similarities, between contemporary secretarial labour processes are explored in the second section of the chapter. This section explores the cultural realization of class and gender relations in the daily procedures of secretarial work. Analysis centres on the insulation and links, manifesting the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations, between different contextual settings within secretarial production. The contrasting contexts in question are the labour processes of high and low-level secretaries.

Substantive contrasts and similarities between ranked secretarial labour processes are analysed as practical expressions of distinctions, between

secretarial women, in the opportunities and restrictions on action imposed by both dominant male and dominant capitalist structural forces. As such, they represent the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations (see Chapter II). The patterning of class with gender is examined through analysis of different cultural instances of structural agency, in which specific constraints of the one structural force coincide with specific constraints of the other structural force. That is, the specification process between these relations (see Chapter II, Figure 3) is explored. For instance, the comparatively high class power of top level secretaries appears to coincide with their direct patriarchal subordination to a dominant class male. In comparison, for women secretaries at the base of this hierarchy of labour, their segregation into gendered 'pools' denotes a different form of patriarchal subordination from that of top flight secretaries, and this appears to coincide with the proletarian characteristics of their labour process.

The complex web of interconnections between class and gender relations is illuminated in analysis of connections between secretarial labour processes, their occupational structure, and the basic rules underlying class and gender relations. The gender division of labour exhibited by secretarial labour and realized in both the structure and labour processes of this occupation, for instance, cohere with the broad principles of patriarchy. However, the structure of formal class differences between these women's labour processes results in daily practices expressing not only class but also gender cultural distinctions between them. They include anomalies, ambiguities and coherencies with the generic principles underlying class and patriarchy. In addition, secretarial women adopt different strategies to adjust their sharply contrasting restrictions on action. This suggests that the structural agency which partly defines the formal boundaries of a particular labour process, acts on, but is also the outcome of, human agency. For example, pool typists manipulate the formal constraints on their actions, but simultaneously confirm their proletarian status and patriarchal subordination, when they take time off from work tasks to chat about their families. In contrast, top level secretaries confirm

and sometimes increase their formal share of class power by using their privatized and personalized patriarchal subordination to a male boss. For example, partly as a result of their patriarchal subordination, they are allocated tasks by which they exercise control over lower level male and female office workers. Yet these women's control over low level male office workers contradicts the basic principles of patriarchal relations. The cultural dimension of class and gender relations, as realized at specific levels of secretarial labour, often contradicts, then, the principles underlying these relations. Analysis of contradictions, tensions and ambiguities, between and within class and gender relations, comprised, in part, of the actions of secretarial women at work, suggests that they can be explained in terms of the interconstitution of culture and structure within and between these structural forces. In other words, they constitute part of the institutionalization process (see Chapter II, Figure 4) of class and gender relations.

The female exclusivity of secretarial labour indicates that this area of production constitutes a cultural moment in the structure of patriarchal relations. Its location in the capitalist mode of production indicates simultaneously that it constitutes a cultural moment in the structure of class relations. Basically this analysis seeks to explain how both structures act simultaneously on and through this gendered sector of office labour. To do so, it highlights the origins and consequences of both the cultural similarities and also the cultural distinctions between different secretarial labour processes. In problematizing, in this way, the frequently assumed unitary characteristics of secretarial labour (see Chapter I), a wide spectrum of this occupational category is explored. Therefore, in profiling secretarial labour in this chapter, the term 'secretary' is used in its broadest sense. It refers to any woman employed in a job entailing typing, audio and/or shorthand transcription. There are likely to be similarities in the labour processes of all secretaries which help to sustain their classification as a single occupational unit (eg Registrar General's Classification of Occupations). However, in this exploration of the possible articulation of class and gender relations, analysis highlights the differences, as

well as the similarities, between the labour processes of different levels of secretarial labour.

The analysis uses secondary source data. It relies predominantly on Downing's (1981) and Silverstone's (1974) empirical studies of secretarial labour. However, their frameworks were unable to explain, and indeed neglected to give attention to, differences between secretarial labour processes (see discussion on Downing's method in Chapter I). While this analysis draws heavily on Downing and Silverstone's empirical research, its methodological focus on the articulation of class and gender relations contrasts sharply with their analyses of this same data.

The analysis presented in this chapter anticipates analysis of the articulation of class and gender relations in secretarial education, contained in Chapters IV and V. Later analysis centres on the mechanisms which connect secretarial education with secretarial production. It explores the relationship between education and production as a possible analytic component of the reciprocal articulation of class and gender relations.

#### 1. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE STRUCTURE OF SECRETARIAL PRODUCTION

In this section analysis centres on substantive amendments to the structure of secretarial production since its initial feminization at the end of the 19th Century. Differences and similarities, constituted in material expressions of class and/or gender relations at various historical moments, are explored. A central concern of this section is exploration of changes in, say, the class relations expressed in the structure of secretarial production, and then analysis of any possible 'knock-on' effect for expressions of patriarchal relations. Resultant anomalies, tensions, contradictions and coherencies, between substantive expressions of class and gender relations and their respective underlying principles, are explored.

Substantive amendments in the structure of secretarial production appear, at first sight, to have more to do with changes constituting cultural instances of class relations than gender relations. For example, the tight gender specificity of secretarial labour has been maintained since women first entered office employment in the late 1800's. This suggests few alterations in the opportunities and restrictions imposed on the actions of secretarial women through the dominant forces of patriarchal relations. On the other hand, the same period has witnessed the development of a distinctive hierarchy, indicating the possibility of increasing distinctions in shares of class power between secretarial women. However, when exploring developments in the structure of this occupation which point to class differentiation between secretarial women, possible distinctions in their gender experiences surface. These suggest that the emergence of a formal hierarchy, constituted in class divisions, within secretarial production had consequences for the structure of patriarchal relations expressed within this occupation, and that class and gender inform and shape each other's structural distribution of power.

Introducing segmentation within an occupation, constituted in any form or forms of social differentiation, is dependent on a number of practical circumstances. For example, it is dependent on having sufficient numbers employed within the occupation; demands to increase productivity by implementing a division of labour; a need for some sectors of labour to act on behalf of capital in controlling other sectors of labour. Segmentation within secretarial production became practicable with the dramatic increase in the numbers employed as secretaries during this century.

With the increase in the number of white-collar jobs in the late 19th Century (Bain 1970; Elliott 1974; Lumley 1973) came the recruitment of women to a previously male dominated occupation. Silverstone (1974) notes that not only were there more office jobs in the 1890's than earlier, but technological innovations, such as the introduction of telephones and typewriters, provided an opportunity to initiate a gender division of labour. Davy states:

". . . a rationale was built up showing that office work was women's 'natural sphere'. The typewriter was analogous to the piano and suitable for female fingers." (1986:126)

Silverstone (1974) reports that so long as women were confined to these activities, male clerical workers showed little concern for their own security and status. In contrast, Walby (1986) observes that there was considerable hostility to the introduction of women clerks among existing male clerks. Whatever the form or level of resistance by male office workers, labour market demands created an opportunity for women to gain entry to the social office at this time. However, gender segregation, in various forms, enabled the inequalities between men and women in wider society, to be reflected in the organisation of office work. Data, presented below, indicates that from this time the tight gender specificity of secretarial labour has remained constant in spite of difficulties in recruiting sufficient secretaries at certain periods. Gender relations have remained, then, an obvious feature of the structure of office work since the earliest days of women's involvement in this sector of production<sup>(1)</sup>.

Since the turn of the century there has been a steady increase in the number of women entering office work (Price and Bain 1974; Pinder 1969; DES 1970; Department of Employment 1974). By the 1951 Census women clerical workers outnumbered men. Between 1921 and 1961 the number of women office workers increased almost fourfold from just over half a million to nearly two millions. In 1966 women accounted for 67 per cent of all clerical workers (Ministry of Labour 1968:42). Among the total clerical workforce in 1966, 35 per cent were women typists, shorthand writers or secretaries (Ministry of Labour, 1968:46). The 1971 Census placed typists, shorthand writers, secretaries, third in the league of 'top ten' female occupations:

Top Ten Female Occupations, Great Britain, 1971

	<u>% of All Working Women</u>
1. Clerks, cashiers	17.5
2. Shop sales staff and assistants	8.8
3. Typists, shorthand writers, secretaries	8.7
4. Maids, valets and related service workers	4.9
5. Charwomen, office cleaners, window cleaners	4.8
6. Nurses	4.3
7. Primary and secondary school teachers	3.6
8. Canteen assistants, counter hands	3.2
9. Proprietors and managers, sales	2.5
10. Hand and machine sewers and embroiderers, textiles and light leather producers	2.5
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	61.0
	=====

Source: Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, Census 1971,  
Great Britain Economic Activity, Part IV, (10% sample) Table 24.

The Equal Opportunities Commission estimated that the number of typists and secretaries in post in Great Britain in 1980 was approximately one million (1980:23)<sup>(2)</sup> and it remained an almost exclusively female occupation. However, recent technological developments, such as the introduction of word processors (Downing 1981, Webster 1986 and 1990) indicate possible threats to secretarial employment levels. These changes in technology may also impact upon, and substantially alter, the power relations involved in the secretarial labour process (Downing 1981). Nonetheless, as Webster (1986) points out, 'demanning' and 'deskilling', which are frequently assumed to be the inevitable outcomes of technological developments (eg Braverman 1974, see Chapter I), are problematised in respect of secretarial labour processes when analysis takes account of the "social and historical factors within which new technology is introduced in different instances" (Webster 1986:130). Certainly by the early 1980's innovations in office technology had had no detrimental effect on the ranking of secretarial work within female occupations. In fact, the 1981 Census placed it second in the league of female occupations:

Top Ten Female Occupations, Great Britain, 1981

	<u>No of Women</u> <u>(10% sample)</u>
1. Clerks	164,967
2. Secretaries, shorthand typists, receptionists	89,269
3. Sales assistants, shop assistants, shelf fillers, petrol pump attendants	76,280
4. Nurse administrators, nurses	55,382
5. Domestic staff and school helpers	53,680
6. Caretakers, road sweepers and other cleaners	52,568
7. Teachers	41,680
8. Counter hand assistants (catering), kitchen porters, hands	31,656
9. Managers in wholesale and retail distribution	21,773
10. Inspectors, viewers, testers, packers, bottlers, etc	21,730

Source: Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, Census 1981  
Economic Activity Great Britain, (10% Sample), Table 8.

Statistics suggest, then, that significantly increasing numbers of women, particularly since about 1950, have entered the secretarial workforce. In any occupation, a significant increase in its numbers, together with such factors as intensification of the technical and gender division of labour, assists the implementation of grading systems, which differentiate amongst the relevant category of workers. In the institutions of production hierarchical occupational structures are constituted formally in class divisions. It is likely, therefore, that the implementation of the grading of secretaries, discussed in more detail below, constituted a change in the cultural dimension of class relations, as realized in restructuring of this occupation.

Considered in isolation, a structure of class divisions within secretarial production, appears to cohere with the generic principles of class relations. On the other hand, it appears to introduce possible

tensions within class and patriarchal relations, if these relations are inter-connected. That is, being confined, through the structural forces of patriarchy, to this female occupation suggests, at first sight, a uniformity in secretarial women's class (and gender) subordination. For example, in respect of horizontal gender divisions, the under-representation of women in the managerial and professional ranks has persisted (Equal Opportunities Commission 1980; Hanna 1973; Department of Employment 1974). In spite of the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts (1975), women have made little headway in breaking through the horizontal gender boundaries of white-collar labour. The few women who have gained managerial posts are rarely promoted from secretarial work to this level (London Chamber of Commerce 1966; Hunt 1968; Fogarty et al 1971). Statistics on women managers suggest that the notion that secretarial work is a stepping stone in a career structure which leads to managerial status remains fallacious. The Manpower Services Commission unmasks some of the mythology involved:

"Secretarial work is also perceived as a stepping stone which can lead to other non-secretarial opportunities and more secretaries had taken up the work for this reason in 1981 (33 per cent) than in 1970 (24 per cent). Nevertheless the promotion prospects of most secretaries were strictly limited and had hardly increased since 1970 despite a changing climate towards careers for women . . ." (1983:17)

As managers are either the owners of the means of production or the agents of capital, they are located in a dominant class position vis à vis, for instance, low level routine office workers. Few managers are women and so it appears that gender excludes women from this powerful class position. In other words, in line with dualist perspectives (see Chapter I), gender relations are informing class relations by excluding women from the most powerful class positions within office work. On the other hand, and contrasting with dualist perspectives, many male office workers are not managers and, given the development of the hierarchical structure of secretarial production, some women may have more class power than some male office workers. In addition, as indicated by the class divisions inscribed in the structure of secretarial work, it is wrong to assume that, as women are by and large excluded from the most powerful class location, they all experience identical class and gender

relations. In other words, the exclusion of women from the most powerful class position within office production does not necessarily lead to a uniformity in their class and gender relations of production.

Exploring the composition of the increased secretarial labour force, discussed earlier, supports the notion that the formal structure of segmentation within secretarial production was constituted in substantive expressions of class relations. For example, within this occupation there was, during this century, an increasing diversification in the social class heritage of its women recruits<sup>(3)</sup>. Reproduction theories (see Chapter I) explain that hierarchical structures in various sets of social institutions tend to confirm any individual's classed family origins. Therefore, as secretaries began to be drawn from working class as well as middle class backgrounds, it is likely that divisions within secretarial production were constituted in substantive class divisions, confirming their different classed family and education heritages.

Many accounts of the feminization of office labour (Benet 1972; Delgado 1979; Downing 1981; McNally 1976; Silverstone 1974) agree that the first women office workers were drawn from the middle classes. According to Silverstone (1974) women's office work rapidly became respectable and associated with unsupported elite women. Indeed working class women in this era were unlikely to have received sufficient general education to qualify for office work:

"Education for (middle class) women gradually improved throughout the century (19th), partly as a result of improved education for all, but also as a result of the foundation of institutions specifically for girls. Among the working class, education for both boys and girls was uniformly bad, or non-existent."  
(Silverstone 1974:9)

The elite aura, afforded to female office work by the family heritage of its early recruits, was threatened when, with a labour market demand for office labour, significant numbers of working class women began to secure posts in offices. Various factors assisted women from working class families to obtain office work. In the first place, the number of office jobs expanded to such an extent that in the 1960's and 1970's, a

deficit of available female labour was recorded (Silverstone 1974). At the same time, particularly since the 1950's, more working class women had the basic skills and education (Simon 1974; Argles 1964) which qualified them for office work. In addition increasing numbers of women since the 1950's, including those from working class families, were achieving formal qualifications in their secondary education (Statistics of Education 1972 and 1981; Social Trends 1983). This helped them to lay claim to secretarial jobs which had originally been the preserve of women from the middle classes.

In the 1950's, then, the secretarial workforce was still increasing in absolute terms. Many of the new recruits were increasingly drawn from lower social class backgrounds than had previously been the case. In 1974 Silverstone concluded that with the increased demand for secretaries:

"recruitment has inevitably come from sources which have not traditionally provided secretarial staff, hence the increase in numbers of young secretaries who came from Secondary Modern schools. One implication of the changing recruitment pattern, is that the social class composition of the secretarial workforce may also be changing." (1974:138)

The introduction of an hierarchical structure, providing the possibility of substantive class divisions between secretarial women, can be judged, then, to have been influenced by changes in the social class backgrounds of its recruits. In spite of the fact that in recent years there has been considerable debate on the proletarianization of office work (Crompton and Jones 1984; Crompton and Reid 1982; Hyman and Price 1983; Morgall 1982; Braverman 1974) white-collar labour has retained the status of the middle ranks in official statistics (eg Registrar General's Classification of Occupations). Many employers and employees possibly feared a diminution in status with the influx of working class women, at a time when women were becoming a major group in office work. In addition, armed with more paper qualifications than her pre-1950's counterpart, the secretarial worker may have been more encouraged to seek career advancement than a comparable worker of earlier decades. The 1960's was a time of high rates of employment when individuals could anticipate obtaining work commensurate with qualifications achieved. A

woman with 'A' levels or a degree, in line with the rest of the population, would have expected to obtain office posts which carried markers to differentiate her work from that of women with low level educational attainment. Yet, at this time increasing numbers of working class women, probably with lower level educational qualifications, were obtaining posts within a largely undifferentiated occupation.

Even within a female specific occupation there are likely to be assumptions that differences in educational attainment, inevitably linked to social class origins, warrant differentiation within production. One practical response to lack of differentiation was that in the 1970's some secretarial women, with high level secretarial qualifications, set up quasi professional associations, such as the Institute of Qualified Private Secretaries. In this way elite secretaries sought measures to differentiate themselves from fellow secretaries with minimal qualifications. Another response, by employers, was to institute a well-defined hierarchical structure to secretarial labour, enabling secretaries and their work to be graded and accorded differential status. The implementation of a hierarchical structure to secretarial production is constituted, in part, in the innovatory job titles and segmentation of office vacancies in newspaper advertisements. As it is being suggested that in formal terms this hierarchy was marked by class divisions between secretaries, the different job titles incorporated into the hierarchy constitute a cultural instance of class relations. The approximate dates at which various titles were introduced, signifying the ranking of secretaries, shows that the pyramid of job locations was clearly discernible by the 1970's<sup>(4)</sup>.

In the late 1960's The Times began to segment its job advertisements. In 1970 this newspaper had a category entitled 'Women's Appointments' under which mainly secretarial vacancies were listed. By 1980, The Times had set up its 'Crème de la Crème' heading for 'top' secretarial positions, lower level posts being located under the generic title 'secretarial'. The Evening Standard in the 1980's also carries two categories within which secretarial vacancies are located -

'secretarial' and 'office vacancies'. The secretarial category was not implemented until the late 1970's. The first reference to 'Personal Assistant', one of the highest ranking secretarial positions, is in the 1970 editions of both newspapers.

Until 1955 there was a common heading for all job advertisements in the Evening Standard. In the early editions, between 1945-1960, about half the vacancies in the Evening Standard are for 'clerks'. A gradual diminution in the number of posts with this title follows, and 'secretary' becomes a dominant title by the mid-1960's. On the other hand, there are few advertisements for office workers in The Times until the mid-1960's. Various titles, all from the upper strata of secretarial labour, first appeared in the late 1960's in The Times, a newspaper associated with a readership from the dominant classes. By the 1980's The Times contains a proliferation of high ranking titles, such as 'executive secretary', 'PA', 'private secretary', 'confidential secretary'. In this newspaper these titles now outnumber vacancies listed simply as 'secretary'.

The titles of posts included in newspaper job vacancies not only partly constitute expressions of class relations in this occupational structure, but also provide some indication of class differences in the relations of production experienced by secretarial women. For example, those for 'typists' usually only mention the department or organization, rather than any individual to whom the typist reports. In contrast, those for 'personal assistants' outline the variety of tasks and responsibilities involved, in addition to the high status and personal qualities of the male executive to whom she will report (Gibb 1981:61-63).

The sharp differences in the nature and variety of tasks mentioned in these two categories of secretarial vacancies denote clear class distinctions between their respective labour processes. At the same time, however, frequent reference to high level men, to whom only the Personal Assistant is to be assigned, signifies not only a class difference between her and the pool typist, but, given the respective

gender specificity of managers and secretaries (see section 2), differences between typists and Personal Assistants in their gender experiences within secretarial work. In other words, there is evidence that the formal class divisions within secretarial work have consequential material ramifications for either being assigned to a male executive or simply working alongside gender peers within a department. This suggests differences between secretarial women in the ways in which they are constituted in patriarchal relations.

The relative homogeneity in the social class origins of secretaries until the 1950's, together with the use of a very limited range of job titles, suggests, then, that secretarial work had a unitary character until this date. It is likely that all women in the earlier years of female secretarial work experienced very similar relations of production. Differentiation amongst secretarial women since the 1950's indicates that divisions have been created which produce internal class relations amongst them. This suggests changes over time in the cultural dimension of class relations which, given the changing class heritage of its recruits, continued to cohere with the generic principles of class relations.

Analysis of the historical changes, constituting, in the first instance, an aspect of the cultural dimension of class relations, as realized in the structure of secretarial work, indicates consequential changes in the cultural dimension of patriarchy. Together they constitute an instance of structural agency. For instance, during the period in which women have been employed as secretaries, the gender uniformity of the occupation has remained constant. One of the most significant changes has been in the social class origins of women entering this work. If today's secretarial women are allocated to places where class relations reflect class origins, then the relations of production of secretaries will be distinguished by varying degrees of class power. But variations in the gender experiences of these classed secretaries also surface. This indicates class and gender structural agency - that is an instance of the mutual constituting of the one structure by the other - since the changing characteristic was not the gender specificity of secretarial

labour, but its class composition. Whatever material form the articulation of class and gender took in the relations of production of the early recruits to secretarial production, it was relatively uniform throughout the work. If secretarial women now experience differences in terms of both sets of relations, then this signifies that change within one category of relations can affect change in the other set of relations and that these two categories of relations inform and move with each other.

The substantive changes, over time, constitute instances of the cultural dimension of class and gender relations, in the structure of secretarial work. That is, they represent different substantive moments of the imposition of constraints and opportunities for action, by dominant class and male forces, on secretarial labour processes. They introduce apparent incoherencies and tensions in the 'fitting together' of these relations. For example, substantive indications that women secretaries are constituted in patriarchal relations differently from each other contradicts the universality of women's subordination to men inscribed in the generic principles of patriarchy. Yet the introduction of class divisions amongst women secretaries, together with the maintenance of the gender specificity of the occupation (which itself coheres with the principles underlying patriarchy) seems to be connected with these women experiencing different forms of patriarchal subordination. They point to possible complex forms of class and of gender relations within secretarial production. Such tensions and anomalies, between and within class and gender relations, are explored further when analysing the ways in which this occupational structure determines and is shaped by the daily procedures of secretarial production, which is the focus of the next section.

As discussed earlier, secretarial vacancies include a variety of job titles. These are symbols of differentiation and demarcation. Closer scrutiny of secretarial labour processes, in the following section, analyses the nature and structural roots of the operational distinctions which are implicit in this pyramidal structure of designations. Analysis is included of the mechanisms which link the cultural dimension

of class and gender relations, as constituted in these labour processes, with the structure of secretarial work. That is, analysis explores the institutionalization process of class and gender relations (see Chapter II, Figure 4) in the context of secretarial production.

## 2. CONTEMPORARY SECRETARIAL LABOUR PROCESSES

In this section scrutiny of various levels of secretarial labour processes throws light on significant variations in the class and gender relations expressed in the daily routines of this occupation. Material conditions and social relations of secretarial labour processes constitute instances of the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations. The differences between these labour processes are highlighted when the tasks and social relations of personal assistants are contrasted with those of pool typists. The differences, in particular, suggest that the secretarial job titles featuring in advertisements for secretarial labour (see section 1) are not merely different labels which mask similar labour processes. Contrary to official classifications and popular images of the work, secretarial production is by no means unitary. Analysis indicates that the inequalities of class and gender relations act on and through all secretarial labour processes, but that each has a distinctive and patterned application within this hierarchy of labour. That is, they constitute, in part, the specification process between class and gender relations (see Chapter II, Figure 3). At the same time, the specificity of class and gender power, expressed in each ranked labour process, manifests coherencies and incoherencies with the basic principles inherent in class and gender relations. These can be explained in terms of the institutionalization process within and between class and gender relations (see Chapter II, Figure 5).

A catalogue of apparent contradictions circumscribes the labour process of every level of secretarial work. For example, the personal assistant enjoys a relatively high degree of class power which, at first sight, contradicts her very visible patriarchal subordination. Such

contradictions and ambiguities can be explained as constituents of the structures of class relations and of gender relations when exploring the simultaneous application of the dominant forces of capitalism and patriarchy. The dualities of capital/labour, men/women, constitute social dichotomies, but also hierarchies upon which material and symbolic power are based and from which specific control strategies arise. With the simultaneous application and meshing together of different structures of social differentiation emerges a complex hierarchy. In this structural context secretaries can be distinguished not only from male office workers, to sustain a gender division of labour, but also from other secretaries, to facilitate not only class distinctions but also gender distinctions between the labour processes of different secretaries. When the daily cultural realities of secretarial work are analysed, the complicated relational positioning of secretaries with each other and with male office workers surfaces. For example, some secretaries only experience patriarchal subordination in respect of specific classes of male office workers. Some secretaries' relations of production entail class control over other workers, men as well as women. Analysis suggests that the very complexity of the divisions, signalled by the daily relations, tasks and conditions experienced by secretaries, constitute substantive instances of structural agency between class and gender relations.

The hierarchical structure of secretarial production, discussed in the section above, is acted out and shaped by, for example, different levels of remuneration, conditions of work, tasks undertaken, status, responsibility and relationship with management. By examining features of the work, such as authority, control, prestige, fragmentation of tasks, the differential distribution of power amongst secretarial women comes to light. Analysis of these variations in power indicates that they are constituted in expressions of both class and gender relations. However, and apparently paradoxically, in the patterning of the distinctive cultural forms that these relations take, there are frequent contradictions with the basic principles underlying the structure in which they are rooted.

In the case of low level secretaries, their practical forms of subordination appear, at first sight, to cohere with the generic principles of both class and gender relations. When working in jobs in the lower rungs of the secretarial ladder, Downing<sup>(5)</sup> (1981) describes the work as follows:

"The work involved typing invoices and letters from handwritten copy. To break the routine, there was occasional telex work . . . The work was tedious and extremely routine, broken only by the arrival of clerks bringing more work, or completed work which required correction. The work was straightforward . . . The letters of inquiry were preprinted and required only the insertion of the quantity required and the description of the goods, plus the recipient's name and address . . . The quotations were straightforward copy typing and the only complicated feature of the job was knowing which paper to use . . ." (1981:137-8)

The only men with whom, as a low level secretarial worker, Downing had direct contact were themselves in the lower rungs of office labour, performing routine clerical tasks. There was no direct contact with management. As a pooled worker she produced typescripts for any member senior to her in the hierarchy of the organisation. The impersonal communication network meant that she was not even aware of the individual for whom any task was carried out. Pool typists are isolated and insulated, then, from higher level male and female office workers:

"I had little contact with anyone outside the typing office. Occasionally, I would have to take work into the office where the clerks sat on the other side of the stairs, but never had any cause to go upstairs to the offices where the management worked." (Downing 1981:138)

The typists were not left entirely to their own devices. They had a female supervisor:

"A gap of about 15 feet separated the two sections, the typists and the clerks, so the typists were fairly secluded. The supervisor sat with the filing cabinets at the back of the room and her approach could easily be seen and any non-work activities ceased before she reached our desks." (Downing 1981:143)

The physical properties of any office worker's immediate surroundings signal the prestige and status associated with the post held. The physical environment which Downing encountered when in secretarial 'pools' reflects these women's low status:

"Access to the office in which I worked was gained by a dingy staircase . . . The walls had been painted orange some considerable time ago; the paint was flaking and in an attempt to brighten it, the accessible regions of the walls were spattered with pictures cut out from magazines . . . All the pictures had aged and yellowed in the daylight which managed to filter through the dirty windows which looked out onto a breaker's yard . . . The furniture had evidently been purchased at different stages since it did not match, was very old and a mixture of metal and wood. Although there were several typing chairs, only two were in working order, the others were stacked in various corners of the room."  
(1981:137)

Numerous features of the secretarial labour process, at the base of this structured hierarchy, bear the characteristics of a proletarian class location. Fragmentation of tasks results in little meaning or understanding being acquired about the broader business of the organization, or indeed about the actual tasks performed. The nature of the tasks necessitates operators to function in a routine fashion, requiring little decision making, or self direction. At the same time, the female supervisor is constantly present to exercise both immediate and direct control over the pool typist's labour process. There is little official leeway for this category of secretary to exercise control over her own pace of work or tasks performed. Her status and prestige within the organisation generally, and within secretarial production, are denoted by her function, and reinforced by the material symbols of inferiority of her physical environs. In short, all the information on this secretarial labour process provides evidence for analysts, like Braverman (1974) (see Chapter I), who argue that the job itself is proletarianized.

In class terms there were striking similarities between pool male clerks and pool female typists. Both groups were engaged in routine, repetitious, standardised tasks; they were tightly controlled by their respective supervisors; all enjoyed identical deprivations in their surroundings, and had extremely limited contact with management. The divisive factor between these two classified sectors was the gender segregation exhibited in the entirely male or female circumscription of their respective groupings.

Class and gender relations appear to 'fit together' coherently in the contextual setting of pool secretaries. That is, they do not apparently shape tensions, ambiguities or contradictions to each other's structure of power distribution. For instance, pool typists' segregation within a gendered pool coheres with the subordination of women to men inherent in the broad principles of patriarchy; the proletarian characteristics of their labour process cohere both with the general principles of class relations and the structural distribution of power within patriarchy. However, when comparing expressions of class and gender relations constituted in this labour process with those constituted in other, differentiated, labour processes, incoherencies within class and within gender relations come to light. For instance, a disruption of the basic rules of class relations is suggested by the patriarchal relations between the two 'pooled' sectors. That is, distinctions within the class categories are not a feature of the generic principles of class relations. In practice patriarchal relations between 'pooled' office workers mystify their common class position and reproduce different identities for the men and women concerned. What is not clear from analysis at the level of the formal structure of secretarial production, is that any potential class unity is, in the daily procedures of the work, undermined by informal relations between the gender segregated 'pools':

"The form of control in this office was less directly patriarchal than in situations where women are in constant contact with their bosses, but when male clerks came into the office, they would announce their arrival with a general 'hello girls', or 'how are the girls today?' in a half-joking half-patronising tone."  
(Downing 1981:140)

In spite of formal strategies of tight control, the copy typists manoeuvred some relaxation of rules and regulations. This behaviour was covertly condoned by management and functioned to maintain copy typists' overall consent to their working conditions and relations<sup>(6)</sup>. Of her experiences in the typing pool, Downing states:

"Our isolation from the rest of the people who worked in the company guaranteed us some freedom and we were thus able to go out to the shops in office hours . . . we could also cease typing and talk. Conversations never concerned the work itself, mainly because the work defied discussion . . . the information we typed

on the quotations, enquiries and invoices was completely incoherent to us." (1981:140-1)

Regarding shorthand-typists she notes:

"Reading was a favorite occupation and had become institution-alised, both during breaks and in slack periods when the typists developed the habit of opening the drawer to the desk and propping the book up against the typewriter in order to avoid being seen to be reading. If during non break periods the supervisor arrived, or anyone in a position of authority, they would simply allow the book to fall into the drawer and close it." (1981:144)

The practice of reading was condoned by management, rather than being identified as serious insubordination:

"it was almost as if everyone knew that the typists occupied slack periods by reading, but it could not be allowed to be seen."  
(Downing 1981:144)

The common feature of all the labour processes to which reference has so far been made is that the participants were 'pooled' with their gendered class peers. Primary identification was with fellow workers and there was an element of solidarity in the actions described. In class terms, the material condition of these labour processes gave rise to a measure of proletarian unity amongst low-level secretarial women. The tactics engaged in undoubtedly assisted the women to gain some meaning and control of their otherwise monotonous and routinized work. In spite of tight control being exercised over the pooled secretaries, they managed to negotiate a measure of freedom of action and control over their own labour process. In other words, in spite of their class and gender subordination, they exercised at least a token resistance to the practical constraints of domination.

Downing reports that the spaces pool secretaries created away from official work were used for chatting about topics such as home, boyfriends, children and husbands. In the main they read magazines like Woman's Own. This action is indicative of cultural connections between class and gender relations. The meaningless, routine and fragmented tasks, together with the immediacy of tight control, confer upon this labour process a proletarian condition. Where the subordinate group manages to obtain some relaxation of formal rules, they resort to

considering areas of their lives, outside production, from which they gain some meaning. That is, they engage in gendered strategies which simultaneously reinforce the subordination written into their class relations. The domestic issues they discussed are undoubtedly circumscribed by inequalities rooted in patriarchal relations. However, the actions did not contest the gender division of labour in their office location. On the contrary, they reinforced their separation from their male proletarian peers, given the stereotypical feminine topics of conversation. These actions cemented pool typists' gendered class identity and solidarity.

Actions exhibiting solidarity between low level secretaries demonstrated, then, both class and gender formation which emerged combined in their substantive forms as an unambiguous identity. Cohering with the basic principles underlying class relations, the women only identified with other secretaries in the same proletarian condition as themselves, and there was minimal contact with higher level secretaries. At the same time, and contradicting the generic rules of class relations, this solidarity excluded their male class peers. In other words, pool typists' actions demonstrate both a classed gender unity and a gendered class unity. For example, of pool shorthand typists Downing observes:

"Their dissatisfaction (with their work) was evidently channelled into the solidarity they developed towards one another which manifested itself in various ways. . . . they made comments about the younger male clerks questioning the strength of their virility and sexual ability. This process of verbal emasculation was engaged in when the victim was just within earshot, although of course he could not respond . . . They cemented their solidarity for one another by covering for lateness and the odd absence if necessary. They also shared out the work. If one typist had received a lot of dictation and some of the others had none, then she would dictate her shorthand notes to them and the work would be evenly spread . . . Although we could always read, it was considered unfair for one woman to spend her time reading, while others were working." (1981:147-8)

The relations of production of pool secretaries express, then, both coherencies and incoherencies with the generic principles of class and gender relations. They are constituted both in the tasks and social relations of the labour process and in the class and gender divisions

between pool typists and pool male clerks. Further features of divisions within office production come to light when analysing the substantive contrasts and similarities between pool typists' and higher level secretaries' labour processes. Material variations within secretarial production signal sharp divisions. They suggest the possibility of the different cultural outcomes of the structural shaping of class and gender relations by each other. That is, there are differences as well as similarities between the constraints and opportunities for action which inhere in ranked secretarial labour processes.

Downing notes some of the material practices which reflect and help to shape the hierarchical structure of secretarial labour:

"There was a clear hierarchy among the secretaries which was presumably reflected in the salary structure . . . The hierarchy was reflected also in the types of work performed by the different secretaries . . ." (1981:154)

Statistics provide evidence of pay differentials between low and high grade secretaries:

SECRETARIES' PAY PER WEEK (1982-3)

	<u>Bottom of Scale</u> £	<u>Top of Scale</u> £
Senior Secretaries	86.44	148.46
Secretaries	69.59	145.10
Audio Typists	56.86	114.95
Shorthand Typists	56.86	117.69
Copy Typists	53.08	109.15

Derived from various tables in LRD, Bargaining Report No 24, 1983, pp3-7

Downing's descriptions of the senior secretary's labour process indicate lack of direct supervision, self-direction in a variety of tasks, prestige and status. For example, she talks about one managing director's private secretary as follows:

"She was responsible for personnel problems, administration and delegation of work, as well as performing her own secretarial

duties . . . she held herself somewhat aloof from the other secretaries and her requests for other secretaries to perform this or that task were never resented." (1981:154)

In another office, Downing worked for a high ranking personal assistant. In outlining her own duties she provides insights into the work of this top level secretary. This personal assistant apparently took advantage of her patriarchal subordination to her male boss, to pass some of her own tasks to, and thereby exercise control over, lower level women:

"I was there to do Fiona's work, since she was expected to be out of the office for some time arranging the renovation and decoration of the offices across the square which they were planning to move to shortly . . . She also came in to find me things to do which she'd put off doing in the past . . . Most of the company's business . . . seemed to take place over luncheons, and Fiona accompanied her boss on these occasions . . . There was little direct supervision since the men were usually out of the office, attending meetings at other companies, or even playing golf . . ." (1981:160-1)

High level secretaries perform a greater variety of tasks than lower level secretaries. Their work is distinctly less routine and standardised. Silverstone<sup>(7)</sup> confirmed the variety of tasks which top ranking secretaries undertake:

"Secretaries listed a wide range of tasks they performed, 150 in all." (1974:211)

Among the tasks most commonly undertaken by high level secretaries were: typing; telephoning; travel arrangements; keeping records and statistics; writing own letters; minute taking; supervising other staff; checking incomes and expenses; liaising with other staff; making tea/coffee; dealing with enquiries, queries and visitors.

Women at the apex of the hierarchy were distinguished not only from pool typists but also from lower level private secretaries by their tasks:

"This is shown by less typing, telephoning, shorthand, photocopying, tea or coffee making, and more travel arrangements, keeping records and statistics, collecting information, taking and dealing with minutes, supervising staff and liaising with other people." (Silverstone 1974:215)

In addition top level secretaries:

"spend a greater proportion of their time on what can be classified as responsible tasks, in particular delegated work. It would appear that greater variety accompanies greater responsibility." (Silverstone 1974:225)

"responsibility for secretaries, measured by variety, is indeed rewarded by higher pay." (Silverstone 1974:226)

Statements made by the immediate bosses of several secretaries shed light on the control exerted by top secretaries over their own labour process, as well as that exercised over them:

"I expect a high quality personal service. She must use her initiative at all times . . . She must be a participant in what we are doing and takes on certain parts of the work entirely. She even forges my signature and does the whole thing herself."

"My secretary does very little day-to-day typing as routine letters are dealt with centrally. She deals with conference matters, especially the organisational part which is very important for me. She arranges my meetings, agendas, accommodation, etc. She also works on specific projects which come up in the organisation. She is very much a p.a." (Silverstone 1974:238)

These outlines of top level secretaries' work contrast strikingly with comparable details of the pool typist's labour process, presented earlier. Each element of their respective labour processes discussed so far depicts distinctions in control and power rooted in, and cohering with, the generic principles of capitalist class relations. However, the advantages of far greater degrees of class power in the higher grades, must be considered in the light of the individual who delegates and permits this level of secretary to wield control and power. As Silverstone contends:

"the responsibility involved in any one job was dependent upon the individual boss's willingness to give scope for independent action. Consequently each job was dependent upon the particular boss and secretary and not upon its basic constituents." (1974:229)

Respondents in both Silverstone's and Downing's research were illustrative of the gender division of labour in office work. All secretaries were female, while bosses were male. At the personal assistant level women negotiated directly with a man to determine the precise nature of their tasks and responsibilities. It is in the daily realities of the work of personal assistants, rather than in the formal

structure of the occupation, that gender relations impinge directly upon the relations of production of secretarial labour. Substantive expressions of patriarchal subordination in the personal assistant's labour process are in tension with the relatively high degree of class power expressed in this labour process. That is, the personal assistant's patriarchal subordination is a coherent expression of men's domination of women, which, in principle, rules out the possibility of women exercising class power over any men or other women.

The degree of power allotted to a top level secretary derives from a patriarchal relationship between her and the male manager to whom she is assigned. It is in the very nature of this relationship that gender subordination is experienced at first hand by the personal assistant. The male has the position of dominance and the power of ultimate decisions on the latitudes of vicarious class power permitted in his secretary's role and function. The personalised gender relations between this working couplet involve a complex reciprocity of status and privilege. The unequal exchange of status phenomenon is inherent in the personal assistant/boss contract:

"The status of a secretary is derived from the status of the person for whom she works. The secretary who works for the chairman of a large organisation has higher status than one who works for a middle manager." (Silverstone 1974:175)

Silverstone goes on to indicate the reciprocity entailed:

"Not only does the secretary not like to work for more than one person, the boss does not like to share his secretary with another . . . The question of delays and priority of work is one cause of resistance, another is fear of loss of status. If an employer's work does not get priority . . . apart from the very real annoyance that is felt, it may be interpreted as a loss of status."  
(1974:176-7)

Direct control of a female enhances the traditional sense of masculinity in the manager and femininity in the secretary. At the same time, to symbolise the importance of his work, the boss requires the total, individualised and undivided attention of his secretary. In return the manager's secretary gains vicarious status since the more important she can make his function appear, the greater the importance and prestige that can be attached to her own work. The patriarchal relations

operate, therefore, according to the inequities inscribed in the generic principles of patriarchy. But, given the high class power of both the personal assistant and her boss, in comparison with pool female typists and pool male clerks, the gender divide between them is incoherent with the basic principles of class relations. In respect of patriarchal subordination the personal assistant experiences not only deprivations, but 'paradoxically' certain advantages, in comparison with a low level pool typist, from a labour process which is in part governed by patriarchal relations. The patriarchal relations entailed in the boss/secretary relationship influence numerous facets of the private secretary's work:

"The status of the person for whom a secretary works is a very important consideration, since it may well affect the regard with which she is held within an organization, the type of people she will meet in the course of her work, the nature of the work that is done, her financial rewards, and the interest she finds in her job." (Silverstone 1974:177)

It is crucial to appreciate the class advantages which the details of the labour process of top level secretaries demonstrate in comparison with comparable detail of the labour process of pool typists. When analysis incorporates differences between the labour processes of women engaged in the same occupational grouping, private secretaries are identified as experiencing specific class prerogatives. These contrast with deprivations in the essentially proletarian class location of her 'pooled' gender peers. But, the class benefits in the upper strata of secretarial labour are derived, in part, from individualized strategies of direct patriarchal control by a male executive. In this working milieu patriarchal relations buttress capitalist class relations. The disadvantages which accrue from the former set of relations are in part offset by, and contradict, advantages in the latter category of relations. In this instance of connections between different moments of the cultural dimension of class and gender relations they are, in part, constituting each other's structure. That is, in analysis of this particular aspect of the cultural dimension of class and gender relations, they reciprocally shape each other's structure of relations, constituting one instance of structural agency. In addition, the labour processes of the male clerk and the managing director are distinguished

by the differential distribution of class power, constituted in the administrative structure of the organization. In these men's labour processes class and gender are connected. That is, it is only those men in advantageous class locations who are formally permitted to wield direct patriarchal control over high level secretaries. The differential distribution of patriarchal power between men, which is incoherent with the generic rules of patriarchy, then connects with the superior class attributes of personal assistants' labour process in comparison with lower ranking male and female office labour. In other words, the substantive class divisions between secretarial women, cohering with the broad principles of class relations, is constituted, in part, in incoherencies within patriarchal relations.

The exchange of status contract in the personal secretary/boss relationship entails a further element of class relations. Enhancement of the male executive's standing is often achieved by the acquisition of the services and social acumen of a woman enjoying the heritage of a dominant class family and/or successful education background. This cultural power is constituted in domestic, education and production class continuities, as illustrated by Downing's description of one top secretary:

"Fiona had been to finishing school where she had completed a secretarial course. She lived in her own flat, purchased by her parents . . . The other women who worked there as personal assistants all came from the same class background as Fiona and talked with the confidence which middle class women have . . . They could afford expensive clothes and hairdressers, shoes and handbags. They were expected to look the part because of their visibility when the company received visitors and because they might be called upon to attend a business luncheon . . . They could afford winter skiing holidays and out of season suntans. In short, they did not have to try to be the part, they were the part. They were at the top in the secretarial field, but their position at the top was guaranteed not by their shorthand and typing, but by their middle class femininity." (1981:161-2)

Downing's description of these women evokes the stereotyped femininity incorporated into popular social constructions of secretarial women. However, the class specificity of the gendered attributes must be taken into account and compared with the women she met in the lower rungs of secretarial work:

"The permanent typists were all aged between 18 and 27 and all came from what I would describe as respectable working class families . . . Their husbands and boyfriends worked either in clerical work, or skilled factory or craft occupations." (1981:145)

In line with the structure of office production, scrutiny of secretarial labour processes indicates that gender confines all secretarial women to a segregated sector of production. However, classed gender attributes contribute to their class location within this broad band of female labour. Exploration of the formal hierarchy of the occupation does not reveal this aspect of the substantive divisions within secretarial production. Since classed gender attributes of secretarial women constitute an aspect of the cultural dimension of class and gender relations, there are apparent anomalies between occupational structure and daily practices of secretarial production. Further potential anomalies, between occupational structure and daily practices, are revealed when analysing secretarial labour processes. For example, in the boss/secretary employment contract, the conformity of class specificity of both parties permits sufficient, but unequal, sharing of power within this partnership for privatised negotiation of working conditions and relations which are not tightly enforced by organisational regulations.

All the women respondents in Downing's and Silverstone's research were able to offer employers traditional secretarial skills. This reinforces the apparent homogeneity implicit in the tight gender specificity denoted by the structure of the occupation. However, a factor which is not clear at the level of the structure of the labour process is that the social acumen associated with specific class cultures is an important factor in women's destination within the ranked strata of secretaries. Downing reported that one high finance organisation used strategies to attract only women from the dominant classes to the high level secretarial ranks:

"Either they employed the services of a top secretarial agency who were paid a fee large enough to guarantee certain types of women, or they obtained their staff through personal contacts. Fiona told me she'd been offered the job because her father was a personal friend of Peter Cambridge (the owner of the company)." (1981:162)

Another strategy, again not discernible in analysis of the structure of the occupation, which effectively debars working class women from high level secretarial work, is the tendency to define this level of work in terms of gendered social attributes, rather than professional indicators such as educational qualifications. In this way, structural limitations, based on classed cultural attributes, but with a gender specificity, are woven into the practical functioning of the secretarial hierarchy to prevent the proletarian typist from achieving mobility to the top of the secretarial ladder. Silverstone quotes one employer:

"We take a secretary on, based upon what we can see at an interview. We ask about education, but it doesn't influence us if their personality and character appear to be what we want."  
(1974:99)

Having received similar statements from employers, Silverstone concludes:

"General attributes which were often mentioned in lieu of educational qualifications were intelligence, common sense, a good cultural background, a good school report, or a 'worldly education'." (1974:98-9)

The various substantive distinguishing features of the upper and lower strata of secretarial production demonstrate clear class divisions between women secretaries, both in terms of their class origins as well as the conditions and relations of their labour process. Patriarchal control is most transparently culturally expressed in the higher reaches of the work. However, the class advantages which result cement allegiance to the dominant classes, in spite of the immediate material subordination within this class specificity to male dominance. At the base of the secretarial hierarchy, control is exercised explicitly in class terms, but at this level informal gender relations, made possible by, but not a necessary feature of, the structure of office work, function to distance the women from their male class peers. In the dominant class locations of the top level secretary and her high ranking male manager, dominant class solidarity overrides the inequalities inherent in gender relations, creating a uniting bond between the gendered working partners and giving rise to gendered elite class identities. At the proletarian level, gender operates to splinter working class unity in the institutions of production. The patterning

of comparative shares of both class and gender power, resultant upon the reciprocal articulation of these relations, is a feature of these differentiated identities of secretarial women.

Clear signs of a proletarian gendered identity and solidarity amongst pool typists, which concurrently sets them apart from their fellow male clerks in its gender specificity, were cited earlier. There are sharp contrasts in the allegiances fostered by top level secretaries. In an office where private secretaries were assigned to particular managers, Downing notes:

"Although the secretaries were all friendly towards each other . . . the feeling of solidarity which I described in the building society (where she worked as a pool typist) was absent here."  
(1981:157)

The physical and relational isolation of top level secretaries from their centralised typing pool gender peers confirms other features of class differentiation between the ranked sectors rather than reinforcing any sense of gender solidarity. Secretaries at the apex of the hierarchy are not, however, isolated from all other office workers. They are in daily contact with high level male managers. Their working location prompts primary identification with a certain class of male, in spite of the inherent gender deprivations entailed for the secretary, rather than any sense of sisterhood with lower level secretaries.

Being a top secretary is signalled by being accommodated in an individual office within the management corridors of power, and by the symbols of power which adorn that office. This is illustrated by Downing's descriptions of an office which 'deals with the top of the hierarchy':

"The offices themselves were extremely tastefully decorated in complete contrast to Rubberized Products Limited (where she worked as a copy typist) . . . The floors were covered with oriental carpets or thick pile fitted carpets. The office which I shared with Fiona . . . (had) soft lighting, large expensive exotic plants, velvet curtains, paintings hung on the walls, chinese antique vases displayed on top of antique chests and tables, and the image was completed with a cabinet containing crystal glassware and decanters containing a variety of spirits." (1981:160)

The multiplicity of job titles which developed in the 1970's (see section 1) within the secretarial labour market constitute an overt symbol of differentiation between the categories. This might suggest the establishment of precise criteria on which to base the allocation of a particular job label, either relating to the nature of the work or the qualifications and ability of the individual required to fill the post. However, as indicated by Silverstone (1974) job titles are employed indiscriminantly and formal job descriptions are rarely issued<sup>(8)</sup>. For these reasons, a woman may be able to acquire the higher status title of 'private secretary' by working in a small backstreet office of a one-man business. However, the material conditions of her work may be comparable in every way to those of the low level pool typist in the prestigious head office of a multi-national company. Job titles have not, therefore, been taken in this analysis as a sufficient indicator of place within the hierarchy. Instead analysis has probed the material conditions, tasks and social relations of ranked secretarial labour processes. The differences and similarities between them constitute substantive divisions, analysis of which points to the forming, informing, shaping and moving together of class and gender relations. They indicate complex forms of class and of gender relations, which contrast with the comparatively simple forms of these relations which inhere in dualists' frameworks.

## CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of secretarial production has indicated that the material and social practices of both its structure and daily procedures constitute cultural instances of class and gender relations. As the material and social practices, which together make up secretarial production, can be interpreted as signalling boundaries which are rooted in the structures of both class and gender relations, coherencies between the cultural and generic principles dimensions of each set of relations are an essential element of analysis of this sphere of production. For example, all secretarial women experience some form of patriarchal subordination. The cultural practices depicting this subordination, constituting an

instance of the cultural dimension of patriarchal relations, cohere with the generic principles underlying the structure of patriarchal relations.

When analysing coherencies within patriarchy, the common experiences of all secretarial women are highlighted. In contrast, when analysing coherencies within class relations, distinctions surface between women in their experiences within secretarial production. So, for example, variations in the control exercised over secretaries and the control they have over their own and others' labour process constitute, in part, the cultural dimension of class relations as expressed within secretarial production. In turn such practices, which shape class boundaries between different levels of secretarial labour, cohere with the general rules inscribed in capitalist class relations. However, when investigating the differences between ranked secretarial labour processes, some of the practical procedures of this differentiation process have to do with, for example, being in daily contact with, or totally removed from, male managers. Given an occupational structure of an almost exclusively male management and female secretarial workforce, this aspect of differentiation between women secretaries is concerned with patriarchal relations. Being either cut off from, or in personalized daily contact with, a male manager constitutes substantive differences between secretaries in their experiences of patriarchal subordination. Yet this element of the wide-ranging variations between women secretaries' labour processes, contradicts the universality and uniformity of women's subordination to men underlying patriarchal relations. This aspect of secretarial work, as well as its structure of tight gender specificity, both constitute instances of the cultural dimension of patriarchy. However, incoherencies within patriarchy, signalled by differences between secretaries in their daily workaday experiences of gender subordination, is at least in tension with the uniformity of their patriarchal subordination, implicit in an occupational structure which perpetuates the gender specificity of secretarial labour.

The class advantages which personal assistants enjoy over pool typists, are derived, in part, from their direct patriarchal subordination to a male manager. In this aspect of personal assistants' labour process the cultural dimension of patriarchy is informing the structure of class relations between secretarial women. But this same patriarchal subordination, expressed in personal assistants' labour process, simultaneously coheres with the broad principles of patriarchy. In other words, it constitutes one instance of structural agency between class and gender relations. That is, the pool typist does not experience formal gender subordination at first hand in the daily routines of her workaday life. In this sense she experiences a different form of patriarchal subordination from that of the personal assistant. However, this apparent gender advantage over the personal assistant coincides with, and must be set against, the pool typist's comparative disadvantages in terms of her share of class power. The pool typist's patriarchal superiority over the personal assistant is constituted in material circumstances whereby there is no opportunity for acquiring vicarious class power from a male with a sufficient degree of class power to share, if unequally, with a female aide. The cultural dimension of class and patriarchy expressed in the pool typist's labour process, links coherently with their respective generic principles. But, in contrasting with the labour processes of both personal assistants and male office workers, the precise form of the pool typist's gender and class subordination derives from the shaping of the one structure of relations by the other. Therefore, like personal assistants' labour process, that of pool typists also constitutes an instance of structural agency between class and gender relations.

The daily practices of both pool typists' and personal assistants' labour process each constitute, then, an instance of class and gender structural agency. That there are differences in the outcomes of structural agency between these systems of social differentiation is manifested in the contrasts between these two labour processes. In addition, the material conditions and social relations which realize each instance of structural agency incorporate continuities and discontinuities, coherencies and incoherencies, between substantive

expressions and underlying generic principles, within and between class and gender relations. For example, the material circumstances which indicate that pool typists enjoy a lesser degree of patriarchal subordination than personal assistants, contradicts their relative disadvantages in class terms. That is, there is a difference, in this case, between the cultural dimension of patriarchal relations and the cultural dimension of class relations. Such differences within one moment of power point to the complexity of class relations and the complexity of gender relations. Furthermore, the complexity of each category of relations is, in part, a function of their interconnectedness, constituted in numerous and varied instances of structural agency.

The contradictions, tensions, ambiguities, continuities and coherencies, within and between culture and generic principles, comprise the complexity of both class relations and gender relations. Analysis of the form of each of these relations, contained in the variable outcomes of their structural agency, explains contradictions and anomalies, within and between class and gender, as a constituent facet of each category of relations, rather than as a paradox or simply an exception proving the rules of their generic structural principles. For example, pool typists' enhanced patriarchal power, in comparison with personal assistants, functions to confirm their class subordination to personal assistants. In other words, this contradiction within patriarchy 'supports' coherencies within class relations. At the same time, the form that pool typists' comparatively enhanced patriarchal power takes cuts them off from their male class peers. So this contradiction within patriarchy functions concurrently to confirm gender distinctions within class formations. In other words, although it appears paradoxical, this contradiction within patriarchy also brings about, through its connections with class relations, coherencies within patriarchy which reinforce systematic social differentiation between men and women.

When exploring connections between class and gender relations, where analysis of one system of social differentiation affects changes in analysis of the structure of the other, apparent contradictions and

ambiguities within each can be explained, then, as a feature of their interconnections. At the same time, the outcome of this interconnection contains coincidences of the cultural specificities of class and gender power, constituting, in part, a specification process between these relations. For example, the comparatively high degree of class power of personal assistants coincides with their comparative disadvantages in patriarchal terms. This patterning of class and gender relations, contained in the incoherencies and coherencies between culture and generic principles, within and between these relations, denotes their interconstitution.

With regard to comparing the cultural manifestation of class and gender relations on the one hand in the structure and, on the other hand, in the daily procedures of secretarial production, there are both similarities and distinctions between them. They constitute part of the ideological effects of articulation. For example, the tight boundaries to proletarian secretarial women's career opportunities, created in daily practices, are not discernible at the level of the structure of this occupation. As these women have extremely limited formal, and very few informal, contacts with higher level personal assistants, it is likely to be difficult for them to gain a clear understanding of the boundaries built into the organizational structure of their occupation. Yet this structure partly enables and is shaped by, for instance, proletarian women's retention within this level of secretarial work. These and other aspects of the connections between and within class and gender relations will be discussed more fully in Chapter VI when specific issues of power are addressed in analysis of the ideological effects of class and gender articulation.

This analysis has explained that the structure and labour processes of secretarial production constitute, in part, class and gender articulation. In the next two chapters analysis centres on secretarial education. The structure and daily processes of this vocational education, in explicitly reproducing the labour power analysed in this chapter, are likely to constitute, in another institutional context, part of the reciprocal articulation of class and gender relations. How

this education contextual moment of the interconstitution of culture and structure, within and between class and gender relations, links with this interconstitution as realized within secretarial production, is analysed in Chapters IV and V as a possible constituent of the reciprocal articulation of these relations.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER III

(1) A detailed account of the initial feminization of office work is not given in this thesis as considerable data is available elsewhere on this aspect of the history of women's office work. See for example:

Benet Mary Kathleen, Secretary, an Enquiry into the Female Ghetto, Sidgwick and Jackson, London, 1972, Chapter II.

Crompton Rosemary and Jones Gareth, White-Collar Proletariat, Macmillan, London, 1984, pp 16-34.

Delgado Alan, The Enormous File, A Social History of the Office, Murray John, London, 1979, Chapter III.

Downing Hazel, Developments in Secretarial Labour, unpublished PhD Thesis, Birmingham, 1981, Chapter III.

McNally Fiona, Women for Hire, MPhil Thesis, Durham University, 1976.

Silverstone Rosalie, The Office Secretary: a Study of an Occupational Group of Women Office Workers, unpublished PhD Thesis, City University, 1974, Chapter I.

Zimmeck Meta, 'Jobs for the Girls: the Expansion of Clerical Work for Women, 1850-1914' in John Angela V, Unequal Opportunities, Blackwell Basil, Oxford, 1986, pp 153-177.

(2) Statistics on the number of women engaged as secretarial workers differ. This statistical variation is likely to result from the imprecisions in definitions of what constitutes secretarial or indeed white collar labour (Bain and Price 1972). Although reservations are acknowledged about the precision of statistics on secretaries, the increase in numbers is sufficiently marked to conclude that there was a dramatic expansion in this sector of labour, particularly after the second world war.

(3) This investigation does not centre on the history of secretarial labour, which is worthy of further research in its own right. Only sketchmap information is provided here which in fact points to the necessity for more detailed research and analysis. In respect of historical changes in the social class origins of secretaries more detailed investigation is necessary than was possible with the practical constraints of this study (see Appendix). Although data is presented which indicate broad shifts in the social class heritage of recruits to secretarial labour, it is noted that there is some controversy on the class origins of clerical workers. For example Crompton and Jones (1984) provide details of relevant statistics and conclude that:

"Even if it is true that there was a preference for women of middle-class backgrounds by the first decade of the twentieth century, women from working-class families were being recruited into clerical work often in the larger more modern offices."  
(1984:20)

Davy also contributes to the discussion on the social class origins of female secretaries:

"On the one hand, there is the assertion that the early pioneers were women from middle and lower-middle-class backgrounds. On the other, it is asserted that the great mass of female clerks came directly from elementary school with little initial commercial education . . . When looking at the 40 years (1900-1939) as a whole there appears to be a gradual increase of women whose fathers were skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled manual workers, and a slight decline of women whose fathers were in the lower-middle-class." (1986:127)

The data of this chapter suggest, however, that women from working class background did not enter secretarial work in significant numbers until much later in this century.

(4) In an endeavour to pinpoint the era in which the current secretarial designations first appeared, job advertisements in newspapers were studied. The Times and The Evening Standard were selected as they represented possible different areas of this job market. The editions for the first Thursday in November at five yearly intervals since 1945 were examined. November was chosen as it avoided national holiday seasons, which affect the job market. Thursday was selected as in recent years The Times has elected to devote a specialist section of its advertising to office workers on this day of the week, under the heading 'La Crème de la Crème'.

(5) Although Downing's data is utilised, analysis in this study is at variance with that provided by the originator of the information. In this re-analysis of Downing's data the central focus is connections between class and gender relations. In contrast, Downing prioritized patriarchy in her analysis. For more detailed discussion of Downing's model of analysis see Chapter I.

(6) The examples of what Downing terms 'resistance' provide additional information on the conditions experienced by women employed in the lower ranks of secretarial labour. They contribute towards the proletarian characteristics of low level secretarial labour.

(7) The data on secretarial labour provided by Silverstone (1974) are numerically extensive, in comparison with Downing's data. Silverstone acquired her information by requesting 252 business establishments and over 500 secretaries to complete questionnaires, as well as conducting interviews with relevant respondents. Her main aim was to test the hypothesis that secretarial work was a route for upward social class mobility for women and to suggest ways in which secretarial women could gain more recognition for their skills and knowledge. Although it could be considered that Silverstone's data is now somewhat outdated, it accords in many respects with information provided by Downing nearly a decade later. This complementarity between the two research documents lends credence to the validity and reliability of information gleaned by their extremely different methodological procedures.

Downing adopted participant observer status to acquire data on

secretarial labour. In contrast, Silverstone conducted a nationwide postal survey of secretaries who were members of two professional associations of secretaries: The Institute of Qualified Private Secretaries and the National Association of Private Secretaries. In addition she requested a sample of London Secretaries to complete a questionnaire. The details of the posts they held clearly showed that they were all in the higher echelons of the secretarial hierarchy. For example, most worked on an individual basis for a high ranking executive. Silverstone notes that members of the professional organisations tended to hold very responsible posts (for example, Personal Assistant to the Managing Director) in the highest reaches of secretarial labour, while her sample of London secretaries were in a slightly lower category, being, for example, Private Secretary to a lower level male manager. In spite of this fine differentiation between the two categories of secretaries, Silverstone's sample has relevance for only one sector of the secretarial labourforce which is being investigated in this research. Her data refer to high level secretaries in the context of this study. That is, this study is concerned with similarities and differences between the constraints and opportunities for action which inhere in ranked secretarial labour processes. In this respect analysis focusses on pool copy typists, at the base, and executive secretaries at the apex of the hierarchy.

(8) A major problem associated with any investigation into secretarial labour concerns the imprecision of job designations in this area of work. The difficulty is highlighted when considering the secretarial classifications implicit in the two research documents under consideration (Downing 1981, Silverstone 1974). Neither of the investigators made any comprehensive commentary on the indiscriminate use of job titles within secretarial labour. It is only by examining their respective data in detail that any assessment can be made of the specific categories of secretaries included in their research. For example, although limitations were imposed by Silverstone's sampling methods, even within this narrow top band of secretaries, occupational participants used a multiplicity of titles to designate their secretarial work. When requested to give the title of the positions they held, these high ranking secretaries produced a wide range of designations, which underlines the conceptual confusion surrounding secretarial job titles. The designations given included:

administrative assistant, audio-secretary, branch secretary, clerical officer, supervisor, personal assistant, parliamentary secretary, secretarial assistant, senior secretary, private secretary (1974:299).

Downing provides no official job titles for the posts she held during her temporary secretarial work. However, from the details she gives on the nature of the tasks involved and the social relations encountered, it is apparent that her data refers to every stratum of secretarial labour. At one time, as a participant observer, she was working in the lower echelons of secretarial labour, within a typing pool. At a later stage she became a private secretary in an exclusive financial organisation. Her data, therefore, covers the same range of posts incorporated within the generic designation of secretarial labour used in this investigation.

Although Downing does not explain her specific categorisation of secretarial labour, it is appropriate on several counts. The uniting bonds between pool typists and executive secretaries concern common skills and knowledge, similarities in training procedures and qualifications. However, in providing such explanations for linking various sectors within a generic group, designated 'secretarial labour', the features which connect the various strata beg the question of the criteria on which managements differentiate between the subsections. This is one of the issues which is addressed in detail when analysing secretarial education (Chapters IV and V).

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SYSTEM OF SECRETARIAL EDUCATION

#### INTRODUCTION

Having analysed secretarial labour processes in production, in the previous chapter, the focus of analysis now turns to secretarial education. This chapter centres analysis at the level of the formal system of secretarial education, while the central concern of the next chapter is at the level of the lived realities of secretarial students and teachers. In effect, analysis of both secretarial production and secretarial education anticipates exploring the relationship between these sets of institutions.

This chapter explores coherencies and incoherencies, within and between class and gender relations, as realized in the system of secretarial education in England. The emphasis here is on the formal curricula of secretarial courses represented in the public literature on these courses. In this respect various aspects of secretarial education are examined, including differences and similarities between: formal syllabuses, entry stipulations, credentials, students' anticipatory location in secretarial production. These constitute boundaries between secretarial courses and colleges, which, in turn, constitute the formal structure of this system of education. The strength of these boundaries

is analysed in the context of the differences and similarities between substantive expressions of class and gender relations as realized in the various aspects of secretarial education which are explored.

The structure of secretarial education is, in part, contained in the dominant and subordinated class associations of private and state education, both of which offer this kind of vocational education. It is likely that there will be differences, as well as similarities, between substantive expressions of class relations in the two classed sectors of secretarial education. At the same time, if class relations articulate gender relations, there may also be differences, as well as similarities, between the two sectors, constituted in substantive expressions of gender relations. In other words, being female, and electing to take a gender specific secretarial course, does not necessarily lead to an educational experience expressing uniform class and gender relations. Yet, for instance, in defining women's universal subordination to men, the generic principles of patriarchy suggest a common class and gender condition for all women. This indicates that possible tensions and ambiguities, within and between class and gender relations, are constituted in the formal system of secretarial education.

Examining substantive expressions of class and of gender relations, contained in the system of secretarial education, illuminates the coincidence of particular cultural instances of class relations with particular cultural instances of gender relations. In other words, this mode of analysis explores the specification process of class and gender articulation (see Chapter II, Figure 3). This sheds light on instances of structural agency between these relations. In turn, analysis of the interconstitution of the forms of class and of gender relations with these substantive expressions of these relations, explores the institutionalization process of class and gender articulation (see Chapter II, Figure 4) in respect of this system of education.

An historical perspective on the system of secretarial education is taken in the first section of the chapter. Changes, over time, to this

educational structure are explored, which constitute expressions of class and/or gender relations. Pressures from various social institutions which, in part, shaped these substantive changes are examined. For example, the expansion of full-time secretarial education in the 1950's introduced extensive state provision. Prior to this private colleges monopolized full-time secretarial education. The overall expansion of secretarial education resulted partly from a need, expressed by employers, for an increased administrative labourforce. In providing suitably qualified labour, the gender exclusivity and broad class divisions within secretarial education reproduced both the class distinctions and also the tight gender specificity exhibited in the developing hierarchy of secretarial production (see Chapter III).

Broadly, then, the gender uniformity and class divisions, which characterise the structure of secretarial education, correspond with the gender and class structures of administrative and secretarial work. This coherence between the class and gender structures of education and of production suggests that the institutions of production may have a dominating hold over the procedures and processes of education. On the other hand, pressures from, for instance, Government Reports to standardize vocational qualifications were also a factor in shaping changes in the system of secretarial education. These connect with pressures exerted by production. Analysis suggests that, partly because of variety, in origin and needs expressed, of these pressures and responses, expressions of class and gender relations in secretarial education are unlikely to be the perfect reflection of those manifested in any other set of institutions, including, of course, production. Contradictions, ambiguities and coherencies, between and within class and gender relations, as realized in different institutional contexts, then surface as aspects of the complexities of each category of relations.

The second section of the chapter focusses analysis on the contemporary structure of secretarial education. The class and gender divisions, exhibited by the institutional structures of the variety of colleges providing secretarial education and their formal curricula, are

explored. For instance, high level secretarial students in state colleges are taught decision making skills as part of their training for secretarial work. In contrast, these skills are largely omitted from private college secretarial curricula. However, private college students are destined for high level secretarial work, where decision making is a feature of the labour process (see Chapter III). In terms of the content of the formal curriculum at least, there is an incoherence here, then, between education and production, constituted in specific cultural moments of class relations. However, this incoherence within class relations in part informs class differences between state and private secretarial curricula. It thereby contributes to the institutionalization of class boundaries between these sectors of secretarial education.

Secretarial education is explicitly concerned with reproducing labour power which, in production, is simultaneously classed and gendered (see Chapter III). The structure of secretarial education must, then, in part express coherencies between class and gender relations in education and in production. On the other hand, there are ambiguities, anomalies, tensions, and coherencies, between and within class and gender relations, as realized within the formal system of secretarial education. For example, while the gender exclusivity of this vocational education coheres with the broad principles of patriarchy, class differentiation between female secretarial students is in tension with the uniformity of women's overall subordination to men. Coherencies and incoherencies, between and within class and gender relations, are realized, then, both in secretarial production (see Chapter III) and in secretarial education. However, analysis indicates that the patterning of these incoherencies and coherencies is different within each set of institutions. This different patterning, within education and within production, suggests that connections between class and gender relations are more complex than those indicated when analysis is confined (as in Chapter III) to one set of social institutions. Contrary to traditional reproduction theories of education (see Chapter I), incoherencies between education and production, constituted in their respective substantive expressions of class and gender relations, are explored, in

this method of articulation, as a possible integral facet of the reproduction (or reconfiguration) of forms of social inequalities.

1. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE STRUCTURE OF SECRETARIAL EDUCATION

The evolution of the current formal structure of secretarial education is explored in this section. In the first place, broad changes, such as the substantial expansion of full-time secretarial courses, particularly after the Second World War, are analysed. For instance, this expansion comprised primarily the introduction of full-time courses in state colleges. Before this, private colleges were the major providers of this full-time vocational education. In general, participation in private education requires a level of economic wealth possessed only by elite class families. In addition, private education is usually distinguished from state education, in part, by a cultural ethos which reinforces that culture associated with the elite. In contrast, state education accommodates, in the main, students from families with economic disadvantages, compared with the wealth of the dominant classes. Furthermore, students entering state education generally possess that range of cultural values reproduced in a proletarian or new middle class family background. Thus, the expansion of full-time secretarial education to the state sector represents at least one element of change to the class structure of this area of vocational education. That is, when viewing class in terms of inherited economic wealth as well as culture, students from lower class families, than previously, gained admittance to secretarial education by virtue of its introduction to the state sector of education. In other words, this particular change in the class structure of secretarial education is represented in the respective dominant and subordinant class family backgrounds which distinguish students enrolled in the private and state sectors of education.

Developments within state colleges lead to the institutionalization of class differences between secretarial students enrolled in this sector of education. In respect of this particular change to the class structure of secretarial education, class is viewed in terms of the tasks, activities, qualifications, social relations which distinguish secretarial courses one from the other. When drawing together analysis of class relations in terms of both students' family backgrounds as well as the minutiae of activities comprising the formal curricula of secretarial education (see Notes on Chapter II, No (3), on concept of class) then developments in secretarial education indicate that a three class model of secretarial labour emerged in the structure of secretarial education.

Broad amendments in the structure of secretarial education parallel changes in secretarial labour processes (see Chapter III). For instance, the expansion of secretarial education occurred alongside expansion of the administrative sector of production. That class divisions emerged within both the expanded secretarial workforce and secretarial education indicates coherencies between education and production. Coherencies and continuities between education and production, constituted in expressions of both class and gender relations, are highlighted when exploring at the level of these broad changes.

When, in the second part of this section, analysing the various pressures for change on the structure of secretarial education, both coherencies and incoherencies, between secretarial education and production, come to light. At this level of scrutiny, the structure of secretarial education expresses both class and gender as complex relations, constituted in coherencies and incoherencies within and between their substantive realization and respective generic principles. For example, with government pressures to harmonize vocational qualifications, examination boards revised their secretarial examinations. They introduced curricula, which, in confining qualifications to secretarial education, rather than broader based business education, confirmed the gender specificity of secretarial

labour. At the same time, these revised curricula had greater similarities in their subject contents with male dominated business studies qualifications. This constituted a tension with the generic principles of patriarchy, expressed in the tight gender boundaries between secretarial and business education.

The overall focus of this analysis concerns the variety of institutions and pressures which impinged on the system of secretarial education. Resultant diverse expressions of class and gender relations, informed by numerous influences on secretarial education, are unlikely together to mirror the diverse manifestations of these relations in secretarial production. Resultant incoherencies and coherencies, between secretarial education and secretarial production, compound those complexities of class relations and of gender relations which are expressed within secretarial education.

#### 1.1 HISTORICAL TRENDS WITHIN THE STRUCTURE OF SECRETARIAL EDUCATION

With a growing demand for more secretaries since the late 19th Century (see Chapter III), concurrent developments in education included an expansion in existing provision as well as the introduction of full-time courses in state colleges of further education. Education facilitated both the growth in the administrative sector of production and also the retention of the gender specificity of secretarial labour. Parallel expansion of secretarial education and of production indicates close links between the two sets of institutions.

In the latter part of the 19th Century, when women first entered office work, evening classes were one of the most popular ways of acquiring training for the work<sup>(1)</sup>. Argles (1964) points out that state education for commerce began in a very small way in the last half of the 19th Century. These classes were run under the aegis of the Society of Arts (now the Royal Society of Arts (RSA)) and the Department of Science and Art. He goes on:

"At this time (1900) . . . shorthand and typewriting were already subjects in most demand. Most of it (commercial education) was carried out in the evenings, and the Society of Arts and the regional examining unions had been joined by the London Chamber of Commerce." (1964:123)

Junior commercial schools, established after the 1902 Education Act to provide full-time courses related to office work, totalled only 50 by 1939, according to Argles. He points to the centrality of the RSA as an examining body when he states:

"In 1947 the RSA, still the biggest factor in commercial training, dealt with 70,000 scripts in single-subject examinations."  
(1964:123)

Clear institutional separation, between the state and private sectors of secretarial education, emerged in the early part of this century. Private colleges were established, and continue today to offer full-time secretarial training. Given the respective dominant and subordinant class associations of private and state education, this institutional separation is an initial indication of the institutionalization of class differences between secretarial students.

#### FOUNDATION DATES OF PRIVATE COLLEGES

<u>College</u>	<u>Foundation Date</u>
Langham Secretarial College	1948
Pitman's College	1910
Pitman's Correspondence College	1840
Queen's Secretarial College	1924
St Godric's College	1930's
St James's Secretarial College	1912

(taken from relevant 1983/4 prospectuses)

Little opportunity for full-time secretarial education was afforded, in the early part of this century, to those without the financial resources to enter private secretarial colleges. Davy points out:

". . . commercial education depended on basic education acquired at elementary or secondary school and the ability to pay. The fees were too expensive for many working-class families . . ."  
(1986:127)

Students entering private colleges were likely, therefore, to come from middle or upper class families. This suggests, then, coherencies between education and production constituted in the predominantly dominant class heritage of early recruits to secretarial labour (Chapter III) and to full-time secretarial education<sup>(2)</sup>.

In contrast with the extremely limited opportunities within state education for full-time study on secretarial courses in the early years of this century, by the 1970's a secretarial course was the second most popular choice of girl school leavers opting for further study in state education. Very few boys chose this vocational training:

Destinations of School Leavers  
in England and Wales, 1977-78, by Sex (%)

	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
Degree Courses	5.7	8.8
Teacher training courses	0.9	0.2
GCE 'A' and 'O' level courses	4.1	3.4
Secretarial courses	5.2	*
Nursing courses	1.4	*
Other courses	8.4	5.4
Employment	65.3	73.8
Unknown	9.0	8.4
* extremely small numbers, around 100		

Source: Sex Differences in Britain, Reid Ivan and Wormald Eileen (eds) 1982:90

Comparisons, between the 1900's and 1970's, in respect of the institutions providing full-time secretarial education, indicate a change from an homogeneous class category of colleges to two distinctive class categories of college. This constitutes a change in the class structure of the system of secretarial education. Further developments within state secretarial education (see section 1.2) introduced class divisions within the subordinate class category, namely state colleges. Secretarial education today institutionalizes class differences between female students in the model of the distinctive class relations of pool

typists, personal assistants, and private aides to executive men, as realized within secretarial labour processes (see Chapter III).

During the 1970's the gender specificity of secretarial education was maintained and the percentage of girl school leavers opting for a secretarial course in a state college remained almost static:

Percentage of All Girl Leavers Entering Secretarial Courses

<u>1974-5</u>	<u>1975-6</u>	<u>1976-7</u>	<u>1977-8</u>	<u>1978-9</u>	<u>1979-80</u>
5.4	4.7	5.4	5.2	4.8	5.0

Source: DES, Statistical Bulletin, ISSN 0142-5013, HMSO, September 1981. (Statistics relating to these courses are not available in publications prior to 1974)

Most of these courses were taken by full-time study. For example, in 1976 there were 7,343 full-time female secretarial students, but only about 600 on day release or other part-time courses (DES 1979:38).

Office skills have been taught in state secondary schools since the beginning of the Century, where instruction consisted mainly of shorthand, typing and bookkeeping. Silverstone states:

"The subject was initially instituted in response to an increasing demand for clerical workers and was confined largely to pupils in Central and Junior Commercial Schools. After the reconstruction of the educational system resulting from the 1944 Education Act, commercial training was carried on in some Technical Schools." (1974:112)

State secondary schools were more likely to cater for pupils from lower social class backgrounds than for those who attended private secretarial colleges. However, this state provision was not widely available. For example, as noted earlier, junior commercial schools were few in number. In addition, vocational subjects were integrated with compulsory school subjects, so the hours devoted to their study must have been minimal in comparison with that provided in today's full-time further education courses (see Chapter V). Furthermore, the majority of secretaries who

learnt commercial skills at school, received further education in these subjects after leaving school and before entering the labour market (Silverstone 1974:125). This suggests that either the depth of knowledge and skill acquisition at school was not sufficient for direct entry to secretarial work, or that credentials were required which were not available from compulsory schooling. It appears, therefore, that the strategy of combining secretarial education with general education failed to satisfy demands by employers for increasing numbers of secretaries. The rapid expansion of secretarial education in colleges of further education, after the Second World War, sought to rectify this deficiency in the supply of adequately skilled personnel.

Of Silverstone's sample of London secretaries in the 1970's only 11.6 per cent had learnt typing at a technical college (1974:122). By the 1980's the Manpower Services Commission reported that 40 per cent of their sample of secretaries had trained in a college of further education (1983:7). The dramatic increase in numbers attending secretarial courses in further education also indicates that these courses became more popular during the 1970's. The participation of women in full-time non-advanced further education grew rapidly between 1954/5 and 1961/2, from approximately 27,000 to 53,000 (Argles 1964:115). Taken with the data above, it is likely that many of these women were studying on secretarial courses. The non-advanced classification of the courses suggests that a low level of educational attainment was required for entry to these courses. With the acknowledgement of a correlation between educational achievement and social class origins, they undoubtedly accommodated many working class women.

It is reasonable to assume, then, that training in sufficient depth to render students eligible for secretarial work did not become extensively available to working class women until after the Second World War, with the rapid expansion of full-time state further education. This change in the institutions providing secretarial education coincides with the period of significant expansion of the administrative sector of production, when working class women began to enter secretarial

production (see Chapter III). Changes to the class structure of education, cohere, therefore, with changes to the class structure of production, expressed partly in shifts in the class backgrounds of female entrants to office work. Until then full-time secretarial education was only provided by the private sector, which assisted the monopolization of secretarial posts by elite women. Again, this indicates coherencies between education and production. The coherence between secretarial education and secretarial production constituted in the gender exclusivity of secretarial students and labour, did not lead to uniform experiences of class relations for secretarial students in education or for secretarial workers in production. In other words, the uniformity of women's patriarchal subordination to men, realized in the gender exclusivity of both secretarial education and production, is in tension with the development of class distinctions between these women, expressed both within secretarial education and within production.

By the 1960's the phenomenon of women from working class backgrounds obtaining secretarial posts was established (see Chapter III). The major curricula and credentialisation changes (see section 2), can be judged as a response to the rapid expansion of this sector of production as well as to the changing class composition of secretarial education and labour in the post Second World War era. However, pressures for change in the system of secretarial education did not come only from production. Various topical issues, examined in the following section, all had some bearing on revisions to this vocational education. Consequent amendments to the system of secretarial education introduced substantive expressions of class and gender relations, amongst which were coherencies and incoherencies with the gender specificity of secretarial labour and education, and the class divisions within these areas of education and production. They constitute components of the complexities of class relations and of the complexities of gender relations.

## 1.2 HISTORICAL INFLUENCES ON THE STRUCTURE OF SECRETARIAL EDUCATION

Analysis, in the section above, indicated that transformations, constituted particularly in the educational institutions providing secretarial education and modes of study in state education, connect coherently with historical changes in the employment and deployment of the secretarial workforce (Chapter III). However, changes in the structure of secretarial education occurred within the context of other changes taking place generally in society and in education, particularly during the period since the Second World War<sup>(4)</sup>. They, as much as changes within secretarial production, also informed changes to the system of secretarial education.

Analysis so far has indicated that historical changes within secretarial education express both class and gender relations. Substantive changes are themselves shaped by numerous factors and institutions, which interlink and shape each other. Changes within secretarial education cannot, then, be attributed to one specific factor, such as concurrent changes in the mode of production. In consequence, secretarial education demonstrates a relative autonomy from production, and other institutions, inasmuch as relations in education are not the perfect reflection of relations in any other set of social institutions. At the same time secretarial education responds to the different pressures that these varied institutions put upon it, to suggest a connection between them all. These varied responses constitute distinctive expressions of class and gender relations, which then cohere or are incoherent with those expressed in production.

Incoherencies between cultural instances of class and/or gender relations expressed in education and in production, point to a high degree of insulation in secretarial education's relative autonomy from production. On the other hand, coherencies point to a very limited degree of insulation between secretarial education and secretarial production, suggesting that this education may be dominated by production. As analysis identifies instances of both coherencies and incoherencies between secretarial education and production, in some

instances boundaries between secretarial education and production are strong, in other instances they are weak. This suggests a degree of relativity in the autonomy of secretarial education from production. That is, variations in the strength and weakness of the boundaries between education and production, as constituted in coherencies and incoherencies between their respective expressions of class and gender relations, express the relativity of these sets of institutions' respective relative autonomy. However, the relative autonomy of two sets of institutions may not exhibit a random, haphazard distribution of coherencies and incoherencies, between and within class and gender relations, in production and in education. On the contrary, such coherencies and incoherencies may take on a patterned form. As such this relativity of the autonomy of education from production may constitute an important aspect of the articulation of class and gender relations which is realized in the relationship between these sets of institutions. That is, the forms and cultural moments of both class and gender relations in education, and their interconstitution, may constitute, in part, the institutionalization process of these relations in production.

Analysis of various historical pressures for changes to the system of secretarial education explores the issue of the relativity of relative autonomy of education from production. For example, since the Second World War secondary education has been reorganised. Today, ostensibly non-selective comprehensive schools provide general education for children to the age of 16 years. The period has also witnessed the disintegration of secondary technical and commercial schools. Until the early 1960's a major function of the RSA was the provision of commercial school certificates for technical and commercial schools, and secondary modern schools. The disappearance of the vocationally orientated secondary school (today re-emerging in the shape of CPVE, CTC's and TVEI), together with the introduction of national CSE and GCSE examinations, eroded the RSA's original market. The philosophy evolved in the 1960's that general education took place in comprehensive schools and vocational training in further education<sup>(5)</sup>. Vocational education became more clearly bounded and differentiated from compulsory

education. Changes in the pattern of general education must, therefore, have influenced the RSA in its decisions to revamp its commercial and secretarial credentials in the early 1960's (see section 2).

Decisions to amend commercial and clerical training in state education came after various Government reports expressed concern about this education. The central issues addressed in these reports represent a perceived link between education and production: shortcomings in commerce and trade were attributed to insufficient or inappropriate education. Enquiries were repeated on the grounds that education had not responded adequately to the demands of the administrative sector of production for appropriately trained personnel. Scrutiny of secretarial education was included in these recurrent reports. It would appear from the frequency and similarity of their critiques, therefore, that this area of gendered vocational education does not necessarily reproduce secretarial labour power in a fashion which reflects relations in secretarial production, nor that it is totally dominated by its concomitant sphere of production.

As early as 1899, the London County Council's Technical Education Board published a Report on Commercial Education, which stated:

"In conducting our investigation upon the subject of commercial education . . . it is becoming more and more clear that among the principal causes which are threatening us with a grave diminution of international trade must be placed the better education enjoyed by many of our competitors." (quoted in Cotgrove 1958:20)

The theme of concern recurred in succeeding Government Reports. In 1931 the Goodenough Report on Commercial Education appeared; Carr-Saunders chaired a similar enquiry which reported in 1949, while in 1959 the McMeeking Committee was instructed:

"to consider the provision made by local education authorities for further education for commerce at and above the level of Ordinary National Certificate and Intermediate professional examinations, and to recommend urgently what further steps should be taken to implement the commercial aspects of the policy announced in the White Paper on 'Technical Education'". (1959:iii)

The McMeeking Report concluded that little progress had been made in commercial education since the Goodenough (1931) and Carr-Saunders

(1949) Reports. By the end of the 1950's some 200 state Colleges provided courses at or above the level of ONC, but had failed to gain acceptance by employers for the qualifications. Lack of recognition was due, in the Report's opinion, to the multitude of competing examinations sponsored by professional and quasi professional bodies covering accountancy, banking, law and secretarial studies. The McMeeking Committee reiterated the complaint and recommendations of Carr-Saunders ten years earlier:

"We have referred to the embarrassment caused by the multiplicity of associations, and therefore of different special needs, but this is not the only source of difficulty for the colleges. Several associations often include the same subject in their examination schemes; but with little or no justification they frequently lay down different syllabuses. We cannot but regard it as unreasonable that the colleges, hard pressed as they are by legitimate demands made upon them should be asked to give different courses in the same subject when the reason lies, not in special needs, but in failure to co-ordinate demands. So far little progress has been made in this direction and we would urge professional associations to give immediate attention to the matter." (1959:para 46)

It is perhaps of little wonder that, with this Government pressure, added to the disappearance of their traditional market of examinees in junior commercial schools, both the RSA and LCC restructured their secretarial examinations in the late 1950's and early 1960's (see section 2). Amendments in their schemes of credentialisation helped these competitive voluntary bodies to remain as the major accreditors of state secretarial education. They continue to influence, and exercise a measure of control over, this area of vocational studies. This is important because these examining boards introduced schemes of certification containing expressions of both class and gender relations which were frequently incoherent with expressions of these relations in production (see section 2).

Additional Government influence on vocational education came with the Industrial Training Act (1964) which established the Central Training Council. The Council was advised by seven Committees, including the Commercial and Clerical Training Committee (CTC) which published its first report in 1966 on Training for Commerce and the Office. The CTC reported neglect of in-service and day release commercial and clerical

training. Of 1,671 establishments surveyed, only 12 per cent made any provision for training this category of labour, and such training as existed was often of a very trivial nature. The CTC Report, in line with its predecessors, deplored the multiplicity of examinations and qualifications. It concurred with Carr-Saunders' (1949) conclusions on training for secretaries. It could not recommend any departure from the full-time pre-employment mode of training. This reinforced globally the gender distinctions within vocational education for office work: while women were confined to pre-employment education, men had opportunities for 'day-release' and 'sandwich' study while earning their living in offices.

One feature of secretarial work, highlighted by the Industrial Training Act (1964), is that it is a diverse occupation, carried out within every industry or business organization. Thus the occupation could not have a Training Board devoted to its needs, but depended on various Training Boards adopting recommendations on training clerical workers who happened to be located within their industries. In other words, the occupation of secretary had less power to control its training procedures than occupations such as engineering, construction, farming, which had their own Training Boards. This situation reinforces that devaluation of secretarial work which links with its gender specificity. The Engineering Industry Training Board was one of the few Boards to sponsor trial courses for 15-19 year old office workers. These were not well supported and only four of the seven technical colleges that agreed to run courses did so, and even these were poorly attended (Pinder 1969:567).

Perry states that CTC reports made little impact and when the Committee's term expired it was allowed quietly to disappear (1976:229). The Industrial Training Act failed to have any substantial influence on the, by then, traditional full-time pre-employment mode of training for secretarial work. Employers were content to retain existing procedures by which trained female office workers were acquired at no direct cost. General gender ideology, concerning women's frequent changes of job and primary commitment to the home, no doubt influenced employers in their

decision not to provide expensive 'on-the-job' or 'sandwich' training in secretarial work. On the other hand, with little direct involvement in secretarial education by employers, this area of vocational preparation may have a greater degree of autonomy from production than other mainly male areas which include more 'day release' education. In this respect secretarial education may enjoy a degree of autonomy from production by which it can introduce forms of education, the class and gender underpinnings of which challenge the realization of these relations within production.

One of the recommendations of the Haslegrave Report (1969) was that a Business Education Council (BEC) be set up as a counterpart to the Technician Education Council (TEC). BEC (and today BTEC) courses have since been implemented as a national structure of courses and examinations for business and commerce. Although secretarial skills modules are available under the auspices of BTEC, the RSA reported (1985) that BTEC had had little, if any, impact on the numbers entering their secretarial examinations. Conversion of secretarial examinations to BTEC qualifications would have meant that secretarial women studied the same core subjects as men preparing to enter office work. This could have helped women to break through the vertical and horizontal gender boundaries in office work. The structure of BTEC would also have enabled secretarial women to work their way up through a hierarchy of qualifications, rather than being debarred from the meritocratic process of a lower level qualification permitting entry to a higher level course, as is the case today (see section 2). The maintenance of different examining boards to accredit male and female office training institutionalizes, in education, gender divisions between office workers. On the other hand, to remain a viable alternative to BTEC, RSA and LCC secretarial qualifications required a comparable range of levels and depth of knowledge acquisition. Resultant modifications to RSA and LCC qualifications (see section 2.1) meant that these boards institutionalized a form of gender relations which contradicted women's universal subordination to men. That is, in terms of content and range, these 'women's qualifications' were comparable in standard to 'men's qualifications' for office work.

In spite of publicly expressed concern about commercial education at Government level, and the introduction of a variety of innovatory schemes in the broad sphere of business education since the Second World War, the RSA and LCC retain recognition and influence over secretarial qualifications. Attempts by the European Commission in the 1960's and 1970's to harmonize vocational education (re-emerging now in NCVQ) were no more successful in implementing their recommendations than British Government Committees<sup>(6)</sup>. Any process of standardization of secretarial qualifications could have brought greater national recognition for these awards. Comparative exercises, both within secretarial credentials and with qualifications primarily associated with men's office work, would highlight the gender division of labour in office work, as well as differentiation procedures between women engaged in secretarial work. Issues relating to the inequalities of both class and gender would have been addressed. With these missed opportunities the broad structure of secretarial education and certification institutionalizes class and gender divisions which continue to cohere with the broad gender divisions between office workers and class divisions within secretarial labour.

Although, since the Second World War, on many occasions attention has been focussed on commercial education and deficiencies identified, secretarial training has not achieved national recognition. Where employers do not exercise direct control over vocational education they apparently fail to recognise the credentials entailed (see Chapters III and V). Implicit in the lack of interest of predominantly male managers is the perpetuation of the social construction of secretaries and the devaluation of any work associated with women. These factors impinge on the nature and structure of training courses as well as the structure of the work itself. Lack of employers' direct involvement together with the vested interests of voluntary private bodies, in the shape of the credentialization agencies, contributed to traditional examining boards' retention of a dominant influence over secretarial labour. However, the substantive effects of this influence brought with them incoherencies, as well as coherencies, between education and production. In the following section expressions of class and gender in the substantive

current influence, by secretarial examining boards, on the formal structure of this vocational education is examined.

## 2. COMPOSITION OF THE CONTEMPORARY SYSTEM OF SECRETARIAL EDUCATION

One of the practical reasons for non-recognition of secretarial qualifications, which contributes to the devaluation of 'women's skills', is the variety and number of qualifications available. It is partly a question of the multiplicity of certificates and diplomas, offered by competing examining boards, making it difficult to identify distinctions and similarities between them. Lack of clarity is one reason why employers rarely use formal qualifications as a criterion in the recruitment of secretaries (Gibb 1981:63). Instead they tend to make judgements based on gendered class attributes (see Chapters III and V). Furthermore, the sharp contrasts in class power embodied in the labour processes of ranked secretaries is legitimized, in part, for the individual holder of any post, by the differentiated qualifications (regardless of content) which secretaries obtain during training for the work.

Ambiguities within secretarial credentialisation are illustrated by the Manpower Services Commission's comments on secretaries' training:

"10 per cent of the 1981 sample had undergone no secretarial training whatsoever, of those who had received training 23 per cent had done courses which did not lead to a qualification of any kind, and 22 per cent had attended training courses resulting in certificates or diplomas awarded by a particular institution (such as a college certificate) rather than a nationally recognised award. Yet among the remainder there were no fewer than 78 different qualifications illustrating the unsystematic nature of secretarial training." (1983:7)

In the main, institutional certificates are awarded in the private sector of secretarial education, while the majority of state colleges offer nationally recognised qualifications<sup>(7)</sup>. This distinction between credentials confirms the dominant and subordinant class specificities of private and state colleges (see sections 2.2-2.4). A fuller account is now given of, firstly, nationally recognized secretarial credentials and

the substantive expressions of class and gender relations which they constitute. Secondly discussion develops analysis of data on private secretarial colleges and their college-specific certification procedures. This compares expressions of class and gender relations in the two class distinctive sectors of secretarial education and explores the patterning of these relations.

## 2.1 STATE COLLEGE SECRETARIAL EXAMINATIONS

The main qualification aims of the majority of state college secretarial courses are those offered by the RSA and/or LCC<sup>(7)</sup>. Variety in the levels and content of secretarial examinations within state colleges legitimises equivalent categorization of students within single colleges. This distinguishes one set of female secretarial students from another as well as from male dominated areas of business studies education. Procedures which differentiate between women and between men and women institutionalize, then, both class and gender relations. Moments of coincidence, of specific substantive forms of patriarchal, and specific substantive forms of class subordination/superordination, constitute, in part, the specification process of these sets of relations. They point to instances of structural agency. The pattern created by these instances of structural agency, over the spectrum of private and state secretarial education, constitutes the articulation of class and gender within this area of education. At the same time analysis indicates that the pattern, constituting class and gender articulation within education, includes expressions of these relations, some of which cohere with, and others of which are incoherent with, expressions of these relations within production.

Although the LCC and RSA continue to offer a variety of examination subjects, ranging from arithmetic to religious studies, both Boards are most widely known for their commercial qualifications. Prior to the 1960's both organisations offered single subject examinations, including those in office related subject areas. In addition, the RSA provided a School Commercial Certificate, started in 1927 and phased out in 1968. Today, both the RSA and LCC offer complex group diplomas<sup>(8)</sup> at

elementary, intermediate and advanced level, which relate solely to secretarial work. As these qualifications are clearly bounded from male dominated business studies qualifications, they institutionalize, in colleges of further education, the gender subordination of women to men inscribed in the generic principles of patriarchy.

Until the early 1970's, the qualifications available to full-time secretarial students in state technical colleges were relatively uniform and of a general low level. In respect of examinations, institutional differentiation between the state and private sectors of full-time secretarial education was, and remains, clearcut, as the latter sector has rarely entered students for these examinations. As each sector caters for female students from distinctly different social class backgrounds (see section 1 and Chapter V), the distinction in examination aims confirms these class divisions. By the 1970's state colleges began to offer higher level Diplomas in secretarial subjects, attracting women with 'A' levels and Degrees to their ranks. Students with high level qualifications were likely to come from higher social class backgrounds than those with minimal educational attainment. Extensions and distinctions in national qualifications assisted the introduction of differentiation within the state sector of secretarial education. This revision within the state sector contributed to a three class structure within the system of secretarial education, which confirmed the class backgrounds of its female recruits.

The first group award offered by the RSA was the Certificate in Office Studies, instituted in the late 1960's. This was a Stage I Elementary qualification, entitled today<sup>(9)</sup> Diploma in Office Studies. Its target population is school leavers without GCE 'O' levels who are likely to come from working class backgrounds. The Diploma was introduced when working class women were becoming a numerically significant group in secretarial work (see Chapter III). The course consists of one year's full-time study and aims to enable students to undertake routine office procedures. In this latter respect it realizes class relations which cohere with the the proletarian characteristics of the pool typist's labour process (see Chapter III).

In 1970 an Intermediate Group Award was offered by the RSA. This Clerical and Secretarial Diploma Stage II was taken by school leavers with GCE 'O' levels, studying on a two-year full-time course, who had no previous training in secretarial subjects. The introduction in 1973 of a Stage III Advanced Diploma for Personal Assistants (PA Diploma) completed the RSA's range of group awards. These higher level secretarial qualifications first appeared at a time when a hierarchical structure of secretarial work was appearing within secretarial production (see Chapter III). Class divisions, expressed in the hierarchy of qualifications which developed within state colleges, cohere with distinctive expressions of class relations in secretarial labour processes.

The PA Diploma<sup>(10)</sup> is offered to Post GCE 'A' level or Postgraduate students taking a one-year full-time secretarial course. The RSA transmits covert signals as to the exclusivity of the Advanced qualification. Syllabuses and examination details are published in a separate booklet from the handbook detailing other secretarial qualifications, including the lower level group Diplomas described earlier. The RSA confirms the management potential of holders of the PA Diploma when it states that the scheme aims:

"to provide a suitable background of knowledge and skills, and to encourage the development of self-confidence and initiative to enable the student, in due course, to play a responsible role in administration and management." (Diploma for Personal Assistants, RSA Booklet 1981:8)

Describing potential careers for the holders of the PA Diploma as a managerial destination, contradicts the realities of the career structure for secretaries. Few women become managers, and of those who do, few reach this level via secretarial work (see Chapter III). Nevertheless this contradiction between the education process and the production process has cultural implications in that it perpetuates the mythology of secretarial work. In practice it helps to attract women who have been 'successful' in general education to state secretarial courses and then to the ranks of secretarial production. While relations in secretarial education may not, therefore, be a perfect reflection of relations in secretarial production, incoherencies between

their respective relations assist the supply of a highly educated female workforce for secretarial production. By containing such women within this gender specific education, education also institutionalizes the tight horizontal gender boundaries of office life.

The RSA does not stipulate previous educational attainment for its examinees. However, colleges ensure that Stage I is taken by those with CSE passes, Stage II by Post GCE 'O' level candidates (see Chapter V), and the RSA itself recommends GCE 'A' level passes before the PA Diploma is attempted. A package of secretarial Diplomas has been created which in practice provides neat lines of credential demarcation between women students, institutionalizing class relations in state colleges.

Secretarial qualifications suggest that a progressive ladder of credentials has been created with the introduction of a range of graded group awards. However, in the overall organisation of secretarial education within state colleges, the working class girl, with low level general educational qualifications, but who may be successful in secretarial examinations, is debarred from obtaining higher level secretarial credentials. In practice each level is used as a terminal qualification, particularly by virtue of the fact that secretarial courses are geared towards entrants with no previous relevant knowledge (see Chapter V). These sharply ranked Diplomas legitimize equivalent ranking in the mode of production, reinforcing gendered class divisions amongst secretarial women.

The Stage III PA Diploma, introduced in 1973, was a new concept for the RSA, and differed from lower level Diplomas in that all subjects were compulsory. Complex titles were invented for the component subjects, such as 'Economic and Financial Aspects of Administration'. The RSA stated that one reason for the introduction of the PA Diploma was that more women with GCE 'A' levels and Degrees were seeking secretarial qualifications and that they required a more 'academic' course. The RSA also appreciated that the more highly qualified students would enter higher level secretarial jobs than holders of Elementary and Intermediate Diplomas. The RSA developed a series of Diplomas with a

hierarchical structure, which cohered with class distinctions between the pool typist and personal assistant's labour process.

The LCC was the first examining board to introduce, in 1956, a high level group secretarial diploma entitled Private Secretaries Diploma<sup>(11)</sup>. The LCC continues to stipulate that entrants must be at least 20 years of age and should have a minimum of three years' practical office experience. Some graduates take this Diploma by full-time study, but in the main candidates study on evening only courses. This mode of study reflects employers' influence within the LCC and their traditional reluctance to grant female office workers day release. This practical difference between the mode of training for male and female office work is an instance of the institutionalization of gender relations within vocational education. Minutes of LCC committees record that the original suggestion for a Private Secretaries Diploma was made in December 1953. The Committee heard that Heads of Commercial Departments and teachers of Commercial Studies had approached the Board with the proposal. The impetus for this qualification came then from education when specific 'markets' were identified within production for secretarial credentials.

In 1963, the LCC Committee agreed to offer a lower level Private Secretaries Certificate. Minutes of Committee meetings record that members believed that secretarial staff who serviced those below top management would be suitable candidates for this qualification. For example, one minute reads:

"Mr (Jackson) pointed out that it was not enough for girls to be proficient in shorthand and typing to qualify for the higher appointments. Far too frequently an employer engaged a girl as a private secretary and later found that she was better suited to be a shorthand typist."

(LCC Commercial Education Syllabuses Sub-Committee Minutes, Thursday 10 December 1953).

It was agreed that many candidates for the higher level Diploma, although successful in the technical sections of the examination, were not suited for secretarial work with top management and should be awarded the lower level Certificate. Discussions on this topic highlight the emphasis placed on the social skills and acumen of middle

and upper class women in the higher ranks of secretarial production. For example, it was agreed that candidates were often lacking in the qualities assessed in the interview section of the Private Secretaries Diploma:

"The interview board, in coming to its decision should consider:

1. Personal appearance and features of the candidate;
2. Neatness and taste in clothes;
3. Carriage and deportment;
4. Self-confidence and ability to inspire confidence;
5. Pleasantness of manner;
6. Depth of knowledge in the subjects of the examination in relation to speed of response to questions."

(LCC Commercial Education Syllabuses Sub-Committee Minutes, 27 July 1955).

The Private Secretaries' Certificate was first offered in 1966. By the mid-1970's about 2,800 candidates were entering for the Certificate. They were mostly students who had taken a two-year full-time secretarial course after obtaining GCE 'O' levels at school. While the initiative for producing ranked credentials, which cohered with the developing hierarchy within secretarial production, came from education, account was clearly taken of the perceived 'needs' of production and in particular the classed gender attributes which were a major criterion in the ranking of secretaries.

LCC Committee minutes point to competition between the LCC and RSA, whereby each Board vies with the other for secretarial examinees. For instance, a meeting in 1959 commented that LCC examinations were adversely affected by the monopoly built up by the RSA. In 1977 the LCC completed its range of group secretarial awards with the introduction of an elementary Secretarial Studies Certificate for students with CSE qualifications who had taken a two-year full-time secretarial course. This meant that the RSA and LCC offered competing secretarial qualifications at every grade.

The full range of Diplomas was gradually introduced by both the RSA and LCC during the period when clear class distinctions within secretarial production were developing. This would indicate that amendments in certification procedures within education mirrored changes in the class structure of secretarial production. It suggests that secretarial

education responds, and is controlled by, production. However, the schedule of changes in either domain is not altogether clear. It may equally be a case of education providing some secretarial workers with enhanced qualifications who then demand superior ranking within production to that offered to women with elementary level qualifications (eg development of quasi professional associations of secretaries - see Chapter III).

Distinctions within secretarial credentialization in state colleges undoubtedly reinforced gendered class divisions between secretarial women in production. Nevertheless it is difficult, in the context of this data, to estimate the balance and direction of power and control in any relationship constituted by secretarial education and secretarial production. At the same time, competition, internal to the examining boards, played an important part in the increase in the number and levels of Diploma offered. Other changes in education generally, such as the collapse of commercial secondary schools (see section 1), also played their part in shaping amendments in certification procedures. This indicates that the specificities of change in secretarial credentialization were a result of the reciprocal articulation of the 'needs' of a number of social institutions, each of which contains its own pattern of class and gender relations. Although now hierarchically ranked, secretarial qualifications remain clearly gendered. All Diplomas are tightly bounded and cut off from any area of certification geared towards traditionally male spheres of office work.

The next section explores in more detail the shaping of the structure of state secretarial curricula by the syllabuses and certification procedures of the examinations outlined in this section. At this level of analysis coherencies and incoherencies surface, constituted in substantive expressions of class and gender relations, within education and between education and production.

## 2.2 STATE COLLEGE SECRETARIAL CURRICULA

A Report by HM Inspectors on Business Studies (1985) in state education notes that:

". . . education in business studies . . . had its origins in the vocational education needs of those employed in such professions as accounting, banking and law and in more general administrative work in the public and private sectors. To a large extent these needs were defined by the professional bodies and such bodies still exercise a strong influence on the provision, directly through courses which are geared to their examinations . . ." (1985:6)

Lacking a strong professional body, in the case of state secretarial courses it is the private examining boards of the RSA and LCC which exercise a profound influence on the content of relevant courses. The contrasts and similarities, between the content of the various curricula of relevant qualifications, express both class and gender relations. There are complex coherencies and incoherencies between them, and between different expressions of the same category of relations, as well as with those expressed in production.

The secretarial curricula, which have emerged since the 1960's, have been determined largely by the new examinations (see section 2.1) which evolved during this period. Broadly, the revised curricula produced a more 'serious' and complex statement about the functions of secretarial labour at all levels. In this sense they countermand the traditional devaluation of 'women's work'. For example, students are required to study an increasing number of subjects during their vocational training. Subjects such as speech and deportment, which were included in many state education secretarial curricula prior to the 1960's have, for the most part, been excluded from these courses. Explicit indicators of any deferential stance by the female secretary towards her (almost inevitably male) boss have been taken out of examination questions, textbooks, and syllabuses. These features of secretarial education relate overtly to expressions of patriarchal power in secretarial labour processes. Therefore, some aspects of the gender relations in secretarial production are less explicitly expressed within today's state college curricula than hitherto. In other words, there are now

incoherencies between secretarial education and production as constituted in expressions of gender relations. However, the recommended number of hours for the skills of shorthand and typing indicates that these components are the central core of all secretarial courses. They occupy between one third and one half of class contact hours. Operational indicators suggest the importance of these 'women's skills' and perpetuate the conditions for the practised gender segregation of office labour. Where students on courses other than those designated 'secretarial', learn the same skills, such as typing, less time is devoted to their study. For example, in one state college BTEC students received two hours per week typing tuition, while their female counterparts on secretarial courses received five hours per week tuition in typing.

If educational attainment correlates with social class origins, today's state colleges cater for students from several different social class backgrounds. For instance, in 1979 1,950 girls with GCE 'A' level passes elected to follow full-time secretarial courses in further education. In the same year 18,300 girls without GCE 'A' levels chose to study secretarial subjects on full-time courses in these institutions (DES Statistics of Education 1977 Vol 2 (1979)). Relevant courses are invariably labelled 'secretarial'. This ubiquitous label is ambiguous in the context of the clear class distinctions between secretarial labour processes. For example, in spite of the fact that statements are made that students on lower level courses can anticipate obtaining posts in the lower grades of secretarial labour, as copy typists, audio-typists or shorthand-typists, the course itself is designated, for instance, 'Secretarial Studies Certificate Course'. This partly accounts for the phenomenon of female office workers referring to themselves as 'secretaries', regardless of their work content:

"Apparent promotion may be achieved by altering the name of the job while keeping the actual work the same. Both secretaries and employers remarked on the way this was happening in offices. People who were formerly called shorthand typists, typists, or even clerks, were now called secretaries, a situation which has been described as 'status drift'." (Silverstone 1974:298)

In other words, the class uniformity expressed in the labelling of courses, contradicts expressions of class divisions within secretarial production. It is also incoherent with substantive class distinctions between state secretarial courses.

Prior to the 1960's the majority of secretarial students in further education took single subject examinations in shorthand and typewriting, with a minimal number entering for additional single subjects, such as bookkeeping<sup>(12)</sup>. This meant that, regardless of previous educational achievement, students of various ages and general education qualification might well have achieved identical secretarial qualifications. Secretarial credentials until the 1960's contained few signals as to the social class origins of applicants for secretarial posts. In addition a common curriculum would help to shape the belief that all such students would acquire similar work and that little differentiation was possible when they took their production places.

In contrast with the unitary character of secretarial education in state colleges prior to the 1960's, clear class distinctions between secretarial courses have today entered this area of education. Each course is packaged as a self-contained unit, insulated from other secretarial courses offered in the same institution (see Chapter V). Particularly in the ancillary subjects of secretarial courses, the traditional class divisions of conception and execution are built into syllabus contents. For example, RSA syllabuses show that in 'Background to Business' the Post CSE student learns the practicalities of banking, such as opening an account, completion of paying-in slips, cheques, reconciliation statements. At the same time, this knowledge is not strictly necessary if these students are to be copy typists. The Post 'A' level student will learn the tasks outlined above within Economic and Financial Aspects of Administration, but in addition she is provided with the philosophical underpinnings of the capitalist financial system. At the higher level the student is given information which suggests her ability for conceptual analysis. This has frequently been taken as the basis for initiation and decision making in the labour process, as compared with the execution of others' decisions in

proletarian work. Examination questions posed to Post 'A' level candidates illustrate her anticipated alignment with management decisions and her relational separation from her typing pool gender peers<sup>(13)</sup>. In this respect, the content of the course coheres with the PA's gendered class and classed gender allegiances within production (see Chapter III).

All state college secretarial courses include the skills of typewriting, audio typing and (with the exception of one course investigated) shorthand. In addition all courses include the designation 'secretarial' which signals the gender specificity of its anticipated clientele. Pictures in prospectuses illustrate the importance of state colleges' up-to-date equipment, such as electric or electronic typewriters and word processors. In the skills students are required to follow precisely instructions given in typing examinations and reproduce verbatim dictated passages in shorthand examinations. There is no area of discretion or initiative by the candidate. Candidates are, in contrast to high level examinees, penalised if they stray in any way from instructions<sup>(14)</sup>. At the post 'A' level stage, the secretarial student learns about areas of her anticipated labour process in which she may exercise discretion and initiative. Her practical skills examination permits her to initiate documents, decide whether to route copies, and to compose her own correspondence. These facets of secretarial curricula constitute, then, a correspondence with class distinctions expressed in the different tasks performed by ranked secretaries.

The pre-1960's curriculum, with some modifications, has today been allocated to the lower level secretarial student. There is scant indication that the content of low level state secretarial courses purports to fit occupational candidates for any location other than that with proletarian characteristics. However, more fundamental revisions have taken place in the curriculum offered to the Post 'A' level candidate. This level of student today receives an 'up market' programme of secretarial preparation. For example, the titles of many of the subjects she studies are similar to those offered in Business

Studies Degrees<sup>(15)</sup>. The literature states that Post 'A' level secretarial candidates will be located, within production, at middle management and executive level.

If the secretarial recruits to the two levels of course offered in state colleges, discussed above, are broadly distinguished by their working class and middle class family origins, then the content of their respective curricula confirms these class distinctions as well as the class distinctions of their anticipated labour processes (see Chapter III). Given that these curricula are contained exclusively within the state sector and that an alternative secretarial education, for women from elite family backgrounds, is widely available in the private sector, it is possible that many of the state sector higher level students come from working class, as well as middle class, backgrounds. This group may be representative of the class mobility inscribed in the 'new middle class' concept of class analysis. The curriculum at this level is not differentiated from lower level curricula on any gender basis, but represents a contrasting analytical and theoretical account of their anticipated labour process.

It is reasonable to assume that women who have followed the PA Diploma course become competent workers in the higher ranks of secretarial production, capable of producing high quality typed documents as well as of taking decisions and initiating tasks. Such qualities are frequently discussed as characteristic of the 'new middle class' (Wright Mills 1951, Esland and Salaman 1980, Abercrombie and Urry 1983, Goldthorpe 1982). The higher level secretarial student gains knowledge which legitimises enhanced control, authority and status in comparison with her pooled proletarian gender peer. The content of these courses corresponds with the manner in which class acts differentially upon the various strata of secretarial labour. That is, state secretarial curricula institutionalize the structure of class relations of secretarial production. On the other hand, the content of the higher level secretarial Diploma is not clearly differentiated from that of many male dominated business studies qualifications. In this respect it

expresses a contradiction between production and education, as constituted in substantive expressions of gender relations.

Institutional differentiation is incorporated, then, into the processes of becoming a secretary in state colleges which reproduces class divisions between the women in question. However, there is scant indication, in the formal syllabuses of these class differentiated courses, of distinctions between the specific gender messages of state secretarial courses. Yet the pool typist and personal assistant are constituted differently in the gender relations of secretarial production (see Chapter III). At this level of analysis, therefore, state colleges do not institutionalize the gender relations of secretarial production. At the same time further features of class and gender differentiation between secretarial courses surface when comparing state college provision with that of the private sector.

### 2.3 PRIVATE COLLEGE SECRETARIAL EXAMINATIONS

One feature of sharp distinctions between the state and private sectors of secretarial education is the comparative lack of public information about the private sector.<sup>(16)</sup> National examinations are rarely included in secretarial education in the private sector. Therefore, it is not possible to obtain detailed information on syllabuses or credentials, as was the case when exploring information freely available from the RSA and LCC. In addition, there are few indicators of their number or of historical changes within the private sector, as official statistics relate mainly to the state sector of education. This broad distinction within secretarial education confirms the respective subordinate and dominant class specificity of the state and private sectors of education.

Only two, of 10 private colleges surveyed, enter students for RSA or LCC examinations. They do not offer the group Diplomas which are the main credentials for state college students (see section 2.2), but single subject examinations, mainly in shorthand and typing. All private colleges award their own institutional diploma. In the two private

colleges where national certification was available, prospectuses prioritized their own college diploma. Prospectuses necessarily provide only brief outlines of courses offered by any college. Therefore, detailed information is not available from this source on, for example, subjects incorporated into any private college diploma, or the criteria for success which are applied.

The sparsity of information on private college credentialisation is itself interesting. It signals gendered class relations. Limitations on the quality and quantity of information available, suggest that this sector of 'women's education' exists beyond the realms of public scrutiny. Privatized, internal procedures are an inherent feature of the exclusivity, of which private colleges boast in their prospectuses (see section 2.4). However, these procedures cannot easily be scrutinized as little relevant information is publicly available. In social class terms, exclusivity denotes the exclusion of the masses from entry to private secretarial colleges and the reproduction of an internal cultural capital. It realizes, therefore, a feature of class boundaries between private and state sectors of secretarial education.

Secretarial education in the state sector has to pass a test of public accountability, while that of the private sector exists beyond a level where public scrutiny is deemed desirable or necessary. Yet the strategies of establishing individual syllabuses, in the context of any private college, and internal tests of achievement devoid of external validation, reflects high prestige, status and esteem. It must be the case that the aura of upper class elitism emitted by the documentation of these private institutions (see section 2.4) suggests their total dependability, reliability and unquestioned fairness in making appropriate professional judgements. These are the qualities which are traditionally attributed to the dominant classes and manifest a facet of the institutionalization of class relations within secretarial education.

## 2.4 PRIVATE SECRETARIAL COLLEGES' CURRICULA

Within the private sector of secretarial education there is some internal differentiation. For example, private education ranges from personal tuition in the home of a teacher to extensive full-time courses provided in colleges equivalent to 'finishing schools'. Contrasts with the state sector are particularly highlighted when comparing analysis of elite private colleges' curricula with analysis of those of state technical colleges.

Of 10 prospectuses examined, four private colleges were small suburban establishments, catering for between 20 and 80 students, located in a domestic house. At these colleges fees are relatively low, being in the region of £120 to £260 (1983/4) per term. Payment is also possible on an hourly rate of attendance. Students study a very limited number of subjects, such as Business English and Office Practice, in addition to secretarial skills. Three of the colleges allowed students to start at any time and to choose hours of attendance. These colleges offer an informal, individualised structure of training, akin to the secretarial school described in Gissing's (1893) novel set in the 1880's. The training bears little resemblance to the formalised courses and extensive programme of certification offered by state colleges.

The small suburban colleges have scant national reputation and advertise their courses only locally. It is likely, therefore, that they cater predominantly for a local clientele who, perhaps, welcome flexibility in attendance and relatively low tuition fees. The college prospectuses give few indications of entry qualifications or of the posts which students can anticipate on completion of training. As fees are relatively low, it is likely that they attract some women from working class as well as middle class families. Flexibility in modes of study may also be convenient for women with domestic responsibilities.

One of the private colleges surveyed has a world reputation, since its name is synonymous with a system of shorthand. It has a college in

London, two branches in the suburbs of London and three in other major towns in England. Their courses are shorter than those offered by state colleges, being of 13, 14, 15, 20, or 24 weeks' duration. Fees (1983/4) ranged from £330 to £989 for each course, depending on length. Again, a limited range of subjects was available in comparison with the curricula of state colleges. The most extensive range of subjects was available on the 24 week course: shorthand, typing, communication, secretarial practice and office technology. The number of subjects diminished as the course became shorter, until the 13 week course comprised only shorthand and typing. Three of the courses required students to have 4 GCE 'O' levels while no formal qualifications were necessary for two of the courses.

This private college started its short full-time mode of secretarial training in the late 1960's. Before this much of its work was as a private commercial school catering for 13+ school pupils. The change was effected at a time when state commercial schools were phased out (see section 1) and when increasing numbers of post compulsory students were electing to continue their studies in state colleges. General trends in state education can be judged to have influenced this private college's decision to amend its secretarial training mode. Their competitive response was to provide a shorter training period with relatively low tuition fees, emphasising at all times their longer historical association and tradition in secretarial training in comparison with state secretarial education. They also set up an internal appointments bureau to help students obtain work. The college prospectus constantly refers to training students for posts as "secretaries in positions of responsibility". No mention is made of the lower grade posts, such as copy typist, available to the graduates from lower level state college courses, in spite of correspondence in the level of general education attainment, the more limited content and length of training, and the lack of RSA or LCC credentials, at this college. In the literature at least, differentiation between the private and state sectors includes the possibility of students, who have achieved identical low level general education certificates, acquiring different levels of secretarial post, incorporating differential

gendered class relations (see Chapter III). Yet, in the private colleges students do not learn subjects concerned with decision making techniques, for example, which are a facet of higher level secretarial work. In other words, there are contradictions between production and private education, constituted in expressions of class relations in their respective curricula and labour process contents. This contrasts with class coherencies between production and state education constituted in their respective curricula and labour process contents.

The other end of the spectrum of private secretarial education is represented by the five remaining colleges surveyed. Details of these colleges all contain the ethos of an exclusive finishing school. Fees for a three term course range from £2,200 to £3,800 (1983/4). In addition, students have to finance their own textbooks, stationery, meals and accommodation.

The main full-time courses at these exclusive colleges are of one or two years' duration. In contrast with state courses, entry requirements are not clearly stated. While for some courses an 'A' level or two 'O' levels are recommended, these qualifications are not essential. For example, one elite college states that applicants should be "at least British 'O' level standard", but they do not need to have achieved passes in these examinations. These entrants then follow an identical secretarial curriculum to that offered to students with an 'A' level qualification. The particular course taken by any individual student rests primarily on personal negotiation rather than the clear institutional demarcation procedures of state colleges with mandatory stipulations on entry qualifications. All colleges in this private sector state that they assist students to obtain top level secretarial posts. Their literature suggests that they train students only for posts in the higher reaches of the secretarial hierarchy. Constant reference to their historical success in secretarial training and long established traditions suggests that there have been limited changes to their educational procedures. This indicates that the private sector is characterised by stability and tradition rather than the dynamics of innovation and change inherent in the literature on the state sector.

Elite private colleges offer a wider range of subjects than their counterparts in the state sector. As in the state sector, secretarial skills are compulsory elements as well as subjects such as Secretarial Procedures and Communication. However, the subjects which explicitly set them apart from the curricula of state colleges enjoy a gender specificity. In this category of content are:

- Dress and Grooming
- Deportment
- Make-up
- Flower Arranging
- French Cuisine
- Modelling
- Exercise and Dance
- Hostess Duties

Prospectuses emphasise these gendered elements of their curricula. This indicates a concentration on confirming or developing a gendered elite cultural capital which is missing from the formal curricula of state colleges. In other words, important distinctions, as constituted in the gender relations of secretarial education, become apparent, between the state and private sectors, especially when analysing elite college curricula. On financial grounds these exclusive colleges are likely to serve the daughters of the wealthier sectors of society who are the modern day equivalents of the early female recruits to office work. That is, in the private sector this moment of class relations coincides with a specific moment of gender relations. At the same time, if elite private college graduates are destined for the highest ranks of secretarial production, they do not study appropriate decision making skills at college. Their curriculum contrasts with high level state secretarial education in that there is scant conceptual analysis. In other words, expressions of class relations, at least in respect of the skill content of elite private secretarial education, are incoherent with students' anticipatory class relations in production. On the other hand, implicit in the inclusion of subjects such as dress and deportment is coherence between these private college curricula and the classed and gendered cultural specificity of personal aides to executive men.

Much of the office equipment depicted in private college prospectuses is out-dated in comparison with that pictured in state college prospectuses. That is, photographs of elite private colleges include manual typewriters, ink duplicators, manual telephone switchboards. These practical aspects of private colleges' training procedures contradict the high quality and standards implied by the general quality of the brochures and exclusivity of their locales. The notion of exclusivity needs, then, to be linked with areas of the curricula other than secretarial skills. This observation corresponds with substantive realities of high ranking secretarial labour processes (see Chapters III and V). In top level posts, less emphasis is placed on practical skills and more account is taken of the secretary's ability to control lower level workers, communicate effectively with male managers, and manipulate an individualised and personalised secretary/boss relationship. In other words, coherencies between the class and gender cultural aspects of private secretarial education and high level secretarial posts may, 'in reality', be a more significant aspect of the inter-relations between these social spheres, than incoherencies between their respective class relations as expressed in practical tasks and skills.

Elite private colleges frequently make reference to their exclusivity when, for example, stating that "the college is one of the most exclusive and best known in Britain." They also mention the select areas in which they are located, stating for instance "we are comparatively a small college . . . with two houses in perhaps the most exclusive residential part of London." In this way, they make overt appeals to the exclusivity which circumscribes their anticipated clientele, inferring the admission of only superordinate class categories of student which simultaneously denotes the exclusion of the majority. This is another distinguishing feature between state and private provision, which institutionalizes class relations. The extensive range of courses and levels of entry qualifications, published by state colleges, suggest that the majority could gain admittance, participating in a broad experience shared by many others. These substantive contrasts between state and private secretarial education

symbolise the status and prestige which exclusion practices confer upon private institutions. These class distinctions are readily discernible, even within a sphere of vocational preparation which is exclusively concerned with women. Expressions of differential class relations are in tension with the uniformity implied by the gender exclusivity of secretarial education.

The prospectuses issued by state colleges make no reference to the cultural attributes of their localities. Private college prospectuses, in competitive advertising strategies, convey the elite cultural tone which embraces their form of education. One such brochure exhorts participation in visits to the Albert Hall or "taking the Flower Walk in the neighbouring Kensington Gardens". Another announces that the college organises "chaperoned visits to Art Galleries". An elite cultural capital is clearly represented in this aspect of private colleges' curricula.

Private college brochures often place particular stress on subjects such as Flower Arranging, Cookery, Deportment and Appearance. This emphasis is achieved by descriptions which frequently undermine the significance of secretarial skills and imply that they constitute the boring, uninteresting facets of secretarial education. For example, one prospectus states "the attainment of an adequate style in typing and usable speed in shorthand takes a braver spirit and more patience than the average employer appreciates", "she becomes familiar with the keyboard - mercifully of the same alphabetical design that . . . she will find on the electric and electronic typewriters". After informing applicants that in this college a similar emphasis is placed on secretarial skills as in other colleges, the brochure goes on "it is in the 'other periods' sector of the curriculum that (this college) takes prime place . . . (This) secretarial college is indeed driven . . . to ensure that boredom is virtually impossible."

The devaluation of secretarial craft knowledge, skill and expertise, implicit in the prospectus cited above, realizes both class and gender relations. On the one hand this prospectus reinforces the normality of

women's subordination to men, expressed in the low status of 'women's skills' in waged labour, by explicitly debasing relevant curriculum activities. At the same time, the inferred insistence on high status, prestige and esteem of the curriculum subjects, devoid of direct association with the skills required in secretarial labour processes, are themselves informed by patriarchal relations. Particular moments of class and gender relations coincide and connect here in that these gendered ancillary subjects acquire their prestige from their class associations. On the other hand, the areas of elite colleges' secretarial education which attract status and prestige are themselves clearly gendered. They represent, then, cultural expressions of gendered dominant class cultural capital. The coincidence of these specific cultural forms of class and gender relations constitute part of the specification process of these relations. They constitute, in turn, instances of structural agency between these relations. Their very differences from cultural forms of class and gender relations within state secretarial education point to the patterning of class with gender, which in turn constitutes the reciprocal articulation of these relations within secretarial education.

The elite private colleges emphasise their small teaching groups and low student/staff ratios. In addition, photographs show personal attention from staff in the classroom, new students being welcomed as an individual, and students taking sherry with the staff. Pictures of the buildings depict small, converted houses with personalised, privatised and domestic characteristics. With respect to gender relations, students' physical environment during training in private colleges has a remarkable similarity to the domestic home, within which women have traditionally been segregated from the working milieu of their male partners. The array of coloured pictures in private college prospectuses shows an exclusively female student population dressed according to the traditional norms of office work. In these respects, representations of gender relations gain a marked significance in the private sector of secretarial education. They are undoubtedly linked to the family backgrounds of these likely upper class recruits to this form

of vocational preparation, constituting as such a cultural moment of classed gender relations.

Photographs of private and state secretarial colleges confirm that these are class differentiated institutions. There is a general impersonal ethos to state college prospectuses. Students, dressed in the informal student tradition, are shown alone, with no direct contact with staff. Although most state colleges have a student counsellor and a tutorial system, these services are available to all, rather than individualised. State college buildings are huge impersonal blocs. These observations suggest that the majority, who comprise the subordinate classes, do not warrant individualised and personalised attention. They also suggest that student/staff relations may take different forms within the state sector rather than being regulated by institutionalized norms and values. In contrast, the traditional prestige of the dominant classes demands that within their secretarial training, as in other areas of their lives and perhaps even more so because of the gender specificity entailed, students' unique qualities be constantly acknowledged by personalised and privatised attention. This suggests more uniformity in staff/student relations in the private sector than in the state sector, and a regularized formality of these relations.

Norms and values associated with femininity, and particularly those relating to office work, are more overtly stressed as consideration is given to the literature of institutions serving the higher social class recruits to these vocational courses<sup>(17)</sup>. A recurring theme in private college prospectuses is that a successful secretary needs above all else to be an interesting and attractive woman. The secretarial course aims of one such college include "gentle guidance into confident womanhood". English Literature is included in order to "make her a more interesting girl". Although the average graduate may be "proficient in the skills", she will become a "graceful secretary". Highlighting traditional female attributes legitimises gender segregation in office labour, whereby the valuable assets with which these women acquire top secretarial posts are represented as those which relate predominantly to their femininity. Classed gender assets confirm these prospective top secretaries'

difference from their male counterparts and assert the equity of the barriers which deny access to traditionally male spheres of office work. In this tightly bounded classed and gendered insularity, it becomes relatively easy to sustain the ideological underpinnings of women's overall inferior status to men. However, the specificity of female subordination to male dominance, in this case, is within the boundaries of the dominant class.

## 2.5 LINKS BETWEEN SECRETARIAL EDUCATION AND SECRETARIAL PRODUCTION

Gender relations act differently in the state and private spheres of secretarial education. The distinctions involved connect with the specificities of the students' class origins and educational terrain within which they are located. Clear distinctions, in the anticipatory labour processes to which relevant students are to be allocated, suggests that secretarial education mediates between gendered class familial heritage and gendered class relations of production. This facilitates continuities in privileges and disadvantages, as well as possible social mobility, as these women pass through and take their places within various social institutions. At the same time, particular expressions of class and gender relations in parallel classed categories of secretarial labour and secretarial education, are sometimes incoherent, ambiguous or contradictory. Such contradictions and coherencies, between secretarial education and production, take a patterned form. To clarify this particular patterning of class with gender relations, Figure 7 below represents the class and gender coherencies and incoherencies, between secretarial education and production, which have come to light as a result of analysis of the formal system of secretarial education. At the same time, analysis thus far by no means exhausts exploration of the relations between these two sets of institutions. For example, there is very limited information in the public literature of secretarial courses, in which the formal system of this area of education is represented, on social relations between secretarial students, between staff and students, or between staff. Yet

these are undoubtedly informed by, and help to shape, the formal structure of this area of education and are investigated in Chapter V.

At this stage of analysing empirically circumscribed constituents of the formal system of secretarial education, the model below sheds light on some aspects of the complexities of the reproduction, within education, of a three class model of secretarial labour. That is, not only coherencies but also incoherencies, between expressions of class and gender relations, in education and in production, constitute components of the reproduction of secretarial labour power. Explanations of incoherencies, as constituents of the corresponding class structures of secretarial education and secretarial production, necessitate exploration of interconnections between class and gender relations, between and within each class level of secretarial education and production. For example, the PA Diploma course in state colleges contains no indication, in its formal content, of the manipulation of a patriarchal, privatized and personalized relationship with a male boss. Yet this will inevitably become part of these students' gender relations in production (see Chapter III). Hence, the model below signals incoherent gender relations between this level of secretarial education and its corresponding level of secretarial production. On the other hand, this particular incoherence, between education and production, can be explained as part of the institutionalization process of class relations within education. That is, sharp distinctions in the clearly gendered contents of the formal curricula of the private sector and state sector constitute, in part, class differences between them.

Another aspect of class differentiation, between the private and state sectors of secretarial education, is the contrasting coherencies and incoherencies between the class relations expressed in parallel levels of education and production. In this instance, the skill and knowledge content of their respective formal curricula, compared with the tasks of relevant labour processes, represents these coherencies and incoherencies. So, for example, the formal syllabuses of elite private colleges do not include decision making skills. However, these are part of high level secretaries' labour process. In this respect, then, there

are, as shown in the model below, incoherencies between class relations in this level of secretarial education and in production.

The model below represents essentially the public structure of secretarial education. However, when analysing connections between class and gender relations, within each classed level of secretarial education, incoherencies and coherencies between this education and production are not as clearcut as perhaps this model suggests. For example, gender relations are clearly expressed in the formal content of elite colleges' curricula, in subjects such as cooking and make-up. However, various elements of elite colleges' brochures explicitly and implicitly point to the reproduction of a dominant class cultural capital. It is almost inevitable, therefore, that subjects such as dress and appearance will take on elite values. In this sense (and contrary to the incoherence in class relations depicted by the skills, knowledge and tasks of relevant education and labour processes) class relations in private education cohere with those in the parallel level of secretarial production. However, this particular class coherence is masked by the explicitly gendered form that such coherencies take in this aspect of the formal curricula. In itself, this points to the possibility that the articulation of class and gender relations can produce ideological effects, in masking or highlighting the class and/or gender links between sets of institutions. This issue is addressed in detail in Chapter VI.

Figure 7

REPRODUCTION OF SECRETARIAL LABOUR POWER

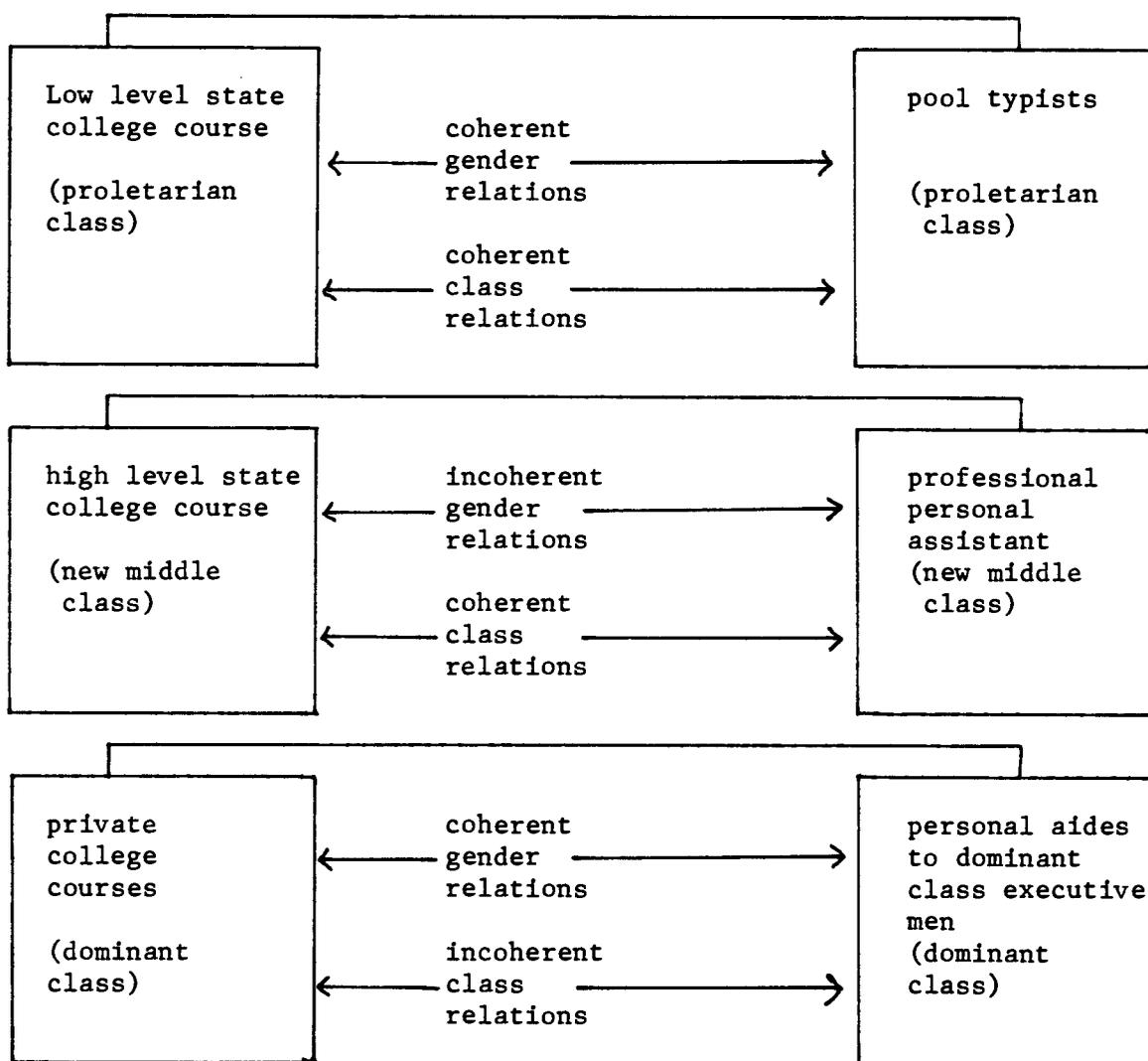
SECRETARIAL  
EDUCATION

SECRETARIAL  
PRODUCTION

Female Exclusive

Female Exclusive

Comparing  
education  
process with  
labour  
process



The model above indicates both coherencies and incoherencies between class and/or gender relations in production and in education.

Incoherencies, in particular, suggest that relations in secretarial education do not constitute a mirror image of relations in secretarial production. On the other hand, incoherencies and coherencies, between and within class and gender relations, in secretarial production and in secretarial education, may take on a different form, at the level of the lived realities of secretarial education, than at the level of the system of this vocational education. This issue is explored in the following chapter which analyses lived social relations in secretarial education at a state college and at an elite private college, as distinct from structural relations explored in this chapter.

### CONCLUSIONS

The structure of secretarial education comprises, historically, changes, constituted in expressions of class and gender relations. The introduction of full-time state secretarial education to a system previously dominated by the private sector, together with changes in the curricula offered within the state sector, cohere with broad gender divisions within office production and the development of class distinctions in the relations of secretarial labour processes. A three class model of gendered secretarial labour developed in the structure of secretarial education (see Figure 7 above). At the same time, this coherence between the class and gender structures of secretarial education and production is, in part, constituted in incoherencies between and within class and gender relations, within education and between education and production.

The pattern created by coherencies and incoherencies, between expressions of class and gender relations in education and in production, shown in Figure 7 above, was particularly highlighted, in this chapter, when exploring the curricula of each classed category of secretarial course. For example, within secretarial education, dominant class elite private colleges emphasise gendered knowledge associated with the femininity inscribed in social constructions of secretarial labour. The coincidence of these cultural forms of class and gender

relations constitutes, in part, the specification process between these relations. It is one moment of structural interconstitution of these relations. Put another way, this instance of structural agency constitutes part of the patterning of class with gender inasmuch as cultural forms of these relations, as constituted in state secretarial education, contrast with those constituted in the private sector.

Status for high level state college courses is claimed by high level conceptual knowledge in the curriculum. In contrast, status for elite private secretarial courses is claimed by the dominant class aura of the colleges and the gendered subjects, such as grooming and deportment, which are a compulsory element of their curricula. In addition, the levels of skill and knowledge contained in state secretarial curricula include that necessary in their students' anticipatory labour processes. However, given that the manipulation of privatized gender relations are an integral facet of top secretarial positions, the omission of relevant knowledge in state colleges, constitutes an incoherence between gender relations in education and in production. In contrast, in the private sector there are coherencies between education and production, as constituted in their respective gender relations, but incoherencies between their respective class relations. That is private college students do not receive a curriculum which includes developing decision making and initiative skills, although these are features of the labour process of top level secretaries. In other words, part of the patterning of class relations with gender relations, realized within secretarial education, constitutes complex coherencies and incoherencies between education and production.

The substantive differences between the curricula of elite private and state colleges, results in female secretarial students being constituted, in the relationship between education and production, differently from each other. For example, the incoherencies between class relations in private secretarial education and in production, in comparison with the class continuities between state secretarial education and production, confirm class distinctions between these sectors of education, as well as their students' classed family

heritage. In other words, a contradiction between expressions of class relations, institutionalizes, in part, class relations within education. In turn, these institutionalized class relations shape the structure of gender relations within secretarial education. That is, gender specific knowledge, for example, is either included or omitted from secretarial curricula in a pattern which accords with the dominant or subordinate class specificity of the college. However, the omission of 'feminine skills' from state secretarial curricula, is incoherent with gender relations within production. On the other hand this incoherence within gender relations, constitutes, in part, the class structure of secretarial education in that it confirms class differences between state and private secretarial colleges.

Coherencies and incoherencies, between and within class and gender relations, expressed within education and between education and production, are part, then, of the complex structure of each set of relations. Analysis suggests that these complexities inform, and are the product of, the interconstitution of class and gender structures with each other. Furthermore, this process of interconstitution takes place between the social institutions of education and production, as well as within each set of institutions. In essence, the relationship between sets of institutions adds to the complexities resulting from, and informing, class and gender articulation, as constituted within social institutions. They constitute, in turn, part of the institutionalization process of class and gender between and within the cultural and structural dimensions of both sets of relations, within and across sets of social institutions.

Formal class and gender boundaries surface when analysing the system of secretarial education. This system itself informs, and is shaped by, the routine daily lives of secretarial students and teachers. Given the manifestation of class and gender relations in the structure of secretarial education, these women's activities, social relations, and institutional contexts, also express these relations. However, analysis of routine college life may bring to light coherencies and incoherencies, between expressions of class and gender as constituted in

the system of this vocational education and those constituted in the lived realities of secretarial education. They would compound yet further the complexities of connections, between and within class and gender relations, within the system of this education and between it and production, which have been expored in this chapter. The next chapter examines this issue in more detail. It compares daily realities of the institutional structures, processes and procedures of an elite private secretarial college with those of a state technical college. Analysis explores and contrasts substantive expressions of class and gender relations as expressed in routine life at each of these two colleges. In other words, it examines the system of secretarial education at the level of day-to-day social relations and activities.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER IV

(1) It is relatively difficult to acquire detailed information on secretarial education in the early years of its foundation. However information gleaned from a variety of sources suggests that part-time evening courses constituted the main avenue for acquiring relevant training. For example Silverstone (1974) notes that at the end of the 19th Century when women began to enter offices, one deficiency which the Society for Promoting Employment of Women sought to remedy was the lack of training available to women who contemplated entering 'business occupations'. Silverstone (1974) quotes from an article in the Englishwoman's Journal which reported that the Society had managed to raise sufficient funds to establish a school for women where they were trained by being:

"Thoroughly well instructed in accounts, bookkeeping, etc . . . fold and tie up parcels, and perform many other little acts . . . the necessity of politeness towards customers, and a constant self-command . . . girls educated in this school would also be capable of becoming clerks." (1859) (quoted in Silverstone 1974)

Silverstone (1974) maintains that in the latter part of the 1880's women were becoming increasingly employed in the Civil Service. In 1880 women were selected on the same basis as men, that is by open competition. She cites an article in Cassell's Magazine in 1893 which suggests ways in which this highly competitive situation might be tackled. This quotation indicates that evening class studies were one of the avenues of obtaining vocational business training:

"When a girl is between 15 and 18 she competes for a female sortership in the General Post Office. Should she be so fortunate as to obtain one of these situations, she devotes her evenings to study. Then, as soon as she is 18, she presents herself at every examination for clerkships." (1893 - quoted in Silverstone 1974)

Gissing's (1893) novel entitled The Odd Women, a work of fiction, creates a story around female characters who formed part of the large 'surplus of women' in late 19th Century England, and in so doing provides glimpses at secretarial education in this epoch. Two of the women set up and teach in a school in Great Portland Street which trains girls for office work. They choose to train exclusively middle class women. One of the pupils observes "I really don't think . . . there can be any solidarity of ladies with servant girls." The pupils, all middle class women who have fallen on hard times, come to learn their office skills in their spare time, while working long hours in shops. Although a fictional work, the information on secretarial training coheres with data cited above on the avenues for secretarial training at this time. In addition, Gissing's novels are renowned for the sympathetic and authentic record they provide of middle and working class women's lives in 19th Century England.

(2) The general trends in attendance at further education establishments lends weight to the proposition that vocational training for secretarial work, until the Second World War, was likely to have been taken by evening only study for the technical college student. The DES (1972)

reported in Statistics of Education 1971 a roughly six-fold increase over the previous 60 years in attendance at further education colleges, with about a threefold increase since just before the Second World War; in actual numbers from 0.6 million in 1910-11, to 1.3 million in 1937-8, and 3.3 million in 1971. They reported a significant shift in modes of attendance. Until the Second World War approximately 90 per cent of the enrolments were for evening only, with full-time attendance representing only 1 or 2 per cent of the total. The DES (1972) reports that the number of full-time and sandwich students together in 1971 accounted for about 9 per cent and was growing rapidly. The increase in the number of full-time and sandwich students in the 1960's was about double that in the 1950's.

(3) Data in Government Reports, which relate specifically to secretarial education, are extremely limited. The main source for the data which is provided is the Department of Education and Science's Statistics of Education. However, these documents did not begin to be published until the 1960's. A further complication is that the manner in which information is presented, even about similar comparative data, has changed over the years. In relation to a section of these documents headed 'Destination of School Leavers', the early reports state that courses leading to RSA and LCC qualifications had been excluded. It will be shown in a later section that these examining bodies provide the major qualification aims of state secretarial education. On these grounds, therefore, students opting to study on secretarial courses are omitted from official Government statistics until the 1970's.

(4) This discussion provides further information on the institutions making provision for secretarial education, as well as on the examining boards for secretarial subjects.

(5) The rise in the number of students attending colleges of further education detailed in the previous section helps to confirm this assertion.

(6) International comparisons of vocational education were highlighted when Britain was discussing, and finally entered, the European Economic Community. In compliance with Article 128 of the Treaty of Rome, the Commission of the European Communities and the Member Countries formulated its General Principles for Implementing a Common Vocational Training Policy which was accepted by the Council of Ministers on 2 April 1963. It later became a Decision which meant that it was mandatory on member Governments. This policy included the standardisation of vocational training methods and systems. In the event member countries did not comply with the Decision and eight years later the Commission admitted that the 1963 Decision had not worked and published new Guidelines for the Development of the Programme for Vocational Training at Community Level which were endorsed by the Council of Ministers of 26 July 1971. The Commission's efforts now centred on a process of gradual persuasion and it was felt that standardisation would be achieved as a result of comparing and evaluating the end products of the training processes used in the member countries. Harmonisation was recognised as a long-term process which would need to evolve at its own pace.

The recommendations of the EEC may have been one of the reasons why the CTC elected to visit and report on the training for commerce in three other European countries (France, Germany and Denmark) as an integral element in the compilation of its 1966 Report. The Report states:

"In most other West European countries the content and pattern of training for younger office employees or potential employees is to a considerable extent determined by the central training authorities. The control of commercial training is achieved either through legislation governing apprenticeships or by the Government itself assuming responsibility for providing training." (1966:18)

No doubt comparative observations, similar to those quoted above, were among the pressures which brought about the introduction of TEC and BEC qualifications. With Britain's officially established links with Europe, in the early 1970's, comparisons were also made between secretarial training schemes, as witnessed by the Seminar on Work/Study in France and Germany for Students following Secretarial Courses. This seminar was held on 24 October 1974, being organised by the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges at the instance of Her Majesty's Inspectorate. Its aims were threefold: to provide information about comparable courses in France and the Federal Republic of Germany; to establish a forum for the sharing of experience; and to offer delegates an opportunity to discuss common problems. Representatives from some 50 institutions of further and higher education, DES, the Scottish Education Department and from the major examining bodies attended. Reports made by the German and French representatives confirmed that secretarial qualifications in their respective countries were nationally governed and, passing through Parliament in Germany at that time, and adopted in 1975, was a law containing criteria for the training of secretaries and recognising and protecting the title of State Certified Secretary.

Official links with Europe and comparative studies on vocational training programmes were undoubtedly issues which contributed to both the RSA and LCC restructuring secretarial examinations in the 1960's and 1970's, the details of which are contained in a later section. However, it can be seen that in comparison with other European countries the State has, to a large extent, delegated responsibility for the control of qualifications in the vocational sphere of secretarial work. Harmonisation of qualifications, even within Britain, is still largely unresolved, as in the secretarial sphere there is no comprehensive classification of occupations nor system of recognition of competence at national level. Private bodies such as the RSA and LCC have been permitted to maintain their own national education schemes, conduct their own examinations, and influence the development of the structure of the work to which they relate.

(7) Scrutiny of current prospectuses of 38 technical colleges in the London area shows that 36 state that the main credential aim is a RSA and/or LCC qualification for their secretarial courses. The main emphasis will, therefore, be given to these examining bodies and their related credentials and curricula. At the same time, it is noted that

there is a distinct lack of uniformity in secretarial credentialisation even within the state further education system.

(8) The award of a group diploma requires candidates to satisfy examiners in several examinations, covering 4 or 5 subject areas. Candidates must pass all examinations at one examination period in order to be awarded a diploma.

(9) Data on current secretarial diplomas were acquired in 1984/5. Since then some modifications have been introduced and further alterations are proposed. However, it is felt that the substance of these later changes has no significant bearing on analysis of secretarial credentials contained in this study.

(10) There were 250 candidates for the PA Diploma in its first year, the number of entrants rose to 500 in 1974, to about 1,000 by the end of the 1970's and remains today at about 1,400 annually. The RSA has never been able to improve on the 33 per cent national pass rate in this Diploma.

(11) In 1956 there were 160 candidates entering the Private Secretaries Diploma, and the figure rises steadily until in 1980 614 candidates entered for the Diploma, of whom 173 were successful. The pass rate has been extremely low throughout the years since the Diploma was introduced.

(12) Relevant information was acquired by examination of past college prospectuses of one college of further education and discussions with RSA and LCC personnel.

(13) For example the Communications paper, 1980, for the PA Diploma, included:

"Question 4.2

Your company, Addrite Limited, which makes a range of office accounting equipment has decided in principle to introduce a secretarial servicing system to replace its existing provision. In the new scheme, a secretarial servicing unit will be set up in each of the company's head office departments. It will comprise a supervisor, 3 - 5 senior secretarial staff and 8 - 12 typewriting/transcription staff. The units will replace the current 'one-to-one' manager/private secretary relationship and the existing departmental typing pools, which are both felt to be costly and to inhibit staff development

The decision has not been welcomed in all quarters, however, and criticisms have been voiced about the consequent loss of prestige, job satisfaction and personal contact. In order to pave the way for the introduction of the secretarial servicing units, you have been asked by your principal, Mr John Bucknell, Managing Director, to write an article for the next edition of the Company's house journal to emphasise the advantages which would derive from introducing the new system, bearing in mind that some staff view the prospect with scepticism."

(14) Relevant information is given in past examination papers and publications such as the RSA's Notes for Teachers of Typewriting.

(15) In a pamphlet published by the Higher Education Foundation, it is stated that Business Degrees include:

Economics, Law, Accounting (1983:39)

The PA Diploma course includes:

Economic and Financial Aspects of Administration  
Legal Aspects of Administration.

(16) Details of current curricula and credentials were obtained from the prospectuses for 1983/4 of 10 private colleges in the London area.

(17) Subjects of the elite colleges' curricula, such as Flower Arranging, Dress and Deportment, express traditional notions of upper class femininity. In other subjects which have the surface appearance of gender neutrality, such as Journalism and Public Speaking, expressions of patriarchal relations also pertain. For example, one prospectus states that "Public Speaking is aimed at making good conversationalists rather than politicians out of our students". The subordination of women within patriarchal relations is inscribed with notions such as the inappropriateness for women to compete with men for influential positions in society. The above quotation suggests that this college reproduces overtly the ideology which sustains the unequal distribution of power between men and women, in coherence with the generic principles underlying patriarchal relations.

## CHAPTER V

### A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF TWO COLLEGES

#### INTRODUCTION

Like the previous chapter, this chapter also focusses on secretarial education. However, it develops analysis of this area of vocational studies at a different level. Here the routine experiences of secretarial students and teachers are explored. As they go about daily college life, students and teachers act out, constitute and inform the system of secretarial education. Their day-to-day social relations and activities are analysed, therefore, in terms of being both constrained by, but also helping to shape, reproduction of the gendered, three class model of secretarial labour (see Chapter III), which emerged when examining, in the previous chapter, the formal system of secretarial education.

Lived realities, which contribute towards the reproduction of secretarial labour power within education, are explored by presenting, in this chapter, a comparative case study of two colleges. They are representative of the contrasting state and private avenues for training for secretarial work, and different levels of course, discernible when analysing the system of secretarial education (see Chapter IV). 'Sloanes' is a small, elite, private college, concentrating on

secretarial education. It is located in an exclusive 'up-market' residential area of London. The college itself is a large converted Edwardian house, set amidst well tended lawns and flower beds. In contrast, 'Hometown' is a large, state college, offering a range of secretarial courses within a multi-disciplined span of vocational education. 'Hometown' college is housed in a typical 1970's building. This concrete tower bloc is located in the centre of a busy, prosperous, London suburb. 'Sloanes' and 'Hometown' were deliberately chosen as alternative cases because their locales and outward appearances immediately indicate sharp class contrasts between them.

Sloanes and Hometown's cultural ethos, institutional structure, education processes and classroom relations are examined in this chapter. Analysis centres on the realization of class and/or gender relations in each college's physical environment, staffing structure, implementation of formal curricula, classroom and extra-classroom social relations, students and teachers' views on secretarial education and secretarial work. In effect, this analysis compares specific moments of class and gender relations expressed within each college. Analysis proceeds by exploring the patterning of class with gender relations, contained in the coincidence of specific moments of class and gender relations expressed within a single course or college. Connections between secretarial education and production are also examined. This entails analysis of the patterning of coherencies and incoherencies, within and between expressions of class and gender relations, as constituted both within education and also between education and production.

Analysis of the system of secretarial education, in the previous chapter, indicates that there are probably similarities, but also sharp distinctions, between daily life at Sloanes and at Hometown. Together they are likely to constitute differences, between each institution, in the pattern of class and gender relations which their routine procedures exhibit. On the other hand, the practical implementation of each college's policies on, for example, recruitment, allocation of students to courses, staffing arrangements, assessment of students, constitutes

expressions of class and/or gender relations which may be either coherent or incoherent with those expressed at the level of the system of secretarial education. For example, the state college may combine different levels of secretarial students when timetabling common elements of the formal curriculum, such as basic keyboarding skills. If this were the case, it would weaken, in practice, those tight class boundaries between, say, Post 'A' level and Post 'O' level state college students indicated in analysis of the system of secretarial education (see Chapter IV). In other words, this aspect of the process of secretarial education would constitute an incoherence between class relations as expressed in the daily realities and in the system of secretarial education. Furthermore, this possible practice would be incoherent with the sharp class boundaries between different levels of secretary in production (see Chapter III). This suggests that analysis of the daily realities of secretarial education is crucial to this structuration approach. It may shed further light on the reciprocal articulation of class and gender relations. That is, analysis of the lived realities of secretarial education may compound the coherencies and incoherencies, within and between education and production, as constituted in expressions of class and gender relations at the level of the overall structure of secretarial education.

Existing education theories (see Chapter I) emphasize that reproduction of class and gender relations, in any area or institution of education, may be constituted not only in formal curricula contents, but in more informal procedures and processes. Like other spheres of education, then, an important aspect of secretarial education is the 'hidden' curriculum of social education. Analysis of, for instance, control of students inside and outside classrooms, norms and values underpinning each college's cultural ethos, student/teacher, student/student, and teacher/teacher relations, are likely to illuminate the realization of class and gender relations, as constituted in the social education which infiltrates both the formal and 'hidden' curriculum of training for secretarial work.

In respect of social education, analysis of, for example, the formal curriculum of elite private colleges, in the previous chapter, indicated that, in this institutional context, the gendered dominant class cultural capital of students is confirmed. However, at the level of daily procedures, this confirmation process appears problematic. For example, it is likely that these students, from dominant class family backgrounds, are taught by teachers who are their class subordinates. In other words, it is unlikely that these teachers possess the classed cultural capital which is apparently reproduced within their elite private college. In view of this, it is possible that, in their daily classroom contact with these students, in which they are in a position of control over dominant class women students, they transmit, implicitly or explicitly, values which are incoherent with expressions of class and gender relations realized at the level of the system of secretarial education. Put another way, within daily classroom life, these teachers' actions may, perhaps unconsciously, challenge or subvert reproduction of their students' gendered dominant class cultural capital.

Teachers, as well as students, bring with them to their life in secretarial education, then, unconscious values which must influence their actions and social relations. They are also likely to have conscious views on issues relating to class and gender relations, which also guide their actions, attitudes and behaviour towards each other. For example, in spite of the fact that formal state college curricula omit explicitly gendered knowledge, such as dress and appearance (see Chapter IV), teachers may consciously decide to give advice to students on this aspect of the norms of office work. In other words, it is possible that teachers consciously reinforce the subordination of women to men, as realized in these topics. On the other hand, their students' conscious understanding of women's patriarchal subordination may mean that, in such circumstances, they could reject their teachers' advice. The views held by Sloanes and Hometown teachers and students, on issues representative of both class and gender relations, are, therefore, investigated as a feature of the daily realities of secretarial education. Again, teachers and students' conscious beliefs constitute

expressions of class and gender relations, which may challenge or accommodate or acquiesce with those expressed at the level of the system of secretarial education, as well as those expressed in secretarial production.

Attention turns now to detailed analysis of diverse expressions of class and gender relations, realized in Hometown and in Sloanes internal cultures, structures and processes of secretarial education. In addition analysis of the conscious beliefs of students and teachers indicates that these women filter, challenge, re-negotiate and accommodate elements of the institutionalization of class and gender relations within secretarial education. This signals moments of human agency which analysis suggests are bound up with instances of structural agency. Together they constitute the reciprocal articulation of class and gender relations within secretarial education.

#### 1. INSTITUTIONAL CULTURES

The specific cultures of Sloanes and of Hometown college are explored in this section by analysing each college's history; contemporary ethos; backgrounds, structure and control of its staff. The cultural tone of Sloanes is that of elitism and genderism which combine to produce a gendered dominant class culture. In contrast, Hometown's cultural tone is one of general subordinate class ranking to that of Sloanes, but incorporating more inter-class cultural and structural diversity. All class and gender cultural symbols at Sloanes explicitly point to the reproduction of a gendered dominant class cultural capital. Diversity within Hometown makes it more difficult to pinpoint a particular class or gender cultural orientation. However, it is culturally of an order indicative of lower class compared with that of Sloanes.

## 1.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of Sloanes illustrates the maintenance of a dominant class culture. Direct links with the dominant class establishment and its supporting institutions have remained constant. The college was founded some 55 years ago by the mother of the current owner. She was assisted by her husband, who was the managing director of a large engineering business. At their deaths in the 1950's, they were succeeded by their son, who was then a Conservative Member of Parliament. In conversations at Sloanes stress is placed on the Principal's status as an ex Member of Parliament. The Vice Principal retains his title of Air Commodore, Associates are a Sir and Lady, and the Administrative Officer is referred to as the Wing Commander. The most powerful positions within the college are held by men, and by virtue of prestigious designations unassociated with education or office labour. In this dominant class cultural setting, this staffing structure institutionalizes gender relations. That is, men are at the apex of the hierarchy of positions. Inasmuch as many of the gender facets of Sloanes culture contrast with those of Hometown, this moment of gender relations coincides with the the college's dominant class culture, pointing to an instance of structural agency between these relations.

Hometown's history parallels general developments in state education (see Chapter IV). The site the college occupies originally housed a commercial secondary school. It was taken over after the Second World War to accommodate a technical college, which in the 1950's began to offer full-time secretarial courses. Student numbers and courses, including secretarial studies, gradually expanded. In the 1960's the work of the college was divided, with high level courses going to the newly opened Polytechnic which stands almost opposite the technical college. However, secretarial education was not affected by this split. No bid was made by the Polytechnic for even the Post 'A' level secretarial courses, probably because of the low value placed on areas of work associated with women. The close proximity of an institute of higher education left the college with a low level ethos. The current Principal and Vice Principal at Hometown are men. However, in contrast

with Sloanes executive men, they have high level academic qualifications and have been promoted through the ranks of the lecturers' hierarchy. They represent 'new middle class' professionalism. This suggests that the institutionalization of gender relations at Hometown takes a different form from that at Sloanes. That is, social class mobility and professional meritocracy are inscribed in Hometown's institutionalization of gender relations.

## 1.2 CONTEMPORARY ETHOS

Sloanes buildings symbolise both elitism and domesticity. Put another way, they constitute a coincidence of specific moments of class and gender relations. The college occupies a large converted house, in an exclusive residential area of London. The waiting room resembles a dominant class home; oak panelled walls adorned with paintings, pot plants and flower arrangements, a fire glowing in the hearth, and plush armchairs scattered around a carpeted floor. On the antique table, magazines and newspapers available for students or visitors to pass the time include The Lady, Homes and Gardens, The Daily Telegraph and The Times. Classrooms have solid wood, well worn, polished desks placed in rows. There are manual typewriters and a limited number of electronic typewriters and word processors. The owner and Principal of the college lives with his family in a detached house in the grounds of the college. The Vice Principal occupies a house of similar quality in an adjoining road. The college is small in comparison with Hometown, catering for about 200 students. They come from all parts of Great Britain and abroad, with about half the total from overseas.

Financial considerations must bar the vast majority from attending Sloanes. Tuition fees are £2,300 per term (1990), on top of which students pay for accommodation, meals, visits, stationery and books. A few grants are available at the discretion of the college. They are awarded to close relatives of former students or the children of clergy and the armed forces. Most students are residential, living in nearby

houses owned by the college. These provide high quality flatlets with a resident warden.

Sloanes remains sufficiently small that an ethos of personal acquaintance between everyone pervades the college. All visitors are obliged to report to an enquiry office. Its open door faces the main entrance. Any stranger entering the building is quickly detected. Exclusivity is signalled by the college's air of being insulated from the general public. At Sloanes moments of gender and class relations coincide. They mutually cohere to inform the ethos of a classed form of gender relations which, in turn, coheres with the domestic culture of its dominant class female recruits.

In contrast to Sloanes, Hometown's ethos suggests meritocracy, equal opportunity and class diversity. It is a large college with open access and no explicit signs of gender discrimination. It is unmistakably an institution of education with few signs of direct connections with domestic or non-educational working life. Hometown is a modern, clean and well-equipped college, although essentially utilitarian and impersonal. It is housed in an eleven storey tower, erected in the 1970's, hemmed in by the buildings of a busy town centre. In contrast to Sloanes, the secretarial section has spacious teaching rooms, with modern typing desks and chairs. It has a room devoted to word processing, a training office, and a variety of electric and electronic typewriters. Secretarial rooms and equipment are of a similar quality to those provided for male or non gendered subject areas. Although there is a large reception desk at the main entrance, few report here on entering the college. Hometown's size and accessibility permit freedom of entry to any member of the public.

Hometown has a full-time student population of over 2,000, some 150 of whom take secretarial courses. In the main students are school leavers, in their late teens. Part-time day, evening, and adult courses attract some older students. Fees at Hometown are determined by the Local Education Authority. Tuition is normally free to those below 19 years. Older students can apply for grants from the local authority to assist

them financially. Books and stationery are supplied by the college. Students and staff reflect the local population - there are few ethnic minority students. There is only a small number of overseas students. Hometown's general ethos reflects its locality which is one of the most prosperous London suburbs. It has the aura of upper working or middle class respectability where financial constraints would not debar entry for many of its catchment population. Clearly Hometown is somewhat privileged in comparison with some inner city state colleges. Yet in spite of these relative class advantages, the general ethos of Hometown contrasts sharply with that of Sloanes.

### 1.3 THE STAFF

Those at the apex of both Sloanes and Hometown's staffing hierarchy are male, while the majority of secretarial teachers are female. In this respect both colleges institutionalize gender relations. However, there are distinctions, between the colleges, realized in relations between students and the men in authority. In effect, women teachers at Hometown have more authority, in terms of control of their own labour process, than women teachers at Sloanes. There are differences, then, between each college's internal class relations. That is, differences between the colleges, constituted in the forms taken by their institutionalized gender relations, inform their respective internal class relations.

At Sloanes every student has direct personal contact with the men in authority. Students at Hometown only come into contact with the male Principal or Vice Principal in exceptional circumstances. Visible, direct control for secretarial students at Hometown is exercised by the female Head of that section. Sloanes students' personal contact with their executive men indicates that the gender division of labour, manifested in staffing structure, is more tangible and more directly patriarchal to students at Sloanes than to those at Hometown. At Sloanes the Principal takes on the role of 'head of the college family'.

At Sloanes there are sharp distinctions between its staff which contrast with the assumed professional equality of all staff at Hometown. For example, Sloanes higher level staff have their own offices, which are as comfortable and well furnished as the waiting room, described earlier. Their doors remain shut. Senior staff have coffee brought to them in their own rooms. Classroom teachers have a contrasting communal staffroom. There is a large old table where they sit on hard, wooden chairs. They drink their coffee from an assortment of mugs. In a corner is an electric kettle used to make drinks. A few worn and faded easy chairs are available. Sloanes teachers have more class contact hours than teachers in the state college. They have relatively short vacations, in comparison with Hometown. These expressions of class divisions between Sloanes staff, and between the staff at Hometown and Sloanes, coincide with distinctive degrees of control over their own teaching labour process.

Sloanes classroom teachers are physically and relationally distanced from higher ranking male and female decision makers in their college. They rarely attend social functions, have no say in the selection and allocation of students and have to adhere rigidly to syllabuses imposed by higher level staff. Their labour process is tightly controlled to render them the proletarians of Sloanes internal class relations. The Head of Training confirmed that teachers are restricted to compulsory schemes of work devised by those in authority at the college:

"There is an official college syllabus for all the subjects. It is fairly rigid. We get teachers to stick to it uniformly . . . We are particularly obliged to keep a strict watch on progress and attendance because with parents paying such high fees they do expect good results. Attendance and timekeeping - they do all have to keep a strict watch on them."

Distinctions between staff at Sloanes institutionalize, within this college, class relations. Sloanes is like a large scale version of elite family life. Classroom teachers' class relations with their pupils incorporate the contradictions entailed in the nanny's position within the household. Teachers have a measure of control over their students by virtue of their position within the organisation. However, they are in a subordinate class location in respect of the dominant

class family origins and wealth of their pupils. These elite families purchase the labour of the teachers via their agents - the male owner and Vice Principal of the College who have close ties with the establishment. The power invested in the Vice Principal's office is used to control tightly the teachers' labour process and permit them little discretion over their own labour process. This ensures, at the level of the classroom (see section 3), uniform transmission of the gendered dominant class values inherent in Sloanes cultural ethos. A Sloanes classroom teacher provided insights into the class contradictions entailed in her position:

"I tell them (students) about having to arrive on time and not looking at the clock. If you're given work at five to five then you just have to stay to do it . . . Some of them (students) are really cheeky. One girl sat there and said 'here's my paper'. I said 'Excuse me, but bring it out' and then she got another girl to bring it out. They blame the teachers for everything. If they don't pass their test, it's not like an external exam where some anonymous person decides whether they pass. Here they know it's you and they say 'I couldn't hear you' or 'you dictated faster than that' . . . We don't have bells, we just get to the classroom on time. We (teachers) are all on time and expect the students to be on time. We are made to take great interest in their attendance. We take a register every lesson. If they are away for a day I report it to the college. Miss (Smith) reports to the administration and they take it up. We don't actually do any more than that because we don't have any direct contact at all with parents."

At Sloanes, then, there is an essentially contractual relation between teachers and students. At Hometown relations between teachers and students, as well as between teachers, contrast sharply with those at Sloanes. At Hometown symbols of differentiation between staff are less sharply contrasting than at Sloanes. The staffing structure here expresses less explicitly the institutionalization of class relations than at Sloanes. For example, senior members of Hometown's staff have small offices which they often share with another member of staff. Lower grade teachers share staffrooms with about 20 others of similar grade. Each teacher has individual desk space, filing cabinet and shelves. The furnishings are of a comparable quality for all staff. Doors remain open and lower level staff enter senior members' rooms without knocking and obtain papers in their absence. They all meet in the snack bars at breaks. The college committee structure ensures

teacher representation on all decision making bodies. There is trade union representation. The Head of Secretarial Section allocates subjects to teachers, but the teacher then has individual discretion about her programme of teaching. There is an ethos of class continuity between all staff and in the staff/students relations, which permits Hometown teachers greater control over their own labour process than that afforded to Sloanes teachers. However, this particular class advantage over Sloanes teachers is in tension with the class subordination written into Hometown's general ethos in comparison with that of Sloanes. The latitudes permitted for individual decisions on teaching strategies are illustrated by one Hometown teacher:

"I feel I have to be very careful about promoting discussion on things like feminism. Once I said to someone - a teacher - 'why should she be just a secretary?' and that other teacher was very upset. I didn't mean to imply that a secretarial job was lowly; I was trying to attack the ideology of it, how they perpetuate the caring role of women, looking after men, serving them. I would like to think that I encouraged students to branch out, but I can't have hundreds of students leaving the course can I? . . . One can give them one's own thoughts, but one can't indoctrinate them . . . In teaching . . . I try to break down their (students') responses towards teachers . . . I am a figure of authority and I want to keep some authority, but I want them to question that all people are all people, so that they understand they should not be inhibited when they go to work by their fear of authority . . . I want to drag them into adulthood so that they see that they have rights and to question me and to disagree with me if they want. I might say that I am right anyway, but I think they should have the right to disagree with me and that is a very conscious approach because that is what I believe education should be - an ability to question . . . In relation to their anticipated work, they should be taught to question authority . . . To question is the way you learn to transfer and think for yourself . . . I would never encourage them to revolt because I want to remain safe too, but to understand there may be unfairness . . . I think this is part of my personal consciousness, not part of the official syllabus. However, I also say there are certain rules they have to follow in order to achieve their ends - it might be boring, but we have to do it to pass the examination."

These remarks confirm Hometown's ethos which integrates a broad social education into programmes of vocational preparation. Issues of socialization are explicitly incorporated into classroom activities. In contrast, at Sloanes such social education is the explicit concern of extra classroom life where low level teachers are rarely present.

The personal histories and appearance of teachers at the two colleges contribute to contrasts in their respective cultural tones. Female secretarial teachers at Hometown dress informally in skirts and jumpers and occasionally trousers. There is no attempt to control students' appearance, who are usually dressed, like other students, in jeans and jumpers. The Head of the Secretarial Section stated:

"So far as I'm concerned they (students) can wear what they like."

This indicates that, at Hometown, collegueship, rather than the formal contract of student/staff relations at Sloanes, characterises student/staff relations in the state college. However, this collegueship is spurious given that the formal teaching role involves control and authority over students.

Secretarial teachers at Hometown all possessed at least a Certificate in Education teachers' qualification. Of 8 interviewed, four had University degrees, including one higher degree, and another was studying for a higher degree. They saw themselves primarily as teachers who happened to be involved in secretarial subjects. They had left secretarial work either because they saw no future in it or because they thought that teaching would be more rewarding. High level qualifications assisted their 'promotion' from secretarial work to secretarial education. This marks them out as professionals and role models of social mobility for the students, in spite of the gender specific area of production and education within which they had been contained. Hometown staff and students' appearance did not represent models of traditional femininity. They were rather the 'respectable' images of the upper working class or middle class locality in which they worked. As such they represented a coincidence of specific moments of class and gender relations.

Sloanes teachers' appearance suggested that they paid more attention to traditional norms of femininity than did teachers at Hometown. At Sloanes higher level female staff dress in tailored suits or formal dresses, with pearls or matching brooch. Their sleek and carefully groomed appearance conforms both to traditional images of the executive

secretary as well as to an elite form of femininity. Sloanes internal class divisions are reinforced by the differences in dress between its female staff. Female classroom teachers are a less sleek and sometimes jaded version of their superiors. In contrast with Hometown, Sloanes students dress like young office workers and receive advice about their dress from staff. Students overheard on the way to the Vice Principal's coffee party chatted about their appearance:

"I'm surprised she (the teacher) didn't tell you not to wear those socks. She made me put on my high heels."

Sloanes Head of Training said that there were college rules on dress:

"We expect students to dress as they would for an office."

Both as role models and by explicit rules, Sloanes teachers are overtly concerned with the reproduction of a classed form of conventional female appearance. Staff are expected to exercise direct control on this aspect of the cultural reproduction of secretarial labour. In this respect, staff at Hometown exercise extremely limited direct control over their students. This latter stance coheres with non genderism in Hometown's cultural ethos.

At Sloanes only the Head of Training and organiser of the Employment Bureau have University degrees. They had also taken a secretarial course at this college. However, classroom teachers were distinctly less well qualified than Hometown teachers. They had worked as secretaries, with the exception of a male teacher who had been a policeman. No member of staff encountered at Sloanes held a Certificate in Education qualification. They retained primary identification with secretarial labour, rather than with their role as a teacher, and made enthusiastic comments about secretarial work:

"It's such a good job for a girl to get into and they can be such a help to busy managers."

"I'm always telling them about my work (as a secretary), how rewarding it is to keep the business running smoothly, getting the MD to his meeting on time and with all the documents he needs. I tell them they'll be able to get into big business, or the glamour side of things - like films, fashion or advertising."

Teachers at Sloanes had entered teaching because they had found secretarial work to be rewarding and wished to pass on their experiences to a new generation of secretarial women. Being in a subordinate class location within Sloanes hierarchy and having no background of formal qualifications for teaching, they gained their status both from their previous work and also vicariously through the class prestige of the college and its students. If they were to question openly disadvantages in being a secretary, then they could be in danger of undermining the area of their lives from which they achieve self respect. For example, one teacher said:

"I had some very good jobs when I was a secretary. They were very interesting and demanding. More responsibility than teaching. People don't often realise the responsibilities that are stacked on the secretary. But that's one reason why I went into it - teaching - I can tell students about this, because of my experience. I think that's one of the most valuable things I can do - tell students about what it's really like - being a secretary. I was the one who had my hands on every part of the work and could ease the flow of work. I could help with all the liaison at every level. Quite honestly I don't think my Director could have functioned, well not efficiently at any rate, without me."

There are also clear distinctions in institutional status between the general servicing staff at Sloanes and Hometown. Hierarchical rank is more sharply marked at Sloanes than at Hometown, realizing different internal class relations. For example, canteen staff at Hometown dress in nylon overalls, supplemented on cold days by cardigans with rolled up sleeves. They are pleasant to students but admonish any who, for instance, drop food or wrappings on the floor. They chat to teaching staff on first name terms, usually about their respective personal lives. The corresponding staff at Sloanes dress in a uniform of black dress and white cap. No personalised encounters were witnessed between them and teachers. Links with domestic life are underlined in that Sloanes refectory staff often take on a surrogate mother role in their relations with students. For example, students are urged to eat a little more as it is good for them. Enquiries are made as to students' enjoyment of the food. These women are reminiscent of maids portrayed in novels about upper class family life.

Staffing structures contribute, then, to the different cultural tones of the two colleges. The staff structure at each institution is pyramidal. However, differentiation between staff at Sloanes is pronounced and clearcut, institutionalizing class relations within this college. In comparison the assumed professional equality at Hometown is in tension with the institutionalization of class relations. Hometown's ethos of openness and professionalism in the ranking of its staff is incoherent with class and gender divisions within its staffing structure. Differentiation between staff in both institutions expresses class and gender relations. However, the tight class boundary between the two colleges is reinforced by sharp differences between these internal class and gender relations.

Sharp class differences, manifested in Sloanes internal class relations, reinforce the dominant class ethos of this college's general culture. The tight control of the lowest ranking teachers ensures a high degree of uniformity in the transmission of gendered dominant class values. In practice Sloanes internal class relations are offset by clearly defined bureaucratic rules. This means that within Sloanes there is a clearly visible unity of purpose. That is, it is a 'total institution' (Goffman 1968) in comparison with Hometown. Through the mechanisms of internal capitalist class relations, all staff are set on a single course of reproducing a gendered dominant class cultural capital. Lower ranking teachers, who may not themselves be in possession of this classed cultural capital, are enabled, by the college's internal class structure, to transmit relevant norms and values. In spite of distinctions between the class backgrounds of classroom teachers and their students, at Sloanes the staff structure reinforces the gendered dominant class values of the college's general ethos.

In contrast with Sloanes, at Hometown there is class continuity amongst the staff and between the teachers and students. Staff at this college have greater degrees of autonomy and decision making in comparison with lower ranking teachers at Sloanes. Distinctly less tight control of staff at Hometown reproduces internal diversity and variety in the class and gender messages of the college's culture. These factors mean that,

in comparison with Sloanes, the culture at Hometown is complex; the class and gender messages of its culture are less absolute, being blurred by diversity and ambiguities. This diversity is accommodating for the general ethos of meritocracy, for both male and female students and staff.

## 2 INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

This section examines Sloanes and Hometown's provision of courses; allocation of students to courses; content and assessment of courses; students' transition to work. These features of the two colleges' secretarial education comprise their respective institutional structures. By exploring components of institutional structures, a pattern can be traced to moments of class and gender relations realized in formal boundaries within each college and between Sloanes and Hometown's secretarial education. As indicated by concepts adopted by Bernstein (1975) (see Chapter I), boundaries denote specialization which reveals differences from, rather than commonality (1975:81). In line with Bernstein's (1975) method, in the case of secretarial education power and control may be embedded in the boundaries created between secretarial students. These may shape the class and gender experiences and consciousness of these female students and teachers.

### 2.1 COURSE PROVISION

Sloanes is primarily concerned with secretarial education. It offers five such courses:

Basic Secretarial Course - 3 terms - no stipulated entry requirement.  
Intensive Secretarial Course - 2 terms - designed for mature, well educated students.

Executive Secretarial Course - 3 terms - students will normally have followed an Advanced level course.

Liberal Studies and Secretarial Course - 2 years - for students who have a good average level of general education.

French and Secretarial Course - 2 years - for students with GCE 'A' level French.

In 1981 Sloanes introduced a three term course in Business Studies. This course is for those wishing to work in the management of family businesses. It centres on executive functions of controlling the labour of those in the lower reaches. There is no entry requirement. The Head of Training said that the course had been instigated at the behest of parents:

"They wanted their daughters to be able to do more than just the administration of the family business. They wanted them to know about management and be able to take on personnel and how to go about dismissing them."

This indicates the level of anticipatory work destination for students at Sloanes which coheres with its dominant class culture. Shorthand and typewriting are not taught on this course, but most students have completed a secretarial course at the college.

Hometown offers a wider variety of courses than is offered at Sloanes, including:

accountancy, business, secretarial, mechanical, motor vehicle, marine engineering, electrical, science, GCE, nursery nursing, cartography, hairdressing, MSC, YTS, CPVE, adult education. Each course is located within one of five departments:

Department of Business Studies  
Department of Science  
Department of General Studies  
Department of Electrical Engineering  
Department of Mechanical and Motor Vehicle Engineering.

Each department occupies classrooms on different floors of Hometown's tower block. Departmentalised staff have staffrooms closest to the rooms in which they teach. In their breaks teachers use those snack bars closest to their classrooms. This organisation limits inter-departmental contact between staff or students. It reinforces the gender specificity of secretarial students and staff and produces tensions with the non genderism of Hometown's general culture.

At Hometown secretarial courses are located in the Department of Business. The full-time secretarial courses offered are:

<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Entry Requirement</u>
RSA Diploma for Personal Assistants	1 yr	GCE 'A' level
RSA Certificate for Secretary Linguists	1 yr	GCE 'A' level in the language
LCC Private Secretary's Certificate	2 yrs	4 GCE 'O' levels
Secretarial Course with Modern Languages	2 yrs	4 GCE 'O' levels including a language
Secretarial	1 yr	2 GCE 'O' levels
Secretarial	1 yr	GCE 'O' level or CSE in English Language

Technical skills, primarily associated with secretarial training, are offered on BTEC General and National courses, including modules in Office Typewriting, Office Machines and Equipment, Secretarial Skills. However, the male and female students enrolled on BTEC are taught separately from the exclusively female secretarial students. Although male and female students attend the college, the internal college structure means that boundaries are created between the vocational disciplines. This sets female secretarial students apart from areas of work primarily associated with men, denoting a sharp gender division missing from Hometown's cultural ethos.

## 2.2 ALLOCATION OF STUDENTS TO COURSES

Neither Sloanes nor Hometown has any entry regulation which debars men from applying for a secretarial course. Nevertheless, Hometown rarely has male students on secretarial courses. Sloanes has about one male secretarial student each year. At Hometown applicants who do not have the entry qualifications for BTEC National, often have the 'O' levels required for the one year secretarial course. The Head of the Secretarial Section stated that this avenue for training was always pointed out to such applicants:

"If it is a male student who has, say, 3 'O' levels, you point out secretarial, but you can tell they write that off straight away."

Popular images of secretaries emphasise the female exclusivity and feminine qualities for participants in this work. It is likely, therefore, that few men consider becoming a secretary. College structures which physically divide male and female students as well as

the overt emphasis which is put on gender specific knowledge at Sloanes, are likely to be additional deterrents to men.

At Hometown students are allocated to courses strictly on the basis of previous educational attainment. This coheres with the 'meritocratic' processes of general education which in effect reproduce patterns generally confirming class origins. At Sloanes students negotiate entry to a particular course, in spite of vast differences in their previous educational attainment. This displaces a 'meritocratic' grading of students in education generally, and reinforces the unity of the dominant class.

At Hometown the level of secretarial qualification is determined by the level of course, rather than students' progress. Students who are successful at the lower level rarely enquire about gaining higher level secretarial certificates. Indeed, within this college's structure, improvement in certification would be extremely difficult since all courses assume no previous knowledge of secretarial subjects. All students remain within the group to which they are allocated on entering the secretarial section.

At Hometown grouped students are insulated from each other. Lower level students are often unaware of the higher level secretarial course. Boundaries between courses are strong. When asked about the higher level course, one Post 'O' level secretarial student expressed surprise:

"I didn't know anything about a Post 'A' course. I didn't know there was anyone doing any course like that here. They don't mix any groups at all here."

In contrast, courses at Sloanes are not tightly bounded. The homogeneity of Sloanes students' class backgrounds and the size of the institution encourages inter-group association, regardless of differences in previously certificated educational ability. For example, one postgraduate was studying with a group of students with few or no GCE 'O' levels. In shorthand, speed streaming permits contact between students with different levels of educational achievement. In the Head of Training's words:

"Graduates sit side by side with lower level students."

Sloanes allocation procedures mark out class unity in contrast with the class divisions inherent in Hometown's allocation practices.

### 2.3 STUDENTS' PREVIOUS EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

At Hometown only 1 or 2 passes at GCE 'O' level are required for entry to the Post 'O' secretarial course. However, over 50 per cent of students had achieved the 4 GCE 'O' levels required for entry to a number of other courses at the college, such as BTEC National or GCE 'A' level. A high proportion of those with 'A' levels had achieved sufficient passes to enter Universities or Polytechnics<sup>(2)</sup>. It could not have been the case that these women had been forced, through lack of qualifications, to opt for secretarial training. In the main, these women had gained a relatively high level of certification during their compulsory schooling.

In contrast with Hometown, many students at Sloanes had not achieved as high a level of educational qualification. For two secretarial courses there was no entry requirement and the Head of Training said:

"Before students come here I read all the files and most sound like angels, but some have bad headmistress's reports, and communications problems in the family, and very often the two come together - broken homes and bad reports - no 'O' level to their name, never shown any interest in anything . . . but we don't reject them on that basis . . . if she lacks motivation in an academic subject it does not necessarily mean she lacks motivation in vocational training."

A secretarial teacher at Sloanes observed that the majority of students hold extremely few qualifications. He illustrated the point with the following anecdote:

"I know that one girl told me that her father said 'this is your last chance. You've wasted your time so far, passed no examinations, now you can qualify, if not you're on your own.'"

The Vice Principal provides a summative perspective on Sloanes clientele - women with few qualifications, but possessing the social graces of the elite:

"We don't get the academic high flyers here, but they're all very nice little girls and we do get them very nice jobs."

#### 2.4 STUDENTS' SOCIAL CLASS ORIGINS

Hometown students come primarily from the state sector of education<sup>(1)</sup>.

In contrast, when asked about the student intake, the Registrar at Sloanes said:

"We have a very high proportion (of students) from fee paying schools."

She went on to indicate that the college operated exclusively within the private sector of education:

"It has been most noticeable in the last ten years how the careers side of work at schools has expanded and we find we get a lot of introductions via the schools from careers' teachers, and we get invited to do careers' conventions from the schools. This probably applies in state schools as well, but the only contact we have is with the private sector."

During investigations at Sloanes only one student had been educated at a state secondary school. Students at Hometown and Sloanes can be distinguished by their previous educational experience. Those originating from state secondary schools remain in this educational sector by attending Hometown.

Private education is an indication of social class origins. In monetary terms alone private education necessitates a certain level of wealth to finance tuition fees and ancillary costs. Staff at Sloanes often mentioned, with some pride, the high fees. A secretarial teacher, mentioning the high tuition fees, added:

"I am glad that I have done it (taught) here, because of the type of people we have got. It's a privileged class here; it is the daughters of the rich."

The Head of Training also pointed out the high fees and stated:

"Most (students), at the moment, are financed by their parents."

Later she observed that it was rewarding to hear from past students and especially to know:

"that they have got married and become Lady this or Lady that."

She also pointed out that many students go to work in the family business on leaving Sloanes. Sloanes students are, then, in the main, the daughters of families in the higher echelons of the bourgeoisie. They remain in a dominant class culture when they enter Sloanes.

The fathers' occupations of secretarial students at Hometown indicate the contrasting social class origins of students in this sphere of secretarial education:

Occupation of Fathers of Secretarial Students at Hometown  
(using Registrar General's Classification of Occupations 1980\*)

<u>Course</u>	<u>No. of students in each social class</u>			
	I	II	III	IV
Post 'O' Secretarial	2	15	17	2
Post 'A' Secretarial	2	14	1	0

\* see Notes on Chapter II, No (2), regarding acknowledged reservations on use of existing Occupational Tables in class analysis.

The Post 'A' level group originates almost entirely from families in social class II, whereas over 50 per cent of those on the Post 'O' level course come from families in social class categories III and IV. The figures suggest a difference in class origins between many studying on secretarial courses within Hometown. Furthermore, none of the occupational titles listed suggested that the families owned businesses, as was the case with some students at Sloanes. In contrast, at Sloanes there is more uniformity in students' class backgrounds. However, Sloanes students tend to come from higher class families than the vast majority of students at Hometown.

When viewing class in terms of traditional occupational categories (eg Registrar General's Classification), three class groups are generally represented within secretarial education: dominant class, new middle class, proletarian class. That is, it is being assumed that father's occupation denotes, at least broadly, distinctions between students in respect of the economic situation of their families. The highest class group is segregated from the lower groupings within its private college. Within each college there are signs of continuity between the classed cultural heritage of its students and the cultural tone of the institution. These class differences, together with institutional separation, contribute to the institutionalization of class relations within secretarial education. On the other hand, these class relations splinter the uniformity implicit in the female exclusivity of secretarial students.

At Sloanes the clearly bounded dominant class backgrounds of its clientele legitimise the college's dominant class culture, equally ranked courses and self selection of students' course. In comparison, Hometown students come from lower level, but more diverse, classed family backgrounds. This class diversity coheres with Hometown's reproduction of class divisions expressed in the allocation of students to secretarial courses. This constitutes a spurious legitimization of 'meritocracy'. Put another way, the internal structures of Sloanes and Hometown together institutionalize a model of three class categories of secretarial course.

## 2.5 CONTENT AND ASSESSMENT OF COURSES

At Hometown course segregation is legitimised by the differentiated final Diploma or Certificate. These aspects of Hometown's internal structure represent a mutual reinforcement afforded by different moments of class relations. All secretarial students at Hometown take RSA and/or LCC examinations. The RSA Advanced PA Diploma and RSA/LCC Single Subject examinations (see Chapter III) distinguish Hometown's low and high level courses. On the PA Diploma course students learn traditional

academic subjects as well as secretarial skills (see Chapter III). On the low level course students learn only practical skills:

PA Diploma Content - shorthand, typing, economics, law, personnel administration, business communication.

1 year Post 'O' level course content - shorthand, typing, audio typing, word processing, secretarial duties, business English, business studies, practical training office.

At Hometown formal course content is guided by examination goals. In contrast, students at Sloanes do not enter public examinations. The Head of Training reported:

"They (students) get the (Sloanes) Diploma or First Class Diploma . . . To get the Diploma they have to get 100 and 40 wpm in shorthand and typing respectively, transcribe letters at 60 and 80 and good folders of work. It's all continuous assessment. Like that students are constantly under pressure: they have tests every week."

At Sloanes, students reported that they had tests once a fortnight. Any student who fails a test retakes this same test one week later. The class privileges inherent in life at Sloanes, in comparison with life for both men and women at Hometown, are built into this assessment mechanism. Students gain the advantage of practising test papers before they pass that test. In contrast, Hometown secretarial students had only one attempt at their main examinations.

Internally devised curricula at Sloanes are similar for all courses, contrasting with marked differences in the curricula and credentials offered at Hometown. At Sloanes each course includes the elements of Management, Economics and Business Knowledge:

"All of the subjects are not, for example, neat economics. Everything is related to the work of a secretary and the students do practical work as a secretary . . . Economics, how economics affect the business and within the business itself. We get them to make an application for shares in British Telecom, for example, so that they know how to go about that kind of problem."

Particular attention is paid to dress and grooming, as defined by elite femininity. Sloanes Head of Training said that all students attended classes in:

"social skills - grooming, fashion, and visits - topics of cultural and academic interest."

Sloanes gives tuition in Cookery, Entertaining and Personal Development, Fashion, Grooming and Make-up.

At Hometown, all secretarial students learn the skills of shorthand and typing which have a particular association with 'women's work'. However, there is no overt transmission of formal subject matter, such as grooming and fashion, which are part of the general social construction of femininity. There are sharp distinctions, then, between moments of gender relations realized in Hometown and Sloanes curricula.

At Hometown, the gender relations expressed in their secretarial curricula are in tension with women's subordination to men inscribed in global inequalities between men and women. That is, overt messages about femininity are written out of the formal curriculum, which coheres with the College's non gendered culture. However, this gender stance, in its very contrast with that at Sloanes, underlines Hometown students' class subordination to Sloanes students. Furthermore, it implies non discriminatory practices which suggest the meritocracy of class distinctions realized in the differences between Hometown's ranked secretarial curricula.

It is the distinctly gendered aspects of Sloanes curriculum that explicitly sets its secretarial training apart from that of Hometown. Distinctions between gender relations in Hometown and in Sloanes secretarial courses confirm class distinctions between the two colleges. However, Sloanes class privileges, constituted, in part, in gender distinctions between secretarial students, contradict the generic rules of patriarchy and women's uniform subordination to men. At the same time, this contradiction within gender relations shapes class continuities between home, education and production. That is, had they enrolled at Hometown, the majority of Sloanes students would have been in the lowest streams of secretarial education. As such they would have been in a proletarian position. Such downward social mobility would have produced sharp discontinuities with their dominant class backgrounds and occupational destination.

## 2.6 TRANSITION FROM COLLEGE TO WORK

Sloanes' students use dominant class family connections to help them acquire jobs. Many students go to work in their families' own business. There was no evidence of similar job opportunities for Hometown secretarial students. For those at Sloanes without family connections, the college has its own appointments bureau. Of this employment agency, the Head of Training commented:

"It is a service and complements things we are doing. It has a lot of beneficial throwback effects because we keep in touch with people. There is some long established links with certain employers that I would say constitute the core of the work. A lot of jobs come from old students, or when they're in a position to employ someone themselves. There always seems to be some talk with an old student."

Thus, for students at Sloanes who do not possess appropriate family connections to ensure high level office employment, the college has a network of 'appropriate' connections operated through its own employment agency.

Sloanes appointments bureau is organised on a full-time basis by a member of staff. Finding students work where they will be in close contact with elite men is structured into this education. In this respect Sloanes participates in the marriage market of elite women and frequent reference was made to marriages of past students which manifested dominant class continuity through the institutions of home, college and work.

In general Hometown, as a college, appears to have greater autonomy from other social institutions than Sloanes in decisions about its educational practices. This apparent autonomy is reflected in its arrangements for secretarial students to enter work. Links between it and production are extremely weak. The college has no mechanism which overtly controls the level of job acquired. Secretarial students are left to their own devices in their search for work. Hometown students obtain jobs either by replying to newspaper advertisements, visiting a Job Centre, or enquiring at a secretarial employment agency<sup>(3)</sup>. This

aspect of Hometown's structure leaves space for the possibility of discontinuities between sets of institutions. Nevertheless, the class and gender relations realized in the jobs which Hometown students take point to class and gender continuities between these students' family backgrounds, level of course and ranking in secretarial production.

## 2.7 STUDENTS' FIRST JOBS

At Hometown the jobs obtained by Post 'A' level secretarial students are different from those obtained by Post 'O' level students. They tend to be less routine, in that more varied and responsible tasks are involved, are paid higher salaries and are more likely to be located in a large business or service industry in London<sup>(4)</sup>. If the outcome of education is judged by the posts acquired by students then the internal structure of secretarial education at Hometown, incorporating class divisions and gender specificity, coheres with the structure of class differences within the female exclusivity of secretarial production.

Hometown's secretarial tutors pointed to class differences in the jobs their students take. For example, the Post 'A' level tutor said:

"Any girl who leaves this course, even if as far as my standards are concerned, she may not be good, has no problem at all in getting a job. A lot of lower level students just do shorthand and typing, but these girls have a lot more to offer. When they come back to the reunion, I find few of them do much in the way of shorthand and typing, even in their first jobs. They have very varied jobs, . . . they take sort of personal secretaries jobs, but because they are intelligent they are left to do the jobs on their own, rather than having everything dictated to them . . . I would think that any employer must take into account that they (Post 'A' students) are more intelligent and they can give them more responsibility and more demanding work fairly early on . . . One girl said 'the only way I use my shorthand is that I have someone working for me and if I want her to do a letter for me I draft it out in shorthand and she types it.'"

A Post 'O' level teacher indicated the lower status characteristics of her students' jobs, in comparison with those taken by Post 'A' students:

"I think the most common job is working in an office for two or three people. Usually a small office and usually local rather than in London. They haven't got enough confidence to put themselves up

for anything a bit more individual than that. That is quite a safe bet for them."

The Head of Section confirmed the views of her staff. They were conscious of preparing students for different levels of secretarial work:

"The salaries of the Post 'A's are higher . . . they do get higher level jobs than the Post 'O's . . . With the Post 'O's, some of them are unsure of themselves and they do want something which is fairly routine, cut and dried, without too much responsibility. I think it is more important to them that they like the people they are working with, whereas the Post 'A's will have more of an eye to the future and will be asking if the job is going to be interesting to them, not so much in terms of the people they are working with, but in terms of what it will lead to."

All staff at Hometown adopted an unquestioning attitude towards the fact that the Post 'A' level and Post 'O' level students get jobs of different ranking. They suggested that this class distinction was appropriate since Post 'A' level students were more mature, intelligent, self confident, and possessed better qualifications. Staff sustained the belief that selection was based on meritocratic criteria and no-one hinted at any unfairness in the allocation of secretarial posts.

Pay differentials are a tangible symbol of the boundaries between students' first jobs. In general Sloanes' students<sup>(5)</sup> earn more than Hometown Post 'O' level<sup>(4)</sup> students and about the same as Hometown Post 'A' level students<sup>(4)</sup>. Hometown Post 'O' students received £4,673 pa average (1984) (£7,500 1991 equivalent<sup>(6)</sup>) while the Post 'A' students earned £5,970 pa average (1984) (£9,500 1991 equivalent<sup>(6)</sup>). Sloanes students earned £6,409 pa average (1985) (£10,300 1991 equivalent<sup>(6)</sup>). Although all jobs held by ex-Sloanes students necessitated the skills of shorthand and typing, a wide variety of tasks was included in the job descriptions. This indicates that the posts were not as routine as those obtained by Post 'O' level Hometown students, but about as varied as those held by Post 'A' level Hometown students.

The posts obtained by Sloanes students have marked class advantages in comparison with those obtained by low level Hometown students. They are mainly distinguished from the Post 'A' level Hometown students' posts by

the prestige and status enjoyed by the organisation within which they are located as well as by the importance placed on applicants' cultural attributes. An important criterion for Sloanes class prerogatives in their job placement is social skills. These are part of their inherited, gendered and classed cultural capital, which the culture and structure of Sloanes confirms.

Sloanes Head of Training said that all her students obtained posts as secretaries rather than lower level shorthand-typists, copy typists or audio typists. In spite of the fact that students enter Sloanes with a background of extremely diverse, and often very low, educational 'success', class differences constituted in the level of posts obtained did not emerge. The Head of Training said about the jobs acquired by her students:

" . . . a lot has to do with the personal qualities of the girl. I would say a fair number of our better students end up running businesses or in partnerships with their husbands or in very responsible jobs. Among our graduates, going into politics is very popular . . . Mr (Turner) (the current owner of the College) was an MP and we have Lady Falkender, she was one of our old students. It means they are combining their secretarial skills with research abilities . . . or . . . a student . . . can go into public relations, advertising, the media - that sort of work - the fashion houses and cosmetic houses."

This identification of differences between jobs obtained by Sloanes students revolved around a labour market segmented into different kinds of commercial and business organisations, rather than in levels within the secretarial hierarchy. In contrast, at Hometown the main differentiating factor in the jobs obtained by Post 'O' and Post 'A' level students, was their ranking within the pyramid of secretarial work. Basically, Hometown and Sloanes serve two different secretarial labour markets, which express a sharp class division between them. Students with comparable levels of educational attainment acquire different levels of secretarial work according to whether they attend Sloanes or Hometown. Those from Sloanes are able to leapfrog the lower rungs of the secretarial hierarchy, where low level Hometown students find their first jobs. Course organization at Sloanes facilitates comparable ranking of students with different qualifications when they

take up secretarial work. That of Hometown consists of tight boundaries between students holding varying levels of qualification, which legitimizes their students' sharply contrasting ranking when they take up secretarial work.

At Sloanes there are both ambiguities and coherencies between and within expressions of class and gender realized in its structure and culture. That is, students gain high rank within secretarial production by concentrating on reproducing dominant class femininity. This coheres with the broad principles underlying patriarchy since it marks a difference through which inequalities can be expected between them and dominant class men. Yet they can proceed to a course which trains them for management, their potential placement in these ranks constituting an incoherence within gender relations, expressed as a breaking down of the male/female divide of office labour. This incoherence can be explained by taking account of the class specificity of procedures of gender reproduction at Sloanes. The institution is tightly bounded and cut off from state secretarial education. On the other hand, boundaries within the college are weak, permitting inter-group associations. In the context of the ostensibly meritocratic procedures of education, Sloanes course organization is anomalous. That is, generally students with high level qualifications gain entry to different subjects, courses, institutions, from students with low level attainment. Above all else Sloanes institutional structure reproduces the unity and cultural impenetrability of the dominant class. It achieves this, in part, through moments of gendering which differentiate the college sharply from state secretarial education.

At Hometown, too, there are coherencies and incoherencies, between and within expressions of class and gender relations realized in its internal structure and culture. Students' lower level ranking in production, compared with Sloanes students, is based primarily on a culture and knowledge selection which suggest a measure of filtering in respect of traditional gender inequalities. That is, this moment of gender relations is in tension with the generic principles of patriarchy. However, the structure of courses creates barriers between

traditionally male and female spheres of education, institutionalizing gender relations. At the same time, Hometown's structure of secretarial courses generates intra-gender divisions by grouping women. Each gendered area of business education contains courses which are hierarchically ranked. In class terms, the Post 'A' level secretarial course is of higher status than that of the Post 'O' level BTEC National course. This is incoherent with the uniformity of women's subordination to men inherent in the generic principles of patriarchy. Furthermore, Hometown's ethos of social class mobility is in tension with sharp class divisions expressed in different contents of secretarial courses. This tension within class relations contrasts with the clear class coherencies within Sloanes. As such it reinforces classed gender distinctions, between Sloanes and Hometown, which confirms the advantages of Sloanes students and thereby constitutes, in part, the institutionalization of class relations within secretarial education.

### 3. PROCESSES OF SECRETARIAL EDUCATION

Exploration of institutional cultures and structures, which has been the focus of this chapter so far, concentrates analysis on formal internal and intra-college boundaries within secretarial education. In this section the day-to-day processes of social relations in secretarial education are explored. When examining the lived realities of studying to be a secretary, coherencies and incoherencies, between and within class and gender relations, expressed in informal boundaries, come to light. They are, in part, the outcome of the human agency of secretarial teachers and students who sometimes consciously strive to amend cultural features of the generic principles of these relations. These contribute to the complexities of life in secretarial education. However, the strong boundaries between grouped students may shield from their direct view these very complexities.

There are sharp distinctions between Sloanes and Hometown, and within Hometown, in the ways in which students are controlled, norms and values transmitted, student/staff relations inside and outside the classroom,

interpretations by students of their training and potential work destination. These distinctions realize and shape internal college boundaries. In the contrasts between Sloanes and Hometown, they also realize the patterning of class with gender, pointing to different instances of structural agency in structuration. Firstly, analysis centres on expressions of class and gender relations in Sloanes process of secretarial education. Secondly, analysis proceeds to Hometown's process of secretarial education.

### 3.1 DAILY LIFE AT SLOANES

At Sloanes students are tightly controlled and monitored by staff both within the classroom and during extra-curricula activities. This tight control ensures overt and uniform transmission of elite gender values which cohere with the college's internal culture. Sloanes organises a range of social activities to occupy students in the evenings and at week-ends. Students are expected to attend and senior members of staff are always present. The Head of Training referred to these events:

"We have a lot of social contact with our students for a number of reasons. We can sort out any problems early on. We have a party for new students. They will say things over a cup of coffee which they would not otherwise tell us. It makes them feel part of the whole . . . Mr and Mrs (Turner) (the owners of the College) set the tone. All students visit Mr and Mrs (Turner) in their home. Teachers and students appreciate it because they say they don't have much opportunity to talk to one another (presumably in the classroom). I tend to ask them what their long term plans are and whether they are enjoying the course, and problems with subjects. It gives them another person's viewpoint on things - it's reassuring."

Week-end trips to tourist attractions in London and throughout England, are accompanied by staff. Parties are given for staff and students, often in the Principal or Vice Principal's home. A Grand Ball is held every term. These events represent avenues for social interaction outside the formalised teaching situation. They are part of social education at Sloanes. The 'appropriate' norms of secretarial work are demonstrated at these social gatherings. In addition, traditional

beliefs associated with the elite are overtly signalled and serve as an initiation into the female's role within the adult world of the establishment.

At an evening supper party at Sloanes a hot meal and wine were served. Staff and students mingled in informal conversation. On another occasion students attended a coffee morning in the Vice Principal's home, where visitors were greeted by his secretary and his wife. An elderly maid, in black dress and frilly white apron, served coffee and biscuits. After students had dispersed, senior staff remained for sherry and relaxed conversation.

At the supper party, a series of slides, showing places of interest to visit in England preceded the meal. The first picture was of Buckingham Palace, followed by 19 slides of various members of the Royal family at weddings and other Royal occasions. A teacher provided the commentary and complemented slides with detailed accounts about the life of the Royal family. Frequent reference was made to the Royal family in the remaining slides showing buildings of tourist interest.

Little of the informal conversation on this occasion, or at the coffee party, concerned the training for secretarial work in which students were currently engaged. Holidays, in places such as the Bahamas, were a favoured topic in addition to social events connected with the Conservative party. Secretaries employed at the college were present, as well as senior teaching staff. The secretaries, all past students of the college, were role models for current students. They spoke about the difficulties involved in arranging social functions - inviting the right people, selecting the wine. Connections between the social functions and the secretarial labour process were intimated. They were symbols of events which secretarial students could anticipate organising and attending, and these occasions would be characterised by direct contact with dominant class men. Current secretaries affirmed this depiction of secretarial work in their behaviour, tasks and anecdotes on their work which they readily provided. Secretaries greeted guests on

arrival, showed them where to leave coats, made formal introductions to the Vice Principal and assisted opening conversations.

The importance of social events to the calendar of secretarial courses is carried through to cementing ex students' allegiance to Sloanes and its gendered elite values. Sloanes has a thriving Old Students' Association. It holds an annual reunion and produces a glossy magazine. On completing their course students are 'invited' to join this Association, the entrance fee for which is included in final accounts.

The invocation and reinforcement of norms and values, in the 'informal curriculum' of casual conversations at social events, are informed by senior staff views and beliefs. For example, at the coffee party the Vice Principal explained the validity of the female exclusivity of secretarial labour:

"Men should not be secretaries. I'd only have a girl as my secretary. After all women complement men, they have different qualities. They are daintier and enjoy looking after men - it's almost like their domestic role, making sure the man has everything he needs, keeping the house, so to speak, in order and running smoothly."

Earlier in the conversation he had explicitly referred to the low academic achievement of his students. Now, without any conscious sense of contradiction, he illustrated the posts his students acquired:

"When they leave us, these girls get good jobs. Usually they're a PA and often in some influential business. Within a couple of years they are in charge of departments and administrators, rather than secretaries. These girls don't just wander into it (secretarial education) they know what they want out of it and where they want to get to."

The construction of differences between men and women, by which women can be devalued and labelled as inferior to men, is clearly illustrated by the Vice Principal's comments. However, this moment of gender subordination is in tension with the anticipated high class power, in comparison with some men and lower class women, which his students will acquire at work. The male Vice Principal is not conscious of this tension mainly because it is elite female qualities which ensure the class prerogatives his students obtain within production. His opinions,

perhaps necessarily then, demonstrate an uncritical stance towards gender inequalities. His views are influential in informing the 'appropriate' norms and values of the college, since staff are strictly controlled by those in superior positions. Written in to lower level staff's institutional class relations is transmission to students of the values held by those in control of the college.

Sloanes Head of Training believed that women should have equality of opportunity with men and should gain entry to management posts. She said that her students desired such careers which she strove to help them achieve. However, her examples represent Sloanes institutionalization of gender relations. In addition, the careers she outlines connect with privileges relating to their dominant class specificity:

"A lot (of students) become diplomats' wives and use their skills organising parties, helping running the family or husband's business . . . A lot resent the kind of attitude that they're only working until they marry. The majority hope to have a family and husband, but they do also have careers by combining it with this career."

In contrast, Hometown students predicted that their economic situation, inside or outside marriage, would necessitate that they work for most of their lives.

### 3.2 INSIDE SLOANES' CLASSROOMS

In classroom activities at Sloanes students are controlled tightly. Attendance is monitored every lesson and teachers resort to bureaucratic college rules to admonish students:

Teacher: "You two did not come to my lesson today. This is a compulsory subject and you are not allowed to opt out. You will be in class tomorrow."  
Students: "Yes."

In contrast with a similar situation at Hometown (see section 3.5), no explanation for students' absence was requested or given. The teacher gained her authority from institutionalized rules which students were expected to obey. Contrasting with Hometown's classroom relations, there was no negotiation of rules between staff and students.

Students commented that they worked hard at Sloanes. They had so little free time that, although they had been at the college for several weeks, they had not had time to go for a walk in the nearby Parklands. One student added:

"The teachers are really strict. It's like being back at school. As soon as you say a word, even if you've finished all your work, they tell you to be quiet."

The Head of Training referred to college regulations as a 'code of practice' rather than 'rules'. This fine distinction of terminology bears the class distinction of unquestioned rules being appropriate for lower social ranks while the elite come to appreciate the appropriateness of a code of behaviour:

"Attendance - we expect students to notify us, which is a code of practice not a rule . . . We establish a code of behaviour which is not embodied in a set of rules, but which is expected. We expect them to be polite and well behaved and if anything is unacceptable, we tell them so . . . We will not tolerate any incidents or aggression between the girls . . . They learn a lot other than what they formally study in the classroom."

Senior staff made decisions on appropriate rules which coincided with perceived desires of parents. There are rules on general behaviour, relations between students, as well as their appearance. Regulations were not negotiable either by lower ranking staff or by students.

In describing the social class background of his students, Sloanes male secretarial teacher expressed views on women's subordination to men. These guide his relationship with his students. The gender implications of his comments cohere with beliefs voiced by the Vice Principal (see section 3.1). In turn these are part of the value ethos of the college which institutionalize classed patriarchal relations. Comments on women by the male Vice Principal (see section 3.1) and low grade male teacher are distinguished by the tone of their statements. This difference is informed by the men's different class positions in respect to their female students:

"I don't have any discipline problems, neither do the female teachers . . . when you deal with the state education system it is different. They tell the teachers to 'f' off. You don't get that here . . . not that they (students) are any brighter than anywhere else, not that. They're not grateful for it . . . A lot of them

(students) go back and work for Dad or do nothing if they are very rich as a lot of them are . . . People do say 'how do you find it?' and I say 'I would rather be teaching a group of attractive young women than geography to a group of half gays.' Some of them are small bitches but they are all basically nice girls."

Insights into teacher/student classroom relations were provided by another secretarial teacher at Sloanes. This teacher indicated some ambiguities between students' elite cultural acumen, such as self-confidence and oral ability, and their contrasting ability exhibited in the formal examinations:

"Some of them (students) are very articulate and have the gift of the gab; they are very sophisticated. But they can't write at all. I can't understand this because orally their English is very good. When I started I thought 'Oh! these girls are so articulate' and you may have noticed my South African accent. I thought their English was better than mine. When I went into a class of these toffee nosed sounding students I was worried. But I soon found out that they couldn't write English. One girl put 76 apostrophes on one page. She said that she had never understood where to put apostrophes and didn't see that it mattered. When I said it certainly did matter she said I sounded just like her mother . . . I don't know what they all do when they finish here. I wouldn't employ a lot of them, they're hopeless and can't even spell the most simple words. Some just go off to other courses, for instance, to finishing schools in Switzerland. Others go to work for their fathers."

Another teacher pointed out:

"It's very different here (from a state college), no public exams at all. We work to a syllabus . . . We have tests every week here . . . We have to keep to the syllabus, but, for instance, I have my own way of teaching, which might be a little different from the way other teachers present the subject . . . I don't know how students are put into the various groups . . . Before they start I think they might grade them . . . some of them have 'A' levels, but some of them their English is so poor (she was speaking about native English speakers). I asked one student in this group 'have you done any 'O' levels?' She said 'No' and she had never heard of CSE's so she obviously hadn't done any of them. They've all been to private schools before coming here, but I don't know what they've been doing there, with no exams at all."

Sloanes students, in the classroom, are controlled tightly by teachers whose own labour process is tightly controlled. At the same time the family background of teachers indicates that they are their students' class subordinates, which complicates conventional power distribution in class and classroom terms. However, explicit rules help teachers to

operate with sufficient authority in spite of class differences between them and their students. Adherence to these rules ensures uniform messages concerning students' anticipatory class and gender relations in production:

"Personal qualities goes back to discipline. I try to instil in them (students) that it is not only for the course they are doing, but they will need this sense of responsibility when they go out to work, for whatever reason . . . They can't just go off because it is a nice day . . . I try to relate it to the future as well as to the present course. They are going to be part of a team when they go to work and will be supervising junior staff and they won't want junior staff acting like that . . . When students arrive you can form your own judgement. After about 3 or 4 days you can pick out the naturals. . . those who have just got it, going to be perfect PA's. I think it is family background, the way someone has been brought up knowing how to respect someone in authority, having the right manners, being able to talk to someone in the right way. It's their good education as well . . . Students must dress smartly, no trousers, and when they see the Appointments Secretary for their interviews, then they have to dress for an interview. It is a delight to see them . . ."

In line with the unity of purpose inscribed in Sloanes cultural ethos and structure of courses, no teacher at Sloanes voiced critical opinions about curricula, teaching methods or content of courses. Their adherence to the values and procedures at Sloanes contributes to coherencies between expressions of class and gender relations realized in each facet of this college's secretarial education. This situation contrasts with teachers at Hometown who were eager to recount their personal philosophies on education generally and secretarial training specifically, which frequently challenge the generic principles underlying class and gender relations. It was simply not within the normal parameters of Sloanes teachers' teaching lives to make any meaningful, individual decisions about their classroom activities. Little space is left at Sloanes for the diversity of messages which could arise when voicing informal views and beliefs.

### 3.3 SLOANES STUDENTS' VIEWS ON SECRETARIAL WORK AND EDUCATION

Sloanes students' views of their secretarial education expressed less renegotiation of either their class or gender statuses than was conveyed by Hometown students (see section 3.6). Like some Post 'A' level students at Hometown, some Sloanes students viewed secretarial training only as something to fall back on, rather than as a necessity for their future life. However, the alternatives for these women were not working at all, rather than pursuing the alternative careers described by Hometown's high level group (see section 3.6). The material circumstances of Sloanes students' class backgrounds meant that it was not essential for them to work.

Sloanes students had a conscious appreciation of the class advantages which could accrue from their female cultural capital. This coheres with expressions of class and gender relations in the college culture and content of courses. For example, Sloanes' students with few 'O' levels, talked about the jobs they would obtain:

"Initially I want to be a secretary. I don't just want to do the basic secretarial skills of typing all day. I want to learn about the business I am in . . . I will go for PA, for example, for a large advertising firm where it then says you can progress - have good prospects. Definitely not just audio or copy typing - no."

"I want a job with prospects - a career, not just a job. A job sounds very boring. A job is something you do just to get money . . . I want a career first before I marry and have children and after that I would go to work again . . . My father has a secretary of 56, so you can do it until you are very old, almost dying."

Sloanes students, with comparable educational qualifications to Hometown's low level students, were extremely confident about the high level posts they would obtain. Their views on the kind of people who would do their copy typing and filing indicate an awareness of the value placed on the cultural attributes which Sloanes women undoubtedly possessed. Replies inferred the fairness of this distinguishing feature in the ranking procedures of secretarial labour:

"Well copy typists, they will have just picked up their skills at a local school or Tech. They won't have been to a good college like this."

"In business you have to be the part, look right. Businessmen won't want girls like that meeting their clients and entertaining them, so they'll just keep them away from that sort of thing - from visitors - in typing pools. They haven't always got the manners or the looks."

"They might be quite good at typing, but they probably won't know how to get on with managers . . . how to speak nicely and that . . . although I suppose that some of them may be able to work their way up, um, I don't quite know how to put it, er, they're probably a bit rough and haven't got the right gloss, so to speak."

Sloanes students with higher level academic qualifications also anticipated achieving high ranking secretarial posts. They expected to use these positions either as an entrée into management, in a similar way to Post 'A' level Hometown students, or as skills to be used as they set off to see the world. These students displayed none of the hesitant ambiguities about their futures inherent in the high level Hometown students' statements (see section 3.6). Sloanes' students said:

"I wanted to do something vocational after my degree . . . I wanted a stepping stone into management. I managed one of my mother's hotels for a while before this, but there wasn't enough in that for me. With secretarial I can get into a good business and work my way up."

"My mother is American and has business connections over there and I can work in America. So I will go over and then work there for a while . . . When, and if, I come back I will join a television company as a PA and work my way up. I figure that would be a nice line of work . . . get into production or something."

"I'm going abroad as soon as I've finished the course. I have lived abroad most of my life, so I enjoy travel. I want the opportunity to travel before I settle down and get a full-time job, but I may do something here and there, depending where I am. After that I'll get a job in management, my father has a lot of contacts through his business which will be useful."

All Sloanes' students anticipated delegating routine tasks to lower level workers. They believed that they would be given responsibility. Patriarchal elements of the boss/secretary relationship were hinted at by one Postgraduate:

"I think you have to accept (as a secretary) a lot from the person you are working for. You have to be tolerant and you must put yourself out to help and you are their support. You have to see it as a responsible job. If you coast you won't get a very good reputation for yourself. I am determined to enjoy the job I am going into."

When referring to her friends' impressions of secretarial education, another Sloanes student spoke openly about the general status of women:

"I like it (the secretarial course) because you don't need millions of 'O' levels. When you say what you are doing to old friends from one's previous school, they think you are a bum now. They don't understand what is involved . . . My friends at school think it is very second rate. But it definitely is not second rate. I don't think just anyone can do it. It is quite difficult and competitive . . . I think it is low status because it is not academic. They (friends) think it is a doddle. They think you get your file out and do your nails and brush your hair all day. It does have to do with being a woman. Women seem to be more game to do the job, but it is considered low status, and therefore women can do it. But in fact secretaries do most of the job of the boss. They take on most of the responsibility but the boss gets the credit."

There was automatic acceptance of the justice in the high ranking within the pyramid of secretarial labour which Sloanes students confidently predicted for themselves. On the other hand, all students were well versed in practical problems which they might encounter as women. For example, one student said:

"I have been told about men with their secretaries. How they take advantage of secretaries. The boss may have two mistresses and a wife, and you have to deal with all of them on the 'phone. There is an organisation now, called WASH, that's Women Against Sexual Harassment. But I don't think I would join it. I tend to think I will be able to cope with all that for myself."

In spite of some fears about the sexual demands which might be made on them in their secretarial role, in contrast with Hometown students the majority of Sloanes students welcomed the stereotyped feminine image of secretaries, enjoyed their lectures on fashion and make-up, and intended to continue the tradition:

"I want to dress smart. You have to be smart to be a PA, you can't go around in trousers all the time. I will always dress smart. You have to think 'what shall I wear tomorrow?' and make the effort. You have to look bright and well groomed."

Another student who particularly valued the advice on dress and make-up stated that this would be very important to her in her work because:

"I'll be meeting the clients, perhaps taking them out to lunch, and it is so important that you look the part and give the right impression."

Students with few formal qualifications now studying at Sloanes enjoyed all the subjects of their secretarial course and voiced no fundamental criticisms about their training, the college, or their decision to become a secretary. They accepted the tight discipline because they appreciated the amount of money their parents were paying for tuition. Although some mentioned that they would have liked more experience with up-to-date technological developments in office work, this criticism was rendered insignificant by the opportunity provided to make 'nice friends' and by the enhanced opportunities afforded by the class connections between the college and business organizations:

"This college has a very high reputation. People from here go out with very good qualifications. I think it is the (Sloanes) Diploma. It is very impressive and business is impressed and will add money to your salary because of this Diploma . . . The fees are very high so you do feel obliged to work quite hard. When you come to a college like this it is good because everyone is paying high fees, so they are all the same kind of person."

"It is the name of the college that has such a high reputation. (Sloanes) has a good name, that is why I decided to come here. I have got a job where they have taken students from here before. They know they are getting very good material."

"I went for the name (of the college) because I knew it would help me get a very good job, and I know it will."

As indicated in section 2.3, the majority of students at Sloanes have few formal qualifications. Nevertheless, a few university graduates attend the college. While postgraduate Sloanes students enjoyed the content of their course, some rejection was intimated of the manner in which they were controlled. These students had been to university and experienced a less tightly monitored educational regime. They found difficulties in adjusting to the imposed discipline at Sloanes. They perceived contradictions between their class relations in Sloanes in comparison with their position in the relations of other institutions. They made comments, objecting to college rules:

"It is like a boarding school with petty rules and they treat you like kids in the classroom . . . Here you get petty punishments if you don't do the work, but I don't think there is any need to dish out punishments."

"They (teachers) take a register at every lesson, and everything is compulsory. If you say anything, they just say that it is a college rule."

The only alternatives to attending Sloanes which had been considered were secretarial courses at other similar private colleges. Only one student had considered a secretarial course in a state technical college. This student was studying at Sloanes on a different basis from other students. In exchange for acting as warden in one of the hostels, she was given free tuition and £15 per month (1985). She viewed her position in the college as a job rather than as a student. She was an exception to the uniformity of class heritage amongst students, which no doubt influenced her position in the college. She is the exception that proves the rule in that she said that she was not encouraged to mix socially with other students.

Sloanes students with higher level qualifications raised few objections to being in mixed ability classes with students with low level certificates:

"We are in the same classes, particularly for shorthand, with other groups. Some of them are really like dumb blondes, but on the whole they're very nice and I like meeting people."

Sloanes students welcomed the formal social gatherings arranged by the college. Only one student said that she did not enjoy these events and 'got out of them' if she possibly could.

Perhaps because Sloanes curriculum is akin to popular images of secretaries, all students declared that their training and experience at the college were very similar to what they had expected.

### 3.4 DAILY LIFE AT HOMETOWN

Social life at Hometown is organised predominantly on a college wide basis. Events for students are organised by the Students' Union. In contrast with Sloanes, staff and students participate in college events only as and when they wish to, rather than as the expected norm inherent in Sloanes social events. Students at Hometown experience less direct control outside the classroom than their counterparts at Sloanes. Yet, in contrast with Sloanes, Hometown's secretarial students had relatively free and informal access to staff. Staff chat with students in the lift and corridors. Students wander, unannounced, into staffrooms to discuss their course or search for work. Few implicit or explicit barriers exist for contacts between staff and students outside the classroom. This coheres with the college's ethos of social class continuity between staff and students, which reinforces a sense of 'colleagueship' between them.

Hometown teachers hold diverse views on issues relating to class and gender relations. These guide their relationships with students. This contrasts sharply with the homogeneity of views which Sloanes students encounter in their secretarial education. Hometown students have to make sense of diverse class and gender messages transmitted by individual teachers. Nevertheless this aspect of diversity coheres with a cultural ethos of autonomy, class diversity, and gender equality.

Hometown teachers are conscious of barriers within secretarial work which could hinder their students' promotion prospects. They adopted teaching strategies which would encourage students to overcome barriers within office work. In other words, they have a conscious sense of challenging some of the inequalities of class and gender relations. Only one teacher adopted an uncompromising approach. She suggested that students amend their appearance and speech, in line with the gendered culture of the dominant classes, as possessed by Sloanes students.

In respect of gender boundaries, teachers of Hometown's Post 'A' secretarial group concentrated on combatting the devaluation of skills associated with women:

"the Post 'A's rather look down on shorthand and typing . . . they don't want to put a lot of effort into it. They have preconceived ideas that it is going to be easy . . . you don't get that with the Post 'O's so much . . . I don't know whether it's because they have 'A' levels and say they don't just want to be a secretary or whether it is the attitude of the staff who have taken them - I mean the staff at their previous schools, who have closed minds as far as secretarial is concerned. They tell them 'you're wasting your time, you should go to University if you can get 'A' levels'. Even if students don't say it, this comes through if it has been an attitude of the staff at their schools."

This teacher tried to overcome students' attitudes towards the skill subjects by teaching them a pride in their expertise and recognition that the skills were not as simple as popular images implied. She implicitly attacked the social construction of skill categories and the devaluation of 'women's skills'. On the other hand, teachers reported that the inferior status of secretarial knowledge and skills was not alluded to by Post 'O' level students. No doubt, as the following teacher's remarks suggest, these students' attitudes are coloured by their previous educational experiences. At secondary school they themselves had been labelled as less able and therefore inferior:

"Some (Post 'O' students) see typing as a magnificent skill and to think they can try to do it - that is really something for them - and some who are bad at everything else and haven't done too well at school, can actually learn to type and do very well at it."

In this latter case, the inferiority which teachers believe to impinge to the greatest extent on lower level students is connected with their class location and supercedes, in students' consciousness, any inferiority associated with the genderism implicit in their vocational studies. The notion of upward mobility for students who become successful in secretarial education, in spite of the gender specificity of this education, coheres with the college's culture of professional meritocracy, but is incoherent with the tight boundaries between Hometown's ranked courses.

For Post 'A' level students tensions between class and gender are highlighted. They are taught that their high level course and qualifications will provide an avenue for promotion into management. But they will get their first jobs on the grounds of their expertise in skills associated exclusively with 'women's work'. No explanation is provided of how the acquisition of gendered skills may help to surmount the gender barriers of men's unequal share of management jobs.

Lacking the tight control over teachers and clear college rules of Sloanes, Hometown teachers enjoyed a measure of freedom to express different and sometimes conflicting opinions. This contrast between the two colleges confirms class differences between them. For example, Post 'O' level Hometown teachers tried to instil certain attitudes in their students while struggling with some recognised ambiguities in their own beliefs. The attitudes in question fell into two categories. On the one hand, some believed that students needed to change their appearance and speech, and claim recognition for expertise in secretarial skills. Others believed that students should be encouraged to question their traditional roles as women, as well as the rules and demands of those who controlled their labour. A typical response illustrating the first category of opinion was:

"I always discuss with them all the time about their attitude, which I think covers it all - speech and dress. Some of them come in with the attitude that they are not going to change anything about themselves, either their appearance, their timekeeping. I try to make them analyse their feelings about this and why they feel antagonistic about all this and I think in secretarial work they will have to be disciplined, tidy and smart, which bugs them, and I think if you don't point it out to them they are going to be shocked when they go to work - it is just that kind of job. It is particularly secretarial work which requires it - it has something to do with being a woman . . . But if a man is being a secretary there are standards of appearance and attitude which would be the same . . . I have thought about it a lot and I think how difficult it is, for example, for men to adjust to the changes women want in their role. It is hard for my husband to accept equal responsibility for domestic chores which have always been a woman's responsibility and to value my work as much as his. It is generations of conditioning. I always try to put to the girls that there should be nothing inferior in feminine roles of mother, or secretary, they are not necessarily inferior roles."

This line of argument suggests amending patriarchal relations by working within its existing structure, particularly as realized in secretarial labour. The alternative strategy implies a more radical approach to the amelioration of women's condition within the structures of both class and gender relations. These elements of the process of secretarial education for low level students, contradict a college structure which ensures their restriction to the lowest level course. Whatever stance is taken, teachers' views indicate some filtering and re-negotiation of the generic principles underlying class and gender relations. They also indicate a diversity of strategies in education at Hometown, implying that the college is not totally dominated by the demands of secretarial production:

"Yes, I do express my views openly in class and get them (students) to discuss them with me. I try to get them to see the unfairness women suffer just because they're women and how to do something about it. I want to get them (students) to stand up for themselves and not just to accept everything that's done to them. When they go to work they should be aware of their rights as well as their responsibilities, and not just accept everything that's done to them."

This teacher was not alone in her desire to foster a critical awareness in students of their anticipated relations in production. Others referred to the material constraints of their own circumstances, on the extent to which they felt free to express their own opinions in the classroom. The constraints included those imposed by examination syllabuses. For instance, one teacher commented:

"It would be nice to be able to do far more in the way of personal development, but if one did, then one would, in a way, be unfair to the students, as they came here for certain things, certain qualifications, and they should be given the opportunity to achieve that."

Teachers identified contradictions between their views on what students should learn and the values which informed formal examination syllabuses. There was tacit acknowledgement of ambiguities between the structure of courses and process in which they were involved. Only one Hometown teacher adhered to encouraging students to conform to the traditional norms and values of secretarial work. There was no clear distinction between staff which correlated with the subjects they taught. Teachers of secretarial skill subjects, with the exception of

the teacher cited above, held and projected to their students views which, in varying degrees, questioned or rejected class and gender relations expressed in secretarial labour processes. One such teacher proclaimed:

"I never mention dress, make-up etc . . . I tend to deliberately avoid shorthand material which does seem to be reinforcing their female status . . . I decided it was not in keeping with my views."

### 3.5 INSIDE HOMETOWN'S CLASSROOMS

Inside the classroom, Hometown teachers negotiate learning activities, promote discussion and questioning on the part of students. They rarely resort to institutional rules to assert authority, as was the case with Sloanes teachers. However, there were differences in classroom relations for Post 'A' and Post 'O' level groups. These stemmed partly from differences in the attitudes and behaviour of the students, legitimizing the class divisions between these groups realized in the college's internal structure. These differences are illustrated by accounts of the classroom lives of both groups.

The most striking feature of classroom relations for Post 'O' level students is that staff did not rely on formal institutional rules to control students. Their classroom relations did not correspond to proletarian relations of production (as Bowles and Gintis (1976) (see Chapter I) would predict), where activities are imposed and closely supervised. No rules and regulations were either explicitly or implicitly referred to. When students resisted, in any way, teachers' information or requests about how work should be carried out, the teacher always provided an explanation, rather than, in contrast to Sloanes teachers, relying on the authority and control invested in her role, as the teacher, or the rules of the institution. This teaching strategy gained the consent of students to the activities through positional control.

There was a boisterous, but not disruptive, hub-bub of chatter between Post 'O' level students before classes, when no teacher was present. Students talked in small groups, seated at or on desks, about their

personal lives or difficulties with homework and passed round sweets. There was little change in behaviour when any teacher came in. Students' attention was gained for the formal lesson by statements such as:

"OK, shall we make a start now?"

The group became quiet when it was apparent that the teacher was ready to begin the lesson.

Students in the Post 'O' level group participated freely in lessons, almost vying with each other to answer questions. Occasionally, they held up their hands, but more often simply called out their replies. On one occasion, students volunteered information on the paying-in procedures at banks which contradicted the knowledge transmitted by the teacher. However, this potential undermining of the teacher's knowledge contained no suggestion of 'catching out' the teacher, but rather a constructive questioning of the procedures involved. There was no sign of embarrassment from the teacher that a student had practical experience which contradicted the information presented. Having elicited from students the names of the five major clearing banks, the teacher provided the names of other banks such as Coutts. She referred to them in terms which signified the class uniformity of everyone in the room, including herself, and the existence of other higher status groups not represented within the classroom:

"There are some posher banks, like Coutts. They're for those people who want to look like someone important."

In Business English the teacher acknowledged that she was not an authority in every aspect of her subject:

"Last time some of you asked me about the 'ence' and 'ance' endings. I didn't know about this, so I looked up for you rules for 'ence' and 'ance' and it said there isn't a rule, and each one just needs to be learnt."

The first quarter of an hour of this class was taken up by explaining the criteria on which staff had selected only some pupils to enter an RSA examination. Students had previously objected to the selection process, and continued to maintain that it was unjust. They were permitted to question their teacher's judgement in this respect.

No register of attendance was taken during the morning. In the afternoon a teacher arrived with the register and students offered names of their absent colleagues. A formal roll call was not taken and one student volunteered that she had arrived one-and-a-half hours late that morning, which received no comment from the teacher. When this student had arrived in the middle of a lesson, she apologised for her lateness and, in contrast to parallel discussions at Sloanes (see section 3.3), the conversation between student and teacher went:

Student: "Sorry I'm late."  
Teacher: "Well, where have you been?"  
Student: "Standing at the bus stop for about three hours, waiting for a bus and I'm frozen."  
Teacher: "Oh dear, well why not find a seat at the back near the radiator to try to get warm."

One afternoon the class was split, each half being placed in classrooms on different floors of the building. One group was left to its own devices in carrying out the tasks set. On returning unannounced to this room all students were working happily at their typewriters, with a little discussion on the practicalities of carrying out the work.

Each subject of the Post 'O' level curriculum was taught by a different teacher and there were slight variations in the group's behaviour. They were at their quietest with an older male teacher of shorthand and typing. He used the authority invested in his teaching role more explicitly than any other teacher at Hometown, together with a patronizing male superiority. He constantly told students to be quiet and one line of student/teacher interaction went:

Teacher: "Casting my mind back to the last Friday of last term, there weren't many people here. I felt quite lonely. Katy where were you, did you get lost on your way?"  
Student: "No, the car broke down."  
Teacher: "Another - Maria - what happened to you?"  
Student: "You know what happened to me. You 'phoned up my mum and she told you I didn't feel too good."  
Teacher: "Yes, well I didn't like doing that, but if I didn't we don't know what is happening darling. Listen to me, all of you. It's all got to happen this term, we've got to get up to 80 for the exam, which we're due to take in about 8 weeks' time. We can't have any passengers, you've got to put in some hard work. You promised to do some work over the holidays, but some of you didn't keep to your part of the contract, you

didn't do it, but it will be you who fail the exam, not me."

The theme of examinations recurred when a student stumbled over her reading aloud:

Teacher: "That's terrible. It's no good if you can't read it, kiddo, you have not done your bit of the bargain. We also had another binding agreement, you were all going to be whizzo on the contractions. You didn't think it was going to be like this on the first day of term did you? . . . The message is you've got to do what I ask you to do. If you don't the consequences are yours not mine - you're all taking the exam."

Students made no comments, but sat with heads bowed.

This group also had a male teacher for Business Studies. They were more vociferous and freely called out comments during this class. The teacher's more relaxed manner signalled that students could participate more openly in this lesson than in their earlier skills lesson.

Students took the opportunity to use gender relations to undermine his authority. At the beginning of the class the teacher noted one absentee and asked:

Teacher: "Is Sally away today?"

Student: "No she's left. Mr (Jones - the male teacher cited earlier) 'phoned her mum on the last Friday and he put a lot of pressure on her 'cos she wasn't very good at shorthand and so she thought she just would leave."

Teacher: "What about the exam she entered for later this term? Will you be seeing her Tina? Do you think you could ask her whether she still wants to come back to take it, because she can if she wants to? Or may be you could say that I'll give her a ring some time, about it, if that's OK? . . . Right, I thought we should check up on what we've already covered (students continue to chat about the student who has left). OK can we have a bit of attention."

Student: "Oh, Mr (Bolton), don't you think it's cold today, we're all frozen."

Teacher: "Yes it is, but nevertheless we'd better do some work.""

The main topic was advertising. The teacher dictated notes which students took down verbatim. Then began a discussion on how organizations selected their medium for advertising:

Teacher: "If we think of women's products, like perfume, then you might use women's magazines. But we can go further than that, can't we? What's the difference between Cosmopolitan and Woman's Realm?"

Students laugh and make comments such as 'I didn't know you read them magazines.'

Teacher: "Well do you think there's any difference in the readers?"

Student: "Yes, those who get Cosmopolitan, they're rich women."

Teacher: "Well like who?"

Student: "Those women from rich families, married to rich husbands."

Teacher: (laughing) "So the search continues for rich husbands does it, I thought all that had finished. Yes, well they're probably relatively well off, but they could be working women, like secretaries in London . . . This is an oversimplification, but in general terms it's correct. I haven't seen Woman's Realm lately".

Student: (laughing) "Yes, but you seem to know all about Cosmopolitan".

Teacher: "Well, take another example - Guinness only advertise in the Mirror etc not the Times, so who are they appealing to?"

Students: (in unison) "The working class."

Class and gender topics were deliberately broached in the formal teaching of this class. Implicit in students' laughing reactions and reference to 'rich women' was that they were not part of this group, although they suspected that these were the kind of women with whom their teacher associated. There were no witty asides or giggles when students agreed that the Daily Mirror appealed to the working class. At the same time, within the relaxed relations between the students and teacher, hints of the genderism inherent in the relationship were detectable. Both sides played on the gender difference in a light hearted manner.

With the exception of the class conducted by the male shorthand and typing teacher, teachers of the post 'O' group went to some length to negotiate with students the timing of homework, approaches to the topic, and examination entries. In the training office students negotiated between themselves the various tasks to be undertaken. One student became the supervisor and the teacher explained that students could take this role in rotation. The 'supervisor' circulated to give advice and report back at the end of the session. The situation was reminiscent of the pool typists' situation and most tasks were routine and low level.

The situation arose after lunch that the Post 'O' level's teacher did not arrive. Discussion, initiated by students, expressed both a

gendered group unity, a potential negotiation of their relations with teachers, and also a consciousness about perceived inequalities in their location in the lowest stream of secretarial education at Hometown. Students agreed that because they only had one 'O' level, they were regarded as the 'divvies'. Some students stated that they were sure that they had been divided from a parallel secretarial group because they did not have as good qualifications, as in the other group most students had 3 or 4 'O' levels. Other students expressed surprise at this, not realising the criterion for division.

Students discussed the possibility of making an official complaint about their treatment. They were particularly incensed by the fact that in one subject they had had four changes of teacher and each one taught them in a different way. They felt, therefore, that they had no chance of passing the examination. It was not a matter of teachers leaving the college, but that they had too many teaching hours. Students questioned why it was always their group that teachers chose 'to drop'. It must be that they were "the lowest level and teachers are pleased to get rid of us." Students viewed this as unfair. They said they were prepared to work hard but that their enthusiasm was waning in these circumstances. Some teachers did not care about them. After waiting 30 minutes for their teacher, students, as a group, decided to abandon the classroom for the snack bar.

The general ethos of daily classroom life for Post 'A' level groups at Hometown contrasts with that of lower level secretarial groups. The students were quieter. There was less buoyancy in their personal chats or classroom participation. Whenever a teacher entered the room, her mere presence commanded the attention of students. The atmosphere within the group was one of individualism rather than the strong sense of group unity which pervaded all activities of the Post 'O' level group.

Students in the Post 'A' level course constantly made notes during lessons, without being directed so to do. They contributed verbally only when asked a direct question or were requesting clarification by

the teacher. On one occasion, a major part of their day was taken up with working through a typewriting examination paper. Students proceeded within the conditions of an examination room, although they had not been told that these were the conditions to observe. They automatically produced appropriate examination behaviour. Although a register was taken, this was completed in a covert manner. The teacher ticked off names by looking around the room while students were engaged in a pre-set task.

The classroom atmosphere and behaviour of the Post 'A' level group at Hometown are remarkable for students' total compliance with the conventional norms of learning. They accepted the knowledge transmitted by teachers in an unquestioning fashion. Where any student wished to speak to a teacher, for example, about her absence from class, this was done after the class so that there was no interruption to the flow of knowledge. In this uncritical atmosphere the teacher was invested with greater authority, stemming from her subject knowledge, than in Post 'O' level classes. There was no student behaviour which necessitated rebuke by any teacher. In this way, students maximised the amount of formal curriculum knowledge transmitted within the prestipulated time limits of their class.

The way in which students' own behaviour contributes to classroom relations is clear when a more detailed account of a typical Post 'A' level class in shorthand is compared with a typical Post 'O' level class. In the case of Post 'A' students they engage in self assessment; there are no signs of students introducing discussion not related to the lesson; there is a taken-for-granted understanding of the teacher/student relationship and the methods of achieving the goals of learning; lack of success on the part of the student is not automatically attributed to her not having worked sufficiently hard.

Before the teacher arrived for the class most students sat working over their homework, or discussing mock examination questions. When the teacher arrived she immediately went into the formal teaching:

Teacher: "Good morning. Here's your work I've marked from yesterday.

Your vertical headings look very good. Right we're going on with the next chapter now. You'll find these phrases easy, so I'll go quite fast.

Student: "Do you think it would be worth buying that book to have at home?"

Teacher: "Yes, if you can afford it, I think it would be."

After dictating phrases . . .

Teacher: "Who got them all right?" A number of hands are raised in response.

Student: "Well, I did, except I've written them rather on the large size."

Teacher: "Well concentrate on that aspect when you're drilling."

Later in the lesson . . .

Teacher: "Coming back to letters, I think we ought to do some more transcription now, so you'll be brilliant by the time we do the mock exam on Friday. This is a long one, but the words aren't difficult, so you'll be able to do it OK."

. . . After this activity

Teacher: "I am aware that you've had some of your mock results back and I know that some of you will be disappointed. If you would like to, you can come and see me for a private tutorial about it."

Several students indicated that they wished to make arrangements to meet their tutor after the formal class. Thus discussion of another topic was not allowed to permeate the official teaching time of this subject.

Post 'A' students were not overtly controlled by teaching staff. The sense of unity amongst the Post 'O' level group was absent from this higher level group. The culture of their classroom represented the values of self disciplined, individual industry, in which students were relaxed. To a large extent students' behaviour itself created the norms and values expressed in these learning situations. In short, these students exhibited the personal qualities and cultural acumen inscribed in the new middle class. For example, an economics lesson for a Post 'A' level secretarial group was devoted to the lecturer providing specimen verbal answers to the questions in a recent mock examination. Students took notes and there was limited interaction between teacher and taught. Attention was concentrated exclusively on the topic of economics. Some class members had been absent from the mock exam, so they were set to work in another room on this examination paper. A number of students spent no longer than 30 to 40 minutes on this three hour paper. Between two classes the group who had already sat the

examination discussed their fellow students' leaving the examination early. Divergent opinions were expressed, including:

"It's not fair to the teachers, not taking the exam seriously."

"I think it's up to them, if they don't want to do it, then they won't get the help we've had in tackling the exam."

"Some of them, should take it more seriously, they haven't done enough preparation and that's why they left early, they've had a lot of time off college as well. Any way that's their funeral and it gives us more opportunity to concentrate on the work we're serious about, so it's better for us really when they don't turn up."

"I think it's a waste of time discussing it all."

Underlining this lack of gender unity, a teacher commented that some students in this group had complained that teachers went over work for group members who had been absent. Students who were rarely absent said that this teaching strategy was wasting their time, and that teachers should not repeat knowledge. Teachers had agreed to comply with the students' request and leave the absentee with the responsibility of reading in textbooks the information they had missed. This aspect of their classroom relations reinforces competition and lack of gender unity between factions within the group. Criticisms voiced by students were directed more to fellow students than to their teachers. The situation contrasts with the unity and loyalty that Post 'O' level students manifested towards each other, as well as the gender unity implicit in Sloanes process of secretarial education. Between students in the Post 'A' group at Hometown there was open competition and rivalry. Different types of student solidarity inherent in the classroom relations of ranked groups at Hometown reinforces the college's structure which reproduces class divisions.

A feature of all classroom activities at Hometown was that they were exclusively the preserve of an all female student population. This gender specificity of secretarial education is a contributory factor in the reproduction of patriarchal relations. However, in sharp contrast with Sloanes, there were few occasions when any Hometown teacher could be assessed as explicitly reinforcing women's subservience in the secretarial role.

### 3.6 HOMETOWN STUDENTS' VIEWS ON SECRETARIAL WORK AND EDUCATION

All students bring their own beliefs and values to the classroom, which influence their behaviour and help to mould student/staff relations as much as the views which guide teachers. All Sloanes and Hometown students could rationalize their ranking within the hierarchy of secretarial courses. At Hometown the perceived rationality in students' ranking contributed to the college's cultural tone of professional meritocracy. Many had some sense of the tensions between their class and gender statuses which reflected similar tensions between the culture of the institution and the structure of its courses. In mediating the knowledge transmitted to them, they indicate a measure of filtering of class and gender relations.

Post 'O' level students at Hometown recounted the factors which would place them in the bottom line of secretarial work:

"The course fits you to be a secretary, but at our age you can't get a very high level job, so first we would have to be a shorthand typist or copy typist, but we couldn't get a job even as a junior secretary right away. We haven't got the ability or the experience."

"I won't go straight away as a PA, rather as a junior in an office, perhaps as a junior secretary. I think I want to get more experience and confidence. It depends how large the firm is and who you would be PA to. If it was the Managing Director of a large firm, I'd back out of that one. I'm not fit for that, but I suppose I might just be able to do it in a very small firm."

"I want some of the Crème de la Crème jobs, you know, what you see in The Times (laughing), but seriously though I know that's just a dream . . . I don't see why we shouldn't have a job like that, but I don't know, they don't sound like us. Well we're just not that kind of people, are we?"

Students identified their anticipated work as being routine and in the lower echelons of secretarial labour. They felt themselves to be lacking the cultural attributes necessary in the higher ranks of secretarial work. There was a uniform acceptance of their ranked position which cemented group allegiance. They made frequent reference to a solidarity amongst the gendered group of students, which is akin to

peer group identification within many typing pools, where labour processes exhibit proletarian characteristics (see Chapter III). This solidarity came through in their readiness to question class and patriarchal relations expressed in their classroom experiences. Filtering class and gender messages underlines their classed gender solidarity, but also confirms differentiation between them and the Post 'A' level group. This, in turn, confirms class distinctions between the high and low level course and generates cultural reinforcement for their anticipatory proletarian location within production.

Confrontation of class and gender aspects of low level students' anticipatory relations of production was implicit in views such as:

"On the course they (teachers) think they tell us about being a secretary. They say 'a secretary should do this, and that's not what a good secretary would do'. Like being dead in at 9 o'clock and others want you to be more involved and some places they don't dress 100 per cent smart like they say here. They say 'if you have to do things at work at 5 o'clock you need to stay to do it - you should be dedicated to it'. But I think you can just get walked over like that. They tell us about being a secretary, but most of us have our own ideas about it. This just comes over, we don't have lessons about it. Sometimes in Secretarial Duties and Typing she always says 'a good secretary wouldn't do this' but she is only trying to get at you to work harder. But most people in this group have their own ideas anyway and haven't been too much influenced by the teachers. But they (students) work hard all of them."

Another student from the group expressed strong feelings about the stereotyped images of femininity in secretarial work, although it was not clear whether she felt that teachers were forcing her to conform to this image:

"I don't want to type for the rest of my life. I'm not cut out to be a secretary and that kind of thing - I've got broader horizons than that. It's only at this stage that I'm typing. It's the image of a secretary I can't fit into . . . I think it is me and my outlook on things that doesn't fit in with this image. I will dress up like a secretary, but I'll be kidding myself that that is me, when it isn't. Obviously there is more pressure on women to conform to this dress thing. Society says that women are equal, but it just isn't like that and being a secretary is a typical woman's job, because you don't get many male secretaries . . . I had these views before I came here, which perhaps you will say is the wrong attitude. But I'm in trouble here. I don't go to Secretarial Duties any more. I didn't come here to do that sort of thing, I just wanted the skills. I am rejecting the knowledge

because I consider it a waste of my time. It's really brain washing. I suppose some of the things are useful, but it doesn't interest me because I don't see myself in the role they are portraying. They have expectations of people going out to a job and going to work every day for five years until you get promotion, and then just going on again for another five years. You are just a secretary and you work for a boss. They always portray that boss as male more often than not. I should think that's right, as it is usually that way, that the boss is male, but I am not saying that it should be that way."

This student, in her own words, 'rejected' the patriarchal relations implicit in a particular subject area of her course. However, she went on to say that she liked the course. Group solidarity was important to her:

"I like the course much more than I expected. The class is good, we all get on together. There is a good level of understanding between us all. I thought when I came here I will be stuck in a group of 16 year old girls talking about their boy friends all the time, but the atmosphere is good, we discuss serious things, it's not like that at all."

All Hometown Post 'O' students perceived gender inequalities in their anticipated work. They believed that secretaries were inferior in status to male office workers and saw this as unfair. They felt that the course suggested that if they were dedicated and industrious they could break down the gender barriers, but no student viewed this as a very likely possibility.

With the exception of a student who intended living in Italy, all post 'O' students mentioned their potential earning capacity as a positive reason for taking a secretarial course:

"I've no idea of what title of job I will go for. I'll just go out for all the money I can get. I don't mind what title it has."

"Well, I wanted some skills so that I could get out and earn some money. That's what everyone goes out to work for really isn't it? I'd thought about other things, but they don't pay as good."

"I hope I am settled down by, say, 35, have a house and a car and that. I don't know whether I'll be married, but, yes, I suppose I might be. I don't think that it matters what job you do whether you get married, but you have to think about the money . . . I wouldn't mind being other things, like nursery nursing, but if you want a house and things, it's not practical, there's no money in it. There's much more money in secretarial work."

Students believed that they would marry at a later stage in their lives. All but two of the 18 thought that they would continue to work outside the house, either because they would need the money or because they felt that staying at home and doing housework was boring. No mention was made of using secretarial work as a marriage market, as was the case for Sloanes students. Only two of the 18 class members mentioned the conventional view that secretarial skills constituted a safety valve, something to fall back on, if alternative plans did not come to fruition, or if they needed part-time work when they had children. In the main, then, Post 'O' students recognised the deprivations of a lower class location which necessitated their remaining in paid labour for most of their lives.

With regard to Post 'A' level students at Hometown, only two of the six formally interviewed intended taking up secretarial employment after completing their course. Even these two exceptions intended moving out of secretarial work as rapidly as possible. One wished to use her skills as an avenue to personnel work, while the other hoped to get into production work at the BBC. Of the four remaining students, two were entering nurse training, one the police force, while the last was going to university. These latter students viewed secretarial skills as useful studying aids and anticipated taking lecture notes in shorthand and typing their own essays. They also stated that if they did not like their chosen careers they would have marketable skills with which to obtain employment. For example, the potential policewoman said:

"I always feel that with secretarial skills you can always get a job. It is something to fall back on, if I was wanting temporary work. I don't think I do want a permanent job as a secretary, but if I have to wait to get into the police force I can get work in the meantime . . . if I can't get in (to the police force) I was thinking of going into art, dealing in art by working my way up through being a secretary."

In less formal discussions with the group of 17 students, it transpired that, like Sloanes students, no Post 'A' level secretarial student viewed working as a personal assistant as her ultimate ambition. They were divided almost equally between using secretarial work as a way into

other areas of work, including management, and those who were using a year between school and other training to obtain skills which might be useful aids to employment at some indeterminate stage in their lives. All students viewed the opportunities which might accrue from secretarial skills as a positive advantage, rather than an indication of inequalities between men and women. Those wishing to obtain managerial posts believed that they had an advantage over their male counterparts in that they could avail themselves of this 'back-door' avenue to managerial status. Students conveyed little intrinsic interest in the subjects of the course, but viewed their studies as a means to another goal, not directly associated with the formal curriculum.

Those Post 'A' level students who believed secretarial work to be an entrée to management posts, occasionally identified some of the gender inequalities of office life which might impede this transition. Their initial confidence, reported above, was undermined by later contradictory statements, which identified issues relating to tensions between class and gender relations:

"I have heard from various people who have been secretaries that once you are in a secretarial position, you are very valuable in that position to your boss. He likes you to do his secretarial work and therefore he is very reticent to give you the leeway to do other things. He doesn't necessarily see you as promotion material really. I am sure this is the case . . . It could be to do with being female. I still do think that, in spite of the fact that we are all supposed to be equal, that certain male managers think women are likely to leave their job to have a family, so, therefore, they tend to be more hesitant about offering you top managerial positions."

Those who felt themselves to be potential managers did not wish to remain in secretarial work because there was insufficient responsibility and scope for initiative in these posts. Yet, they doubted their teachers' assessments that they would be capable of carrying out Personal Assistant work, even if they were successful on the course:

"My lecturer in Personnel and Managerial Aspects, she has the opinion that we are all going to be able to go out and get a PA job first time round. I don't think that will happen. I don't know whether I'm up to that really."

"The course has put me off doing secretarial work. In September I had secretarial work in mind, but now I really don't want to do

secretarial work. Partly I am not enjoying the course very much, partly because the idea of being a secretary does not appeal. I find it degrading. I feel you are not doing anything worthwhile. You are just doing the boss's dirty work really . . . I would rather be my own boss and have more responsibility . . . We have been played a tape with a boss and you have to take down the dictation. Taking letters, it seems to be the attitude they take - just go and do this and that, type a letter to my son and when you have finished go on to do something else. I never was that interested in secretarial work. I just want to use it to go into junior management. I still think that is possible and a good career to follow . . . I don't know whether I'll be able to get a job as a PA . . . Unless I was a PA then I don't think you are your own boss and organise your own work."

"They (teachers) give us plenty of confidence. They say we are going to be top class material and we are going to do very well. They give you the impression that you are not going to be just an ordinary secretary but something more, with responsibility heaped on your shoulders. I hope that that does happen, but the proof is in the pudding. I have my doubts and I don't know whether I could take it anyway."

Students were caught between varying images of secretarial work. On the one hand, their teachers emphasised the quality of the posts they would obtain, requiring initiative, decision making and being relatively loosely controlled. Yet they perceived aspects of their work where they would be highly controlled and particularly the patriarchal relations involved in having a male boss.

Students were aware that lower level secretarial courses existed at the college, but had no contact with any of these students. Only one Post 'A' level student believed that there would be little difference in the jobs obtained by the two levels of student. All others felt that they would obtain higher level posts than Post 'O' level students and that this was fair. Their views on these differences shed light on their beliefs about class issues in their anticipated relations of production:

"I hope I get a different kind of job from the Post 'O' level student . . . I should think it would mean I will have more responsibility and may have a junior secretary working for me . . . we are given the impression that we may be in a position where we will have others working under our supervision. Yes, I would like that. I wouldn't mind it at all, but I am quite demanding and I would be rather a hard task master. I believe that if you work hard yourself and put all your efforts to do a good job, you have the right to expect that of others."

"Yes, I would get a different kind of job from someone with 'O' levels. Hopefully I would get a job that this training and understanding of the firm and how it is run would fit me for. I would like to think I'd have much more responsibility."

"I do get the impression that some people start at the bottom as junior typists. Some of the courses here prepare people for those lower places. That's for people who are not as highly qualified as us."

"I think I would be looking for a higher salary than Post 'O's if employers were looking for 'A' levels, you would be expected to do more, so you would be paid more . . . I think there are different levels of job in secretarial work. For example, how much you are relied on . . . I think I would have to supervise the lower level 'O' level secretaries. We are told that on this course, that it's a high level and you would be expected to work your way up, you've got good prospects for promotion."

These students believe that their high location within the secretarial hierarchy will be based on a meritocratic system related to educational qualifications, although no student mentioned secretarial qualifications in this connection. No mention was made of any cultural or feminine attributes which might contribute to their success in achieving high status in secretarial work and which is an important factor in Sloanes students' anticipated high ranking in secretarial labour (see section 3.3). However, connections between gendered categories of work and their status were referred to when discussing whether the course had proved to be as they had expected. All Post 'A' level students found their current studies more difficult than they had anticipated. Many appreciated that they had held the common belief that as it was women's work, of low status, it must be easy to learn the skills involved:

"I thought it would be a doddle, but it isn't. I had always looked upon the view that you went into the bottom and you did all the shorthand and typing and I knew from school that the girls learning it were lower qualified than me and I thought that there couldn't be that much to it, but now, doing it myself, I realise there is more to it than meets the eye."

"I came on the course thinking it was going to be a doddle, but I soon learned very different. If I was going to do well at it, it was damned hard work. It is definitely as hard as any form of academic qualification. It annoys me that some people say 'what are you doing on a typing course?' I can turn round and tell them it is not easy . . . to sit at a desk and try to alter the manuscript and type it out is not easy, no way. In fact, I am as guilty as much as anyone because when I was studying 'O' levels I

did typing at that stage and because I was younger I regarded it as my dross option . . . I think it all originates from the point that secretaries are all women and are often seen in a very subservient light. I now have an admiration for (my teacher) to see how qualified she is and what skills she possesses and it isn't easy to teach these subjects."

All Hometown students felt that they had sufficient common sense to know how to dress appropriately when they went for job interviews. They did not want any instruction on areas such as dress and speech. In line with the College's culture of professional meritocracy, they believed that their academic knowledge together with secretarial skills would be of more importance at work than their appearance. One student commented:

"People are always saying to me 'you don't look like a secretary'. But I don't see why you have to dress in a certain way and look like that. I don't think that's right - if I can do the work. The teachers here don't make any comments at all about what I look like, they just assume I suppose I'll get dressed up when I go for interviews."

In contrast to Sloanes, informal views infiltrate college and classroom life at Hometown. Students and staff are less tightly controlled within the college and have a higher degree of autonomy from parental pressures than at Sloanes. This contributes to the open expression of diverse views on secretarial education and the filtering of perceived formal norms on class and gender issues. These factors suggest that the college is less closely linked to home and work than Sloanes college. However, despite diversity in the class and gender messages of secretarial education within Hometown, at the same time it reproduces tight boundaries between its ranked courses and confirms the class distinctions between the state and private colleges. In other words, they contribute towards the three class model of female secretarial labour within education.

Examination of classroom relations has indicated that the day-to-day control of students varies enormously according to the college and category of the group. These control strategies are informed by formal institutional structures and cultures. However, there are areas for negotiation of 'social reality' between staff and students, constituting

expressions of class and gender relations which are sometimes at variance with those inscribed in the structure and culture of the two colleges. The interconnections between informal and formal boundaries incorporate tensions, ambiguities and coherencies in their respective expressions of class and gender relations. This further complicates the social world of secretarial education.

Ambiguities surface when, for instance, classroom social relations are compared with relations in secretarial production. The pattern of control, exhibited in distinctions between relations in secretarial classrooms, reverses the pattern of control in secretarial labour processes. This comparison brings to the fore apparent contradictions between secretarial education and secretarial production. Again, however, when tracing interconnections between class and gender relations, as constituted in the patterning of these relations within secretarial education, 'contradictions' are more appropriately defined as points of tension. This is because cultural 'contradictions' within one category of this vocational education shape tight gender and class boundaries between its constituent courses. As such, these cultural 'contradictions' constitute the institutionalization of class and gender relations in secretarial education. In effect, they perpetuate patterns of relative superordination and subordination of secretarial women with each other and with men.

## CONCLUSIONS

There are both similarities and differences between routine life within Hometown's secretarial courses as well as between that in Hometown and Sloanes secretarial courses. They are constituted in different class and gender, college and classroom, relations. These relations are, in turn, constituted in coherencies, tensions and ambiguities between and within different substantive expressions of class and gender relations. The patterning of cultural instances of incoherencies and coherencies, within and between class relations and gender relations, constitutes the

specification process of these relations within secretarial education. In turn, they inform and are shaped by the structures of class and gender relations in this sphere of education, constituting, in part, the institutionalization process of these sets of relations. Furthermore, the consequent complex structures of both categories of relations, constituted in the lived realities of each secretarial course, in turn exhibit coherencies, tensions and ambiguities, between and within expressions of class and gender relations, as constituted in secretarial education processes and in secretarial labour processes. The patterning of coherencies and incoherencies of specific cultural moments of class and gender in secretarial education and secretarial production, constitutes the specification process of these relations between sets of institutions. Again, in turn, these constitute, in part, the institutionalization process of these relations across the two sets of social institutions.

Analysis of connections, between and within class and gender relations, within education and between education and production, points to the specification process contained in the patterning of expressions of class and gender relations. For example, the subordinant and dominant class specificity of state and private education is confirmed by sharp differences between Sloanes and Hometown's cultures, structures and processes of secretarial education. There is a strong boundary between Sloanes and Hometown. This tight bounding is confirmed by practices in Hometown which, in some instances, re-negotiate the conventions of power distribution in class and in gender terms. In themselves, they constitute incoherencies within class and within gender relations. However, the practical effect of these is to reinforce institutional differentiation between Sloanes and Hometown.

All aspects of Sloanes secretarial education complement each other to produce a unity of purpose. There is an unquestioned certainty of procedures which reproduce advantages inherent in a gendered dominant class cultural capital. In contrast, within Hometown there are coherencies and incoherencies between expressions of class and gender relations constituted in different features of its secretarial

education. For example, at Hometown there is coherence between expressions of class and gender in its culture and processes of secretarial education. A culture of professionalism and non gender discrimination is carried forward into the daily experiences of secretarial classroom life. For instance, teachers and students openly question and reject knowledge and processes which reproduce the subordination of women to men, as well as inequalities of power distribution in class terms. In addition, differences in classroom behaviour of ranked student groupings shape and legitimize differences in classroom relations. However, these different classroom relations do not replicate anticipatory relations of production. Contradictions, between social relations of corresponding levels of secretarial education and production, incorporate renegotiation of class and gender relations of production within vocational education. This distinction, between production and education, contributes to an ethos of autonomy, freedom of expression, and equality of opportunity for both students and staff in Hometown's process of secretarial education.

It is in Hometown's structure of secretarial education that clear class and gender divisions surface. This produces tensions with expressions of class and gender relations constituted in the college culture and process. Ranked terminal qualifications incorporate traditional class divisions within their contents, which reproduce continuities with class heritage and classed production place. Setting female secretarial students apart from male students preparing for office labour, overtly reproduces gender distinctions harnessed to patriarchal relations.

At Hometown processes of secretarial education and the college culture filter conventional class and gender divisions. They constitute substantive incoherencies with the generic principles of class and of gender relations. However, these incoherencies partly constitute class distinctions between Sloanes and Hometown. In Hometown's high level course, students' professional qualifications and status are anchored to renegotiating gender relations by penetrating the boundary between male management posts and female PA jobs. The form that this gender renegotiation takes reinforces these secretarial students' class

advantages in comparison with low level secretarial students. In the low level course renegotiating gender centres on rejecting traditional norms of femininity. This gender renegotiation confirms relevant students' difference from the high level group. It also underlines low level students' subordinate class position vis à vis both higher level Hometown students and Sloanes students. In other words, gender and class are articulating to shape each other's structure. That is, these cultural moments of class and gender relations constitute, in part, an institutionalization process of these complex forms of class and of gender relations.

Inasmuch as female secretarial students at Hometown are separated from male students, but are simultaneously separated from each other into courses exhibiting classed gender boundaries, Hometown's practices reproduce gendered class divisions. Within this exclusively female area of vocational education students study skills and knowledge traditionally associated with 'women's office work'. However, high level students also learn about the executive functions of male management which points to the PA's involvement in the decision making processes of male managers. This structural context differentiates between the gendered office roles but simultaneously suggests allegiance between this classed level of male and female office worker. In contrast, low level students' curriculum concentrates on 'women's practical skills' and procedural knowledge. This focus simultaneously distinguishes the course content from similar levels of 'male courses' and higher level secretarial curricula. In contrast to the high level Hometown course, the content of the low level course reinforces the physical boundary between male and female business studies students at the college.

Expressions of class and gender at Hometown are complex. There are coherencies, tensions and ambiguities within and between the various expressions of these relations. The diversity of class and gender expressions within Hometown contrasts sharply with relatively uniform expressions of class and gender relations within Sloanes. This difference between the two colleges is one feature of the strong

boundary and class distinction between them. Sloanes students enter an institution in which control is exerted over a wider area of their life than at Hometown. In contrast with Hometown, Sloanes students are mainly boarders and the college timetables social activities outside, as well as inside, the formal classroom. In these respects Sloanes is more of a 'total' institution (Goffman, 1968) than Hometown. The uniform expressions of class and gender in Sloanes education coheres with the class and gender values of students' family origins. In mediating between home and work, Sloanes education contributes to producing a totalizing culture for dominant class women.

Connections with home and work are less explicit at Hometown than at Sloanes. The culture of this college is that of professionalism associated predominantly with education and training rather than any other social sphere. The very diversity of expressions of class and gender relations makes it more difficult to unravel connections between Hometown and other areas of its students' lives than is the case at Sloanes.

Sloanes organization, culture and process of secretarial education overtly concentrate on reproduction of a gendered dominant class cultural capital. Tight control of students by staff, together with tightly controlled lower level staff and explicit rules, ensure that there is little space for renegotiating class and gender divisions. In contrast with Hometown, there is coherence between expressions of class and gender constituted in Sloanes culture, structure and processes of secretarial education. From adherence to traditional gender relations, class advantages are confirmed for Sloanes students over Hometown secretarial women. Through structured procedures for job placement, these classed gender relations assure direct contact and unity with dominant class men.

Differentiated secretarial courses are tightly bounded. Tensions and ambiguities within one course reinforce boundaries with other courses: incoherencies, between and within expressions of class and gender relations, within and between courses, are displaced when account is

taken of their contribution to informal and formal boundaries between secretarial courses. They help to ensure, paralleling Willis' (1977) analysis for example, that women from working class homes get working class secretarial jobs, while those from dominant class homes get dominant class secretarial jobs. Class and gender relations take different practical form because of a specification process in which they are, in part, defined by each other. This points to instances of structural agency between class and gender relations. So, for example, the full meaning of the overt gender subordination, which is written into the formal and 'hidden' curriculum of Sloanes, is only available when explaining the class boundary this helps to create between that college and other colleges in the state sector of secretarial education. In other words, the articulation of class with gender relations is constituted in the patterning of different instances of structural agency. The overall outcome of incoherencies and coherencies, between and within class and gender relations, as realized within the system of secretarial education, and stemming from and shaping articulation of these relations, is the institutionalization of gender relations and the institutionalization of class relations.

Analysis in this chapter has suggested that for some participants in secretarial education, class and/or gender inequalities are highlighted while for others they are obscured. The pattern of revealing and masking of sets of relations is part of the ideological effect of class and gender articulation. These ideological effects are discussed in the next chapter. They are important because they constitute crucial features of students' understanding and interpretation of their classed gender and gendered class relations in vocational education and in their production places.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V

(1) The courses selected for in-depth enquiry at Hometown were the Post GCE 'O' level including shorthand and Post GCE 'A' level PA Diploma secretarial courses. Students enrolled on these courses completed a brief questionnaire seeking information on schools previously attended, general education qualifications, father's occupation and mother's occupation. Comparative data on the students attending Sloanes' was obtained, by force of research circumstances, in a more indirect fashion, there being less freedom of access to such information at this college.

Of the 17 Post 'A' level students at Hometown who completed the questionnaire, 13 were educated in state secondary schools and 4 in private schools. Thirty-eight Post 'O' level secretarial students responded in written responses on the questionnaire. Of these, 8 had attended private secondary schools and 30 state schools. As the college is situated in a wealthy suburb of London which abounds in small private schools, the relatively high proportion who had attended one of these private schools is perhaps not surprising.

(2) The general educational qualifications achieved by students studying at Hometown prior to opting for secretarial education, is as follows:

Educational Qualifications of  
Post 'A' Level Hometown Secretarial Students

<u>No. of 'A' Levels</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>
0	1
1	3
2	6
3	6
4	1
	—
Total	17
	=

Educational Qualifications of  
Post 'O' Level Hometown Secretarial Students

<u>No. of 'O' Levels</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>
0	1
1	1
2	5
3	7
4	5
5	8
6	2
7	4
8	4
No response	1
	—
Total	38
	=

(3) Questionnaire responses supplied by the 1983/4 and 1984/5 secretarial students on the jobs obtained, after completing their course of studies at Hometown, provided the relevant data from this college for this section. Eighteen of the 32 Post 'A' level students had returned their completed questionnaires, while 28 of the 47 Post 'O' level students had responded positively to requests for information about their work.

(4) The following tables provide statistics about the jobs which Post 'O' level students entered on completing their secretarial course at Hometown.

Data on Jobs Acquired by Post 'O' Hometown Secretarial Students

Salary

<u>Salary Range</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>
under £4,000	2
£4,000-£4,500	10
£4,500-£5,000	2
£5,000-£5,500	3
£5,500-£6,000	7
over £6,000	2
No response	2
	—
	Total 28
	==

Approximate Amount of Time Spent on Activities Listed  
in an Average Working Day  
 (% of Post 'O' students giving positive response)  
 (to nearest whole number)

	A great deal of time %	Quite a lot of time %	Some time %	Occasion-ally/never %
Shorthand	4	4	18	75
Typing	42	21	7	29
Audio Typing	4	14	11	71
Word Processing	11	7	4	78
Answer Telephone	18	25	11	46
Filing	0	50	11	38
Arranging Meetings	0	0	11	89
Composing own correspondence	0	0	4	96
Meeting Visitors	0	4	7	89
Travel Arrangements	0	0	4	96
Delegating Work to Others	0	4	0	96
Supervising Others' Work	0	0	0	100
Research	0	0	4	96
Making Tea/Coffee	18	21	25	35
Shielding Boss from Callers	7	0	11	82
Solving Problems	0	7	14	79

Nature of Organisation

	<u>No. of Students</u>
Large business in London	7
Local Bank	1
Small local business	17
Local temporary work	1
Temporary work in London	1
No Response	1

The organisations within which Hometown's secretarial students had found employment are remarkable for their lack of general prestige, whereas those to be quoted later in relation to Sloanes students, provide an aura of dominant organisations in the economic and political power structure of capitalist society.

Examples of Organisations in which Hometown Students  
Acquired Secretarial Posts

Post 'O' Level Ex Secretarial Students

Rawplug Co - local	Croner Publications - local
Ian Allen - local	Gatherhope - local
Eden Employment - temporary local	Scaffolding (GB) - local
DER - local	Spillers Foods - local
Lease Management Services - local	Carmona Dover - London
Gasgoine-Pees - local	Racal Simulation - local
British Oxygen - London	British National Oil - London
CTI - London	Sartorius Instruments - local
Imperial Optical - London	Page Aerospace - local
Scottish Life Assurance - local	Crown International Prods - local
H & J Builders - local	Atlas Foods - London

Post 'A' Level Ex Secretarial Students

St Lukes' Hospital - local	Shell UK - London
ITOH Electronics - London	Onstream Ltd - local
Cosmopolitan Magazine - London	Richard Rogers - London
Polytechnic - local	Department of Environment - London
Reed Employment - local	Selfridges - London
Associated Books - London	National Health Service - London
Racal Marine Navigation - local	Nuffield Hospital - local
Technical Publishing - London	

Further details will now be given on the posts obtained by Post 'A' level secretarial students from Hometown.

Data on Jobs Acquired by Post 'A' Hometown Secretarial Students

Approximate Amount of Time Spent on Activities Listed  
in an Average Working Day  
(% of Post 'A' Students who responded positively)  
(to nearest whole number)

	A great deal of time %	Quite a lot of time %	Some time %	Occasionally/ never %
Shorthand	5	11	39	45
Typing	28	28	11	33
Audio Typing	5	0	11	84
Word Processing	5	11	11	72
Answering Telephone	33	22	11	33
Filing	0	0	28	72
Arranging Meetings	33	17	22	28
Composing Own Correspondence	28	22	17	33
Meeting Visitors	17	28	11	44
Travel Arrangements	11	22	17	50
Delegating Work to Others	17	28	17	38
Supervising Others' Work	11	22	17	50
Research	17	11	28	44
Making Tea/Coffee	0	0	22	78
Shielding Boss from Callers	44	11	11	34
Solving Problems	39	17	17	28

Salary

<u>Salary Range</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>
£4,500-£5,000	1
£5,000-£5,500	2
£5,500-£6,000	4
£6,000-£6,500	6
£6,500-£7,000	1
£7,000-£7,500	1
£7,500-£8,000	1
£8,000-£8,500	1
No response	1
	—
TOTAL	18
	==

Nature of Organisation

	<u>No. of Students</u>
Large Business in London	8
Hospital and Health Service	3
Large Local Business	2
Local Temporary Work	2
No Response	1

The questionnaire, from which data on jobs obtained by past secretarial students were acquired, was compiled by Hometown college. In the area of activities carried out in their work, it is possible that some activities are quite vague, such as 'solving problems' and that respondents may have interpreted this activity in different ways. For instance, few jobs can be without any problems to be solved, but these problems could range from relatively simple decisions such as how to fit a new daisywheel to an electronic typewriter, to more fundamental problems with far reaching consequences. The precision of the percentage of students ticking any particular box is, therefore, less important than the overall picture of the differences in the jobs obtained by the two categories of student.

(5) Data on the jobs acquired by the Easter 1985 Sloanes' leavers was obtained from the college's employment bureau. Of the 42 who completed their studies at this time, 14 did not require assistance from the college as they had already been promised posts in organisations with which they had some personal connections. Of the remainder, 4 students opted for temporary work, 11 decided to continue their studies either within this college or at another educational institution, and two students were still being assisted in their search for employment when the statistics were provided. Information on the salaries of the 11 students who had already been placed in jobs is provided in the table below.

Data on Jobs Acquired by Sloanes Students

Salary (Easter 85)\*

	<u>No. of Students</u>
£5,500-£6,000	1
£6,000-£6,500	4
£6,500-£7,000	2
over £7,000	4

\* This data is not directly comparable to that acquired from ex Hometown students as the time scale for the collation of relevant data is different.

The tasks specified in the Sloanes' jobs included:  
 travel arrangements; arrange and attend committee meetings; visits to sites; dealing with the press and clients; errands; back-up in organisation of household State events and furnishings; giving

guided tours around House of Commons; secretarial work concerned with family properties.

All posts were in the London area, and the prestige of the organisations in which they were located, can only be illustrated by their citation when immediate contrasts are evident with those in which Hometown students found work:

Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the UK;

Two commercial film companies;

Royal Institute of British Architects;

Two publicity companies for 'up-market' films and television;

Buckingham Palace;

Two posts in the House of Commons;

Two posts in Sloanes College.

Eight of the prospective employers had mentioned that they required applicants to possess good social skills, including ability to liaise with Directors, meet clients, good telephone manner and appearance, well mannered.

(6) Secretaries' average earnings per annum in 1984/5 were updated using Central Statistical Office (December 1990) data on percentage increase in average earnings for each year up to 1991.

## CHAPTER VI

### IDEOLOGICAL EFFECTS PRODUCED BY CLASS AND GENDER ARTICULATION

#### INTRODUCTION

Analysis of the reproduction of secretarial labour power, in preceding chapters, pointed to complex divisions between women, between women and men, and between men. Embedded in these divisions are specific issues of power. These are explored in this chapter. That is, discussion is developed on identifying the problematics of interest group formations amongst, in the context of this study, office workers. Included in this discussion is analysis of issues which underpin and forge possible allegiances, alliances, as well as collective and oppositional identities, amongst these workers.

This analysis explores a specific, circumscribed, component of that power which is incumbent upon individuals combining together. That is, analysis centres on that aspect of alliances and allegiances amongst office men and women which is generated during secretaries' vocational education and transition to office work. The class and/or gender issues, which point to collective and oppositional identities, are

explored. Clearly, secretaries' consciousness of social inequalities is also developed in other social spheres, such as in Trade Unions, the legislature, party politics, and ideological apparatuses, such as television, radio and newspapers. Students' relations at home and in their prior schooling will also undoubtedly contribute towards secretaries' understandings of social inequalities. These will all have an impact on those beliefs and alliances generated during vocational education. However, these are outside the empirical remit of this study. On the other hand, analysis will indicate that, in terms of this occupational group as a whole, interpretations and understandings of class and gender inequalities, fostered during secretarial education, are extremely complex. It can be assumed that they will be increasingly complicated by those views and awarenesses acquired from experiences of class and gender relations in other areas of daily life.

The gendered three class model of secretarial labour, which emerged in earlier analysis (Chapters III-V), suggests that neither the totality of secretarial women, nor the totality of each class level of men and women office workers, share social identities. That is, similar, but also sharply different, class and gender issues are contained within men's and within women's daily experiences of office work and of education. They point to problematic alliances and allegiances between and within gendered and classed categories of office labour. These are explored initially by analysing coherencies and incoherencies, within and between class and gender relations, as producing a patterned form to substantive instances of, on the one hand, shielding from commonsense view, and, on the other hand, highlighting of the underlying principles of class and/or gender relations.

Instances of concealment and highlighting, of the systems of class and of gender inequalities, indicate the particular conscious understandings of these social inequalities which are acquired at any specific substantive moment of the realization of class and gender articulation. It is in this sense that the concept of ideology is adopted in this analysis. That is, the term 'ideology' is used to examine views, beliefs, understandings, interpretations, pertaining to, in this

analysis, the political dynamics of class and gender relations in the context of secretarial education and production. In short, conscious awareness of class and gender inequalities, as generated in secretarial education and production, is explored. This aspect of analysis is important. It sheds further light on actual and potential social praxis in respect of secretarial teachers, students and workers. Put another way, it is assumed that these women possess highly rational standpoints based partly on those class and gender issues revealed or obscured at one particular substantive moment of the articulation of these relations. That is, they have at least a tacit knowledge of how to proceed in their day-to-day activities. They have a "practical consciousness" which allows them "tacitly (to) keep in touch with the grounds of their activity, as a routine element of that activity" (Giddens 1982:30). Partly as a result of that 'reflexive self monitoring', generated in secretarial education, secretarial teachers, students and workers make conscious judgements about uniting or distancing themselves from others, in order to challenge or retain their comparative class and/or gender disadvantages or advantages. For example, high level secretaries have set up quasi professional associations, based explicitly on possession of a high level secretarial diploma acquired in education, which distances them from low level secretaries (see Chapter III).

The ideological effects produced by the reciprocal articulation of class and gender relations are particularly highlighted when analysis proceeds, at a different level, to explore the intended and unintended outcomes of actions based on secretaries' consciousness. This analysis explores the ways in which secretaries' current and projected challenges to, or accommodations of, the constraints on their actions act on the dominant male and capitalist structural forces which contextualise these actions. This analysis sheds light on contradictions, ambiguities, coherencies and incoherencies between conscious actions and interests. The term 'interests' is adopted in this discussion to refer to those effects, influences and outcomes of conscious actions, on class and gender structures, which analysis of class and gender articulation suggests improve upon the shares of power which currently inhere in

secretarial labour and education processes. For example, all secretaries might have sufficiently similar views on, say, patriarchy, fostered by conscious experiences of some form of patriarchal subordination, to underpin united industrial action which contested the constraints imposed upon their workplace actions by dominant male forces. However, in the light of earlier analysis of class and gender articulation, this action might not be in their 'interests'. For instance, the high level secretary would, in such action, jeopardize her comparative class advantages, since they are closely associated with her particular form of patriarchal subordination.

Basically, this chapter focusses on the different forms of power constituted in the ideological domain of class and gender articulation. For example, analysis explores the obscuring or 'disappearance' of, say, patriarchal subordination of women to men, in a particular substantive context, as itself possibly supporting the reconstitution of patriarchy in another substantive context. In addition, the highlighting of say, gender inequalities, at a specific substantive moment, may encourage conscious resistance to relevant constraints which reconfigures the structure of gender relations. On the other hand, such contextualised, immediate, reconfiguration of, say, patriarchy, may be part of a process by which the original configuration of these relations is achieved in another substantive context. In essence, this analysis explores the patterning of various forms of class and gender power embedded in the ideological dimension of the articulation of these relations. This suggests 'paradoxically' that the alleviation or 'disappearance' of class and/or gender constraints on the actions of subordinate groupings, in specific substantive contexts, is as much a constituent of constraints on their actions as those substantive moments which realize overt, explicit, clearly visible, imposition of constraints by dominant class and/or gender structural forces.

The first section of the chapter refers back to the class and gender theories discussed in Chapter I. Discussion of these theories, at this stage of analysis, focusses on the masking and illuminating of social divisions produced by the mainly uni-focal and dualist methods currently

adopted. In other words, it explores the ideological effects produced by existing methods. Contrasts, between explanations of the structures of class relations and of gender relations provided by these methods, in comparison with a method of articulation, bring to the fore the issues of power explored in this chapter. For instance, Marxist feminists' methods, while often assuming a unitary 'capitalist patriarchy' perspective on connections between class and gender relations, imply the priority of patriarchy over class relations when explaining that patriarchy confines women to proletarian production places (eg Beechey 1977, Bruegel 1982). Although they do not address directly the issue of women's alliances and allegiances, their methods imply a collective identity for all women. Yet, in practice, some women enjoy class advantages over other women and some men, although only in association with their class specific patriarchal subordination, as is the case for personal assistants (see Chapter III). It is more than likely, therefore, that such women do not share the same understanding of class and gender inequalities or any sense of allegiance, in terms of mounting a united challenge to patriarchy, as those women, like pool typists, who do not acquire such class privileges. Such oppositional identities are, for example, again illustrated by high level secretaries' establishment of quasi-professional associations, referred to above, through which they distanced themselves from low level secretaries (see above Chapter III).

In the second section discussion centres on the ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation. This analysis uses and builds upon both the data and also the analysis of Chapters III-V. That is, it examines specific instances of the ideological effects of class and gender articulation contained in the reproduction of secretarial labour power. In the first place, analysis explores the conscious actions, views and beliefs about class and gender inequalities generated in secretarial education. For example, earlier analysis of Hometown's classroom practices is developed. Here teachers take conscious decisions, to exclude from their secretarial classroom practices, any explicit or implicit reinforcement of women's subordination to men. Their action constitutes an immediate redirection of gender relations. However, at the level of analysis of the ideological effects produced by

class and gender articulation, this practice conceals the class advantages, within production, gained by Sloanes students, itself partly predicated upon their training in the manipulation of femininity.

In the second place, analysis explores the views, understandings and interpretations of class and gender inequalities held by secretaries at work in production. The shaping of secretaries' consciousness, in production, by those views and beliefs forged in secretarial education, is explored. This constitutes a different level of analysis of articulation and its ideological effects from preceding analysis. In effect, at this juncture analysis attempts to explore, from the standpoint of detailed information and analysis of secretarial education, those consciousnesses and actions of secretarial workers which came to light in analysis of secretarial production (Chapter III). It explores the influences that secretarial teachers and students' current consciousness and actions are likely to have on these students' interpretations of their relations of production when they take their places within secretarial production. This mode of analysis is partly speculative in so far as more detailed empirical evidence, than that provided in this study, would be required to verify fully the contentions arising out of this analysis. On the other hand, the students who provided data for this study acquired jobs which were comparable in various respects to those analysed when exploring secretarial labour in Chapter III above. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that, when taking their places in production, these students will act in, and react to, their relations of production in a very similar fashion to those secretaries whose labour processes were analysed earlier. In effect, this earlier analysis of secretarial labour provides evidence to underpin analysis, in this chapter, of the shaping of secretaries' consciousness and actions, in production, by their preceding experiences in secretarial education.

The following section explores the various possible allegiances and alliances between classed groups of secretarial students and also between and within classed and gendered groups of office workers. These are indicated by the patterning of masked and highlighted class and

gender issues, as analysed in the previous sections. Again this analysis will remain to some extent speculative, until underpinned by extensive, original evidence focussing on relevant issues. Nevertheless analysis of secondary source data on secretarial labour (see Chapter III) again supports this particular moment of analysis. Certainly, the method of articulation assists, at the very least, development of discussion on those actions and alliances which will be necessary to bring about change to the current imbalances of power inherent in contemporary secretarial labour processes. This analysis explores intended and unintended outcomes of actions of resistance, acquiescence or accommodation of social inequalities by various possible combinations of secretarial students and various possible combinations of office workers.

Basically analysis of the ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation examines the distribution of different social and cultural meanings, in this case, within secretarial education. These point to possible combinations of classed groups of secretaries, and also to some of the issues, relating specifically to secretarial education, to be addressed if current imbalances of power amongst secretarial waged labourers are to be amended. However, to date there have been few signs of concerted action by secretaries to amend their relative share of class and/or gender power. For instance, unionization of secretaries remains weak. Indeed analysis of the ideological effects of articulation suggests that secretaries, as a 'whole', do not share sufficiently similar beliefs and understandings of social inequalities to unite, in spite of the obvious gender specificity of the occupation and the gender subordination which they all experience in varying forms.

1. WOMEN'S ALLEGIANCES AND ALLIANCES EXPLAINED BY EXISTING CLASS AND GENDER METHODS

Various methods have been used to analyse 'women's work and education' (above Chapter I). However, the general tendency to adopt a uni-focal

or dualist model, centring on, or prioritizing, either class or gender relations, reciprocally conceals or highlights either one of these categories of relations. In other words, these particular methods themselves produce an ideological effect inasmuch as they mask or illuminate class or gender issues.

The method of articulation, developed in this study, engages with the ideological effects of many existing methods of class and gender analysis. Basically it problematizes the interest group formations identified through existing models of analysis. For example, this study of secretarial work and education has highlighted the complexities of social relations. These complexities incorporate a confusion of continuities and discontinuities, ambiguity and certainty, between and within class and gender relations. They suggest, in turn, complex allegiances and alliances stemming from the simultaneous application of various systems of social differentiation in different sets of institutions. In short, this method of articulation indicates that alternative methods, which analyse out, or allocate priority to, one particular category of relations, tend to distort, misrecognise or not recognise, important issues which constitute the consciousness of classed and gendered groups as they play out life, for example, at work or school.

Uni-focal class analyses produce an ideological effect of either failing to discriminate between men and women's experiences of capitalist class relations (eg Burawoy 1979), or categorising all women as proletarians (eg Braverman 1974). The relations of production are distorted in these analyses because their methods conceal, in general, social differences between men and women as well as social differences between women (above Chapter I). As a result they automatically imply a collective identity for all women.

There is a circularity in class centred analysts' particular predicament of explaining women's alliances and allegiances. For example, when acknowledging the gender division of labour, they refer to broad divisions between men and women. On the other hand, their class models

refer to divisions based primarily on economic ownership/non ownership of, plus status, power and authority associated with, the means of production. Yet, if women are universally subordinate to men in patriarchy (Delphy 1977), and patriarchy is expressed in the organisation of work, then all women must constitute an economic class. It is automatically assumed that, given their gender subordination, women cannot be the agents or owners of the means of production. Consequently they infer particular differentiated collective identities, which, when put alongside each other, seem incompatible. That is, their analyses suggest that dominant class interests are only shared by men, while, in contrast, proletarian interests are shared by all women and some men. In the realities of daily life, however, it is clear that some women at least, for example women company directors, have class interests in common with dominant class men. Differences between women's class interests are particularly important because they may splinter that collective identity implicit in the tight gender segregation of sectors of production.

In contrast to class focussed methods, radical feminists, for instance, focus on social differentiation between men and women (Firestone 1972, Millett 1977). However, the ideological effect of this perspective, in unravelling the origins of women's subordination to men, while obscuring the system of class differentiation, suggests, again, an unproblematic collective identity for all women. Recognition of instances of women's superordination to some men and other women automatically points to flaws in uni-focal gender or class analysts' definitions of a totality of shared interests between all women. The problem for, for example radical feminist methods, is that alternative methods, like that of articulation, which highlight social differences between women, could mask patriarchal relations and give rise to conscious denial of systematic inequalities between men and women. This problem is associated with that consciousness of issues and alliances which methods themselves help to raise.

Critical examination of Marxist feminists' methods highlights the problems of collective identities associated with the ideological

effects of uni-focal methods. Marxist feminists' (eg Hartmann 1979, Barrett 1984) acknowledged problems in developing methods which illuminate links between class and gender relations arise largely from failing to penetrate the ideological effect of many existing theories (eg Millett 1977, Barron and Norris 1976, Bruegal 1982). In effect Marxist feminists neglect to problematize the collective identity of all women supported by uni-focal class and gender methods. They cannot then explore different class allegiances which may nevertheless be generated within gender specific areas of capitalist production. As indicated in this study, women at work are also constituted in gender relations differently from each other and they may, therefore, have different gender, as well as class, identities.

The ideological effects of Marxist feminists' methods, masking different forms of class and of patriarchal subordination within production, make it difficult for them to explain patriarchy in terms of the relations of production. Instead many Marxist feminists are compelled to look for explanations of patriarchy at work outside this set of social institutions. They tend to rely on the determining influence of patriarchal relations in the family to explain that women are universally subordinate to men within production (Barron and Norris 1976, Bruegel 1982). In so doing, they contradict their own prior assumptions as to the centrality of economic relations, associated with the capitalist mode of production, for understanding patriarchy. In effect, their analyses (in contrast to their conceptual frameworks) tend to imply that the most important power issue concerns patriarchy at home, rather than patriarchy and/or class at work.

In both radical feminist and also Marxist feminist perspectives, women are understood to be doubly subordinated, that is in both class and gender terms, in all sets of social institutions. This suggests that women's consciousness is largely unproblematic inasmuch as women cannot but fail to have some understanding and awareness of their subordination. In addition, it suggests that there cannot be any contradictions, anomalies or tensions between and within women's class consciousness and gender consciousness. The only explanation remaining,

then, for, for example secretaries' lack of organized action, itself supports global gender ideologies. That is, in the face of this apparent universal, uniform and double subordination, these women are simply complacent, fatalistic, or, in apathy, unwilling to undertake training for skilled work, being content to retain their main identities as that of wife and mother, thus confirming their class and gender subordination.

To some extent, Walby's (1986 and 1990) model of class and gender articulation problematizes the explicit and clearly visible double subordination of women supported by many existing analyses of class and gender relations. For example, Walby demonstrates that advances in overcoming some of the substantive effects of women's subordination to men have been realized within specific (in her terms) 'structures' of patriarchy. For instance, she cites improvements during this century in women's access to paid employment (1990:50). At the same time, she points out that there has been only a slight qualitative change in the position of women within employment (1990:59). In other words, implicit in her analysis is a notion of the complexity of the gender and class issues which women need to address in order to advance beyond the inequalities which they currently experience. However, Walby's (1986 and 1990) analysis tends to omit detailed scrutiny of the possible combinations of women, men, or men and women, in whose interests it would be to take up these issues.

In essence, Walby's analysis (1990) implies a continuation of the tradition of assuming the viability of all women combining into a unified group. This is in spite of the fact that she cites class differences in women's experiences of patriarchal subordination. For example, she states that the higher the social class of a woman the less likely she is to marry, that is to "enter a dependent relationship on a man" (1990:84). Basically, Walby's model of class and gender articulation masks the sharp class differences, and connected gender differences, between women which her data describe. From this standpoint, she is unable to problematize fully the collective identity

of women assumed in various alternative models of class and/or gender analysis.

A further part of the mainly unproblematic nature of women's consciousness, emerging from both radical feminist, Marxist feminist, and also class centred methods, concerns their concentration on coherencies within and between class and gender relations. In so doing, they assume the largely undifferentiated consciousness of all women. They concurrently conceal those variations, in understandings and awarenesses of class and of gender inequalities, between women, which are constituted, in part, in anomalies, ambiguities between and within these forms of social differentiation. That is, they automatically assume that challenges and confrontations, by women, will act on class and gender structural forces to all women's advantage. This assumption is, in some measure, problematized by Walby (1990), by virtue of those complexities of class and of gender relations addressed in her approach on articulation. While not including the fuller range of anomalies, tensions, contradictions and coherencies incorporated into the present method of articulation (above Chapter II) Walby's analysis of data on women's access to, and conditions in, paid employment, cited above, illustrate such complexities of the outcome of women's actions. For example, Walby (1990) observes that struggles by women helped to bring about changes in the structures of class and gender relations, which in some ways worked to their advantage and in other ways reinforced their disadvantages.

This analysis of the reproduction of secretarial labour power suggests that Walby's model of articulation fails to identify some of the complexities incorporated into the outcomes of women's concerted actions. In the main this is because Walby neglects to differentiate between the outcomes of women's actions on different classes of women. Yet, in the present study, it has been indicated that, for example, in consciously opposing reinforcement of secretarial students' subordination to men, Hometown teachers contribute towards confirming their students' class disadvantages in production in comparison with Sloanes students (see Chapter V). In other words, this substantive

instance of class and gender relations, and their interconnections, indicates that there may be ambiguities, anomalies, contradictions, between informed action and its consequences. They render the issues and interest group formations, identified through existing class and gender methods, incoherent and indeed very problematic.

When global explanations of patriarchy are adopted in models which explore connections between class and gender relations, they produce an ideological effect of underlining the autonomy of patriarchy and of class relations in respect of each other. This emphasis overshadows exploration of challenges, resistances, or accommodations of patriarchal subordination as possibly influencing reproduction, reconfiguration or redirection, not only of that set of relations, but also of class relations. In contrast, class and gender articulation, in both the model developed by Walby (1986 and 1990) and that developed in this study, suggests that challenges to, say, gender constraints imposed on women at work can act not only on the structure of patriarchy, but also on the structure of capitalist class relations. This may or may not advantage the women who are mounting this gender challenge. For example Downing's (1981) (see above Chapter III) analysis centres on the common experiences of all secretaries - that they all experience some form of patriarchal subordination to men. With this global gender emphasis she automatically highlights the structural constraints imposed on secretaries through patriarchy and pulls a veil over secretaries' conscious actions of resistance to and accommodation of their restrictions and opportunities for action. She concurrently omits from analysis the substantial class differences between secretaries' relations in production as a possible product of both conscious and unconscious actions in respect of their patriarchal subordination. In turn, she then conceals, in her analysis, the contrasts between the gender issues impinging on women engaged in this female sector of office work.

Critical discussion of Downing's work sheds light on particular political implications contained in the ideological effects produced by her (and others') method. That is, her analysis indicates an

unproblematic potential combination of all secretaries. Yet, being constituted in both class relations and gender relations differently from each other, some women have an interest in, for example, maintaining the systems of class and gender differentiation. For instance, some women gain advantages over other women and some men in association with, for example, the system of patriarchy. If, for instance, high level secretaries were to amend their form of gender subordination, by for example refusing to play out an 'office wife' role of carrying out domestic service tasks, such as lunching with the boss's clients and making him coffee, they might be in danger of losing some of the class privileges associated with conscious accommodation, rather than confrontation, of this patriarchal subordination. On the other hand, pool typists' apparent challenges to their class restrictions by, for instance, chatting when the supervisor is not present (above Chapter III), also represent a reinforcement rather than serious contestation of these relations. That is, this action confirms their inferior class status and power in comparison with top level secretaries. If they were not to engage in this subverting activity, which is in reality covertly condoned and allowed as a control mechanism by management (above Chapter III:187-188), they may be more likely to mount a serious challenge to their class subordination, in that there would remain no area of their working life from which they could draw personal meaning and satisfaction.

Basically complexities of social organisation and forms of power are largely removed from uni-focal and dualist models of production by virtue of their own associated ideological effects. However, some of these complexities are addressed in education theories (see Chapter I). For instance, many education analysts stress the tensions, ambiguities and contradictions, within a specific category of relations, as expressed in different sets of social institutions (eg Giroux 1983, Willis 1977). However, by retaining the tradition of focussing on, or prioritizing, one set of relations, they limit the complexities for exploration. In so doing, they claim that the contradictions and ambiguities, which they highlight, represent the issues which shape awareness of a necessity to challenge social inequalities (Giroux 1983).

They also claim that consciousness, constituted in such contradictions, unproblematically constitutes the issues to be addressed in order to bring about real practical changes to the patterned unequal distribution of class and/or gender power. That is, they assume that redirection and reconfiguration, as the outcome of resistances to class and/or gender relations, is automatically in the interests of all subordinate groups inasmuch as it will remove some of the limitations currently imposed on their actions. In contrast, and along with Sharp and Green (1975) (above Chapter I:102), this analysis of the reproduction of secretarial labour power indicates that immediately contextualised resistance may support broader patterns of social control.

As indicated earlier, methods of articulation engage with some of the ideological effects of many existing frameworks which seek to explain 'women's education and work'. In particular, they highlight the complexities of both consciousness and also of the outcome of actions informed by these consciousnesses. In so doing, the specific method of articulation developed earlier (see above Chapter II), particularly problematizes, in the case of this study, the collective identity of all women secretaries, which is implicit in existing class and/or gender methods. Emphasis on women's differential constitution in both class and gender relations means that this analysis explores women secretaries' interests as being inextricably and necessarily concerned with class relations and contingently concerned with gender relations.

Analysis will now turn to the complex differences and similarities in women secretaries' understanding, views and beliefs about class and gender inequalities. To do this, analysis explores the ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation, rather than a method of articulation. The different forms that power takes in the ideological dimension of articulation are explored. In the first instance, analysis focusses on the conscious understandings of class and of gender inequalities generated during secretarial education, which contribute towards accommodation of, or resistance to, the constraints on their actions in secretarial education and production. Analysis explores the outcome of these actions in terms of the reproduction,

reconstitution, reconfiguration or redirection of class and/or gender relations. Discussion is then developed at a different level of analysis. This latter discussion explores the shaping of secretaries' understanding of the class and gender inequalities inscribed in their relations of production by those views and beliefs fostered during their vocational preparation for this area of work. This aspect of analysis is underpinned by those allegiances, identities, actions of secretaries which are contained in the analysis, in Chapter III above, of secretarial production. This analysis is of crucial importance since it projects very different issues and interest group formations from those identified through uni-focal and dualist analyses of secretarial relations of production.

## 2. IDEOLOGICAL EFFECTS PRODUCED BY CLASS AND GENDER ARTICULATION

Earlier analysis, in this study, highlighted the complexities of the structure of class relations and of the structure of gender relations. Analysis now indicates that embedded in these complex structures are ideological effects. For example, at particular moments of their realization, gender relations can conceal or highlight class relations, and class relations can conceal or highlight gender relations. Gender relations, at one level of class relations, can conceal or highlight gender relations at another level of class relations. Class relations within one gender category can conceal or highlight class relations within another gender category. Tracing the outcome of actions, informed by the patterned obscuring and highlighting of class and gender inequalities, indicates the variety of forms that power takes in the ideological dimension of articulation.

In particular, the analysis to follow attempts to penetrate and critique the largely unchallenged reproduction in education of the gendered, three class model of secretarial production. To do this, analysis explores the patterning of specific moments of the ideological effects of class and gender articulation, as realized within secretarial education, within secretarial production, as well as in the mechanisms

which link these institutions. This analysis indicates that structural power and cultural hegemony are constituted in the articulation of class and gender relations as realized in the daily realities and in the system of secretarial education, as well as in its links with secretarial production.

The first section concentrates on the pattern of concealment and highlighting of class and gender inequalities expressed within secretarial education. In other words, the consciousness of secretarial students and teachers is profiled in this section. The second section concentrates analysis on the links between secretarial education and production. Discussion is developed on the understanding of their class and gender constraints and opportunities for action acquired by different categories of secretaries at work, partly as a consequence of their experiences of these relations within secretarial education.

The third section develops the analysis by combining the implications of the first two sections. It focusses on the possible allegiances and alliances between secretarial students, as well as between and within male and female categories of office labour. Analysis explores the outcomes of actions, as consciously intended or extra-consciously unintended, by any of these possible group formations. Basically, this examines whether there are likely to be improvements in a group's relative share of power as a consequence of challenges or accommodations based on their common views and beliefs about class and gender inequalities.

## 2.1 SECRETARIAL TEACHERS AND STUDENTS' CONSCIOUSNESS

Secretarial students and teachers' conscious awarenesses of class and gender inequalities are explored in this section. These contribute towards resistance, accommodation or acceptance of their experiences of social inequalities. Analysis centres on the pattern of contrasts and continuities of consciousness, constituted in the many different class and/or gender messages of secretarial education. It highlights the different cultural and social meanings about this vocational education and about secretarial labour which these class and gender messages help to form.

When exploring various elements of Sloanes and Hometown's institutional structures, cultures and processes (above Chapter V) analysis indicated correspondence between the relative class positioning of students in their home, education and production contexts. At the same time, this earlier analysis indicated a rich mixture of continuities, tensions and ambiguities, between and within class and gender relations, as expressed in Hometown and in Sloanes' secretarial education. However, insulated, grouped students were not fully aware of these complexities which each group, in part, helps to shape. For example, total physical separation of Sloanes and Hometown means that neither group has full knowledge of the vocational education which the other undertakes. Hometown students and teachers, for instance, often made enquiries about this study to which they were contributing. In contrast to their immediate desire to express views about state secretarial education, they had very little knowledge of, or for that matter interest in, private secretarial education. It was as if this private education represented a privileged class position from which they wished deliberately to distance themselves. One Hometown teacher, for example, remarked that she had "a personal commitment to state education", she did not agree "with sending children to private schools." When told that the study would include comparisons between these two sectors of secretarial education, they virtually ignored this comment and moved conversations to other issues. In contrast, the public availability of information on state education (above Chapter IV), together with personal experience of the private

sector, highlight to Sloanes students differences in their vocational education compared with that of Hometown. For example, Sloanes students and teachers often gave gratuitous descriptions of state secretarial students and teachers. Sloanes teachers commented, for instance, that they had to work harder than state college teachers and had shorter holidays. Nevertheless, they were pleased to be teaching at this elite college "because of the type of people we have got . . . it is the daughters of the rich" (above Chapter V:284), and they do not tell you "to 'f' off" like state college students do (above Chapter V:299).

The case of secretarial education is particularly interesting. It does not have one overall professional body (see above Chapter IV) which defines the ranking of students, courses and certificates, as is the case for, for example, BTEC studies, builders, accountants, nurses, doctors, lawyers. These quasi professional systems of vocational education contrast with the quasi privatised system of secretarial education. In other words, secretarial students and teachers, being located at one specific point within the system of secretarial education, have a limited understanding of the overall system of their area of vocational education, in comparison with the understanding of their structural place by students in many other vocational courses. This suggests that each group of secretarial students' accommodations of, or resistances to, class and/or gender constraints may not act on these dominant structural forces, as realized at the level of the system of secretarial education, in a way which contributes towards reducing the constraints involved. To explore this issue, analysis now centres on the patterning of different and similar class and gender issues contained in various aspects of secretarial education.

Non gendered entry regulations, at both Hometown and Sloanes, suggest that secretarial courses are the exclusive preserve of women on the grounds of individual choice rather than college structures and an overall system which segregate secretarial education on gender lines. Put another way, a public college culture of non genderism conceals, for example at Hometown, an institutional structure of systematic gender divisions. The ideological effect of this is to place responsibility on

women themselves for the female exclusivity of their vocational education, rather than on any institutionalized divisions between men and women. For example, a college structure of gender segregated courses was masked when the Hometown Head of Secretarial Studies stated that she pointed out, to male applicants for BTEC courses, the possibility of taking a secretarial course, but that they automatically rejected this alternative course. And the Vice Principal at Sloanes explained that secretaries should be women because they "complement men, they have different qualities. They are daintier and enjoy looking after men" (above Chapter V:297). He implied that gender differentiation was a matter of 'natural biology' rather than any social construction of gender differences or structural divisions between men and women. On the surface, it appears to be the case, then, that secretarial education is an all-female domain simply because it is only women who choose to study these subjects. This constitutes a legitimation process for gender divisions which, in general, blurs understanding of those gender divisions denoted by the structural gender exclusivity of secretarial education.

This study has indicated that further education plays a part in the reproduction of class divisions in state general education (above Chapters IV and V). However, a structure of class divisions between Hometown secretarial students is incoherent with, and blurred by, the college's cultural ethos of professionalist meritocracy. At Hometown, for example, secretarial students are divided into hierarchically ranked groups. The criterion for allocation is previous educational attainment, which suggests an objective, meritocratic process. At the same time, impenetrable boundaries between the groups conceal from each classed grouping, the reproduction of class divisions. For example, low level Hometown students knew very little about the high level course in their college, let alone any differences between their curriculum and that of the high level course (see Chapter V). One student in Hometown's low level course said, for instance, that she 'didn't know there were any Post 'A' level secretarial students at the college' (above Chapter V:282). In addition, the gender uniformity of secretarial education, of which all secretarial students and teachers,

through their participation, are aware (above Chapter V), obscures expressions of women's differential constitution in gender relations, as well as the class differences which help to shape these intra-gender differences.

In practice, Hometown students do not view challenges to class constraints as their prime concern. For instance, in the realities of routine life in Hometown's secretarial education, both students and teachers prioritize the filtering of gender relations rather than class relations. It will be recalled, for example, that the majority of Hometown teachers and students expressed views representing a filtering of gender relations. For instance, teachers commented that reinforcing women's inferior status in the classroom was 'not in keeping with their views' (above Chapter V:311). Students made statements such as "it is usually that way, that the boss is male, but I am not saying that it should be that way" (above Chapter V:322). Some Hometown teachers and students also commented on issues representing a filtering of class relations. For instance, a teacher said that she aimed to get students 'to question authority' when they go to work (above Chapter V:274 and 310). Students said, for instance, that they thought 'you can get walked over' at work if you always agree to stay late and do everything they want you to (above Chapter V:321). However, more Hometown teachers and students brought up issues challenging gender relations than those bringing up issues challenging class relations. On the whole, they were all more vociferous and well versed on their awareness of gender discrimination than of class discrimination, as expressed both in secretarial education and in secretarial production. That is, they explicitly filter representations of women's subordination to men (above Chapter V). However, renegotiation of class relations is far less concerted or explicit.

Conscious awareness of class and gender issues, in respect of Hometown students and teachers, demonstrates an intermittent visibility and invisibility of these dominant structural forces. In other words, the ideological repercussions of class and gender articulation tend towards a 'shimmering' effect. For example, when the student cited above stated

that, when at work, she would be expected to carry out tasks as and when so ordered by her male boss, she demonstrated an understanding of the constraints which would be imposed on her labour process through dominant male and capitalist structural forces. She felt that, particularly in terms of women's subordination to men, it was necessary to stand up for oneself. In other words, at this cultural moment, gender inequalities were clearly visible and class inequalities distinctly less visible. On the other hand, she implied that she would have sufficient freedom of action to adjust these constraints, on an individual basis, by, for example, refusing to stay late to complete a task or not always arriving at work on time. In reality, of course, it is unlikely that such potential gender resistance, on her part, will act on dominant male forces to allocate her fewer constraints and greater opportunities for action. On the contrary, in the light of analysis of pool typists' labour process (above Chapter III:185-190) such individual resistance is more likely to result in additional constraints, or perhaps dismissal from the post. That is, her anticipated gender resistance is likely to have consequences in respect of the basic class constraints imposed on her labour process. This suggests that analysis of the shimmering effect, as a component of the ideological implications of class and gender articulation, illuminates a pattern of connections between secretaries' consciousness and the intended and unintended outcomes of their informed actions.

As indicated above, secretarial students and teachers have, in varying degrees, some sense of the inequalities inherent in both class and gender relations. The ideological effect produced by the articulation of class relations with gender relations does not, then, render women totally unconscious of, and impervious to, any sense of injustices or advantages which they may experience in terms of both their class and gender subordination or superordination. The ideological effect in question is subtle. It produces, as discussed above, a shimmering effect which contributes to conscious confusions and ambiguities concerning class and gender inequalities. In general, this, in turn, confuses and disrupts individual identities. For example, one Post 'O' level student at Hometown was conscious of some disruption in her

personal identity, particularly as a result of attending this secretarial course. She said, for instance, that she would "dress up like a secretary", but would be "kidding myself that that is me when it isn't". She declared that she did not attend secretarial duties because "I didn't come here to do that sort of thing, I just wanted the skills. I am rejecting the knowledge because I consider it a waste of my time - it's really brain washing . . . I don't see myself in the role they're portraying. They have expectations of people going out to a job and going to work every day for five years until you get promotion, and then just going on again for another five years" (above Chapter V:321-322).

Inscribed in the substantive issues, contributing to the disrupted identity outlined above, is a relatively clear view of women's patriarchal subordination, but a less than clear view of class inequalities. That is, this student appreciated that dress and appearance and 'servicing a male boss' were part of the social construction of secretarial labour which reinforced women's subordination to men. At the same time, she did not appreciate that her economic circumstances would undoubtedly demand that she did 'go to work every day for five years.' For example, she said that she wanted to "go off around the world", but would need to work as a secretary for about a year "to get some cash together". Her parents were unable to help her financially as they had younger children to support and her "Dad doesn't get much as a storekeeper". In fact, she observed that her parents doubted that she would accumulate sufficient finances to realize her ambitions of 'a life of travel, excitement, and roaming around where the fancy took her'.

Instances of the intermittent visibility and invisibility of class and of gender structural forces points to the variety of forms that power takes in the ideological domain of articulation. For instance, one element of this shimmering effect allows and encourages some renegotiation of the lines of power distribution as constituted at the level of the generic principles underlying class and gender relations. For example, Hometown teachers and students' conscious filtering of

classroom knowledge which expresses these women's subordination to men has ramifications for their conscious understanding of class relations. In effect, Hometown teachers and students' renegotiation, and immediate reconfiguration, of gender relations, based on their gender consciousness, obscures the class structure of production and the privileges associated with acquiescence to patriarchal relations, as demonstrated by the class advantages, connected with their patriarchal subordination, enjoyed by Sloanes students.

Basically, Hometown students and teachers are not aware of a process by which their filtering of gender relations confirms these students' class subordination in respect of dominant class secretarial students at Sloanes. Inasmuch as teachers and students engaged predominantly with issues relating to students' immediate course or anticipated ranking in secretarial production, there were few opportunities to develop a fuller understanding of the broad system of secretarial education and production. For example, it was noted (above Chapter V) that all staff at Hometown adopted an unquestioning attitude towards the fact that Post 'A' and Post 'O' level students obtained jobs of different ranking. This was despite conscious acknowledgement that some Post 'A' students, for instance, did not achieve high standards of competence during their secretarial studies. For instance, the Post 'A' level tutor did not critique in any sense that "any girl who leaves this course, even if as far as my standards are concerned, she may not be good, has no problem at all in getting a job. A lot of the lower level students just do shorthand and typing, but these girls have a lot more to offer" (above Chapter V:290). On the other hand, the male teacher of Business Studies deliberately engaged with class and gender issues. However, discussion with students did not proceed to the level of addressing issues relating to the origins and consequences of the fact that "rich women read Cosmopolitan" and that "Guinness advertise in the Mirror and not the Times because they are appealing to the working class" (above Chapter V:315).

Many Hometown teachers implied that they might have wished to 'go further' in discussions with students on issues relating to class

inequalities and to gender inequalities. This potentially more radical approach to secretarial education was hindered, however, by conscious awareness of constraints imposed on their own labour process, particularly through the formal content and qualification aims of the various courses. So, for example, one teacher observed that "it would be nice to do far more in the way of personal development, but if one did, it would be unfair to students as they came here for certain qualifications and should be given the opportunity to achieve that" (above Chapter V:304).

In general, confining conscious filtering and renegotiation to their immediate classed and gendered location limited Hometown students' conscious awareness of the functioning of these relations within secretarial education and production. This constitutes a further example of the shimmering effect produced as part of the ideological consequences of class and gender articulation. In short, Hometown students and teachers' explicit challenges of their gender constraints demonstrate, in Willis' (1977) terms, 'partial penetration' of class and of gender relations. They equally demonstrate, in Sharp and Green's (1975) (above Chapter I) terms, how the broader context of teachers' practice "tend to lead to consequences which belie both their moral commitments and the causes they appear to have adopted and profess" (1975:vii).

Apparently paradoxically, and in a fashion which must be difficult to unravel for Hometown students and teachers, their active signs of class and of gender confrontation conceal, from them, the institutionalization of class and gender divisions at the level of the system of secretarial education. For example, a group of low level Hometown students said they would like to get top level secretarial jobs but they were "not that kind of person" or needed "to get experience" or were "scared of the responsibility". In other words, systematic class divisions were obscured by this personalization of the factors which indicated that they were destined for low level secretarial posts. On the other hand, they did not understand that some of the personal characteristics they mentioned were those emphasized when they challenged and resisted the

particular class and gender constraints imposed on their secretarial education process. This element of obscurity is important. It indicates that challenges which may result in a reconfiguration of, say, gender relations, can be part of the ideological reproduction process of class relations. Nonetheless, in line with the shimmering effect produced by articulation, differences within this female sector of vocational education are not totally invisible to staff and students. For example, one group of Hometown students contended that they had been placed in the lowest stream of secretarial courses because they were viewed as 'the divvies' (above Chapter V:316). Such conscious awareness of differentiation within this 'women's education' is also important. In itself, it constitutes another instance of the concurrent filtering and obscuring of the universal subordination of women to men which is implicit in the female exclusivity of secretarial education. In other words, various aspects of secretarial education, which together visibly denote inter-institutional and intra-institutional distinctions, again mystify the reproduction of gender relations. This dissipates that potential power which resides in a solidarity forged by secretarial students to contest their forms of patriarchal subordination.

Earlier analysis (above Chapters IV and V) indicated that, at Hometown, courses and their students are ranked on the grounds of explicit symbols of differences, such as qualifications and curricula content. As argued above, the resultant hierarchical structure of secretarial education masks the systematic subordination of women to men. In addition Hometown secretarial students had no formal, and extremely limited informal, contact with male and female BTEC students. This was in spite of the fact that both categories of students studied some identical subjects, such as typing (above Chapters IV and V). The hierarchy of secretarial courses is separate from any male hierarchy of education, but it is difficult for students to see whether these gendered hierarchies are simply different from each other or unequal. Opportunities for social mobility apparently exist within both sets of gendered hierarchies, which simultaneously points to class differences between women, as well as between men, but mystifies gendered class relations. For example, low level Hometown secretarial students

believed that, with experience, they would be able to obtain higher level secretarial jobs. High level Hometown students, in contrast, believed that their anticipated personal assistant location would be advantageous in that it would be a 'back-door' way into management (above Chapter V:324). In this particular respect, secretarial students are encouraged to accept rather than to challenge the gender segregation of their vocational specialism. This confuses that understanding of the gender specificity of their form of education registered in the conscious filtering of gender specific knowledge by Hometown teachers and students. This points to complex anomalies and ambiguities within any individual's conscious understanding of gender relations.

In spite of the hierarchical structure of secretarial education, upward social class mobility is illusory rather than real. For instance, in Hometown's college structure progression to a higher level course is not possible as the college retains students in their original groupings regardless of proven technical competence (above Chapter V:282). In addition, personal wealth, closely associated with social class heritage, denies access to Sloanes for subordinate class women. In effect, the hierarchical structure of secretarial education is, in part, constituted in practices which close off apparent avenues of social mobility. However, these practices were not visible to Hometown students. For example, since Hometown low level students were not aware of higher level secretarial courses in their college, they were not conscious of being denied access to the higher level secretarial qualifications obtainable in the Post 'A' level course (above Chapter V). Even where barriers to mobility are visible, secretarial students retain a stake in sustaining this gendered hierarchy. That is, the gendered hierarchy itself signals a dismantling of the universality of women's subordination inscribed in patriarchal relations. For instance, a Post 'A' level Hometown student viewed her future job in terms of 'being a boss' and 'having a junior secretary working for her, under her supervision' (above Chapter V:325). In addition, the gender specificity of secretarial education fosters a belief that competition for entry to higher level courses and office jobs is decreased, in comparison with situations where both men and women compete for these places. For

instance, some Hometown Post 'A' level students felt that they had an advantage over men inasmuch as secretarial studies constituted a relatively easy route to management posts (above Chapter V:324).

In general, then, a hierarchical structure within a female sector of education masks the systematic subordination of women to men. On the other hand, in terms of the formal classroom, Hometown male and female business studies students had no contact with female secretarial students. However, the low level secretarial students in particular reported that they chatted to BTEC male students in the corridors of the college and at student union social events. These women were aware that male students were enrolled in the Business Department of the college, and they were equally aware that the institutional structure ruled out any classroom contact between them. In other words, the strict insulation of the formal classroom aspects of secretarial education from any male hierarchy of education reproduces visibility of global gender divisions. Again this suggests conscious contradictions and ambiguities within the views and beliefs that secretarial students hold about gender relations. When one Post 'A' level student, for example, expressed the belief that her PA job would facilitate her gaining a managerial post, she concurrently said that many bosses hindered such progression for their PA because they found her too "valuable in that position" (above Chapter V:324). Put another way, this student was conscious of ambiguities and tensions within and between her understandings of class and gender relations. She was confident that she would get a top level secretarial job by which she would ultimately obtain a management position. Her later hesitancy about this potential progression revealed a level of conscious anomalies between her class and gender understandings. That is, her anticipated class progression was rendered less certain by ambiguities entailed in being a female. She said that she had been told that "the boss doesn't necessarily see you as promotion material really. I'm sure this is the case . . . it could be to do with being female" (above Chapter V:324).

In comparison with Hometown, Sloanes teachers and students are at the apex of the social hierarchy of secretarial education. To perpetuate

their location at the very top of this gendered hierarchy, there is no ranking of courses or students. In contrast to Hometown, there is no institutional hierarchy of courses (above Chapter V). The visible disadvantages for Sloanes women are in their relations with men of the same class. The inequalities of both class and patriarchy, at their own class level, are, in general, relatively clearly visible to Sloanes students. They are comparatively privileged when their overall share of power, judged in terms of the gender and class constraints imposed on their actions in their anticipatory labour processes, is set against that of Hometown students. Their perquisites of power are legitimated by an inherited cultural capital and unchallenged patriarchal subordination, within their class location, which Hometown students explicitly reject at their own level.

Tightly controlled by teachers, who are themselves tightly controlled, Sloanes students are exposed to daily procedures which illuminate their understanding of their superordinate location in respect of other secretarial students. Alternatives to the clearly specified, uniform, class and gender messages of Sloanes vocational education are deliberately omitted from the formal and 'hidden' curriculum. For instance, with regard to the ethos of tight discipline at Sloanes, one teacher remarked that she tried "to instil in students that it is not only for the course they are doing, but they will need this sense of responsibility when they go out to work . . . They are going to be part of a team when they go out to work and will be supervising junior staff . . . I think it is family background, the way someone has been brought up knowing how to respect someone in authority" (above Chapter V:301). This indicates that the visible class contradictions - teachers, the students' class subordinates, controlling students' classroom and extra classroom activities - are legitimated, and rendered unproblematic and temporary, by non-negotiable college rules, designed in part by students' parents.

Developing a conscious awareness in students of their comparative class and gender advantages, is an integral facet of secretarial education at Sloanes. Even outside the classroom, a conscious interest in retention

of superordinate power by the dominant classes is fostered. For example, uncritical support of, and loyalty to, the Royal family was explicit in commentaries on a slide show at an evening supper party at Sloanes (above Chapter V:296). In the case of the dominant class, then, consciousness is not left to chance. In this respect the various beliefs, about class and gender inequalities, generated at Sloanes are inevitably more coherent than those generated at Hometown. This coherence reinforces the self confidence of Sloanes students. For instance, students' views on their future secretarial jobs cohered with the class and gender values underpinning Sloanes college. Students predicted that they would 'hand down' the more boring routine secretarial tasks to lower level secretaries. They would acquire these top level secretarial posts because they 'looked the part' (above Chapter V:303).

There were few conscious conflicts between and within Sloanes students' class and gender understandings. For example, Sloanes students believed that one of the reasons why their parents sent them to this elite college was so that they met 'the right kind of friends'. This was important to all Sloanes students. It can be understood in respect of the fact that the majority of these students had very few formal qualifications. Had they attended Hometown they would have been placed in the lowest streams of secretarial education, alongside proletarian women. On the other hand, for the few Postgraduates at Sloanes, there is a conscious class conflict in being placed in classrooms together with those with very limited academic qualifications. However, when one postgraduate found herself in the same classroom as a student with few formal qualifications, she resolved the potential class conflict, saying that she did not mind because "on the whole they're very nice" (above Chapter V:306).

In contrast to Sloanes, Hometown's form of secretarial education encouraged personal insecurity and hesitation. This is constituted in incoherencies and conscious confusion within students' various beliefs relating to both class and gender issues. Some Post 'A' level Hometown students, for example, wanted, as indicated earlier, to use top level

secretarial experience as an entrée into management. Yet they found the course so difficult that they were hesitant about having the ability to carry out even higher level secretarial work, let alone management tasks. They said, for example, that their teachers predicted that they would get top level secretarial jobs, but they were 'not sure they were capable of that' or ready to 'take on all the responsibilities involved'. At the same time, they did not want to remain secretaries on the grounds of the routine nature of the work and the way secretaries were treated by male bosses (above Chapter V:325). They lacked the clear and unambiguous certainty about their future work which reinforced Sloanes students' unmistakable self confidence.

Contrasting sharply with Sloanes, the inequalities of class and patriarchy are, in general, obscured and confused by the daily procedures and practices entailed in Hometown's secretarial education. However, rather than totally masking these social inequalities, this obscurity has a shimmering effect of visibility at one cultural moment and invisibility at another. For instance, at Hometown comparatively loose control of students by their teachers permits open discussion of some perceived inequalities and the enactment of some measure of challenge. For example, one low level Hometown group vociferously challenged their teacher's authority. It will be recalled that these students spent a large proportion of one teaching period outlining the injustices involved in entering only some students for a forthcoming examination (above Chapter V:312). In a similar vein, Hometown Post 'A' level students took the initiative when, for instance, advising teachers not to repeat knowledge missed by absentees (above Chapter V:319). However, such actions of filtering and confrontation within the state college, confirm and reproduce these students' subordination to Sloanes women and render illusory the ladder of apparent promotional prospects. Hometown students and teachers are not aware that their conscious filtering of aspects of their class and gender subordination are part of the confirmation process of class differences between Sloanes and Hometown students.

In contrast to Hometown students, Sloanes students from a position of relative advantage, accommodate and acquiesce, to a great extent, in the inequalities of class and gender relations. That is, they do 'wear those high heels' when attending the Vice Principal's party. And they do accept the tight control exerted over them by their teachers because their 'parents have paid so much for them to attend Sloanes', because 'the name of the college ensures a good job', and because this affords the opportunity to make 'nice friends' (above Chapter V). Such differences, between the characteristics of Sloanes and Hometown students' consciousness and actions, are an important aspect of the ideological effects of the articulation of class and gender relations. In the case of secretarial education, they contribute to stabilising the reproduction of both forms of inequitable relations, in the interests of, and relatively recognizable to, dominant class men and women.

Analysis of ideological effects of class and gender articulation, as expressed in secretarial education, indicates, then, that both the incoherencies and coherencies, contained in the variety of expressions of class and gender relations within secretarial education, assist relatively unproblematic reproduction of class and gender relations. The shimmering effect, constituted in the intermittent visibility and invisibility of expressions of these systems of social differentiation, helps to accommodate de-stabilizing processes, such as the overt confrontation of women's patriarchal subordination at the level of the daily routines of Hometown students and teachers. In effect, it stabilizes social divisions inasmuch as it reinforces their underlying principles of superordination and subordination.

Analysis in this section has indicated that social and cultural complexities are a crucial part of the potency of the ideological effects of class and gender articulation. That is, they assist reproduction of both systems of social differentiation by dissipating the potential for a combined offensive by all secretarial students and by classed categories of male and female students. Complexities are of increasing significance to understanding the ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation when secretarial workers'

consciousness, as constituted in the connections between secretarial education and secretarial production, are explored in the following section.

## 2.2 SECRETARIAL WORKERS' CONSCIOUSNESS

Discussion is developed, in this section, on the consciousness of secretaries at work. For example, Pringle demonstrates that secretaries hold views challenging gender discrimination at work, but that these beliefs are often confused:

"Many (secretaries) felt strongly about equal pay . . . but thought they already had it! When they felt they were badly paid it was by comparison with what other women, or secretaries in other places, were getting, not with what men earned either in trades or in comparable occupations in clerical and administrative areas. By far the largest group held that feminism was 'all right' as long as it was pursued in a soft and gentle, cooperative, gradualist and feminine fashion" (1988:251).

Complementing Pringle's analysis, this section explores the similarities and differences between ranked secretaries' conscious awareness, understanding and interpretations of class and gender inequalities, as expressed in their labour processes. In particular, this analysis examines the pattern of revealed and concealed class and gender inequalities manifested in secretarial vocational education (analysed in section 2.1) as shaping those actions and reactions, by secretaries, which came to light in earlier analysis of secretarial labour processes (above Chapter III:section 2). To do this, the ideological effects of articulation, as constituted in connections between education and production, for each of the three classes of secretarial labour (above Figure 7, Chapter IV:253) are scrutinized in turn.

At Hometown, some elements of both the high level and the low level secretarial course are incoherent with parallel elements of secretarial labour processes (above Chapter V). At first sight, these incoherencies suggest that there could be substantial contradictions between secretaries' conscious understanding of class and of gender relations when they move out of education and into work. However, analysis will

indicate that, contrary to Giroux's (1983) assumptions, these contradictions do not simply expose and illuminate issues representing class and gender inequalities. They tend, in contrast, and as the following discussion will argue, to contribute towards masking, from secretaries, the class and gender constraints which they nevertheless experience in their labour processes.

At Hometown the formal content of secretarial curricula includes subjects which are not essential for students' ability to perform adequately in their anticipated level of work. For example, low level Hometown students study 'Commerce' and 'Structure of Business'. When recalling Downing's (1981) (above Chapter III:section 2) descriptions of the routine tasks of 'pooled' secretarial labour, this knowledge is of no direct relevance to their work performance. In respect of Hometown's Post 'A' level group, their curriculum includes 'Law', 'Economics', 'Personnel Functions'. These students obtained jobs equivalent to the level of secretarial work scrutinized by Silverstone (1974). Yet, of the 150 different tasks she identified as components of the high level secretary's labour process, extremely few, if any, required knowledge of Law or Economics (above Chapter III:191). It can be judged, then, that these subjects are not prerequisites to carrying out the practical tasks of a private secretary. At the same time these extended curricula, in comparison with concomitant labour processes, provide a breadth of related background information in education in a 'likeness' rather than narrowly vocational sense. This breadth of subjects adds a degree of variety and interest in the educational context which is missing in the production context. These curricula generate a view of vocational education as providing wider opportunities in the labour market, for its students, than suggested by the specific skill specialisms included in any vocational course.

The breadth of Hometown's secretarial curricula indicates that they do not mirror those class relations inscribed in the practical activities involved in students' anticipatory relations of production. For example, Hometown's low level students felt that their course trained them to become secretaries with responsibilities such as scheduling and

administering their boss's itinerary, travel arrangements, meetings. In contrast, these students became copy typists, and at this level few, if any, of these responsibilities are incorporated into the work routine (above Chapter III:section 2). In short, these curricula build up expectations and beliefs about secretarial work which, in the realities of secretarial production, are not fulfilled. This suggests that Hometown secretarial education may heighten conscious awareness of, and sharpen discontent with, class constraints, in their students, when they enter secretarial production. Indeed, such discontent with the class constraints on her anticipatory labour process were, for example, projected by one Hometown student who had listened to a tape recorded simulation of the boss/secretary relations at work. She said, for instance, that this had "put her off doing secretarial work" because "you are just doing the boss's dirty work". She observed that "with a boss you have to take down the dictation. Taking letters, it seems to be the attitude they take - just go and do this and that, type a letter to my son and when you have finished go on to do something else" (above Chapter V:325).

Secretaries' actions, when at work, do indicate a measure of discontent with those restrictions which are an expression of class relations. For example, pool typists have a sense of solidarity with each other which "they cemented by covering for lateness, and odd absences, and sharing out work" (Downing 1981 147-8). They manoeuvred time away from work tasks to read women's magazines and chat about their families and boyfriends (above Chapter III:188). Such illustrations of pool typists' reactions to their experiences of class restrictions indicate how these women make their tightly controlled, routine, monotonous labour process immediately tolerable. However, any serious challenge to their class restrictions is, by and large, missing from these actions. Higher level secretaries also registered a certain level of discontent with the class aspects of their labour process. For example, they set up quasi professional associations (above Chapter III:179). The journals of these associations often contain articles appealing for more responsibility to be allocated to high level secretaries. However, they invariably suggest that this can be achieved, on an individual basis, by

secretaries simply initiating discussion of the topic with their male boss. Again, therefore, this is scarcely indicative of a concerted challenge of their class relations of production. Further analysis below, of the ideological effects of articulation, as contained in other aspects of the links between secretarial education and production, will shed light on some of the features of secretarial education which contribute towards the lack of concerted confrontation of class relations on the part of secretaries, in spite of a degree of conscious discontent with relevant aspects of their labour process.

With regard to patriarchal relations, some aspects of Hometown's secretarial curricula confront that subordination of women to men realized in the devaluation of 'women's skills'. That is, the difficulties imposed by these complex curricula challenge the social construction of secretarial labour and its low status. Furthermore, these curricula contradict the legitimacy of the gender division of labour. That is, they include knowledge which has a direct bearing on the broad sphere of administration, rather than being confined to 'women's' secretarial knowledge. Post 'A' level Hometown students, for instance, believed that studying subjects such as Law and Economics would assist them to gain management posts, or administrative, rather than purely secretarial jobs. However, those who went into work after the course, acquired gender specific secretarial posts (above Chapter V:291). This suggests, then, that Hometown's secretarial education may also heighten conscious awareness of gender constraints, in their students, when they enter secretarial production. This heightening of awareness of potential gender constraints on her actions, in the role of secretary, was indicated by one Hometown student when she commented that "people are always saying to me 'you don't look like a secretary'. But I don't see why you have to dress in a certain way and look like that. I don't think that's right - if, I can do the work. The teachers here don't make any comments at all about what I look like" (above Chapter V:327).

Low level Hometown students became pool typists (above Chapter V:section 2.7). Serious discontent with the form of gender subordination

experienced by this category of secretary is displaced by the ritual humour inscribed in the social interactions between them and the men with whom they come into daily contact. For example, Downing reported that pool typists "made comments about the younger male clerks questioning the strength of their virility and sexual ability" (1981:147-8). Together with sharp gender segregation within business education (above Chapters IV and V), this displacement of any discontent fostered by their patriarchal subordination in production, also contributes towards dissipating any sense of class solidarity between low level men and women office workers. For example, pool typists use the spaces they create away from formal work to chat about home, boyfriends, children and husbands and to read magazines such as Woman's Own (above Chapter III). It was noted, in Chapter III, that although these domestic issues are undoubtedly rooted in patriarchal relations, these actions did not contest the gender division of labour in their office. On the contrary, they reinforced their separation from their male proletarian peers, given the many stereotypical feminine topics of conversation.

In contrast to the solidarity of pool typists which underpinned, for instance, their 'verbal emasculation' (Downing 1981) of male clerks, high level secretaries' primary allegiance was to their boss (above Chapter III:193-196). Hometown Post 'A' level students, who were to become the incumbents of such posts, were conscious of some aspects of patriarchy involved in this privatized and personalized boss/secretary relationship (see section 2.1). However, when at work, these secretaries become more sharply conscious that their class status is very closely associated with their patriarchal subordination. For instance, the high level secretary, in production, is encouraged to support her male boss and accommodate her own form of patriarchal subordination because "the status of the person for whom the secretary works affects her own status, nature of her work, salary" (above Chapter III:194).

There are signs, then, that Hometown students, when at work, will experience a measure of discontent with the class and the gender

limitations imposed on their labour processes. That is, secretarial education at Hometown does provide secretaries with knowledge and certificates to legitimate their allocation to more challenging, or at least different, kinds of jobs from those acquired. However, analysis of contemporary secretarial labour processes indicates that this discontent is unlikely to turn into concerted action. That is, certain features of secretarial relations of production, discussed above, impede the conversion of actions of discontent to actions of confrontation. In addition, various features of secretarial education contribute towards quelling secretaries' potential concerted confrontation of their class and/or gender constraints. For example, ex-Hometown secretaries are aware that it is not a matter of vocational education having denied them access to relevant knowledge for acquiring more responsible and varied work (see section 2.1). In practice, the overall ideological effect of this is that secretaries are encouraged to take personal responsibility for the subordination inscribed in their relations of production. This is illustrated by the fact that "the responsibility involved in any one (private secretary's) job was dependent upon the individual boss's willingness to give scope for independent action. Consequently each job was dependent upon the particular boss and secretary, and not upon its basic constituents" (Silverstone 1974, quoted in above Chapter III:192).

In addition, as noted in the section above, some Hometown low level students said that they knew they would not get top level secretarial work because they 'weren't that kind of person' or 'not old enough'. In other words they were already taking personal, individual responsibility for their anticipated proletarian relations of production. They had a conscious awareness, and realistic expectation, of some aspects of their proletarian production places. However, no Hometown student believed that their education contributed to this anticipatory class subordination. On the contrary, they felt that the course trained them to be higher level secretaries in comparison with their expected ranking. For example, one student from the low level course said that the course "fits you to be a secretary", but she was 'not sure she was ready for that' (above Chapter V:320). Lacking self confidence, these

students' anticipated low level work was comforting to them in that they were confident of being able to carry out routine functions.

A sense of individual responsibility, on the part of secretaries, for the constraints on their labour processes undermines any potential solidarity with other office workers, men or women. This is borne out in the realities of secretarial production. For example, high level secretaries distanced themselves physically and relationally both from pool typist and other secretaries. For instance, Downing (1981) noted of one private secretary that "she held herself aloof from the other secretaries" (above Chapter III:191). While pool typists had a stronger sense of solidarity with other secretaries, this was only in terms of their classed gender peers. Furthermore, this particular form of solidarity produced a class cleavage between them and their male class peers. This supports the notion that Hometown's routine daily processes of both its high and low level secretarial courses obscure the class and patriarchal relations, expressed in its corresponding area of production. It does this by reproducing relevant divisions subtly, in an indirect, rather than corresponding, fashion. This demonstrates another aspect of the shimmering effect of articulation discussed in the previous section. This feature of commonality between Hometown's high and low level secretarial courses is constituted, in part, in different curricula. Both appear to be freeing students from the gender and class restrictions, in production, for which they are ultimately destined. On the other hand, the distinctions between the two groups, in the ways in which this apparent 'freedom' is achieved, are also important. They are a crucial component of the ideological effects of articulation. For example, the distinction between procedural and theoretical knowledge, particularly in the non-skill subjects of Hometown's secretarial curricula, reproduce the class distinctions of execution and decision making between the low and high level groups. On this basis class distinctions between these students, when entering production, are legitimized.

Many secretaries' beliefs about their promotional prospects, from the vantage point of their current secretarial role, indicate a blurring of

the class and gender divisions within the administration sector of production. The Manpower Services Commission (1983), for instance, reports that "secretarial work is also perceived as a stepping stone which can lead to other non-secretarial opportunities and more secretaries had taken up the work for this reason in 1981 (33 per cent) than in 1970 (24 per cent). Nevertheless the promotion prospects of most secretaries were strictly limited and had hardly increased since 1970 despite a changing climate towards careers for women" (quoted in above Chapter III:176). Various aspects of secretarial education contribute towards this obscuring of the gender and class divisions within office work. For example, as indicated in the previous section, secretarial education generates beliefs that the specificity of students' initial classed and gendered places of production are extremely temporary. Post 'A' level students, for instance, anticipated that their first job destination would be 'secretarial'. But they would use this position as an entrée into management. The low level group, on the other hand, appeared to self-select low level secretarial work. But they believed that, when they had gained work experience and 'confidence', they 'would go for better jobs' (above Chapter V:320). On the other hand, employers use relatively covert methods to ensure that students, similar to those from Hometown, do not gain access to the highest level secretarial posts. For example, "they employed the services of a top secretarial agency who were paid a fee large enough to guarantee certain types of women, or they obtained their staff through personal contacts" (above Chapter III:196). These procedures are confirmed by the 'family and college connections' approach of Sloanes college to placing their students in the highest ranks of secretarial labour (above Chapter V:289). Many of the secretaries surveyed by the Manpower Services Commission (1983) (see quotation above) are highly likely to have had similar educational histories to those of Hometown students. These are some of the educational circumstances, then, which contribute to the less than clear understanding, on the part of secretaries at work, as indicated by the Manpower Services Commission (1983), of the operation of institutionalized structures which limit their promotion prospects.

From the vantage point of secretarial education, both high and low level Hometown students indicated that the limitations placed on their promotion prospects, when at work in office production, were obscure to them. For example, they sustained a belief in the meritocracy of capitalist class relations, and the unfettered upward class mobility available in production. This must, in part, explain the lack of concerted challenges by secretaries at work in production. That is, students' belief in the extremely transitory nature of their particularised secretarial relations of production suggests they will not pay serious attention to the class and gender issues which may impinge on their conscious understanding of their 'first destination' secretarial relations of production. Indeed, in the sphere of education, a tacit understanding is fostered that their initial experiences of secretarial work are part of the 'contract' of upward mobility. The RSA, for example, explicitly states that the Personal Assistant Diploma, for which Post 'A' Hometown students enter, leads to posts as assistants to middle managers and eventual management responsibilities in their own right (above Chapter IV:230). In other words, secretaries are encouraged to understand that the restrictions imposed, by capitalist and male dominant forces, in their first jobs, need to be accommodated and accepted as part of this 'mobility contract'. Benet (1972), for instance, observed of secretaries who had ambitions of advancing to managerial status that:

"she (the secretary) does everything around the office she can think of, assuring her boss that she just wants to keep herself informed about what's going on and that she certainly doesn't expect overtime. Her big hope is that she will be noticed . . . He gets in the habit of giving her more to do. She answers some of his letters all by herself, she runs errands, she listens to him when he wants to talk to someone about a new idea. She can always be asked to stay late to finish a big typing job." (1972:112)

McNally (1979) supports the notion that secretaries' promotional prospects are, in part, dependent on their accommodation rather than confrontation of the class and gender restrictions on their actions which they experience in this working role:

"Any weaknesses on his (the boss's) part must be 'understood' and managed. The secretary who expresses dissatisfaction with her employer's time-keeping or manners is in danger of jeopardising her

highly personal relationship with him, if not her future as a Golden Girl Executive." (1979:56-57)

That Hometown students are likely to demonstrate similar accommodation of their class and gender restrictions when at work, is demonstrated when, for example, one Hometown low level student commented that she did not want to become the sort of person depicted by some teachers' illustrations of secretaries. She accommodated these projections of her working life by explaining that "It's only at this stage (of my life) that I'm typing". She said that she had 'greater ambitions' for herself (above Chapter V:321-322).

Hometown students generally view their potential upward class mobility in production as being harnessed to gender relations inasmuch as it is acquired via an initial gender specific secretarial job. These students' gender subordination, in production, is understood as advantageous inasmuch as it ensures their class progression. While connections between class and gender relations, in this respect, are highlighted in education, the full implications of their reciprocal articulation in production are obscured. That is, as discussed above, a belief is generated in education that women secretaries acquire advantages over male office workers through their patriarchal subordination, by ensuring in this way their class mobility. This supports, in part at least, the class cleavage between pool typists and male clerks, the relational distancing of ranked secretaries from each other, as well as the patriarchal alliance between the male boss and private secretary (above Chapter III:section 2). The realities, in production, are, however, that such upward mobility will be fraught with difficulties and, at best, less likely than implied during their education. For example, men retain the vast majority of management posts (above Chapter III:176). In effect, this highlighting of gender relations brings to the conscious attention of Hometown students their subordination to men when they enter secretarial production. One Post 'A' level Hometown student, for instance, remarked that "male managers think women are likely to leave to have a family and so hesitate offering them managerial positions" (above Chapter V:324). However, this is offset, and rendered confused, by interpreting this gender

subordination as an 'apprenticeship' for promotion to management or to higher level secretarial posts. In other words, this constitutes another example of the 'shimmering' aspect of the ideological effects of class and gender articulation. In this instance, the illuminating in education of gender relations connects with the reproduction of class relations in production. In effect this illumination of gender inequalities helps to sustain a consciousness of class mobility, in production, as realistic, rather than illusory.

Hometown's certification process constitutes another aspect of the legitimation of their high and low level secretarial students' respective ranking within production. Again, the ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation, contained in this aspect of connections between secretarial education and production, contributes towards the fragmenting of perspectives on class and gender relations in production. Moreover, this element of legitimation and concealment is, once again, partly constituted in contradictions between expressions of class and gender relations in production and in education. For example, it has already been indicated that the content of the Diplomas which Hometown students acquire (above Chapter IV:section 2.1) contests the legitimacy of the narrower range of tasks involved in parallel labour processes. However, the ranking of these Diplomas renders an apparent fairness to these women's relative class locations in secretarial production. This goes on to legitimate the differentiated gender relations which connect with these differentiated class relations. That is, the variety of credentials available within vocational education generally and secretarial education in particular, facilitates, and renders an impression of meritocracy and fairness to, the provision of tightly bounded, hierarchically ranked and exclusively female, secretarial courses and jobs. In other words, the ideological effects, constituted in this legitimation process, indicate that secretarial students are likely to misrecognize the class and gender constraints expressed in their subsequent secretarial labour processes. Such misrecognitions are contained in the continuing and numerically expanding promotional aspirations of secretaries at work in spite of the severe limitations on the realization of these ambitions (Manpower

Services Commission Survey (1983) quoted above). They are also contained in the accommodations secretaries make of their experiences of class and gender limitations on action in order to enhance their promotional prospects (see McNally (1979) and Benet (1972) quoted above.)

In the state sector mechanisms by which secretarial education ensures the socialization of simultaneously classed and gendered groups of students to fit 'appropriate' places in production are concealed. Basically, the fact that the details of the education experience are not a perfect reflection of the production experience blurs secretarial education's close bonds with production. For example, the control exerted over and by secretarial students in their classroom social relations often contrasts sharply with the features of control they will come to experience as workers. In effect secretaries' education reverses the pattern of control exerted over secretaries in production. Secretarial education thus takes on the appearance of relative autonomy from production. Again, this generally masks, to secretarial workers, education's participation in reproducing the particular class and gender relations expressed in their labour processes. In effect, connections between these sets of institutions take on a surface appearance which denies any systematicism to these workers' class and gender subordination. This contributes to that overall masking of class and gender structures in production discussed earlier.

Low level students at Hometown obtain posts characterised by tight control exercised by supervisors, lack of status, little leeway for the use of discretion or initiative, limited control over their own or others' labour processes, a measure of play and distraction from official workplace duties (above Chapter III:section 2). But in their classroom relations, these students are not, in the main, tightly controlled and are encouraged to question and negotiate with their teachers (above Chapter V:section 3.5). The students are comfortable and confident in the cultural climate created by these classroom relations. The language, style and authority of teachers contributes to the accessibility of knowledge to students. Nonetheless, these students

do prove to be less 'successful' than, for example, Sloanes students in employment terms. In line with Bourdieu's (1977) assertion (see Chapter I), this level of secretarial education failed to equip students with the instruments necessary to apprehend a dominant cultural capital. That is, the cultural climate of these working class students' secretarial education coheres with that of their social class inheritance. On the other hand, it contrasts sharply with the cultural climate for Sloanes students. In other words, complementing Bourdieu's (1977) thesis, the cultural context of secretarial classrooms is differentiated on class lines. This is particularly important in the case of secretarial education since the cultural context of the vocational education for low level Hometown students, in cohering with their classed family backgrounds, denies them access to a cultural capital which is an explicit factor in the conferment of high rank to secretaries in production. For instance, employers look for a 'good cultural background', 'worldly education', 'personality and character' when employing a high level secretary (above Chapter III:197). This implies that they do not value, in this production context, those cultural norms incorporated into the proletarian characteristics of Hometown's low level classroom relations.

A greater coherence, between the relations of the classroom and relations of production, can be identified in the case of Post 'A' level students at Hometown. These students help to create a learning situation where they exhibit self-directed diligence and a single minded regard for official goals. They have learnt to play the educational 'game' which increases their chances of examination success. The attributes which Post 'A' students bring to their classroom relations reflect the styles appropriate to their middle class heritage, or mobility to the 'new middle class' (Wright Mills 1951, Esland and Salaman 1980, Abercrombie and Urry 1983, Goldthorpe 1982). These attitudes have been reinforced by their previous prowess in educational examinations.

Hometown high level secretarial students' conscious rating, as 'successful' state education students, corresponds with the attitudes,

behaviour and knowledge with which they can legitimately claim to take advantage of that 'meritocracy' involved in upward social class mobility. This constitutes, in part, their particular form of 'partial penetration' (Willis 1977) of capitalist class relations. That is, they have some tacit understanding, at least, of acquiring higher status and prestige than low level Hometown students in connection with individualistic subservience to authority and the diligence inscribed in their attitudes towards their work. They have this awareness because education has undoubtedly reinforced these personal qualities by examination rewards.

In the case of Hometown's Post 'A' level students, education reinforces and sharpens those characteristics deemed desirable in workers who are to act on behalf of capital in their 'new middle class' location. That is, these students demonstrate, in education, that they can produce high quality work, respect authority, compete, rather than unite, with their class and gender peers. It will be recalled, for example, that some members of Hometown's Post 'A' level group complained about fellow students' behaviour which interrupted their learning goals. They reinforced the authority of their teachers by stating that the students of whom they complained were 'not being fair to teachers' (above Chapter V:319). There was a strong sense of competition between students within this high level secretarial group.

In comparison with Hometown, Sloanes is visibly and explicitly concerned with ensuring continuities between home, college and work, of students' dominant class culture and privileges. Its structure, formal and informal curricula, and job placement for secretarial students, ensure that they will, with few academic qualifications, by-pass that system of grading for work in production which is based on public educational achievement. In effect the processes and procedures of Sloanes College illustrate clearly Bourdieu's contention that:

"academic qualifications receive very variable values and functions according to the economic and social capital (particularly the capital of relationships inherited from the family) which those who hold these qualifications have at their disposal and according to the markets in which they use them . . . The value of the diploma

outside the specifically academic market, depends on the economic and social values of the person who possesses it . . ." (1977:506)

In contrast to Sloanes, Hometown students are led to believe that ranking in secretarial production is based on a wholly meritocratic system. This belief is, in part, sustained by virtue of Hometown students not being fully cognisant of the procedures used by Sloanes students to gain high level secretarial jobs. That is, as discussed earlier, the privatized 'family connections' strategy used by employers and Sloanes college to 'select' top level secretaries cannot be fully accessible to Hometown students when they are in education or in secretarial production. As such, Hometown students can, at best, have only a partial understanding of all the various facets of the class and gender relations which act, in conjunction with each other, in production, to advantage Sloanes students.

Sloanes students acquire secretarial work skills, but also knowledge associated particularly with elite women. It is only these Sloanes students for whom secretarial education contains expressions of the class and gender cultures of the upper class family. These classed gender relations connect coherently with the tasks performed in Sloanes students' anticipatory relations of production. That is, as in Downing's (1981) descriptions of secretaries (above Chapter III:191 and 195), Sloanes students are destined to become the 'Fiona's' of secretarial work, lunching with clients and organizing social events associated with executive men's business contacts and domestic life. They continue these tasks on behalf of the men they marry (above Chapter V:285), obtaining class advantages over other classes of women and other classes of men, to ensure cohesion within the dominant class. In other words, Sloanes students' educational and family cultural inheritance coincides with that description of 'top level' secretaries provided by Downing (1981) as "expensive clothes and hairdressers, affording winter skiing holidays and out of season suntans, not having to try to be the part, they were the part" (above Chapter III:195). Analysis of secretarial education has indicated that sharpening of this gendered, dominant class, cultural capital within education, is part of the

process which guarantees dominant class women a 'position at the top' (Downing 1981) in the production context.

The cultural activities of secretarial education and secretarial production connect most precisely, in unproblematic and explicit coherence, at the level of the dominant class. This underscores visibly the unity of this class grouping, to reproduce and confirm its own privileges. Sloanes students experience, then, fewer disjunctions, than Hometown students, in terms of their conscious understanding of class and gender inequalities when they take up secretarial work. In view of this, and as suggested in analysis of contemporary secretarial labour (above Chapter III:section 2), there are few, if any, manifestations of concerted discontent with their particularized relations of production, on the part of female aides to top male executives. For instance, Pringle (1988) comments that:

"their long and arduous hours are perceived not as exploitation so much as a sign of their professional status" (1988:203).

This is perhaps not surprising since at this level of secretarial work the boss/secretary relationship is:

"based on personal rapport, involves a degree of intimacy, day-to-day familiarity and shared secrets unusual for any but lovers or close friends, and is capable of generating intense feelings of loyalty, dependency and personal commitment" (Pringle 1988:87).

In other words, Sloanes students are destined to become one of that group of secretaries who tend to accept, as McNally points out, that:

"the greatest achievement is to secure a job in close proximity to a famous, important, glamorous man, (and) it is quite possible that she (the secretary) would never wish to attain anything beyond that goal. For such women, promotion takes on a quite different meaning - it is synonymous with the acquisition of a job as handmaiden to Mr Big. These girls enjoy the kudos which attaches to this role . . . It is the kind of secretary who considers that there is no comparison whatsoever between her functions and those of her boss." (1979:63)

In addition, Fiona (Downing 1981) appeared very content with her secretarial role (above Chapter III) and such secretarial posts are, of course, equivalent to those which Sloanes students will occupy (above Chapter V:section 2.7). In general, then, connections between Sloanes

secretarial education and production are characterised by conscious coherencies. Nevertheless there are elements of this connecting process which point to contradictions between their education process and labour process.

In spite of the deliberate and explicit illumination, at Sloanes, of coherencies between their students' class and gender advantages in education and in production, at the level of lived realities of secretarial work and education there are contradictions. For example, as they gain posts at the apex of the secretarial hierarchy, Sloanes students enjoy certain power and control over lower ranking workers, self-direction in many of their tasks, relative high status and prestige (above Chapter III:section 2). Yet, within this college, classroom relations are tightly controlled. In social class terms, the strict classroom and extra classroom control of Sloanes students reinforces solidarity and uniformity between these students. It also reinforces that solidarity with dominant class men manifested in the privatized and personalized boss/secretary relations (above Chapter III:section 2). For example, this strict control ensures that students participate in social events where the advantages of working in close proximity to a dominant class male are clearly signalled (above Chapter V:296-297). Within patriarchal relations, the procedures at Sloanes create secretaries who have some understanding of the ways in which women are subordinated to male dominance in secretarial work. For instance, Sloanes students expected that they might have to contend with sexual harassment in their secretarial role (above Chapter V:304). They also knew about organizations like Women Against Sexual Harassment (above Chapter V:304). Nevertheless they acquiesce to the specific patriarchal relations expressed in the privatized boss/secretary relationship. They look forward to 'sorting out the right clothes to wear every day' in order 'to look the part'. Should any unacceptable sexual advances be made they are confident of 'dealing with the situation themselves' on an individual basis (above Chapter V:304).

Both the structure and process of Sloanes secretarial education overtly generate an understanding in students of their potential acquisition of

a vicarious cachet and status from their close proximity to men of the dominant classes. Class and gender relations are clearly visible to Sloanes students, both in the secretarial education context and in the production context. These students 'penetrate' (Willis 1977) these relations to a far greater extent than Hometown students. This deliberate exposure and revelation of class and gender inequalities is, however, an intrinsic feature of the ideological effects of articulation. That is, Sloanes women are on the dominant side of these relations in comparison with Hometown students and in comparison with low level male office workers. In order to sustain inequitable social relations, dominance, as well as subordination, needs to be reproduced.

Since Sloanes women have not, on the whole, been high achievers in education, the dominant class cannot claim meritocracy to justify these women's dominant power in production. It is Sloanes students' gender subordination, within their class, which is ensuring and legitimating their class privileges in production. For instance, Sloanes students were extremely confident that they would obtain secretarial jobs in which they would be, for example, lunching with their boss and his clients. It was 'the girls from the tech' who would be doing the routine typing and filing. This division of labour within secretarial work was entirely fair and just, in the view of Sloanes students, since 'the girls from the tech' did not know 'how to look the part' or 'speak properly' (above Chapter V:303). Indeed, for Sloanes students, in contrast to Hometown students, the expectations created in secretarial education are realized. Sloanes students and teachers are fully aware that family connections and Sloanes employment bureau bring to fruition, in production, the students' aspirations of relative advantage and privilege reinforced during their secretarial education. For example, Sloanes Vice Principal was very sure that when his students "leave us, these girls get good jobs". And he justified their 'good jobs' on the grounds that these students' working role would be "almost like their domestic role, making sure the man has everything he needs, keeping the house, so the speak, in order and running smoothly" (above Chapter V:297). In other words, he indicated that the legitimation of dominant class women's advantages by their classed gender subordination

constitutes the benevolent and honorable situation and behaviour of dominant class men towards their womenfolk.

This analysis has indicated that the mechanisms by which secretarial education and production link together hinder direct views, particularly for subordinate class secretaries, of the ways in which education reproduces disadvantages, advantages and divisions amongst secretarial labour. The immediate reconfiguration and apparent misrepresentation within education of the class and gender relations of production, influences subordinate class secretaries to interpret their production relations as temporary, idiosyncratic and unrepresentative of secretarial labour processes in general. It thereby obstructs identification of systematic social divisions which inform these relations of production. In contrast, in the case of dominant class secretaries, the procedures of education highlight systems of inequalities which inform secretarial labour processes. In terms of illumination of power relations, Sloanes and Hometown students stand at opposite ends of the spectrum.

The overall pattern of highlighting, in the case of Sloanes college, and concealment, in the case of Hometown college, of direct connections between secretarial education and production, assists continuities of privilege for women of dominant class origins and disadvantage for women of working class origins. In particular, Hometown students do not have a direct view of a process by which renegotiation of their relative positioning within either category of relations is accommodated by amendments in the other set of relations. This is, in the main, because adjustments, which displace the advances made by one particular group in one particular setting, are remote from the immediate location of visible amendments. For example, partly by challenging in education the subordination of women in patriarchal relations, low level state college students reinforce their proletarian location in production. Yet at this substantive moment of a challenge to gender relations, students and teachers are expressing a conscious understanding of gender inequalities and achieving an immediate reconfiguration of patriarchy. In particular, Hometown students are thus precluded from acquiring those

feminine skills used as criteria for high rank within secretarial production. In other words, actions taken on the basis of judgements guided by consciousness do have unintended outcomes. That is, the ultimate outcome of challenges, accommodations, confrontations or acquiescences, to class and/or gender inequalities, do not always ultimately work to the 'advantage' of secretaries. In the next section, discussion develops analysis of unintended and intended outcomes of actions informed by secretaries' consciousness. It does this by, in the first place, exploring the various possible combinations of office workers and of secretarial students.

### 2.3 SECRETARIES' ALLEGIANCES AND ALLIANCES

The section above indicated that the ideological effects of class and gender articulation are rooted in a shimmering effect, constituted in a complicated pattern of relative visibility and invisibility of class relations and of gender relations. This pattern indicates, in turn, complex divisions and unities between secretarial workers, as well as complex issues for consideration if there is to be any change in current imbalances of power. These power issues are explored, in this section, in respect of the intended and unintended outcomes of actions, based on secretaries' consciousness. This explores potential changes to constraints and opportunities for action which inhere in current secretarial labour processes. Projected decreases in constraints and increases in opportunities for action, for any particular group of secretarial students or workers, would constitute their 'interests'. In other words, interests are viewed in terms of secretarial women's current and potential human agency in shaping, to their advantage, the dominant male and capitalist structural forces which currently act on their education and labour processes.

This analysis attempts to project, in the light of earlier analysis of secretarial production (above Chapter III:section 2), those combinations of students and of workers who may take up the challenge of amending current imbalances of power, particularly in the area of office

production. Analysis of secretaries' consciousness, in previous sections, indicated that there are complex constituents comprising the identities and consciousness of each classed group of secretarial labour. It follows that in some respects, female secretaries have similar understandings of social inequalities, for example to those of male office workers. In other respects, however, they have oppositional interests to these same male office workers. Yet, to harness that power which is incumbent upon individuals combining together, secretaries will need either to unite with each other and/or with male office workers. Similarities in their views and beliefs provide a basis for potential combinations of office workers. However, preceding analysis of the articulation of class and gender relations indicates that there are likely to be unintended, as well as intended, outcomes to any concerted challenges to the imbalances of class and/or gender power which they currently experience. Analysis now explores the advantages and disadvantages, for classed groups of secretaries, of harnessing that power inscribed in the similarities of their views and beliefs as other secretaries or as male office workers. In the first instance, analysis centres on potential unities between the same class level of men and women office workers. Secondly, analysis examines possible unities between different class levels of secretarial labour.

In production, proletarian men and women office workers have similar interests in terms of class relations. That is, their physical surroundings and routine tasks make them aware that both gendered groups are located at the base of the hierarchy of office labour. Both groups manoeuvre time away from their monotonous tasks, to chat with each other (above Chapter III:section 2). At the same time, in office work, pooled male clerks' relative power, in comparison with dominant class power, is increased in their relations with the same class of women. The gender division of labour, within this proletarian class of office labour, encourages male domination of their female class peers, in terms at least of informal social relations. This is the only area in which these men can exercise some control over other workers. There is structural provision for these men's patriarchal domination. For example, male clerks entering the female pool of copy typists "announce

their arrival with a general 'hello girls' or 'how are the girls today?' in a half-joking half-patronising tone" (above Chapter III:187). However, in terms of pooled women and pooled men's respective labour processes formal procedures of patriarchal control are not enacted. These men have limited class power, in comparison with other classes of office men, to share with women in return for a patriarchal affiliation with them. That is, in spite of the current class cleavage between proletarian men and women (above Chapter III:section 2), they could combine around the similarities in their understandings of class issues. This class based alliance would itself challenge genderism within their class.

By uniting with the same class of male office workers, proletarian secretaries have little chance of bringing about an immediate improvement in their conditions and relations in production. In practice, for example, it would simply open up to women routine clerical jobs currently held by men. And there is little difference between the class constraints inherent in male clerks' and pool typists' labour processes. For example, earlier analysis of office labour processes indicated that "both groups were engaged in routine, repetitious, standardised tasks, they were tightly controlled by their respective supervisors, all enjoyed identical deprivations in their surroundings, and had extremely limited contact with management" (above Chapter III:186). In contrast, pool typists' overall share of power is immediately increased by advancement to the status of private secretary. In general pool typists have not gained the level of qualifications in their vocational training to legitimise entering work at the private secretary's level. However, they believe that they acquire relevant knowledge during training, can gain appropriate office work experience (above Chapter V) and they possess the undoubted prerequisite attribute of being female. For example, Hometown low level students stated that they would apply for private secretaries' posts after gaining office experience at the level of copy typists (above Chapter V:320). They have an interest, therefore, in maintaining the gender division of labour in the higher ranks of the pyramid of secretarial labour. That is, they can adjust the constraints and opportunities for action imposed

on their current labour process, to their advantage, by moving up the secretarial hierarchy.

The new middle class secretary presents the most forceful potential challenge to patriarchal relations within class formations. Her education provides her with high level academic and professional qualifications, of equivalent standing to those of her male class peer, such as BTEC Higher (above Chapter IV:section 2.1). She could potentially advance her opportunities for action and decrease constraints on her actions by breaking into the male hierarchy of office management. As indicated in the booklet describing the PA Diploma, she is likely to be placed initially at middle management level (above Chapter IV:230). However, male middle managers, from whom she gains class power in return for her patriarchal subordination, are on the rungs of their own promotional management stakes. That is, they are likely to have aspirations of becoming top level managers. This woman would increase the competition involved. In other words, it is in his interests to consolidate his patriarchal dominance. These men and women are competing with each other on the grounds of meritocracy associated with the hierarchical places of corporate capitalism. However, given the pronounced under-representation of women in middle and top management (see above Chapters III and IV), men have a visible advantage over women in this competition.

Difficulties are involved, then, in improving 'new middle class' secretaries' relative overall share of power by confronting the gender division of labour between them and the same class of male office worker. In contrast this class of secretary can more easily increase her share of class power, albeit vicariously, by remaining within her gendered hierarchy. For example, if she becomes indispensable to her middle management boss, when he is promoted to higher management, he often takes his secretary with him (Vinnicombe 1980, Silverstone 1974). In addition, she can, for example, move to another secretarial position with a higher level male manager and improve upon her own class status since "the status of the secretary is derived from the status of the person for whom she works" (above Chapter III:193). Although there are

stark ambiguities within the 'new middle class' secretary's classed and gendered social position, accommodation of patriarchal relations, as many current secretaries' actions suggest (see section 2.2 above), is not eliminated from her agenda of interests.

Analysis of secretarial labour (above Chapter III:section 2) as well as analysis of the differences between the jobs acquired by Sloanes and Hometown students (above Chapter V:section 2.7) indicates a segmented labour market. This advantages Sloanes students. In practice, Sloanes students gain advantages over Hometown students through family connections linked to a system of entrepreneurial capitalism. Sloanes women with high level academic qualifications find it easier than Post 'A' level Hometown students to gain admittance to the male ranks of management. After all, they have family connections with the owners of the means of production (above Chapter V:289). Sloanes students with few academic qualifications gain admittance to the highest ranks of secretarial labour by virtue of their classed and gendered cultural capital. This constitutes a coherent class consciousness and interest in maintaining patriarchal relations. They work for establishment men and present no threat to these men's current position. The criteria for high rank within this level of male work, such as ownership of the means of production, being an MP, a member of the Royal Household, or Institute of, say, British Architects (above Chapter V:340), cannot be challenged by the education or birthright of Sloanes women. These men can afford to share some of their class power with their female secretaries since it in no way jeopardizes their own dominant position. For example, these men allow their secretaries to participate "in what we are doing and take on certain aspects of the work entirely, even forging my signature" (above Chapter III:192). This advantageous power for these women, in comparison with other classes of women, fosters their women's commitment to ensuring the retention of power in the hands of the dominant class. A form of unity, buttressed by patriarchy, between dominant class men and women already exists. Analysis of the reproduction of secretarial labour power illustrates that this unity builds upon "the sharing of a common culture . . . (which is) one of the surest foundations of the deep underlying fellow-feeling that unites the

members of the governing classes, despite differences of occupation and economic circumstances" (Bourdieu 1971:197).

With regard to potential and current combinations of secretarial women, within the specificities of the differential relations of production of secretarial labour, legitimised within education, it is apparent that it is not in the interests of all secretarial women to recognise a common gender cause within a unified grouping. That is, in any gender unity those at the apex of this gendered hierarchy of labour would jeopardise some of their power. How, for instance, would the Fiona's of secretarial labour (above Chapter III:195) fare if they were no longer able to use their elite femininity to ensure high rank? The interlocking, in articulation, of class and patriarchal relations, within secretarial production, indicates that a gender alliance between all secretaries would confront basic class issues. However, the status quo of class relations is in the interests of both elite men and elite women. In the higher ranks of secretarial labour the specificities of gender oppression articulate with particularities of class. For example, Fiona was able to pass down "things to do which she'd put off doing in the past" and "accompany her boss to business lunches" and "arrange the renovation and decoration of new offices" (above Chapter III:191). In other words, her form of patriarchal subordination resulted in high class power in comparison with the class consequences of gender oppression in the lower rungs of secretarial labour. This, in part, constitutes different gender interests for different classes of secretarial labour.

Many students and teachers involved in Hometown's secretarial education openly contest the inequalities of class and patriarchal relations. Nonetheless the current fashioning and extent of Hometown students and teachers' conscious filterings fail to negotiate the consequences of their actions within the production context (above section 2.1). They neglect to take account of the manner in which their actions facilitate and underpin the apparent legitimacy of the distribution of their students to subordinate class locations within production. For example, all Hometown teachers felt it was 'natural' that Post 'O' and Post 'A'

students acquired different levels of secretarial posts. In addition, they all adhered to the notion of upward mobility within and by way of secretarial production. Their failure to look beyond the classroom or institutional boundaries is, in part, a facet of the ideological effect of articulation as expressed in the highlighting of state education's autonomy from production. After all, Hometown teachers and students consciously express their education's autonomy from production. That is, they openly confront and immediately reconfigure class and gender inequalities as expressed in production.

At Hometown the more transparent injustices, opposing the college's ethos of meritocracy, lie in the preordained grading of recruits to secretarial courses within a structure which denies access to higher level qualifications. While it could be a relatively simple matter to open up the avenues for qualification advancement (as is perhaps now happening with the introduction of NVQ qualifications), the interlocking problem remains of employers' non recognition of state secretarial credentials. For example, Silverstone (1974) reported that, in selection procedures for secretarial labour "general attributes were often mentioned in lieu of educational qualifications" and although employers may ask about education "it doesn't influence us if their personality and character appear to be what we want" (above Chapter III:197). And Pringle observes that "even quantifiable skills such as shorthand and typing are rarely respected as qualifications" (1989:26). It would be in the interests of the state sector's graduates that 'objective' skill and knowledge criteria, for selection of secretarial labour, be devised which were linked to national examination schemes. In such a system it would be highly probable that even the low level Hometown student would be evaluated as at a higher level of competence and skill than many of the graduates from Sloanes.

Recognition and reward for competence and ability is part of the problem of the social construction of skill categories. If it is necessary to study for one or two years, on a full-time basis, and to devote about 12 hours per week to the technical skills, then the training necessary to perform adequately as a secretary must be relatively complex and

difficult (above Chapters IV and V). Indeed, many current secretaries who had learnt secretarial skills at school, had found it necessary to obtain further training in colleges before qualifying for this work (above Chapter IV:218). However, social definitions of the work are so deepseated that recognition of the abilities involved in being a secretary will not be achieved through individualised actions, but in the strength of combinations of women. It is important therefore to assess, as follows, present and potential allegiances and alliances between secretarial women.

The Post 'A' level state college student acquires high level skills related to secretarial work, such as composing correspondence, minuting meetings, prioritizing tasks. She also possesses the abilities and personal qualities of diligence and decision making which will ensure that she is a productive worker (see above Chapters IV and V). This vocational education, in setting her apart from, and awarding her higher level credentials than, the low level state college secretarial student, mediates between home and work to confirm, or permit mobility to, 'new middle class' status. Her class and gender location are the most contradictory of all three class groups of secretarial student. If she identifies with women in the lower level Hometown courses, she needs to confront the inequalities of class from which she gains privileges over them. On the other hand, should she opt to associate with Sloanes students and the highest grades of secretary, then she would need to adopt the conventions of subordination underlying patriarchal relations. Yet, this stance implicitly denies that meritocracy inherent in the reasons for her education, and projected, upward mobility from her class origins, in production.

Current actions and social interactions, in production, of the intermediate group of secretarial women distance them from both lower level pool typists and higher level personal aides to executive men (see section 2.2). Nevertheless this intermediate group has a foot in both of these alternative class camps. In other words, they are in a contradictory class location (Wright 1975). They have a commonality of interest with secretarial women from the bourgeoisie in maintaining

distinctions of demarcation from proletarian pooled typists. On the other hand, the very differences in the arduous routes, which this Post 'A' level Hometown group has had to pursue in order to gain their educational credentials, contrast with the ease of opportunity afforded by the routes of the dominant class group at Sloanes. This may suggest that Hometown Post 'A' level students' interests lie more in associations with the lower status Hometown secretarial students.

The low level Hometown curriculum centres on procedural knowledge (see above Chapters IV and V). This confirms these secretarial students' anticipatory proletarian location within secretarial production and reproduces their social class origins. On the other hand, as low level secretarial course students acquire the same basic skills as all other secretarial students, there is no apparent reason for their retention within their predestined proletarian location when entering work. This underpins these students' belief that they will ultimately gain promotion to higher ranks of secretarial labour (see section 2.1). In this sense, they have an interest in maintaining the class divisions between secretarial labour processes, which, in effect, distances them from higher level Hometown students.

Sloanes students learn the same basic secretarial skills as their state college counterparts. However, an explicitly gendered curriculum both sets them apart from Hometown students, and in their classed form, reproduces their gendered elite class family background. Sloanes students are destined for the highest level secretarial posts, enjoying substantial class prerogatives in comparison with the posts obtained by state college secretarial students as well as low level office men. Their level of work is allocated to them on the grounds of their classed and gendered cultural capital. If they combine with Post 'A' level Hometown students, then they will need to confront the general subordination of women in patriarchy and risk losing their undoubted class advantages over not only these but all other secretarial women. Any unity with Post 'A' level Hometown students would entail recognition of their superior qualifications and levels of competence in comparison with Sloanes graduates (above Chapter V:section 2.1). That is,

'objective' assessments would accredit superior placement to Post 'A' level Hometown graduates rather than to Sloanes graduates. In short, it is only the Post 'A' level Hometown student, rather than the Sloanes student, who possesses a national high level Personal Assistant Diploma (see above Chapters IV and V). The private college students retain power by not challenging the patriarchal relations which are so closely associated with their relative class advantages, and setting themselves apart from state college students. By fostering the inequalities of capitalist class relations they accrue advantages connected with subordination, within the dominant class, to men. The form that this education takes promotes the unity of the dominant classes, both men and women, in spite of gender subordination, within this class, of their womenfolk.

It appears, therefore, unlikely that major changes to current imbalances of power will be achieved in the form of a united offensive by all secretarial women. Many secretarial women already recognise some of the inequalities stemming from patriarchal relations. However, this apparent commonality of consciousness amongst all secretarial women conceals their interests. In practice it masks, to subordinate class secretaries, the classed forms that their patriarchal subordination takes. If different classes of secretaries unite they would necessarily unmask divisions between women created, in part, by their differential constitution in gender relations. That is, in the process of combining together they would begin to address the issues which denote existing vast imbalances of power between them. In other words, class issues may 'paradoxically' constitute the most pressing claims for attention in any united offensive by all secretarial women. On the other hand, dominant class women are unlikely to wish to confront their class privileges.

## CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the ideological effects produced by the articulation of class and gender relations, has engaged with the consciousness and interest group formations of women secretaries, implicit in existing methods of analysis. That is, in contrast to existing frameworks of analysis, these ideological effects of articulation indicate that some women have class power to lose, in addition to gender power to gain, from confronting women's patriarchal subordination to men.

The clearly visible, to onlookers and participants alike, gender specificity of secretarial labour, remains unproblematised in many frameworks of analysis. In essence, uni-focal or dualist methods concentrate on this global aspect of the gender segregation of secretarial labour. As a result they are unable to analyse, and their analyses thereby conceal, the ways in which secretaries are constituted in gender relations differently from each other, as well as the interconnected differential distribution of class power between secretaries. In respect of secretaries, however, the clearly visible gender specificity of their area of work contributes towards ambiguities, tensions and anomalies within their consciousness. That is, these secretaries are aware that there are sharply different grades of secretarial work. They, therefore, have some understanding of differences between secretaries in terms of their constitution in class and in gender relations. However, this consciousness is in conflict with concurrent awareness that the gender uniformity of secretarial labour represents the universal subordination of women to men. In effect, existing class and gender analyses do not, in general, penetrate or critique the complexities of secretaries' consciousness. Instead they presume upon a view of women as more uniform and undivided than, as highlighted by analysing the reproduction of secretarial labour power, is the reality of their experiences at work and in vocational education.

There are sharp imbalances of power between women secretaries. However, there are also sharp imbalances of power between male office workers, and also between men and women office workers. The way forward, if any,

towards adjusting these imbalances, to the benefit of those who currently acquire the limited shares of class and gender power, is therefore, extremely difficult to predict. Indeed, this analysis has indicated that the structural location of secretaries, in education and in production, is so complex that it is difficult to suggest ways in which they may 'develop theories of the limits of feasible political action and transform that location' (Sharp and Green 1975:227). In effect, part of the problem of forging substantive shifts to class and to gender inequalities is constituted in their reciprocal articulation. That is, any practical shift in the structural distribution of either class or gender power, can be, and frequently is, countermanded in the consequent 'knock-on' effects to the other, connected, system of social differentiation.

In spite of using an alternative model from those of existing analyses of secretarial labour (eg Downing 1981, Valli 1986), this analysis has concurred that patriarchal and class inequalities are reproduced in secretarial education and production. On the other hand, this analysis has produced an alternative perspective on secretaries' apparently passive acceptance of their class and gender restrictions on action, from those suggested in existing methods of class and gender analysis. This alternative explanation, unlike existing analyses, moves away from explanations which reinforce global gender ideologies. For instance, in contrast to existing methods, this analysis has pointed out areas in which secretarial women have a conscious, although frequently partial, understanding of class and gender inequalities. It has also highlighted those challenges, contestations and filtering of these inequalities in which secretaries, in education and in production, already engage. This indicates that female secretaries are not the totally passive, complacent recipients of their own subordination, as suggested by some existing methods of analysis.

Perhaps it is pertinent to recall that while some class analysts (eg Edwards 1979) emphasise struggles at the workplace in which proletarian men strive to shift capitalist class relations, capital has, by and large, retained its domination. Such analysis does, however, take

account of proletarian men's human agency and the extent to which their actions necessitate dominance to be constantly reasserted and, in part, negotiated. Current filtering and renegotiation on the part of Hometown secretarial teachers and students revolves particularly around their gender subordination. In so doing, they reinforce the class advantages associated with patriarchy, which advantage Sloanes students. This element of struggle and its outcomes remain unrecognised in existing analyses because it is automatically assumed that, as women constitute the subordinate group in patriarchal relations, they cannot acquire advantages from systematic gender inequalities. Basically, contrasting with many existing analyses, the human agency of secretarial women has been illuminated in this study. It has been examined as part of the process of structuration of both class relations and gender relations. In addition, particularly when analysing the potential for allegiances and alliances of secretarial women, conscious human agency in respect of one set of relations clearly has consequences for other sets of social differentiation. It is the patterning of such moments of structural agency, informed by and acting on human agency, constituting class and gender articulation, that makes it difficult to suggest ways in which unfairness and injustices currently experienced by secretaries can be overcome.

With regard to secretarial production, analysis has suggested that patriarchy is used as a buttress to capitalist domination. Patriarchy, as acted out in the administrative sector of production, effectively ensures the cohesiveness of the dominant class, both its women and men. On the other hand, there are few indications of cohesiveness between all male office workers. That is, the dominance of men over women, constituted in patriarchal relations, is not ensured by the ways in which class acts on and through patriarchy in the case of secretarial production. It seems, therefore, that for the majority of women secretaries the main issue to be addressed, in respect of making improvements upon their workplace restrictions and constraints on action, is that of connections between capitalist class relations and patriarchal relations. However, in view of the complexities of secretaries' consciousness and allegiances, which have been highlighted

in this study, struggles to amend, to their advantage, their overall share of power will undoubtedly be fraught with difficulties. On the other hand, a feature of the ideological effects produced by uni-focal and dualist perspectives on, for instance, secretarial labour, is that such difficulties are masked. In contrast, this articulation perspective on the reproduction of secretarial labour power attempted to reveal and highlight some of the complexities of secretaries' social relations. In so doing, additional and opposing light has been shed on conscious and non-conscious problematics which influence secretaries' current and potential actions and reactions to, as well as the outcomes of these actions on, the dominant structural forces of both capitalism and patriarchy.

## CHAPTER VII

### IN CONCLUSION

#### INTRODUCTION

The main issues, raised in this investigation into the reproduction of secretarial labour power, are drawn together in this chapter. A review is presented, in the first section, of earlier analysis of the complex structures of class relations and of gender relations, and their connections. These surfaced, in this study, when developing and using a method of articulation to interpret secretarial production, secretarial education, and their interconnections.

The second section develops discussion on the limitations and opportunities, imposed on this analysis of class and gender articulation, by the research strategies adopted. Possible further areas of investigation are discussed, which may assist developments in understanding connections between class and gender relations.

#### REVIEW OF ANALYSIS

A model of articulation has been constructed in this study (see Figures 2 - 6, Chapter II). It was adopted to explore connections between class

relations and gender relations. This proposed model centred on the forming, informing, shaping and moving together of these relations, constituting articulation.

Two distinctive, but inter-related, aspects of articulation have been addressed in this study. In the first instance, analysis focussed on that element of articulation which highlighted complex, non-conscious, structural forms of class and gender relations. These came to light through analysis of material instances of class and gender actions and social interactions which together, in their patterned form, comprised the complexities of class and of gender forms. The complex forms which surfaced contrasted distinctly with the simple structures of class and of gender relations which, as discussed in Chapter I, are assumed in uni-focal or dualist models. Moreover, analysis of the articulation of these relations with each other shed light on emergent forms of class/gender relations.

In essence, this analysis of the reproduction of secretarial labour power has confirmed that characteristic form of class/gender relations described in Figure 1, Chapter II. That is, dominant class female secretaries are subordinate to dominant class men, but superordinate to all other classes of both men and women. In contrast, proletarian copy typists are subordinate to dominant and new middle class men and women, as well as to proletarian men. This suggests that while women never reach the very apex of power, dominant class women enjoy a social position which is very closely associated with this high degree of power. On the other hand, women occupy the social position manifesting the lowest degree of power, at least in respect of class and gender relations.

In the second place, analysis centred on the complex ideological components of the emergent form of class/gender relations. To do this, analysis focussed on intended and unintended outcomes of conscious actions and social interactions which, in part, comprised and shaped complex class and gender forms. In this case, the articulation approach viewed reinforcement of, as well as reconfiguration of, the balance of

power within a set of relations as being, in part, an outcome of reproduction, reconstitution, reconfiguration or redirection of another category of relations. In other words, movements, constituting part of the structuration process of a particular category of relations, were not taken, as is conventionally presupposed by most models, as the sole prerogative of conscious actions to contest, acquiesce in, or accommodate structural constraints on actions originating in that particularized system of social differentiation. Instead, they were conceptualized in this model as, in part, the non conscious consequence of the interconstitution of conscious actions and dominant structural forces in respect of another category of relations.

The constant underlying theme of this analysis concerned scrutiny of flexibility, change, movement, reconfiguration, redirection, as well as constitution, reconstitution and reproduction, of both class relations and of gender relations. As such the method of articulation was founded on a structuration process (Giddens 1979 and 1984) framework. However, Giddens' (1979, 1984) structuration approach was itself developed, particularly by introducing the concept of structural agency. Structural agency concerned analysis of a process in which the structure of class relations acted on and through the structure of gender relations and vice versa. That is, adoption of this concept explored structuration of each category of relations as, in part, a feature of structural interconnections between class and gender relations. In other words, the model could not be reduced to human agency to explain constitution, reconstitution, amendments and shifts to the forms of class and of gender subordination/ superordination.

A major feature, then, of developments in the underlying structuration approach of the method of class and gender articulation centred on the introduction of the concept of structural agency. At the same time, in line with Giddens' structuration approach (1979 and 1984), this method integrated human agency into its analytic model. It suggested that human agency worked on and through structural agency. This stance avoided that hypostatization of structures which, at first sight, inhered in the concept of structural agency. That is, analysis of

conscious actions, constituting challenges, contestations, accommodation, collusion or acquiescence in expressions of, say, class inequalities connected with the constitution, reconstitution or reconfiguration of gender relations, and vice versa. In short, class and gender articulation was viewed as a structuration process.

Giddens' (1979, 1984) structuration theory expounds notions of the ordered, rather than chaotic, nature of social organisation across time and space. At the same time, he contends that social order is maintained through constantly shifting structural forces. In essence, this study has attempted to proceed a little in the way of exploring and illuminating this apparent paradox. That is, through an articulation perspective on a particular substantive moment of class and gender relations, analysis has shed light on practices and processes which immediately amend and shift these structural forms, but which concurrently 'support' the reconstitution of the original structural forms in other substantive contexts or historical moments. In other words, this study has indicated that part of the operational maintenance, across time and space, of the underlying principles of class and gender relations is contained in the very complexities as well as the flexibility of each of these sets of relations.

The method of articulation, which was developed in Chapter II, conceptualized categories of relations in terms of their different dimensions. That is, it examined the dimension of the underlying principles of sets of relations; their structural dimension; and their cultural dimension. Analysis centred on both the specification process and institutionalization process of these relations. In other words, analysis was concerned both with recursive, sustained sequences of social interactions which institutionalize class and gender relations, as well as relations between them. It was equally concerned with particular historical and contextual moments of both the realization of, and also the forms of, class and gender relations and analysis of the factors which influenced their specificity. In this study, these different dimensions and processes of both class relations and gender relations were examined in the context of a specific moment of the

realization of these sets of social relations - in the education and production contexts of the reproduction of secretarial labour power.

In Chapters III-V analysis focussed on the systems of, and routine experiences within, secretarial production and secretarial education. Particular attention was given to the component labour and education processes which comprise these systems. This analysis was, in the first place, concerned with the forms of class and of gender relations which this area of 'women's work and education' realized. In other words, analysis centred initially on the complexities of the structures of class and of gender relations, as well as interpretations of these complexities as the outcome of various instances of structural agency. In the second place, analysis addressed the issue of the human agency of secretarial teachers, students and workers, which came to light when exploring these instances of structural agency. The conscious actions of secretarial teachers, students and workers were the central concern of Chapter VI. This later stage of analysis explored the intended and unintended outcomes of these women's conscious actions in terms of the ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation. That is, the pattern of highlighting and obscuring, of these systems of social inequalities, was examined as informing, shaping, as well as being the product of, various instances of structural agency between class relations and gender relations.

When examining secretarial labour processes, in Chapter III, it was noted, in line with other analyses of secretarial production (eg Downing 1981), that all secretaries at work experience some form of patriarchal subordination. Analysis indicated that each instance of a secretary's subordination to a male office worker, viewed in isolation one from the other, represents a coherent expression of the underlying principles of patriarchal relations. These coherent instances of patriarchal subordination, in themselves, represent, in part, the institutionalization process of culture and structure within patriarchal relations (see Figure 3, Chapter II). On the other hand, in contrast to other analyses of secretarial production (eg Downing 1981, Valli 1986), an articulation perspective highlighted not only sharply different

gender constraints and opportunities for action, but also sharply different class constraints and opportunities for action, imposed on different secretaries' labour processes.

The sharply contrasting class and gender experiences of secretaries shed light on the pyramidal structure of secretarial production. It was claimed that the ranking of secretarial labour cohered with class relations inasmuch as it was patterned in a three class model (see Figure 7, Chapter III). That is, this coherent expression of class relations represented, in part, the institutionalization process of culture and structure in respect of this set of relations (see Figure 3, Chapter II). On the other hand, identification of the coherencies, which constitute the interconstitution of culture and structure within both class and gender relations, brought to the fore tensions, ambiguities, contradictions, as well as coherencies, between and within class and gender relations. It was particularly when comparing the constraints and opportunities for action, and their class and gender origins, inscribed in different levels of secretarial labour processes that incoherencies, within and between class and gender relations, came to light. For example, the personal assistant exercises some control over her own and lower level office men and women's labour processes, while, in contrast, the 'pool' typist has limited control over her own or any other office worker's labour process. Such distinctions between these women's share of power is incoherent with, in this instance, the principles of patriarchy in which women are uniformly and universally subordinate to men.

Incoherencies within both class relations and gender relations surfaced, then, in this articulation perspective on secretarial production. Analysis indicated that they constituted, in part, the institutionalization process of culture and structure across these relations (see Figure 5, Chapter II). That is, the interconstitution of culture and structure, between class and gender relations, emerged initially from identification of that pattern created in the coincidence of distinctive cultural forms of class relations and certain cultural forms of gender relations. For example, the explicit patriarchal

subordination of personal assistants, in their personalized and privatized relations with their executive male bosses, coincided with high class power in comparison with pool typists. Basically, this aspect of analysis arose with identification of a pattern in which substantive instances of the one category of relations specified substantive instances of the other category of relations, constituting the specification process between the cultural dimension of class and of gender relations (see Figure 4, Chapter II). At the same time, this patterning of cultural instances of class and gender relations included instances of both coherencies and incoherencies with their respective underlying principles.

Analysis of incoherent instances of patriarchal relations suggested that they constituted part of the institutionalization process of class relations in secretarial production. In turn, incoherent instances of class relations constituted part of the institutionalization process of patriarchal relations in secretarial production. In other words, expressions of both coherencies and incoherencies with their respective underlying principles, constituted the structural form of class relations and of gender relations. In short, analysis indicated that class relations were, in part, constituted in material instances of gender relations, and gender relations were, in part, constituted in material instances of class relations. As such, complex forms of both of these systems of social differentiation were identified. For instance, differences between the gender experiences of pool typists and personal assistants, were in themselves incoherent with the underlying principles of this set of relations. They could be understood as part of a process which institutionalized capitalist class relations between these levels of secretaries. That is, coherencies and incoherencies constituted complexities of class and of gender relations as realized in secretarial production. These complex forms of class and of gender relations were constituted, in turn, in various instances of the interconstitution of culture and structure between class and gender relations (see Figure 4, Chapter II). The consequent overall form of each set of relations was constituted in the specification process between the structural dimension of each set of relations (see Figure 5,

Chapter II). In short, this analysis expressed the concept of the complexities of these structures which was made available in the proposed model of articulation (see Chapter II).

Some of the complex characteristics of class and of gender relations surfaced, then, when analysing secretarial labour processes in Chapter III. It was claimed that coherencies, tensions, ambiguities, contradictions, within either category of relations, were part of the very fabric of the form of each of these relations. It was also claimed that these complex structural forms inhere when class and gender relations act simultaneously on, for example, labour processes. A patterning of these complex substantive instances of class and of gender relations also emerged. Again continuities, tensions, anomalies and contradictions all constituted elements of this patterning of class relations with gender relations. Inasmuch as any pattern implies a systematicism, this underlined the notion that class and gender relations, in their articulation, constitute a further set of relations. This set of class/gender relations constituted an emergent form since analysis indicated that it was not simply a case of 'adding together' class and gender constraints and opportunities for action to identify the power inscribed in any particular secretarial labour process.

When analysis turned from the reproduction of secretarial labour power in the context of production, to the context of education, additional compounding complexities came to light in the patterning of the forms of class and gender relations with each other. Examination of the system of secretarial education, in Chapter IV, revealed that, in broad terms, the divisions created between secretarial colleges and courses reproduced the gender specific three class model of secretarial production. Unproblematic reproduction, in education, of the class and gender relations of secretarial labour processes, was apparently incorporated into the system of secretarial education. That is, there was overall correspondence between the class and gender models of secretarial labour in these two sets of institutions. On the other hand, there were indications, in the colleges and examination boards' literature, for instance, that class and/or gender relations, as

expressed in education, were, at certain class levels of secretarial education coherent with, and at other class levels incoherent with, these relations as expressed in parallel secretarial labour processes (see Figure 7, Chapter IV).

Investigations into the lived experiences of secretarial education, in Chapter V, illuminated further coherencies and incoherencies, between and within expressions of class relations and of gender relations, in secretarial education and in secretarial production. For example, the case study, centring on comparisons between secretarial education in an elite private college and a state technical college, revealed classroom class relations which reversed the pattern of class control in secretarial production. That is, at the highest and lowest level of secretarial education classroom expressions of class relations contradicted in many respects expressions of class relations in corresponding labour processes. Furthermore, at Hometown, for example, teachers and students rejected classroom knowledge which reinforced women's subordination to men. In effect, the acting out of gender relations in Hometown's classrooms contradicted, in many respects, that form in which gender relations are realised in the production places these students were to fill. In other words, the forms of class relations and of gender relations, in secretarial education, were as complex as those constituted in secretarial production. However, the crucial issue contained in these education relations, was that the pattern of each set of relations, in each set of social institutions, was far from being identical, but, rather, contained coherencies, incoherencies, ambiguities, contradictions between them.

Analysis, in respect of the comparative case study, indicated that both coherencies and incoherencies, between and within expressions of class and gender relations, in secretarial education and in secretarial production, contributed towards a process which confirmed the differential distribution of class and of gender power between dominant class, 'new middle' class, and proletarian class secretaries. Contradictions, ambiguities and tensions, between and within class and gender relations, as expressed within education as well as between

education and production, constituted part of education's role in mediating between home and work to confirm, in each set of institutions, students' different class origins. On the other hand, the coherencies and incoherencies, between expressions of class and gender relations, in education and in production, brought to the fore additional complexities of the structures of class and of gender relations to those identified in secretarial production.

In Chapter V analysis indicated that incoherencies, as well as coherencies, within and between expressions of class and gender relations, in secretarial education and in secretarial production, did not disrupt, but, in contrast, underlined the patterning of the complex forms of class and of gender relations with each other. In effect, they supported the institutionalization process of class relations and of gender relations within secretarial production. For example, the tight classroom control of Sloanes students by their teachers contradicted the social class control these students would come to exercise, when at work, over their own and others' labour processes. Yet, this social class 'contradiction' was part of the process which confirmed their class superiority to Hometown students in secretarial production. In other words, this cultural form of class relations in education, contradicting its parallel form in production, contributed towards the structural form of class relations in secretarial production. In short, analysis indicated that the cultural and structural dimensions of class and of gender relations, in different sets of institutions, had interconstitutional properties (see Figure 6, Chapter II). This institutionalization process of recursive, sustained sequences of social interactions, across sets of institutions, that is between different social spheres, was constituted in the very differences between the forms of class and of gender relations in each institutional context.

The investigation into secretarial education and its relations with secretarial production illuminated, then, the forming, shaping and informing of the structures of class relations and gender relations by each other, constituting one element of articulation. In other words, analysis thus far centred on the complexities of the structures of class

and of gender relations, and their inter-connections. These contrasted sharply with those structures adopted in, and made visible by, many existing analyses. At the same time, differences between social and cultural meanings distributed within secretarial education surfaced during this investigation. In addition, the case study particularly shed light on the filtering, renegotiation, as well as acquiescence in and acceptance of, class and gender inequalities on the part of secretarial teachers and students. These aspects of secretarial education were focussed upon when analysing the ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation in Chapter VI. At this later stage, analysis moved to interpreting human agency and its shaping of the structural distribution of class and of gender power as another mode of the proposed articulation perspective.

Analysis of ideological effects of articulation centred on the patterning of instances of shielding from direct view, and highlighting, to classed groups of gendered secretarial students, of systematic inequalities of class and/or gender relations. The understandings, views, and awarenesses of these social inequalities generated in the routine lived realities of daily life in secretarial education were explored. So, for example, some Hometown teachers explicitly confronted class relations of secretarial production when they urged students to question those in authority when at work. They were, in effect, at this moment, reconfiguring, in education, social class relations in secretarial production. However, the manner in which this renegotiation of social class relations confirmed these students' comparative class and gender subordination in production, was outside their conscious experience. In the case of secretarial labour, analysis indicated that conscious reconfiguration and redirection, in education, of one set of relations connected with the reproduction of both sets of relations in the context of secretarial production. In other words, conscious actions of filtering and renegotiation, in respect of both the class and the gender relations of secretarial education, constituted elements of the institutionalization process of class and gender relations across sets of social institutions (see Figure 6, Chapter II).

Analysis of the ideological effects produced by class and gender articulation examined possibilities of improving upon secretaries' existing shares of power as a consequence of actions based on their conscious understanding of class and gender inequalities. In this respect an important feature of the ideological effects of articulation, in the context of the reproduction of secretarial labour power, was that the advantages or disadvantages accruing from the one set of relations are legitimized or offset by the advantages or disadvantages accruing from the other set of relations. In effect, the broad patterns of social control, particularly as manifested in capitalist production, contain the characteristics of recursive order, to a very important extent, because flexibility and change at the level of instances of the realization of both class and gender relations, obscure the stable aspect of class and/or gender relations across time and between various labour processes. For example, Hometown low level students' comparative class disadvantages are, in part, offset by the power they consciously exercise when filtering and reconfiguring their gender subordination.

In their actions, based on conscious views and beliefs, secretarial students helped to fashion the divisions and alliances amongst them (see Chapters V and VI), constituting, in part, the system of this vocational education (see Chapter IV). At the same time, no one group of students was fully aware of the patterned boundaries they were, in part, creating and reconstituting within the overall structure of secretarial education. It was in this sense that expressions of class and gender relations, constituted at the level of the system of secretarial education, constituted, in turn, the structural dimension of these relations. For example, Hometown low level students were not aware of their reinforcement of the boundaries between themselves and high level Hometown, as well as Sloanes students, by virtue of their conscious filtering of and opposition to their class and gender constraints. In short, the system of secretarial education was constituted in a pattern of various moments of the realization of class and gender relations. This included coherencies and incoherencies, between and within the complex forms of class and gender relations, as constituted at the level of the system and daily realities of secretarial education. However,

class and gender articulation, at the level of the system of secretarial education, was outside the full comprehension of any single group of students, and so constituted, in turn, the non-conscious structural dimension of these relations.

This analysis has brought to light the complexities of the structures of class relations and of gender relations. The complex forms of these relations, identified in this enquiry into the reproduction of secretarial labour power, contained emergent properties of a further category of class/gender relations. That is, the particular patterning of class with gender relations, surfacing in this analysis, only came to the fore with exploration of the complexities of each set of relations. The model of articulation was particularly pertinent when exploring instances of confrontation and renegotiation of class and gender relations. It is likely that in alternative models, explanations of these conscious actions would have been limited to reconfiguration of these relations. Yet, such explanations would have disrupted and left unexplained and very puzzling the reproduction, in secretarial education, of the gendered three class model of secretarial production. In contrast, the articulation perspective allowed for the reproduction or reconfiguration of one set of relations, in the one, other, or both of these sets of institutions, as an outcome of conscious resistances or filtering or acceptance of another set of relations. Such conscious actions could be understood, in this approach, as part of the process of structuration, constituted in the forming, moving, informing and shaping of class and gender relations by each other, in turn constituting their articulation.

This study has, then, attempted to shed light on the complexities of consciousness and social non consciousness of, in this instance, secretaries as they prepare for secretarial work and then take their places in office production. It has been argued that these are aspects of articulation which constitute, in part, the patterning of the complex forms of class relations and of gender relations with each other. In so doing, analysis has highlighted at least some components of the complexity of a social totality. It has suggested that this very

complexity is an important factor in the reproduction of, and opportunities and outcomes of resistance to, forms of social differentiation.

#### LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH STRATEGY

In this study, analysis was confined to two forms of social differentiation, namely class relations and gender relations. It was also confined to two sets of institutions, namely education and production. Other categories of relations and other sets of institutions undoubtedly connect with those selected. Further research is needed to explore how, for example, race/ethnicity, age, link with the articulation of class and gender relations. This analysis tried simply to bring to the debates on gender relations and on class relations, some of the complexities of articulation which have implications for both discourses. It tends to express an alternative discourse when exploring a method of articulation which highlights the possible complications involved in the overall unequal distribution of power. However, this analysis by no means exhausts the probable complexities involved.

This investigation has demonstrated that deliberate divisions between secretarial students, as constituted in vocational education, reproduce gendered class and classed gender distinctions of the administrative sphere of production. In order to focus attention on the distinguishing features within secretarial education, extreme cases were selected in terms of colleges, and class differentiated student groups. However, secretarial education is more complex than this research strategy perhaps suggests. For example, courses with specialist applications are provided in the state sector, such as medical secretary, legal secretary, farm secretary, bi-lingual secretary. In addition, as was indicated by the data of Chapter III, there are many less prestigious private colleges than Sloanes. These colleges' prospectuses suggest that they do not put an equal emphasis on gendered knowledge as that contained in Sloanes formal and informal curriculum. For example, the

content of some such courses is confined to Shorthand, Typewriting and Business Communication (see Chapter III). There was no indication that these less prestigious private colleges included subjects such as grooming, flower arranging, in their secretarial curricula. Further research would be necessary to judge how the professional associations of the state colleges' specialist courses, and the private sector's curricula which have a greater similarity to those of the state sector, fit into the range of expressions of class and gender relations realized in the sectors of secretarial education selected for in-depth analysis. Analysis of such additional data may shed further light on the articulation of class and gender relations.

In spite of acknowledged limitations with regard to the focus and data of this study, the comparative case study provided valuable information on class and gender relations, and their inter-connections. Although data collection was confined to two colleges, details of the overall system of this vocational preparation, contained in Chapter IV, suggest that the courses scrutinized were representative of similar courses in other institutions. It is, therefore, considered that the data used in, and implications of, this research can be cautiously generalised and that similar findings would result from a more broadly based enquiry.

In respect of work careers pursued by secretarial students, this study concentrated on students' first jobs. Those who entered production all took secretarial jobs. However, teachers at Sloanes and Hometown suggested that many of these women would ultimately move away from secretarial work and obtain, for example, management posts. It is possible that teachers' predictions for the future promotional prospects of their students may come to fruition. For example, with experience the pool typist may climb the rungs of the secretarial ladder, and the Hometown Post 'A' level student may be promoted into management. The private college graduate may obtain management status, particularly through marriage with a well placed man. A longitudinal study would be necessary to explore these long term career prospects of secretaries. At the same time, this investigation has provided information which demonstrates that higher level posts within secretarial labour are

obtainable as the first destination of college leavers. This suggests possible limitations on the availability of higher ranking posts for those applicants, such as those from Hometown's low level course, who lay claim to them on the grounds of work experience. In addition, it has been noted that management posts remain largely the preserve of men. In these circumstances it appears likely that the predictions of future prospects for the private college student are realized. That is, through working in their family business, or by marrying a bourgeois man, these women may gain access to management posts. In contrast it appears less likely that the claims for future promotion for their students, made by state college staff, are realized.

No previous detailed research into secretarial education in England is known to have been conducted. In addition methods, incorporating intra-gender divisions, are in the throes of development in the theoretical discourse on gender relations. For these reasons it was necessary to adopt a simplified stance on the social distinctions between secretaries which are reproduced in education. However, this occupational category is extremely diverse. Ambiguities abound in the titles, locations and functions of secretarial labour within production. For example, job titles tend to be used indiscriminantly (see Chapter III). Similar ambiguities reside in the concomitant area of vocational training. The practical limitations of this research have precluded full exploration of these cultural and ideological ambiguities. This suggests that more extensive investigation into the complex of patterns of anomalies, ambiguities and coherencies, constituted within and between secretarial education and secretarial production, is essential. Such further research may shed additional light on the complexity of paradoxes, which may highlight or shield from the educational and occupational participants' conscious understanding, the inequalities involved in the gendered class and classed gender divisions within the administrative sector of production.

The different outcomes of the articulation of class and gender relations within secretarial education has been indicated when analysing the information obtained during this research. Analysis shows that the

specificities of social differentiation, within both categories of relations, are not realised in isolation. On the contrary, they depend for their form on intricate connections between class and gender relations. It is possible that other areas of vocational training, geared towards the reproduction of a gendered sector of the workforce, such as nursing or hairdressing, may incorporate similar distinctions within its ranks as those discovered within secretarial education. It would be valuable to replicate the analysis of this study, and perhaps to develop it, by making a similar analysis of other areas of gendered education and production. It is highly likely that this would assist developments in the method of articulation.

This study has indicated that bourgeois women retain class advantages when entering secretarial labour, by, for example, mobilizing their elite feminine cultural capital within secretarial education. The question then arises as to what happens to their male counterparts? There must be a significant number of sons of the bourgeoisie who obtain limited certificates from their private education. What qualities do these men have in order to pursue the advantages in employment which their birthright decrees? These questions are important because they point to the duality of gender relations. That is, as suggested by Hearn (1987), there are probably as many versions of masculinity as there are of femininity. They are likely to have connections with class relations, just as the specificities of femininity have been shown to connect with the specificities of class in the case of secretarial education. In addition, classed forms of masculinity probably connect with the variable shades of femininity illuminated in this study. That is, it is likely that classed masculinity partly defines the form and degree of patriarchal domination at each level of the class structure, as well as the class of woman over whom such power can be exercised. This aspect of the duality of gender relations was touched upon when exploring secretarial labour processes in this study. To develop further this aspect of the study, it would be necessary to acquire information on, for instance, the extent to which the cultural capital of elite men enables them to leapfrog the lower echelons of male areas of office work. In other words, further investigations are required in

order to analyse mechanisms which rationalise the reproduction of class origins in production for the male counterparts of Sloanes women.

A dearth of information on the history of developments in both secretarial education and secretarial production was noted in relevant chapters of the thesis. The sparse evidence which is recorded in this study suggests that class divisions within gendered secretarial labour have evolved during the more recent decades of this Century. It is important that more extensive research is conducted into the historical context of contemporary practices. Detailed knowledge of processes and procedures which contributed to historical amendments and change may increase understanding of current secretarial education and production relations.

Since obtaining the major part of the data of the case study in this study, the Education Reform Act (1988) has been implemented. State Technical Colleges have undertaken considerable institutional restructuring. They have introduced line-management strategies to operate local budget management. These management techniques may displace and redefine the ethos of professional equality which existed in most technical colleges (see Chapter V). It appears that lower level teaching staff are being more openly controlled on class lines than hitherto. This indicates a possible substantial change to state colleges' internal class relations. Some investigations into this are needed to explore this observation. With respect to the articulation of class and gender relations, it would be interesting to examine whether any such class amendments affected changes in the gender relations expressed in state colleges' internal structures.

It was noted, in Chapter VI, that this analysis of the reproduction of secretarial labour power has not shed a great deal of light on projecting ways forward towards adjusting, to their advantage, the constraints on action currently experienced by secretaries. However, this was perhaps inevitable in the light of the acknowledged analytic restrictions built into the model of articulation developed in this

study (see Notes on Chapter II:(5)). That is, it was recognised, when constructing this articulation perspective, that its underlying structuration approach conceptually encompassed the notion of reproduction of forms of social differentiation. Put another way, inasmuch as structuration theory (Giddens 1979 and 1984) does not focus on re-structuration or de-structuration, it is automatically predisposed towards assuming the reproduction of, in the case of this study, class relations and gender relations. Indeed, selecting class relations and gender relations as systems of social differentiation for articulation analysis, presupposes, in line with current structuration discourse, their reproduction. Otherwise, in commonsense terms, centring on these systems of social differentiation would have constituted an untenable proposition. However, this analytic limitation is considered appropriate and necessary, since, in itself, it provided the analytic tools to critique dualistic approaches to understanding both the structural forms of class and of gender relations, and the processes of their reproduction (see Chapter II). That is, the limitations of the model developed in this study confined and focussed analysis on coherencies, incoherencies and contradictions, between and within class and gender relations. In addition, this 'articulation analysis' indicated that these complexities constituted part of the modes of reproduction of these social systems. And it is particularly in these latter respects that this model moved analysis beyond that of 'dualism' which concentrates exclusively on coherencies, within and between class and gender relations, to explore and explain both their structural forms and their reproduction.

The acknowledged restrictions, built into the model of analysis proposed in this study, do immediately suggest crucial areas in which this perspective may be developed. For example, analysis of class and gender articulation is required which explores that reconfiguration, redirection and reshaping of class and gender forms, identified in this current study, as possibly including movements in the degrees of inequalities written into both sets of relations. Such analysis may indicate that reconfiguration and redirection of forms of social differentiation constitute not only part of the structuration process of class relations and of gender relations, and their inter-connections,

but also contain, at the very least, the initial indications of their potential re-structuration. It is in this sense that this suggested development of that model of articulation, presented in this study, may shed additional light, to that made available in this analysis, on the ways forward for, for example, secretaries to advance beyond the current constraints on action experienced in their education and labour processes. At the same time, this proposed development in the basic structuration approach to exploring class and gender articulation needs to take as its own base that understanding of the complexity of class and gender forms, and the contribution these complexities make to reproduction of these social systems, which has been highlighted in this current analysis. Otherwise, it is highly likely that, in a similar vein to those ideological effects produced by many existing models (see Chapter VI section 1) this suggested analytic development will be equally and severely flawed. In this respect, this study has attempted, in itself, to constitute a valuable and necessary precursor to the availability of this proposed future development of structuration process approaches to interpreting class and gender relations and their articulation with each other.

Out of this study have come, then, many further areas of possible empirical investigation, as well as of possible analytic developments. At the same time, this present study has addressed the issue of the complex of continuities, contradictions, tensions, ambiguities, involved in preparation for secretarial womanhood. In so doing, this study attempted to penetrate popular constructions of this sphere of vocational education which imply, for example, that its central concern is the reproduction of an elite femininity. Analysis has been presented which critiques this popular and extensive mythology. While the research has raised further vital questions for future enquiry, original empirical data has been presented about a numerically important area of 'women's education and work'. This was explored in an original analytic mode. It attempted, in particular, to contribute to the developing debate on appropriate methods to analyse connections between class relations and gender relations.

Perhaps the most significant contribution, that this empirical investigation has made to current debate, is in the development of an articulation perspective on ideologies of class and gender relations. In so doing, this study has provided an empirical focus for Giddens' 'structuration theory' (1979, 1984). At the same time, this focus upon a particular 'empirical problem' has necessitated and facilitated the development of 'structuration theory'. This has shed light on those practices by which reconfiguration and redirection of a particular set of relations can support reproduction of another category of relations, as well as reconstitution of the original set of relations in another substantive context. In other words, this analysis has illuminated the structuration processes (Giddens 1979, 1984) of both class and gender relations. It has provided analysis of original empirical data in an attempt to develop understanding of the ways in which reconfiguration, redirection and reconstitution, as constituted in structuration, are integral facets of the overall maintenance of social inequalities across time and, in particular, context. As such, this analysis has highlighted the complex forms that power takes in the ideological dimension of articulation.

## APPENDIX

### METHODOLOGY

#### INTRODUCTION

This appendix focusses on the strategies adopted to collect and record the empirical data used, in this study, to explore the reciprocal articulation of class and gender relations. It describes the procedures employed and also discusses the difficulties which were encountered. In addition, it examines some of the pitfalls, opportunities and limitations which influenced the various developmental stages of the study.

Discussion develops various aspects of the methodology underlying the preceding analysis of the reproduction of secretarial labour power. These are: the process of problem definition; the restrictions and opportunities imposed on and by the empirical focus; methods used to obtain and record data.

#### 1. DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Personal experience of a number of problems relating to 'women's work and education' provided the impetus for this study. My initial broad

aims were to clarify the nature of these problems and also to attempt at least a greater personal understanding of the issues involved.

My own work background undoubtedly had a major influence on the initial definition of problems. When I left school I took a full-time secretarial course. After this, I worked for some five years as a secretary in various offices. Since then, for about the last twenty years, I have been a full-time lecturer of secretarial studies at a number of colleges. In the light of this personal involvement in a gender specific area of work and education, I had been eager to read particularly feminist literature. I took a keen interest in the frequent references to, and explanations of, secretarial labour in this literature. However, I found that the assumptions made about secretaries, their work and education, described a world which was not wholly part of my conscious reality. Basically, I understood, from first-hand experience, that secretaries did not constitute a homogeneous category of labour, as suggested by both class and gender analysts (eg Braverman 1974). I started this study with the notion that a greater understanding of 'women's work and education' might be achieved by conducting a class analysis of, for instance, secretarial labour, rather than relying exclusively on exploring its gender specificity.

In general I set out on this project with a wealth of practical knowledge about female office workers and their education, and with a very vague, rather than precise, analytic direction by which to interpret this area of 'women's work'. The first task was to attempt to develop an analytic approach. I tackled this by examining in detail existing class and gender analyses of production and assessing their contribution to shedding light on secretarial production.

As I was concerned with an exclusively female sector of labour, I turned initially to feminist literature for analytic guidance. I noted that while the various methods used by feminists appeared to explain the relations of certain sectors of secretarial production, they failed to account for the relations of other sectors of secretarial labour. It was when I came to examine class theories of production that I became

convinced of the need to explore social differentiation within secretarial labour. I tested the hypothesis that there were important class differences between the relations of production of different levels of secretarial labour by analysing the empirical data of previous research into secretarial labour (eg Silverstone 1974, Downing 1981, Benet 1972, Vinnicombe 1981). From this analysis of the tasks, conditions and social relations of ranked secretarial labour processes emerged more fundamental social differentiation, in terms of power and control, than I had previously acknowledged. At the same time, the class distinctions which came to light within secretarial production invariably connected with the gender specificity of secretarial labour. That is, class relations always seemed to inter-mediate with gender relations. These observations led me to the problem of a possible patterning of the differential representations of class and gender relations within secretarial production. The first indications of the problem of exploring connections between class relations and gender relations surfaced at this stage.

Analysis of connections between class and gender relations emerged as a central problem, then, from exploratory attempts to interpret secretarial labour. In other words, I did not begin this study with a framework of analysis for which I sought a testing ground of relevant empirical data. Indeed, it was only upon further examination of the most recent literature that I realized fully that connections between class and gender relations constituted a somewhat controversial area of debate and that some analysts were calling for analysis of class differences between women.

Although preliminary analysis was confined to secretarial production, I was always primarily interested in vocational education and the mechanisms by which it reproduced, in particular, gender specific labour power. This focus was reinforced, in terms of its originality, by the findings of a computer search for previous analyses relating to secretarial education. The search revealed no previous investigations with a sociological perspective into secretarial education in this country. I progressed, therefore, to an examination of education

theories. The various explanations of the mechanisms by which education reproduced the class and gender relations of production pointed to issues in secretarial education which could provide information on expressions of class relations and gender relations.

Although I appreciated that the education analyses I examined indicated aspects of secretarial education which should be investigated, I was not altogether convinced by the overall tenor of much of the literature. For example, I was troubled by the way in which explanations provided scarcely any space for the consciousness of the women involved in secretarial education. On the other hand, my personal acquaintance with secretarial teachers and students indicated that they frequently questioned and filtered the class and gender implications of their sphere of education. At this point in defining the problems, I came to education analyses which emphasised the two-sided nature of social relations and the power embedded in subordinate groups' actions and reactions to dominant forces (eg Giroux 1983). This provided analytic support and guidance for incorporating secretarial women's conscious actions and beliefs, in respect of class and gender inequalities, into any method I might develop to explore connections between these relations. This was the first step towards analysing class and gender relations, and their inter-connections, as a process. It was at the stage of analysing my data that I incorporated the concept of structuration into analysis. From this underlying perspective, I ultimately developed the method of articulation used in this study.

In outlining the initial stages of this research, I have accounted for my interest in secretarial education. I have also provided some indication of a personal consciousness about my work in this area of education, which prepared the ground for defining the problems investigated in this study. This personal element may lead to criticisms of my work on the grounds of subjectivity. However, I would argue that my previous knowledge and understanding of secretarial work and education was advantageous in many respects. In essence, it led me to question existing class and gender analyses. It also enabled me to explore the complexities of this vocational education. That is, I already had to

hand a groundwork of relevant general information. Any researcher not already acquainted, in this way, with secretarial education would perhaps need to penetrate this general data before arriving at an appreciation of the anomalies, tensions, contradictions expressed in this education. In other words, a prior knowledge of secretarial education left space for, and indeed facilitated identification of, a focus on the complexities of the relations in secretarial education.

I arrived, then, at a broad definition of my main analytic problem. It concerned exploring connections between class relations and gender relations. The stage was set for more systematic data collection than that afforded by my individual experiences of the reproduction of secretarial labour power.

## 2. THE EMPIRICAL FOCUS

Having defined the overall analytic focus, it remained to circumscribe more precisely the particular aspects of secretarial education on which I would concentrate. I began in a general fashion by collecting documentary evidence on secretarial education from examining boards and colleges. Using data from these documents I made an initial analysis of expressions of class and of gender relations in the system of secretarial education.

I confined empirical searches to the London area for practical reasons. That is, I was conducting research while concurrently holding a full-time teaching post in the suburbs of London. The time available for research was, therefore, limited. It had to be fitted in with teaching commitments and I could not afford, for example, to spend a great deal of time travelling to colleges I might wish to visit.

Contacts were made, by letter, with the RSA and LCC. I requested information on historical developments in their respective secretarial qualifications. In response, the LCC offered open access to the minute books of relevant committees. The RSA invited me to discuss the matter

with the person currently in charge of secretarial examinations. These divergent opportunities for acquiring similar data were accepted. They presented the opportunity of gaining different perspectives on the history of secretarial credentials. As it was not the intention to compare and contrast the two examining boards' historical developments, it was not essential to adopt identical methods, for acquiring data, within the two institutions.

I set about analysing the data collected from RSA and LCC. However, developments in these examinations suggested that this information could not be considered in isolation. Information on historical developments in secretarial examinations needed to be explored in the context of broader educational and production issues. A library search was initiated, therefore, to elicit relevant information. Relatively limited literature on the history of technical education was available, and no information concentrating on secretarial education was forthcoming. Clearly then the history of secretarial education warranted exploration in its own right. In order to obtain and analyse original data on this history, an exclusive concentration would be required. Indeed the whole sphere of vocational training, and secretarial education in particular, seemed to be under-researched.

I found the historical aspect of secretarial and vocational education fascinating. It had the potential of illuminating changes, over time, expressing both class and gender relations. Nevertheless, I took the decision to concentrate on the contemporary scene. However, the somewhat limited data on the history of secretarial education which was collected, has been included in the thesis. It is used as background information on current processes and procedures of secretarial education. Part of its use is to indicate an aspect of education which deserves further, more extensive, enquiry. The data which was acquired may provide a base from which further research could be conducted.

From a similar pragmatic standpoint to that above, it was impractical, in the context of the research circumstances, that any extensive data be acquired on the domestic and general education experiences of women

prior to their participation in secretarial education. Neither was it feasible to collect data long-term into the education, production and domestic circumstances of students who had completed their vocational course. Again, these aspects of secretarial women's lives comprise a vital component in exploring their labour process and reactions to their working situations. Enquiries in this vein are omitted from the study purely on the grounds that attempts to cover all aspects would result in a superficial gloss of information over a broad spectrum. In contrast, I felt that a depth of information and sharply circumscribed empirical focus were necessary in order to examine the articulation of class and gender relations in a meaningful fashion. This was particularly necessary if I was to explore the complexities of this sphere of 'women's education'.

The required depth of enquiry necessitated gaining first-hand experience and acquaintance within educational institutions offering secretarial courses. A case study was envisaged which would illuminate the distinctions reproduced between students embarking on secretarial work. In order to explore significant class and gender divisions created between relevant women, it was necessary to seek data on the extremities of the hierarchies of courses and institutions. College handbooks, previously examined, suggested that important variations were contained in the curricula of elite private colleges and those of state technical colleges. On these grounds, it was decided to undertake a comparative case study of two colleges, representative of these two spheres of vocational preparation for secretaries.

### 3. GAINING ACCESS TO TWO COLLEGES

In December 1984 I approached several colleges with a view to conducting research on their secretarial courses. Technical colleges were selected which offered every level of secretarial course, ranging from Post GCSE to Postgraduate, as I was interested in obtaining data on the differences between secretarial courses within a single institution. I was not primarily interested in procedures which differentiate colleges into high and low-level institutions. That is, some local education

authorities retain post GCSE and post 'A' level courses in separate colleges.

Wishing to eliminate, as far as possible, time consuming travel, I chose to contact, in the first instance, the technical college, which met my criteria, nearest my home. I wrote a brief letter outlining my research to the Principal, requesting permission to conduct research within the college. Within a week I received a positive response from the Head of Department responsible for secretarial courses. He invited me to the college to discuss the matter more fully with him and the Head of the Secretarial Section. At this meeting these college representatives gave positive support for my proposed research. They granted open access to any information I required. The only embargo which was applied was that no pressure be put on any member of staff or student not wishing to participate in providing information.

The first private college approached, in precisely the same way as the approach made to the technical college, replied that it was a college policy not to accept visitors. A further letter was written to the college explaining in more detail my proposed research and asking whether an exception to college policy could be made. The college did not reply to this request. Therefore, a second private college was selected. However, the Principal of this institution stated that she was far too busy to discuss my research.

With the experience of two rejections, I decided on a different approach to a third private college. I wrote a short letter to the college explaining that I had received a copy of the prospectus and would welcome an opportunity to discuss the secretarial courses offered. I judged that a more positive response might be obtained if I delayed mentioning any research proposal until I was in a position to present my request in a 'face-to-face' situation. In the event this strategy was a blunder. The Principal of the college was openly hostile when I took up the issue of research. On entering this Principal's office, I stated immediately my academic interest in the education she provided. I asked simply whether she would be able to discuss the secretarial courses in

more detail with me. Her immediate response was to condemn flatly all academic work and maintain that if she were to talk to me about her courses she would end up having to write the thesis on my behalf. She said that she was well aware of the poor quality of so-called academic research. The interview lasted only a matter of some ten minutes. She insisted that I leave and physically escorted me to the outer door. She stood watching to ensure that I walked away from the building.

From the responses to my overtures to various private colleges I was beginning to feel that they were impenetrable institutions. I was coming to the realisation that the strategy I had mapped out for a comparative case study was doomed to failure. This methodological problem was not perhaps as devastating as it might sound. After all there was so little existing research into secretarial education that a number of alternative areas were open to enquiry. I could, for example, have reverted to an original proposal and concentrated on the history of secretarial education. There was always the possibility at this early stage of a study to redefine research proposals. At the same time, my reaction, to the experiences thus far in trying to obtain admittance to a private college, needed surmounting. For example, during the interview described above, I had to consider whether to react to the insults to which I was subjected, or whether such an inevitably emotional reaction would have been considered part of the reasons for the manner in which this Principal spoke and dealt with me. In the event, not wishing to jeopardise any possibility for acquiring data, I had remained mostly silent and, in my view, extremely polite.

I record this part of the methodology in some detail in spite of the fact that, in respect of time consumed, it was a more minor aspect of the research. I paint a detailed picture of gaining access to the private sector not merely because it was one of the major difficulties encountered, but because there is a sense in which it represents in itself relevant data for the study. This problematic adds weight to evidence presented in the main text on the way in which the private sector is closed to public scrutiny and accountability. My experience

illustrates how difficult it is to penetrate elite status by acquiring objective data on the procedures and processes adopted.

To test fully the notion of the impenetrability of the private sector of secretarial education, I determined to telephone further private colleges, state that I was conducting research into secretarial education and ask to discuss the college's courses with the Principal. After two further outright rejections, I was somewhat surprised when, at the next telephone enquiry, positive interest was shown in my research project. A date was fixed for me to visit the college to discuss the matter further with the Director of Studies.

My sharply different experiences while seeking an entrée to secretarial education in the state and in the private sectors had a strong bearing on the manner in which I approached data collection in Sloanes and Hometown.

#### 4. DATA COLLECTION

A combination of strategies was used to acquire information on secretarial education in the two selected colleges. They included formal interviews, informal interviews, casual conversations, formal and informal observation and participant observation. At all times respondents were assured that anonymity would be secured by the convention of using pseudonyms, both for the institutions and for individuals who agreed to participate by providing information.

After obtaining general approval from Sloanes and Hometown to conduct research I planned data collection in each. I was guided by the numerous education theories I had examined earlier. In this way I could assess the viability of existing education theories as tools for interpreting secretarial education. In order to do this I would need to interview staff and students, observe classroom practice and steep myself in the culture of each institution.

At the inaugural meeting at Hometown, I indicated the variety of activities in which I would welcome involvement. No objection was raised to any of these suggestions, in spite of the inevitable intrusion which this research represented into the normal daily activities of the individuals and institution generally. An atmosphere of constructive support and interest was shown by everyone in the institution. I was encouraged to wander around the college unescorted and use all facilities, including the library, classrooms and refectory as I saw fit.

Some 25 visits were made to Hometown. Arrangements for each visit were made by telephoning the Head of Section. Although some proposed dates were rejected, this was only on the basis of practical considerations, such as the fact that students would be taking examinations at that time. When matters were raised in interview on which respondents did not have detailed information, or where they believed others might have contrary views, teachers frequently suggested the appropriate person to whom I should direct these questions. The teachers went out of their way to introduce me to people who, they judged, might have information or experiences which would be relevant to my study. The very supportive attitudes and actions of all staff at Hometown helped to sustain my own motivation in carrying out the investigation. The visits to Hometown were made over a period of 18 months, from January 1985 to May 1986. This meant that I had the opportunity of meeting two different intakes of students.

Data collection at Hometown began by conducting formal interviews with the Head of Section and members of staff teaching on secretarial courses. A representative sample of teachers was obtained by the Head of Section introducing me to the staff when they were gathered together at a coffee break. During this informal conversation I asked whether any of them would volunteer for interview. There were no dissenters, and it was then left to me to make practical arrangements for the interviews. Some volunteers were not interviewed. This was simply on the grounds that we were unable to accommodate each other's teaching commitments to find a mutually convenient time.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers at Hometown. A set of ten questions was listed. These were asked of all respondents. In addition further unplanned questions were posed. These were used to illuminate further the information provided. On only one occasion did a teacher display hesitancy and embarrassment in responding to a question. The ethics of the situation required that I enquire whether this was a sensitive issue. When the teacher affirmed that it was a sensitive issue I suggested that we leave the topic and move to the next issue. The matter in question was not a central issue in this research. Each interview lasted from between 30 minutes to 90 minutes.

The investigation within Hometown progressed to spending two days with each of the Post 'O' level and Post 'A' level secretarial groups. I sat at the back of the room in all their formal classes. I recorded the behaviour and interactions between students as well as between students and staff. At breaks I remained with students, chatting to them over coffee and lunch, or simply observing their conversations and actions. During these informal occasions students often questioned me about my interest in their course. I felt that this provided an opportunity to build up a rapport with students. This helped to gain their confidence before embarking on the more formal individual interviews with students. When they learned that I had taught secretarial studies, they often asked my opinion on aspects of their own course of study. While I gave honest replies, I was careful not to jeopardise my position as guest within the college, by undermining confidence in the teaching methods or subjects they studied.

The main advantage of observing classes before interviewing students was that students were assured that I had some knowledge and understanding of their studies. In individual interviews time was not spent on simply describing their course, but rather on their interpretations of their studies. Interviews were conducted with students in the isolation and privacy of a room provided by the college. Students volunteered to participate. At the end of one long day of interviews it was clear that I only had time for one further interview, although four volunteers remained. The students expressed such disappointment at the prospect of

not participating, that I made an exception, in this instance, and employed a group interview technique to talk to them all. Again interviews with students were semi-structured. I had a standard set of eight questions which were posed to each respondent, but where sufficient leeway was permitted to pursue matters of concern in a more detailed, free-ranging, fashion as they arose. Depending mainly on the articulateness of the individual student interviews lasted from between 20 minutes to 2 hours.

Investigations for the case study necessarily spanned a considerable period of time, in the circumstances of my own work commitments. However, this situation provided the opportunity to analyse, provisionally at least, the data which was obtained at each stage, in respect of expressions of class and gender relations. In the light of these initial interpretations, gaps in the data were revealed. However, I was able to return to the source to ask supplementary questions or pursue, in another fashion, the area of interest which analysis suggested of significance. Concentrated data collection within a shorter period may not have permitted this simultaneous analysis. For instance, a particular interest transpired in the classroom relations witnessed in the four days of observation. Preliminary analysis suggested that these relations did not replicate anticipatory relations of production. Therefore, further extended classroom observation was conducted to obtain more extensive data on this aspect of secretarial education. Furthermore, as the enquiries spanned two academic years, different groups of students were involved, which enabled me to assure myself that the groups were not atypical in any significant way.

Hometown's Head of Secretarial Section facilitated data acquisition on students' education and domestic circumstances prior to entering the college. She distributed questionnaires I had prepared on this topic to relevant groups of students. She also permitted open access to the College's questionnaire responses, from past students, concerning their jobs since completing their secretarial course at the College.

In the light of the difficulties encountered in gaining access to a private sector college, approaches within Sloanes college were made more tentatively than within Hometown. Investigations here progressed a step at a time. No plan of my research requirements was requested or given. The enquiry progressed by highlighting one topic in any current discussion which was of particular interest and asking whether it was possible to talk to someone or, in some other way, gain further insight on the issue. For example, during the initial interview with the Director of Studies, she mentioned that there was a male teacher of secretarial subjects at her college. I expressed interest by stating that I was particularly interested in the gender issues surrounding secretarial work and suggested that it would be valuable to be able to get a male perspective. She arranged for me to interview the male teacher. However, in contrast to Hometown, she carefully prescribed the length of time, approximately 45 minutes, which would be available to me. She arranged this interview with the teacher on my behalf. After this interview, I returned to the Director of Studies, thanking her for making the arrangements and stating that it would be advantageous if I could compare this man's views on secretarial work to those of a female teacher. In this way I gradually gained access to increasing numbers of teachers.

Participant observation on the social occasions at Sloanes arose from my request to talk to students. The Director of Studies suggested that an appropriate opportunity would be afforded by attending these events. I always accepted any offer to enter the college, regardless of the fact that the circumstances were not directly comparable to those offered at Hometown. Indeed the opportunities to visit Sloanes may well not have been the ideal circumstances in which to conduct research. For example, the situations which were presented to me meant that my actions were constantly monitored by those in authority within the college. I was also aware that the College was keen to display to me those aspects of their training in which they took pride, such as the social events arranged for students. I judged, nevertheless, that occasions for which I was invited to the college provided data on the value system which

informed the various activities involved in becoming a Sloanes secretary.

During the interviews with the Director of Studies at Sloanes I used the same semi structured technique adopted at Hometown, posing identical basic questions and allowing other issues to be pursued as a result of responses. The social occasions presented more difficulty in research terms. It was clearly not appropriate to bring out a list of questions or recording material as I was expected to mingle with other participants in a socially acceptable manner. In these circumstances, I attempted to memorise my basic questions and bring them into the conversation in a casual manner.

The participant observation at Sloanes was fraught with ethical and personal problems. With the constant fear of rejection by the College, I was at pains not to act in any way which could be assessed as threatening to the institution. I took care to dress in a way which I judged would accord with the norms of the college. However, this question of outward appearance was relatively simple in comparison with coping with the social etiquette of the occasions. My own cultural heritage did not provide me with any great confidence in engaging in the small talk of the gatherings, while balancing a glass of wine and plate of hot food in my hands and concurrently trying to get the conversations round to areas of interest for my research. I strove for objectivity in my observations and discussions, but visits to the college taught me that I could never totally leave my subjective self outside the research situation.

I cannot claim to have behaved in an identical fashion in each of the institutions of the case study. However, I believe the differences in my approach to have been necessary if any data was to have been acquired, particularly from Sloanes. When I was questioned on sensitive issues at Sloanes, I gave the appearance of collusion with the values of the institution, either by making no direct response or skating around the issue. For instance, on many occasions staff invited condemnation of the state sector of education.

In all, fourteen visits were made to Sloanes during 1984-6. It was not until the latter stages, that some privacy was found to interview students. Fortunately on the day set aside to interview students the sun shone brightly. Interviewees asked their teacher if they might sit with me in the gardens while I talked to them. The direct sunlight and heat were not ideal for recording the interviews. However, as the teacher remained inside the building, the first and only opportunity to speak to students away from direct observation of teachers was welcomed.

As the period of involvement with Sloanes ran its course, it became increasingly difficult to arrange times with the college when I could visit. They were becoming less amenable to my requests. In the end I asked for information on the jobs acquired by their summer 1985 leavers and was told that they were too busy at that time, but might be able to supply me with the information at a later date. In spite of two further letters on this subject, I was unable to acquire the information and I received no reply to my last letter. Tentative enquiries about sitting in on classes were not welcomed and I failed to gain permission for classroom observation.

## 5. RECORDING THE DATA

Tape recorders are often recommended for field research as a means of obtaining the most comprehensive record of interviews and events. On the occasion of earlier research, I had used this mechanical device for recording purposes. However, I had found the machine to be an intrusive element which rendered an artificial formality to interviews. Concern about the functioning of the tape took my attention away from the interview, and interviewees often displayed discomfort in the presence of the recorder. As I possessed the skill of shorthand, I used this method to record all interviews and observations. This recording technique had the advantage of my being able to insert additional information, for example, on the manner in which a response was made. I was capable of taking verbatim notes with sufficient automaticity that attention on the interviewee and responses could be sustained with ease.

Using shorthand notes as a recording medium meant that my activities blended in with the activities of the individuals and courses I was investigating. All the educational participants were using notebooks and pens in their daily classroom activities similar to my equipment. In the circumstances of this research, my notes did not symbolise a secret code. The majority of respondents had sufficient knowledge of shorthand to have been able to read my notes should they have desired so to do. The consent of respondents to my note taking was always sought prior to bringing out my notebook.

The recording technique adopted had an unforeseen advantage. Using shorthand, a skill which was a compulsory element of the courses investigated, signified that I had gone through an educational process similar to that in which interviewees were currently engaged. This common experience appeared to create a bond of understanding which induced a comfortable and easy rapport. At the end of each interview, respondents were asked whether they would like to add anything to earlier observations or make any statements about secretarial education which had not already been covered. On many occasions students took this opportunity to question me about my shorthand speed and my personal experience of secretarial work.

On occasions, when intuition decreed that notetaking was inappropriate, I seized the earliest opportunity for recording, again in shorthand, my memories of the events and statements which were made. For example, after joining in social events at Sloanes, I drove my car about a mile from the College, found a quiet road in which to park, and sat writing notes. At Hometown I was allowed sufficient privacy within the College to note down casual conversations, for instance during lunch, after the group had dispersed. I incorporated into all notes my feelings about events and statements, further questions which came immediately to mind, as well as any relevant information about the physical conditions in which the interviews or events took place.

As far as was practically possible shorthand notes were transcribed on the evening of their recording and additional comments were added about

my memories, feelings and immediate interpretation of the events and comments I had witnessed.

Earlier examination of education theories which concentrated on cultural reproduction, led me to make comprehensive notes on every aspect of the two colleges which could relate to the cultural tone of the institution, including its physical attributes. Initially the personal emotions I felt during visits particularly to Sloanes caused me concern about objectivity. However, because the college presented a cultural environment with which I was personally largely unfamiliar, I found that I took more detailed account of aspects which symbolized the general ethos of the establishment. Hometown provided an environment which was akin to my own climate of work conditions, and for this reason I failed to understand the significance of certain cultural symbols. There is a sense, then, in which the personal ease with which I fitted into Hometown could have hindered objectivity. For instance, it was only after analysis of data on the waitresses and their attitudes towards students at Sloanes, that I took note of the comparable staff's behaviour at Hometown.

### CONCLUSIONS

Sloanes and Hometown college presented different opportunities and restrictions on data collection. However, any field work which involves entering the daily routines of an institution must constitute an interruption to those engaged in formal activities of the institution. Strategies for data collection will no doubt always be influenced by such practical issues.

Methods of investigation at Sloanes and at Hometown were different. Nevertheless data was obtained on comparable elements of their secretarial education. This formed the basis for exploring the reciprocal articulation of class and gender relations, as expressed in secretarial education.

I would add that Hometown is not the college in which I am, or ever have been, employed. For any of my students or teaching colleagues who might read this study, I would stress that I have not been covertly collecting notes on their comments and activities. I made a positive decision not to use data directly drawn from my own classroom and college activities. I felt that I wanted to keep my teaching and research distinctly separate. This was mainly on the grounds of maintaining the confidence of my own students and colleagues. For example, I did not wish to jeopardise classroom relations with students by suggesting that I might use conversations with them for purposes other than those of direct professional concern.

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